

Vegetarianism the Easy Way

"Make it easy on yourself."

I like that phrase. And it's a good motto for learning a new skill or going through a big life transition. When you decide to explore becoming a vegetarian, it is very easy to get scared off by what appears to be a difficult road ahead. But the truth is, there is an easy way and a hard way to become a vegetarian. So in keeping with our motto of the day of "make it easy on yourself", lets discuss vegetarianism the easy way.

First of all along with learning a new way to eat, you are also giving up something you probably have loved to eat for years. So to reduce the difficulty in going through this transition, don't try to accomplish the entire transition in one day. We have a mistaken concept about vegetarians that the conversion is instantaneous as though one day the person was eating all the meat he or she could find and in a flash they became a robe wearing, mantra singing vegetarian. But that is complete myth. Most successful vegetarians found there way into the discipline in stages and gave up meat slowly.

You might take on your vegetarian transition one meal at a time. First give up eggs and bacon for breakfast and switch to grain cereals or pancakes. Don't try to give up cheese and milk at first. Select specific items you will eliminate from specific meals and just accomplish that for a week or so. Then once you have conquered that step, add lunch and then much later add dinner. And don't throw your hands up and give up if you have a moment of weakness and have a hamburger one day. You wont be drummed out of the vegetarian society for one mistake in your program. Just get back with it and keep on keeping on.

Find ways to see some success by being reasonable and sensible about how you approach your meal planning. If one of your goals for switching to a meatless diet is to lose weight, don't substitute sugars and sweats for the meat. If you find yourself eating without meat but each day you have a big bowl of fruit drowned in sugary additives, you won't lose the weight and you might mistakenly think your program failed you. Think about what you eat so you don't sabotage your own diet.

One of the things that scares a lot of people away from trying vegetarianism is the idea of having to learn to eat exotic and expensive new foods such as tofu, and tempeh. So make it easy on yourself and eat the foods you know. By doing your shopping in your own grocery store and buying more food from the produce section than the meat section, you will be working with foods like carrots, onions, garlic, broccoli, celery and cabbage and that familiarity will make the

transition to becoming a vegetarian easier to take. Also by shopping where you are comfortable and eating "normal" foods, you eliminate the sensation that you are joining some bizarre cult.

Now make it fun. Yes it can be fun to be a vegetarian. You can start shopping at farmer's markets instead at the boring grocery store and select very fresh produce and vegetables for your next cooking experiment. Not only are outdoor markets more fun, you will find them cheaper so instead of seeing your food budget go up because of becoming a vegetarian, it goes down. Then by working as a family to find fun vegetarian recipes and working together to make them, everybody gets in on the act discovering how delicious vegetarian meals can be. And when you are having fun, you may forget entirely that you dreaded this transition. Before long, you are a vegetarian and it didn't hurt a bit!

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