

Will Vegetarianism Change the World?

We all fear change. And when we see a "movement" start to get momentum in society, its easy to fear it is being imposed on us by some sinister force out to ruin our way of life. That instinct to fear change at a social level goes way back. But the truth is that society does change and evolve and often for the better.

The anti smoking movement of the last three decades is a good example of positive social change. When the move to eliminate smoking from our national life first started, many people feared it was the work of radical left wingers who wanted to take away our rights. But as more and more discussion of the good of eliminating smoking from peoples lives occurred, it became obvious that smoking was not something good people should have a right to engage in any more than getting a dread disease is a right and a natural part of culture. So smoking has slowly been eliminated from public life and we are a healthier people as a result.

As the move toward more healthy ways to live has continued to be part of our cultural discussion and in the last decade or so, vegetarianism has taken center stage. As before, many fear the natural evolution of society away from meat consumption and toward a natural way of eating as vegetarians is a sinister plot of the radical left to deprive us our right to eat meat and so take away one of our freedoms.

This is far from the truth. But that doesn't mean that vegetarianism is not going to change the world and become more the norm than the unusual. That is because becoming a vegetarian is a natural step for many of us who are concerned about weight loss, long life and health. The national obsession with weight loss and avoiding sickness is so strong that its impossible to ignore. Part of the reason for that is that a lot of companies are making a lot of money selling us ways to live healthy and lose weight.

What these companies don't want you to know is that you don't need pills or expensive programs. You can live a healthier life and lose weight naturally by simply becoming a vegetarian. But as that truth becomes more well known, the movement will pick up momentum and more and more people will see the good in eliminating meat and meat byproducts from their diets. If that happens the answer is yes, vegetarianism may very well take over the world.

What should be our response to the rapidly growing social momentum toward vegetarianism? Should we buy guns and retreat to the hills to fight a final battle with the vegetarian zombies who want to rob us of our lifestyle? Not at

all. Putting the vegetarian movement into context with the move to reduce the negative impacts of smoking on our lives helps give us perspective of what to expect.

If you once smoked and have quit because it has become so socially unacceptable to smoke, you no doubt are glad by now that you did so. Why? Because you are more healthy, happier, more energetic and you will live longer. That good change may have been imposed on you by society but you benefited from the change.

If society moves more toward vegetarian living because of the common sense of living a healthy way that is in concert with ethical treatment of animals, organic living and living green, it will change the way we work as a society. It is easy to look down the road to a time when eating meat is unusual and there are more vegetarian restaurants and markets than any other kind.

But this is not a social change to be feared. Yes, when you join the vegetarian revolution, just as it was when you quit smoking, it may be difficult and you may resent it. But when you have made the change, you will find yourself healthier, happier, slimmer and living longer as a result. And even if you hated seeing vegetarianism change the world, in the final analysis, we all will be better people if it does.

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