

Does Meat-Eating Impede Spiritual Development?

Vegetarianism Inside~Out Part 2

by Paul Chek

The public buys its opinions as it buys its meat, or takes in its milk, on the principle that it is cheaper to do this than to keep a cow. So it is, but the milk is more likely to be watered. —“Sequel to Alps and Sanctuaries,” Samuel Butler

In Part I of this article, I shared many aspects of vegetarianism and meat eating that are commonly missed by experts of all sorts. While there are a plethora of reasons and excuses people give for not eating meat, the most common I hear, and the one that stirs my soul the most, is that eating meat impedes spiritual development. To such a comment, I must respond with a quote from William Shakespeare:

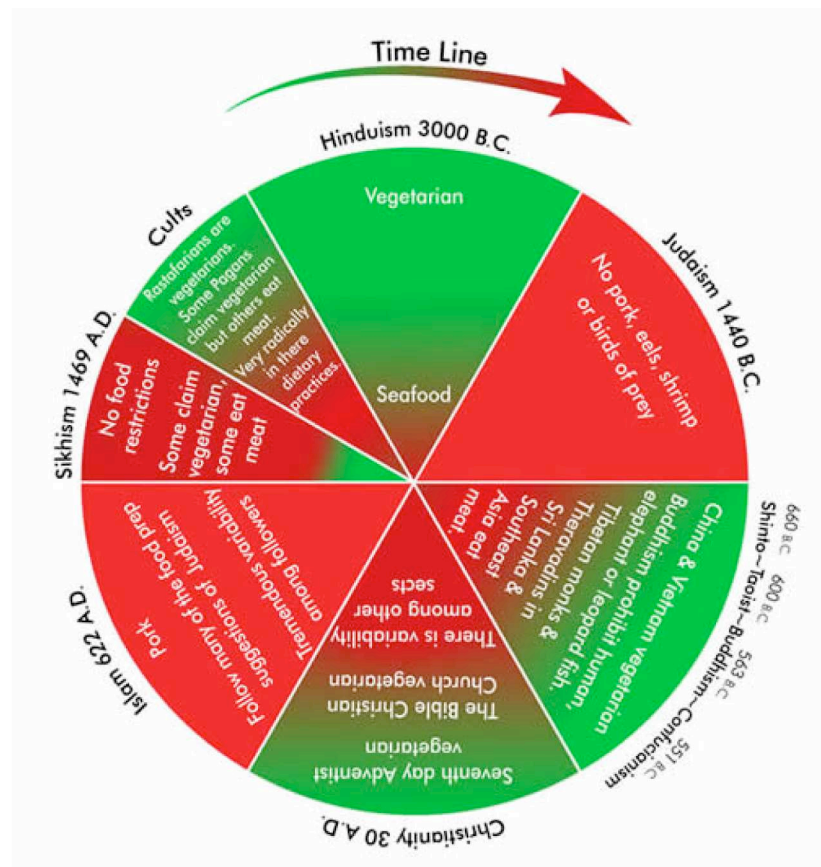
Thy head is as full of quarrels as an egg is full of meat.

It is *not* my intention to upset anyone. It is, however, my goal to educate and to beg you to set aside time to ponder this article before you deal your body an unnecessary vegetarian blow.

Religious Restrictions On Eating Meat

Here you can see how, if one were to adopt a unified faith based upon the concept that all religions contain part of the spiritual puzzle, then he or she would be faced with the same level of dietary confusion that exists in the academic world of nutrition today.

Evidence of that confusion is easy to see in the fact that most nutritionists and dietitians have weight management problems! It should be easy to avoid this



dietary confusion. Eating according to your racial and genetic needs facilitates health and well-being. Since the body is the vessel through which the spiritual expresses itself on the material plane, surely health and well-being are an essential catalyst to spiritual development. By the very nature of spiritual development, we acquire the desire to help others and this is very hard to do when we are not at optimal health!

To begin, we must look at the nature of *religion*. According to the dictionary, religion is:

- A particular system of faith and worship; *the world's great religions*.
- A pursuit or interest to which someone ascribes supreme importance; *consumerism is the new religion*.

Regarding the first definition, anthropologists maintain that for as long as they have been able to unearth details of man's early existence, there is evidence that man was practicing some form of religion. If you look in any book that outlines the chronology of religion, a couple things relevant to our discussion become apparent. The first is that Hinduism, a religion preaching a vegetarian diet as a spiritual necessity, is the oldest of all the great world religions. It therefore can be thought of as the trunk of a great (religion) tree from which other *branches* have sprouted. The influence of Hinduism as the trunk of this tree can be seen in many ways. In fact, according to Kersey Graves¹ and Ford Johnson², the Hindu Avatar Krishna, who pre-dated Jesus by approximately 3,000 years, had a life that correlates very highly to that of Jesus. Some have identified as many as 120 direct parallels between Krishna and Jesus, while others have found over 300! There are many other important similarities between Hinduism and Christianity. In the main, this is because whenever we build something new, even a religion, it is natural to take those parts of a philosophy that work and discard those that don't work. As religions branching off from Hinduism in some way, we've ended up with a lot of people subscribing to religious faiths that have subsequently retained some variation of a vegetarian or meat-restricting diet. It is crucial for our discussion to see that we begin our religious history with Hinduism/vegetarianism so that we can trace the effects of Hinduism on the other major world religions.

If we take Hinduism as the trunk of our tree, the first branch of the religious tree is Judaism. Though Judaism is not a vegetarian religion, it does have specific limitations on what can be eaten and how it can be prepared. This set of guidelines is referred to as *kashrut*, and sets out the criteria by which a food is determined to be kosher. The Jewish religion teaches its followers to avoid eating pork, eel, shrimp, or shellfish, birds of prey, cheeseburgers or road kill³ (p. 156).

Following Judaism, we progress up the religious tree and come to a tight cluster of limbs with the appearance of the Shinto (660 B.C.), Taoist (600 B.C.), Buddhist (563 B.C.) and Confucian (551 B.C.) faiths. Of these religions, Buddhism appears to have had the most to say about dietary practice. Buddhists have a diet that may be generally outlined as follows:

The first lay precept in Buddhism prohibits killing (as in Hinduism). But, the Buddha also made a distinction between killing an animal and consumption of meat, stressing that it is immoral conduct that makes one impure, not the food one eats. At one point, the Buddha specifically refused to institute vegetarianism, and the Pali Canon records the Buddha himself eating meat on several occasions. There were, however, rules prohibiting certain types of meat, such as human, leopard or elephant. Monks are also prohibited from consuming meat if they witnessed the animal's death or know it was killed specifically for them. On the other hand, the Buddha in certain Mahayana sutras strongly denounces the eating of meat. In the

Mahayana Mahaparinirvana Sutra, the Buddha states that "the eating of meat extinguishes the seed of great compassion", adding that every kind of meat and fish consumption is prohibited by him.

In the modern Buddhist world, attitudes toward vegetarianism vary by location. In China and Vietnam, monks typically eat no meat. In Japan or Korea some schools do not eat meat, but most do. Tibetan monks and Theravadins in Sri Lanka and South-east Asia do not practice vegetarianism.⁴

The Buddha's belief that "eating of meat extinguishes the seed of great compassion" highlights one of the many Hindu influences on the Buddhist faiths. Since Buddhism branches off from Hinduism, many Buddhist practitioners carry with them the general Hindu view on vegetarianism. As you can see, however, there is room for debate on the issue of meat-eating even within Buddhism. This brings us to a general problem that exists for any religious faith for which there are poor or debatable written records—and this list includes Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Judaism, and certainly Christianity! The problem is consistency, and it is especially apparent with the dietary component of religious faiths.

It is widely believed that the Buddha's final words were, "Be a light unto thyself," which might imply that he wanted each individual to choose his or her own path to Enlightenment. Still, many Buddhists would ask about the sense of calling oneself a Buddhist if one is not trying to discern and follow the Buddha's teachings on foods and all other issues. Conflicting aspects of the Buddha's teachings—compassion, The Five Precepts, and karma, versus the humility to accept meat and other things offered as charity—are not likely to be easily resolved, given the vagueness of written history. Which monks are more spiritual: *the meat eaters or the vegetarians?* I suspect only the Buddha would know!

Further up the tree we reach Christianity, which has at least 152 sects,⁵ and for which the dietary guidelines vary from none at all to vegetarianism. While there are no authenticated writings from Jesus himself on the topic, there is plenty of discussion. The Seventh Day Adventist manual, for instance, states as one of its goals the "promoting [of] optimum health, free of tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, and unclean foods. Where possible, members shall be encouraged to follow a primarily vegetarian diet"⁶ (Chapter 13, p. 115). So here we have at least 152 faiths claiming to live by the teachings of Jesus, yet like those claiming to follow the teachings of Buddha, not only are they unable to agree on the path of spiritual development ascribed to Jesus, they can't find conformity in their dietary practices.

Among the higher (newest) branches is the Islamic tradition. They believe that the Koran, the Islamic sacred book, is the word of God as dictated to Muhammad by the archangel Gabriel. The Koran lays out Islamic dietary restrictions that are very similar to those of Judaism:

Muslims can eat meat that has been ritually slaughtered, for example, but they must never eat meat from animals that have died of themselves or have been clubbed to death or gored by other animals. Nor can they eat pork. If no other food is available, however, Muslims can eat the forbidden foods, as long as they don't enjoy it or get used to it (3, p. 91).

Moving up the timeline of our religious tree we come to Sikhism, a religious philosophy born out of both Hinduism and Islam. Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak, who was born in 1469 A.D. He was originally a Hindu, yet found many aspects of Hinduism challenging. As a general theme, Nanak tended to be critical of religious rites and ceremonies, and sought to

integrate a society (breaking down the Hindu caste system for example) that was rigidly separated. One example is his introduction of the *langar*, or communal meal, which was open to all castes and which was free from rituals normally associated with Hinduism⁷ (p. 148-9).

Not surprisingly, if you do an cursory search for "*langar*," you will find *many* sites describing this Sikh traditional meal as vegetarian, leaving the impression that Sikhs are vegetarians. In the Wikipedia entry for vegetarianism, for instance, it says: "In Sikhism, it is believed that one should not eat any type of meat for it involves killing a living conscious being." Yet, while searching to see if all *langar* gatherings were in fact vegetarian I came across this statement:

The *langar* is an open kitchen found in all Sikh Gurudwaras, which provide free meals after Sikh services. The Langar was instituted by Guru Amar Das, and is open to the public. *The food served in the Langar is vegetarian in deference to the food restrictions of visitors of other faiths.*⁸ (Emphasis mine)

Reading the italicized sentence, you see something not easily found in other literature on the dietary habits of Sikhs. *The vegetarian meal is offered so that those of other faiths may (comfortably) participate.* Remember that Guru Nanak was a Hindu who wanted to integrate people and remove the barriers of the caste system. Yet, like most every religion on the planet, once the seed (the founder or prophet in most cases) dies, the followers put their own spin on the teachings, and you then have conflict among those *supposedly of the same faith!* Interestingly, there have been leaders in the Sikh movement that were proponents of vegetarianism, espousing Hindu philosophy, and there have been those against, stating that such philosophy is irrelevant to spiritual development.

This brings me to the second definition of religion and a second key discovery by anthropologists. Remember that this definition describes religion as "a pursuit of interest to which someone ascribes supreme importance." Many of Guru Nanak's followers latched onto the dietary restrictions as part of their religion. Moreover, as with many religious followers, they seek to *spread* that practice. This is the second discovery of anthropologists: Spiritual Avatars, Masters, Guru's, Pastors, Preachers, and even excited followers routinely try to *proselytize* others with the philosophy/lifestyle that is saving *them*. While I have no doubt that the vegetarian Sikhs believe that they have found the one true path, who wearing a *human body* is qualified to measure the development of another's spirituality?

In Sandeep Singh Brar's excellent article, "Misconceptions about Eating Meat—Comments of Sikh Scholars,"⁹ Dr. Surinder Singh Kohli is quoted as making the following comment:

A close study of the hymns of Guru Nanak Dev clarifies the Sikh standpoint regarding meat eating. The Guru has not fallen into the controversy of eating or not eating animal food. He has ridiculed the religious priests for raising their voice in favor of vegetarianism. He called them hypocrites and totally blind to the realities of life. They are unwise and thoughtless persons, who do not go into the root of the matter. According to him, the water is the source of all life whether vegetable or animal. Guru Nanak Dev said, "None of the grain of corn is without life. In the first place, there is life in water, by which all are made green" (Var Asa M.1, p. 472). Thus there is life in vegetation and life in all types of creatures.¹⁰

From the same article, Sri Guru Granth Sahib says:

There is no difference between plants and animals. God in his perfection has

designed all living things to eat what they eat. We eat meat as part of the natural order of all living things designed by God. Man has been eating meat and vegetables for millions of years, God has not designed meat eating human beings in error. The only things banned for Sikhs are all unnatural manipulations of natural foods—tobacco, drugs, alcohol all unnatural manipulations of vegetation, and all banned for Sikhs.¹⁰

As a man who has spent his life in pursuit of truth in both holistic health and spiritual development, I can assure you, the men making the above comments display clear thinking as well as sound observational skills.

So, here we have some interesting challenges: *Buddhists are allowed to beg for food and eat animal flesh if they have no knowledge of where it came from or how it died. We have religious abstinence of pork in Judaism, yet native societies like the Hawaiian Islanders practically lived off pork and pineapple and had no history of disease until the appearance of Christian missionaries. Muslims can eat forbidden foods, as long as they don't get used to it. Finally, Sikh scholars debate the spiritual importance of vegetarianism when the founder of the Sikh tradition offered vegetarian meals only to welcome those of vegetarian traditions.* They say that it was the eating of the forbidden fruit that got us here, but it sounds to me like maybe Eve should have tried eating the snake before the apple!

Life Eats Life

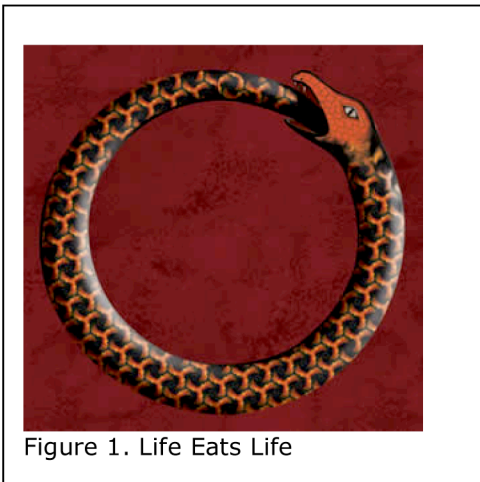


Figure 1. Life Eats Life

We can see in the Sikh philosophy described by Sri Guru Granth Shahib, the ancient dictum that *life eats life*. Nobody brings out this truth more clearly than the late Joseph Campbell, one of the most insightful experts on mythology and theology that ever lived. Campbell expressed in his work the idea that those who claim not to eat meat for spiritual reasons simply don't have a clear grasp of God or reality. In ancient societies, the fact that *life eats life* was demonstrated in the symbolism of the snake eating its own tail, called the *ouroboros* (Figure 1). Interestingly enough, this symbol is also used in alchemy to connote change from one substance to another as well as being a symbol of *gnosis*, or knowledge. The snake eating its tail may also symbolize *unity*. Unity is the underlying theme of world religion and we can see this in the fact that religion

may also be interpreted as *re-legion*, meaning to bring back together as a group. All of these meanings of the *ouroboros* contribute to our discussion and highlight one of Campbell's most important messages: *don't just follow blindly, study life!*

Spiritual Meat

While I have given a brief historical analysis of certain religions and their tendency towards restrictive dietary practices, there are a great number of examples of very spiritual people who did not adhere to these strict dietary regimes. While I could easily compile a thousand page volume on the subject, let's consider just a few of my favorites here:

St. Hildegard of Bingen

St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179) is thought of as one of the most remarkable women of the Middle Ages. The daughter of a knight, she began her education at the age of eight in the Benedictine monastery at Mount St. Disibode. The monastery followed the Celtic tradition, and housed both men and women in separate quarters. At eighteen years old, Hildegard became a nun and within twenty years she was made the head of the female community at the monastery. It was after she became the head of the monastery that her spirituality began to shine. In the next four years she had a series of visions and devoted the ten years from 1140 to 1150 to writing them down, describing them and commenting on their interpretation and significance. During this period, Pope Eugenius III sent a commission to inquire into her work. The commission found her teaching orthodox and her insights authentic.

Despite her growing popularity and her early favor with the Church, in the last year of her life she battled with the Church because she provided Christian burial for a young man who had been excommunicated. Her defense was that he had repented on his deathbed, and received the sacraments. Her convent was subjected to an interdict, barring anyone in the convent from participation in the sacraments as well as from receiving a Christian burial. Hildegard protested eloquently, and the interdict was revoked. She died shortly thereafter on 17 September 1179.

Her surviving works include more than a hundred letters to emperors and popes, bishops, nuns, and nobility. Many persons of all classes wrote to her, asking for advice, and one biographer calls her “the Dear Abby of the twelfth century.” She also wrote 72 songs including a play set to music. In addition to her letters and music, Hildegard left us about seventy poems and nine books. Two of them are books of medical and pharmaceutical advice, dealing with the workings of the human body and the properties of various herbs. St. Hildegard’s approach to health and medicine included the use of various meats. In *Hildegard of Bingen’s Medicine* by Dr. Winghard Strehlow and Gottfried Hertzka, M.D.,¹¹ St. Hildegard outlines the use of fish, poultry, and chicken, lamb, goat, and venison.

It’s clear that Hildegard was a most remarkable woman. Not only was her life marked by creativity and wisdom, she displayed tremendous courage standing up to the Pope and the Church when she felt it necessary. This would be no small feat today, but it was extremely dangerous for a woman in the Middle Ages. In this light, one is forced to ponder where consuming animal flesh may have impeded her spiritual development?

Chief Seattle

Salmon was the primary food source among Indians of the Pacific Northwest. Their diet was supplemented with game animals, as well as clams, oysters, shrimp, crabs, mussels, seasonal fruits, berries, nuts, wild potatoes, and the onion-like bulbs of wild lilies. Among these nearly carnivorous Indians rose a unique man by the name of Sealth Tslakum, but in time he would be remembered as Chief Seattle. Chief Seattle’s life was full of trials, including everything from battling invading tribes to problems with gambling and religious/spiritual embodiment. Along the way, Chief Seattle became a convert from the native religion of the Suquamish tribe to Catholicism. His conversion to *white man’s Christianity* came at a very challenging time in his life, but would later serve him and his people well.

Numerous tribes in the region now known as Seattle, Washington chose Chief Seattle as their representative when the U.S. Government decided to remove the tribes from their lands and put them on a reservation. On January 21, 1855, some 2,300 Indians from more than twenty Indian nations assembled near the village of Mukilteo, in the northern part of

Puget Sound known as Port Elliot. U.S. Government representative Isaac Stevens was anxious to get a treaty signed. By signing the treaty, the Indians would cede their tribal lands to the American government. Unfortunately, the concept of land ownership was utterly alien to the natives. To complicate matters, the government chose to conduct negotiations in Chinook, a language limited to a few hundred words that were wholly inadequate for a complex legal negotiation.¹² This is a good idea if you don't want the other side to comprehend the document they are signing!

In the negotiations, Chief Seattle was truly caught between a rock and a hard place. If he did not negotiate with the white man, conflict would be inevitable and many Indians would die. On the other hand, he had seen the landscape changing as more and more whites immigrated into his region and began to settle, bringing with them diseases to which the Indians had no immunity. The white man also regularly traded commodities such as white flour, sugar, and alcoholic beverages for fish and meat to feed themselves and get them through the winter. With the impact of disease, processed foods, and a rapidly changing lifestyle, the Indians were less and less able to feed themselves as they had in the past. They were also becoming more and more unruly as their natural rhythms, feeding grounds, and lifestyle were impinged upon. Chief Seattle knew he had problems no matter which way he turned.

In a prelude to signing the treaty releasing their land to the government, Chief Seattle gave a speech to both his people and the President of the United States that will forever show his true colors. As a demonstration of the unmistakable spiritual development in this great leader, I have chosen some key excerpts from Chief Seattle's recorded speeches:

How can you buy and sell the sky?
The warmth of the land?
The idea is strange to us.
If we do not own the freshness of the air
and the sparkle of the water
how can you buy them?
Every part of this earth is sacred to my people.
Every shining pine needle,
every sand shore,
every mist in the dark woods,
every clearing, and humming insect is holy
in the memory and experience of my people.
The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories.

The perfumed flowers are our sisters;
the deer, the horse, the great eagle,
these are our brothers.
The rocky crest,
the juices in the meadows,
the body heat of the pony,
and man,
all belong to the same family.
So when the Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land,
he asks much of us.¹³

Chief Joseph

The Nez Perce, a Penutian-speaking tribe, had their homeland on the Columbia Plateau in present-day Idaho, Washington, and Oregon, where they hunted, fished, and gathered along forested rivers. After they obtained horses, however, they began to live off the great buffalo herds that ranged throughout the northwestern Great Plains.

In 1855, the U.S. government forced them to cede several million acres of territory. In 1863, the tribe lost most of its remaining 3.24 million hectares (8 million acres) when they were forced into signing another treaty. This led to war in 1877, during which Chief Joseph and some of his people, attempting to resist violence, tried to flee to Canada. The US military captured them just short of the border, after a trek of 2,735 km (1,700 miles), and the chief never saw his homeland again. The poignant figure of Chief Joseph in surrender came to represent one of the most powerful symbols of the terrible, shameful destruction of the American Indian peoples. Today, the Nez Perce own or control 92,685 acres in north-central Idaho.¹⁴ Selected quotes from Chief Joseph:

The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it.

We do not want churches because they will teach us to quarrel about God, as the Catholics and Protestants do. We do not want to learn that.

We may quarrel with men sometimes about things on this earth. But we never quarrel about God. We do not want to learn that.

I hope that no more groans of wounded men and women will ever go to the ear of the Great Spirit Chief above, and that all people may be one people.¹⁵

Note: To see a beautiful sculpture of Chief Joseph, please visit www.humanitariansculpture.com, which is my mother's web site (Meera Censor).

Native American Spirituality

I've discussed two very important spiritual leaders in Native American History. However I think it important for our topic to look at their spirituality in general. In Peter Knudtson's and David Suzuki's book *Wisdom of the Elders*,¹⁶ you can read about the beliefs of tribal elders regarding the relationships between humans, nature, and the environment. The authors show us how native traditions along with their age-old wisdom and Western science are diametrically opposed. Allow me to share some select comments from this excellent book, and while you read them, consider whether you believe these people are any less spiritual than another of a faith practicing vegetarianism:

Canadian Sub-arctic: *Waswanipi Cree*

Love is not all: it is not meat nor drink
Nor slumber nor a roof against the rain;
Nor yet a floating spar to men that sink.
Love Is Not All. Millay — Niebuhr

The traditional Waswanipi hunter says the success in hunting is not entirely his own

doing. A successful kill can partly be attributed to the willingness of a particular moose or beaver or whitefish itself to lay down its life so that Waswanipi people can live. Beyond the generosity of the animals themselves, the hunters say, *chuetenshu*, the north wind, also gives them what they need to live during the long, harsh months of the Canadian winter.

The Waswanipi hunters know that the north wind and the souls of their prey are neither capricious nor passive but are a dynamic indication of the hunters' moral standing in the "eyes of nature." The north wind and the animal spirits operate in a reciprocal relationship with the hunters' actions—today and in the past—and thereby provide a way that the vast nonhuman membership of the natural world can monitor hunters and mete out punishment based on the quality of treatment it has received at their hands.

In the process, these forces of nature have the power to grant the spiritually diligent Waswanipi hunter access to the vital meat-laden game animals upon which his community depends. In fact, in their generosity, they have been known to offer the hunter perhaps the ultimate gift; a prey animal that, in the midst of a frantic flight, undergoes a magical paralysis and frozen in time, awaits, almost eagerly, the hunter's fatal shot.

The beliefs of the Waswanipi hunters are *not* unusual. In fact, similar beliefs are found in many Native American, Aboriginal, and African tribes around the world. The western mind, steeped in Newtonian consciousness, is quick to think that it's just a bug or germ that has him when feeling off-color or falling ill after a meal. In reality it is very likely that the spiritual forces that balance *respect* and *disrespect* among the brothers and sisters in the *web~of~life are at play*. In fact, it may well be spiritual forces, not just biochemical individuality, that account for the saying that *one man's food is another man's poison!*

In light of these statements and the current science showing how plants are sentient,¹⁷ one has to maintain a level of honesty and integrity when eating plant or animal as sustenance. *The bodies of all living things we eat are but the physical manifestation of spiritual beings.* Spiritual development is *less* influenced by *what you eat per se, but more influenced by how you eat a life, who you are when you eat it, and not the least, what you do with the life~force so given in exchange for the gift!*

In *Walking on the Wind: Cherokee Teachings for Harmony and Balance*,¹⁸ it is made clear that not only the Cherokee, but also most Native American tribes practiced these commandments:

- Never take more than we need;
- Give thanks for what we have or what we receive;
- Use all of what we have;
- Give away what we do not need.

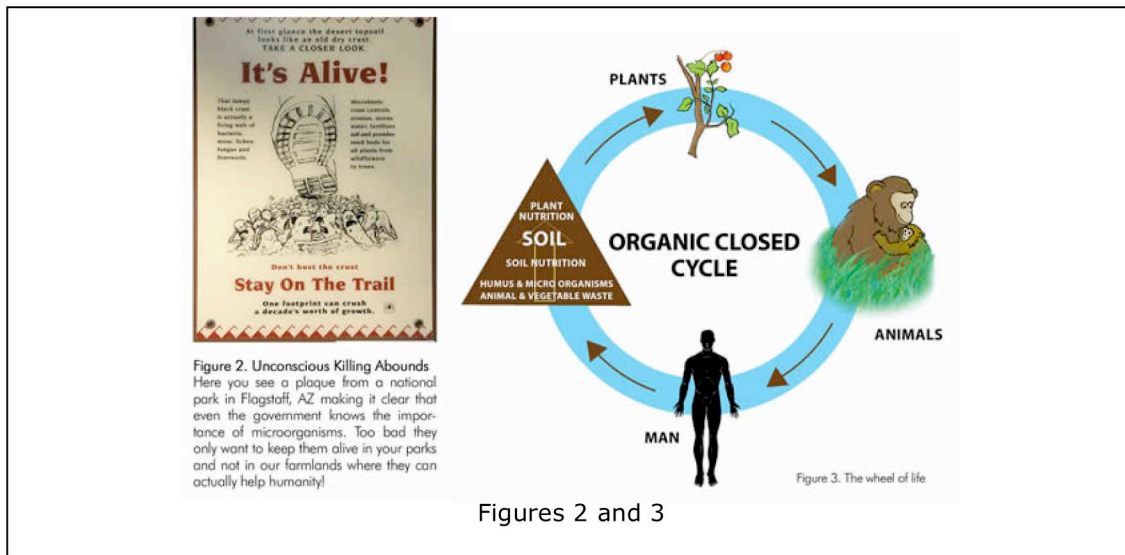
Our Native American brothers and sisters have passed down spiritual beliefs that are far more important than simply being vegetarian. If we all follow their lead, humanity will move toward enlightenment much faster:

- Everything is alive;
- Everything has purpose;
- All things are interconnected;
- We can embrace the Medicine of all living things as we are all walking together in the Circle (see Figure 1 again while holding this concept in mind!).

To bring about recovery—of our crippled ecosystem, farming systems and soils, school system, government, medical system, to abolish corporate greed, encourage adherence to truth in media, and prevent yet another world war—will require both energy and awareness. We will need much energy to fuel the willingness to live truthfully and respectfully. Surely this is *not* a task that can be completed on a diet insufficient for our physical bodies. These needs must be met based on genetic requirements, not emotion or inconsistent and conflicting leadership. *Our physical bodies are "of the earth" and have nutritional requirements that are geographically determined, not religiously determined!* While there certainly are reports of this or that guru living off only fruit or vegetables, or even air alone, there are also reports of people living to be over 100 while drinking regularly and smoking. For every person you can find over 100 years old that drank and smoked along the way, I can find you 20 or 30 million that died early doing the same thing. The important thing to remember is that the gurus are typically much more spiritually (energetically) evolved than their followers.

As Above, So Below

All things are spiritual. All things started out as *cosmic idea* and some found homes here on earth where they could grow and evolve. As we breathe, lay in our beds, walk down the street, across the grass, in the garden, or in the forest, we—in ignorance—are constantly killing (see Figure 2). We will not be able to stop killing life forms and we are not meant to do so. All life lives in a cycle (see Figure 3), and all souls are *living* ideas expressed by the Great One.



All souls seek embodiment and all depend on spiritual force for their *life experience*. When we eat, we need be most concerned about playing our part in the Cosmic Circle of life. Something gave its life to feed what we are eating. Our food gave its life to feed us and so we must give our life in service to complete the circle, for we are the embodiment that our animal brothers and sisters seek. When we become enlightened, we too will seek to move

forward to a state of living disembodiment. In the meantime, most of us will lay our bodies to rest over and over again to repay (feed) the little brothers and sisters of the Earth, just as the lion does when he dies. May we all work to ensure them a nutritious meal imbued with love, respect, and compassion.

Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some wad eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can't eat,
And sae the Lord be thankit.
— *The Selkirk Grace 1793*

That dish of meat is too good for anyone but anglers,
or very honest men.
— *The Compleat Angler*, Izaak Walton

Be plain in dress, and sober in your diet; In short, my dear, kiss me, and be quiet.
— *A Summary of Lord Lyttelton's Advice*

Praise is the best diet for us, after all.

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