

Commonsense



Carnivore or Vegetarian

By Anna Piva



THOUGHTS...

This is just an experiment. The information you will find in this newsletter are just a reflection on a wide variety of subjects related to healthy living, food, and nutrition.

COMMONSENSE

Is a precious weapon that allows us to make better choices. Most of the time, or too often, commonsense is underestimated or not taken in consideration as a valuable source to guide our daily decisions on health and nutrition.

In this posts I ask myself questions that I want to share with you. The aim is to open an helpful dialogue between us.

In the past decades veganism and vegetarianism have become increasingly popular. For each new vegan, a new reason applies. Reasons we are commonly told are: avoiding meat is healthier (cows are often treated with tons of hormones), for each pound of meat a forest dies (which heavily contributes to climate change), it saves water (you need 600 gallons of water to produce a hamburger) and so on. I have been vegetarian for many, many years but at one point in my life, I changed my mind. Why?

Extreme choices never lead to balance. In nutrition this is one of the most important rules. All nutritional elements are fundamental for the balance of our bodies. So, I asked myself where does the problem lie if I eat meat or if I don't? The answer I found is that it lies in excess. Yes, excess is the real problem today. Once we made the decision to choose quantity over quality, our health's destiny changed for the worst.

We have lost the capacity to understand what our body needs in order to properly function; meaning we no longer know how much food and what kind of food we need in order to keep it healthy. For an average person who works in an office (heated in winter, and cooled in summer) and who has a moderately active life, eating meat every day is lethal. On the contrary, for a Canadian lumberjack, who is out in the freezing cold eight hours a day, performing a high intensity physical job, meat is definitely important. A holy man, who lives in a cave and meditates all day and night, can afford to live on vegetables only, if no food at all. Different daily habits and health conditions demand different nutrition.

Cow breeding in itself doesn't harm the planet. It is the excess of breeding that does. Meat once in a while won't harm you health, neither the planet. It is the excess of meat eating/ breeding that will. Eating

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vegetables exclusively (unless you can afford it – see the holy man) will harm your health the same way than eating meat only. Any excess is harmful. What if a bodybuilder would only work his/her biceps? Would he/she have a balanced figure? What if one would use only a nail to fix the house roof? Would it work? A balanced and proper nutrition implies knowing the kind, the quantity, and the quality of nutrients you need at every moment. Your nutritional needs today are different for the ones you had yesterday or the ones you will have tomorrow. Food is primarily a medicine, a fuel, and secondarily a pleasure. If you invert the equation, you can put your health in danger.

My Chinese medicine background taught me that all nutritional elements are important for keeping me

healthy. I understood that the value of what you eat is in what you eat and not in what you do not eat. After being vegetarian for decades, I realized for myself how detrimental a vegetarian regiment was to my health. Consequently I had to change it. Having said that, everyone's choice is personal and has to be respected. My encouragement is to be the most knowledgeable and the most balanced possible. Whatever food you decide to put in your body, choose ones of the highest quality and variety. Nutrition has to be harmonious with your lifestyle, and your health. In an ideal world, the planet's and each person's health wouldn't be impaired if each one of us would apply the rule of balance and quality, instead of excess and poor quality.



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