

When we eat an egg or a chicken, we know that the egg or chicken can also contain a lot of anger. We are eating anger, and therefore we express anger. . . . So be aware. Be careful what you eat. If you eat anger, you will become and express anger. If you eat despair, you will express despair. If you eat frustration, you will express frustration.¹¹

Since there is such an obvious and overwhelmingly strong vibration of violence, fear, and despair in animal foods, when we prepare the food we are not likely to do so mindfully, but mechanically and quickly, in order to avoid awakening our natural sensitivity. We tend to eat these foods in a disconnected way as well. To maintain our pretense that we are oblivious to the obvious horror on our plates, we eat quickly and keep ourselves busy and distracted. Fast food and the industrialization of eating are understandable outcomes of eating animal foods over an extended period. The aggressive busyness of our culture and our outward-looking expansionist orientation are rooted historically and currently in our discomfort with how we treat the animals we eat and the hardness we cultivate toward their suffering.

Food, like all apparently physical matter, is energy and vibration and is a manifestation of consciousness, and though it is important to prepare, eat, and share food mindfully, we can see that it's important to look more deeply than this, to the actual source of our food. When we instigate violence and slavery with our food purchases, it is inevitable that the consciousness of violence and slavery will be planted in our psychophysical being, dulling our feelings and undermining our possible attempts to prepare and eat the food mindfully and thankfully. Matter, energy, and consciousness are inseparable, and the cruelty unavoidably embodied in animal foods is a potent and unrecognized toxin, damaging not just to our physical health, but to our emotional and spiritual health as well.

With the Eyes of an Angel

Animal foods are also toxic to us and our world for another reason. Just as we must harden and desensitize ourselves to produce and eat them, our culture must produce certain hardened people to manipulate and

kill the unfortunate creatures. When we make it a goal to cultivate cruelty and remorselessness in some people, all of us are hurt. In conspiring to pretend that we do not recognize the pain we cause, we deaden the compassion, intelligence, and creativity of our children and of all our people.

We silence our compassion at the circuses, rodeos, racetracks, zoos, and other places where animals are imprisoned and used for our entertainment. In these places most of the violence and cruelty is kept hidden from public view. If we contemplate these places deeply and educate ourselves, however, the inherent violence becomes obvious and disturbing. The only way, for example, to get non-domesticated animals like elephants, monkeys, tigers, dolphins, seals, and orcas to do tricks or work is by inflicting pain and fear through beatings and electroshocks, and/or through food deprivation. Circus trainers are taught to dominate elephants by beating them with bullhooks, bears dance because as babies they were forced to remain on hot metal plates while their “trainers” played music, and dolphins do tricks only because they otherwise face the pain of hunger. Zoos imprison innocent animals, buying and selling them to increase their revenue and the number of “baby” animals, which are by far the most lucrative attractions, while older animals typically end up in “canned hunt” facilities where they are shot as trophies by sportsmen at point-blank range. We dull our sensitivity when we use animals for clothing, furniture, jewelry, and other products, shutting down our awareness of the horror and torment inflicted on living beings to provide them. And we stifle our empathy in scientific research and education, where we teach each other that the suffering of non-human animals is of little consequence. It starts perhaps with school chick-hatching projects, progresses through biology lab frog dissection, and culminates in the millions of animals tortured by researchers working for the military, industrial, scientific, and educational establishments.

Underlying this cultural deadening, of course, are our meals, our fundamental social activity. And to create these meals, we must undergo the further deadening of choosing and buying animal products. Every time we make the decision to purchase the eggs, fluids, or flesh of

animals, we enforce the disconnection between consumer and what is consumed. When we take out our wallets and pay for an animal's flesh or secretions, at that moment we directly instigate violence, fear, slavery, death, and the spread of toxic pollution. At that moment the seeds are actually sown. We are the mafia boss paying the hired gun to kill, and even if we're not using the knife, our white shirt is spoiled.

If we could look over the world we live in with the eyes of an angel, an intuitively awakened being, and see energy vibrations rather than just physical forms, we would see that the wars and violence on our earth are generated from a vast complex of venues where deadening takes place: the countless kitchens and dining rooms, inns, hotels, restaurants, resorts, cafeterias, mess halls, fast food outlets, supermarkets, stores, butcher shops, malls, ice cream stands, snack bars, ships, campgrounds, racetracks, picnic areas, circuses, convention centers, fairs, schools, sports stadiums, churches, casinos, prisons, military bases, nursing homes, nursery schools, hospitals, zoos, and mental institutions where animal flesh, eggs, and dairy products are bought and sold, prepared and eaten. Compassion is deadened and truth ignored in virtually every home, shopping plaza, and institution in our culture. Until we see them for what they are, these inescapable forces will continue to foster denial and violence in every apparently unsuspecting patron. That we cannot see this, and assume our way of living is sane, humane, honorable, and kind, only shows how blind we have become.

Our intuitive angel, looking over our world, would see not only these millions upon millions of deadening venues throughout the cities, suburbs, and rural communities we have erected. She would also see enormous pulsating centers radiating fear, violence, horror, and frustration: the tens of thousands of factory farms, slaughterhouses, stockyards, feedlots, and aquaculture and fishing operations where animals are enslaved, tormented, and brutally killed by the billions every year. Most of these operations, though they are enormous, imprisoning and killing tens and even hundreds of thousands of individuals, are hidden from public view. Huge floating death ships work far out at sea. In the countryside, animal processing facilities are purposefully located far from main roads and population centers, fenced off from public entry.

Their names are vague and euphemistic, like the “Carolina Protein Products” sign I once saw on a large, ominous-looking building far from the highway. But to our intuitive angel, they are not hidden at all, but rise gigantic, towering over the landscape, the intensity and thunderous volume of the suffering within their walls billowing high as roiling vibrational fields of grief, terror, panic, and despair. Radiating thought forms of abuse, domination, and enslavement darken the sky, spreading into the surrounding communities, polluting the energy fields and consciousness fields that connect us all, humans and animals alike. This massive and unremitting negative energy, the despair and pain of the millions upon millions of sensitive individuals imprisoned and killed needlessly for our conditioned cravings, is perhaps the most serious pollution we humans create. Its repercussions ripple out through the vast and intricate webs of thought, energy, and consciousness that form our human relationships with each other, with animals and nature, and with our children, our dreams, and our aspirations.

Many people have understood the tragic implications of this pollution of the earth’s vibrational field with the agony of our animal brothers and sisters. Tolstoy, for example, wrote that as long as we have slaughterhouses, we will have battlefields. According to Nobel Prize-winning novelist Isaac Bashevis Singer, “As long as people will shed the blood of innocent creatures there can be no peace, no liberty, no harmony between people. Slaughter and justice cannot dwell together.” Charles Fillmore, the co-founder of the Unity School of Practical Christianity in Kansas City, wrote in 1903,

In San Francisco a number of years ago many people were made violently ill from eating meat bought at a certain shop. Physicians investigated and they found that the carcass of a certain steer was the source, and it was presumed that it was diseased. Further inquiry developed this to be an error—the animal was unusually healthy and vigorous—in fact so vigorous and forceful that he fought for his life for over an hour after the attempt to kill him began. He was in a frenzy of terror and anger; his eyes were bloodshot and he frothed at the mouth while the butchers were trying to slay him. The physicians

decided that the anger and terror of this steer poisoned his meat in a manner similar to that of the angry mother her milk, which is well known to make the infant sick.

This instance was but an exaggeration of conditions that exist in milder form in all animal flesh offered for food in our markets. Before they are slain these poor brutes are maltreated in ways almost beyond enumeration. Visit shipping pens, stock-trains, stockyards and packinghouses, if you want evidence of the sufferings of the poor beasts of the field. And these very sufferings are through the law of sympathetic mental vibrations transferred to the flesh of those who eat the bodies of these animals. The undefined fears, the terrors of the nightmare, and the many disturbances in stomach and bowels that man endures may be in a measure traced to these unsuspected sources.¹²

Fillmore was writing a hundred years ago in a time that seems quaint, when we could actually track meat to a particular animal. Eric Schlosser, author of *Fast Food Nation*, says that in one of our hamburgers there may be the flesh of dozens of different animals, from all parts of the hemisphere. The suffering the animals must endure is certainly much worse today as well, with the extreme confinement, bizarre drug manipulations and excruciating mutilations practiced on industrialized factory farms. And while we may guardedly discuss the cholesterol and artificial hormone residues in animals foods, the sheer misery we eat and its toxic effect is never seriously considered. We are blinded by our culture's materialism, a natural outgrowth of our eating habits.

In 1910 Fillmore elaborated on his earlier ideas, writing:

Every animal will fight for its life. What then can be the mental condition of the animal that has been cruelly forced into contracted pens and cars, and finally deprived of its body amid the most terrifying surroundings? Can it be otherwise than that its entire consciousness is permeated by violent vibrations of terror that act and react upon all planes of animal life with which they come into contact? You think that you eat a material thing called meat, but the fact is there

is no such thing in reality. The flesh may seem to your outer sense to be a dead, inert mass, but, could your soul eye be opened, you would behold mental currents pervading its every atom, acting and reacting upon each other in a wild, bewildered manner, like the animal of whose body it formed a part. You are taking into your temple elements that will unsettle it, elements that you will have difficulty in harmonizing.¹³

Even if we attempt to prepare and eat animal foods slowly and mindfully, both the reality and our thought of what we are preparing and eating are disturbing to our natural sense of compassion for other living creatures. By desecrating animals, we create energy fields that desecrate us and block our purpose on this earth: to unfold wisdom, love, and understanding. Instead, we have become agents of ugliness and death, serving the interests of enormous industrial conglomerates and corporations that exist primarily to maximize their own self-centered profits and power. And we have hardened ourselves and our children, who, like innocent sponges, soak up our attitudes and beliefs and pass them on to their children as our parents and grandparents have done.

Masks and Fear

Our psychological hardening is an armoring that protects us from feeling the grief and pain we would naturally feel. It desensitizes us and masks our true nature from ourselves. With this in mind, it is fascinating to examine the phenomenal success of the potent and costly milk mustache advertising campaign, which was generated and promoted by our government through the Fluid Milk Promotion Act of 1990.¹⁴ The milk mustache can be seen as an archetypal mask, and the campaign appeals to our deep knowing that in order to abuse animals and eat their bodies and secretions we must wear a mask. The little white mustache triggers an unconscious recognition that dairy products mask terrible cruelty, yet the goodness associated with the color white provides the emotional relief we crave. Working on the unconscious levels of archetypal symbols the dairy industry thus promotes its products by exploiting our deep ambivalence about animal foods, signified by the