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How to End Cruelty to Animals, People and Nature

BY MIKE ADAMS

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The Health Ranger



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How to end cruelty to people, animals and nature, and create a world without war and environmental destruction

What is cruelty? It is any harmful action taken against another living entity that disregards its consciousness or awareness. In this essay, we'll explore some of the levels of cruelty: how it happens, how it's defined, and what we can do to help end cruelty and enhance compassion in the world. Cruelty exists in three distinct realms: cruelty against mankind, cruelty against animals, and finally, cruelty against nature.

Let's start with cruelty against mankind, in which one individual may be cruel to another for a variety of reasons, usually relating to gaining personal control over resources (food, money, etc.) or other people. This concept of personal gain is an important factor in understanding human cruelty, since individuals are usually only cruel to others because they gain something from it. In fact, this is designed into our behavior and has been carried through our ancestry for hundreds of thousands of years. Picture this: two cavemen are sitting around a fire at the end of the day. One spent hours gathering berries, and the other has nothing. The caveman with nothing can attack the caveman with the berries, take his fruit, and be all the more successful for it, at least in terms of survival and control of resources.

From an anthropological point of view, there is an incentive for deceit, theft, and even harming other individuals, as long as it results in some sort of personal gain. In fact, we see this across virtually all species, but especially in those that are most closely related to humans, such as primates.

Today, we see the very same thing happening when one nation attacks another nation in order to control its resources. Attacking a nation to take control of its oil supply is essentially the same as beating a caveman over the head and stealing his berries. It just goes to show how little we've actually advanced over the years.

This brings us to a salient point: ending cruelty requires moving past our ancestral roots, and past the behaviors that are programmed into us because they once helped us succeed in an uncivilized world. Today we have to recognize that cruelty is not acceptable in the international community. It is not acceptable to attack and kill other human beings for any reason, and certainly not to take control of their resources in order to enrich ourselves.

Likewise, it is not acceptable to exploit poverty-wage labor in third-world countries in order to enrich corporations and their CEOs in developed nations. But this is no anti-trade rant: free trade is essential for lifting poor nations out of poverty, but only when combined with mechanisms that respect the sanctity of human life such as safe working conditions, living wages, and a system of recognizing private property ownership for the poor. Read "The Mystery of Capital" by Hernando DeSoto, which is among the most important economic books of the last 100 years, to learn the real reasons why free trade has failed to provide economic freedoms for underdeveloped nations (and what we can do to change that).

How to End Cruelty to People, Animals and Nature

Beyond war and economics, we also see cruelty in the world of medicine. Conventional medicine has a long and sordid history of using human beings for medical experiments, even right here in the United States. In fact, news recently surfaced about a hospital that had been using retarded children in radiation experiments. [Click here for a Google search on this topic.](#)

This and many other medical experiments have been conducted on living, breathing people right here in the United States. This is one of the most egregious forms of cruelty, in that it is a harmful action taken against these people, and that it refuses to recognize the consciousness, spirit or awareness of these individuals. Just because someone cannot speak in words that we understand, or communicate with us in the manner in which we are used to communicating, doesn't mean that they don't feel pain, fear, pleasure or love. Thus, these medical experiments are a horrifying form of cruelty, and many continue to this day (behind closed doors, of course).

In the realm of war, we see examples of cruelty as official policy. In the United States military, for example, cruelty against Iraqi prisoners has become a global scandal. We have seen photographs and heard testimony from individuals who were engaged in all manner of cruelty against Iraqi prisoners, many of whom were innocent civilians. These people were subjected to appalling acts, including sexual torture, humiliation, and execution (as was actually caught on tape). Notably, it appears that the American soldiers engaged in this activity rather enjoyed it.

In the United States, we increasingly find a culture that supports cruelty. Much as we saw in 1939 Nazi Germany, this mindset often accompanies nationalism and pride in one's country. It goes hand in hand with the fervor surrounding fear-based propaganda typically orchestrated by a national leader in response to some sort of military attack. In Germany, it was the Reichstag. In the U.S., it's 9/11. Regardless of the justification for military action, the apparent military goal seems to be little more than control of resources, which once again likens us to cavemen in my earlier example. Except in this case, we don't have to look at the faces of those we kill because it is all censored out of the press. The Pentagon even banned the filming of flag-draped coffins carrying our own (dead) soldiers back from Iraq.

So what does it take to stop cruelty against fellow human beings? First, it requires teaching compassion. We must understand that other human beings have souls and consciousness, and that it is not right to ignore those souls for personal gain, be it power, control of resources or some kind of financial gain. This is a lesson that isn't being taught in American culture. It's not taught in our public schools, it's not an element of free-market capitalism, it isn't something propagated by the press, and it certainly isn't practiced by the current government administration. As a population, we don't seem to understand that compassion is important.

The next step toward ending cruelty is to stop meeting violence with more violence. If the problem is violence, then solving it will require a different approach, such as compassion, negotiation, or even an apology. The predominant mindset in response to terrorist attacks, for example, continues to be revenge. This revenge is propped up by the media and the war-mongering rhetoric of the current administration. But when we act on revenge, we simply create more hatred and more violence. We take out one Saddam Hussein, but we create 40 more who believe they have even more justification to attack the United States and kill even more Americans in future terrorist

attacks. It is a Medusa: kill one snake, and two more appear in its place. This is nothing but an escalation of violence, and it can lead only to more war, pain, suffering and death. Of course, all the U.S. companies that manufacture military hardware profit handsomely. The war industry in this country not depends on war for its economic survival.

The way to stop this escalating cycle of violence is to adopt humility and compassion rather than ego and cruelty. Again, that stance does not seem acceptable by most of the American population, who continue to boast bumper stickers that read, "These colors don't run," or "American Pride." My favorite is "God bless America," which implies two rather bizarre ideas: 1) that God blesses war, and 2) God shouldn't bless anybody else. I don't claim to know the mind of God, but I doubt the atrocities being committed against the Iraqi people in the name of the United States today are worthy of any divine blessing. To name just one such atrocity, the widespread use of depleted uranium in ordinance used by the U.S. military in Iraq is, itself, a weapon of mass destruction that is being used in clear violation of the Geneva Convention, and that will create lingering radiation throughout the Iraqi nation for generations to come. Depleted uranium is not at all selective in who it radiates. By its very nature, it is a weapon of mass destruction.

It's all the more ironic, it seems, since Bush's promised WMDs never showed up in Iraq in the first place -- so the U.S. military decided to bring its own and use them against the very nation it attacked on the premise that Iraq might someday develop WMDs and use them on other nations.

To end these cruelties, we must move past the caveman mentality that tells us to take revenge on the caveman who beat us up and stole our berries. Unfortunately, that's the mindset we are operating with today, which brings into question whether we are correct in calling modern civilization advanced at all. We really haven't advanced that far. We still act on the same basic emotions and stimuli as our ancestors.

Cruelty to Animals

Moving on, let's discuss the highly controversial subject of animal cruelty. Let's start with the premise that animals have souls and consciousness, and that they can feel pain. We now know that even simple-minded creatures such as fish can sense and feel real pain. [Click here for a Google search about new research on fish and pain perception.](#) And yet animal cruelty continues. Many think of animal cruelty as limited to people treating their dogs unfairly, or beating their pets out of anger. But as serious as that is, it is the least of the animal cruelty concerns. I believe that the greatest animal cruelty happening right now is in the food industry, where we are growing living beings and harvesting their flesh in order to feed a nation beef and other meats.

The conditions under which these animals are raised and harvested are atrocious. I believe it is cruelty at its worst to put a chicken in a cage so small it can barely turn around, and cut off its beak so that it can't kill another chicken or pluck out its own feathers. Cattle feeding practices in the United States right now are also a form of cruelty, since matter such as dead animals and chicken excrement are ground up and fed to cows. This is a standard, USDA-approved feeding practice in the cattle industry, by the way. [Click here to search Google and see for yourself.](#)

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I also believe that the very practice of raising animals in confined environments, subjecting them to atrocious feeding habits and killing them in inhumane ways in order to harvest their flesh and turn a profit is an outrageous form of cruelty to animals. I believe that in any advanced society such practices would be outlawed entirely. I find no justification in this society to harvest the organs of animals for the consumption of human beings. People ask, "What about the protein needs?" and "How will we feed the world if we don't harvest cattle?" Actually, they have it backwards: if we don't switch to plant sources of protein, we'll never have enough land to feed the world. Harvesting and growing spirulina, for example, takes 1/100th of the acreage required by cattle for the same amount of digestible protein. And raising soybeans only takes 1/10th the acreage of raising cattle. Spirulina, by the way, has twelve times the digestible protein of beef, ounce for ounce. Raising cattle is one of the least efficient ways to feed the world.

As long as people demand beef, though, an improvement over current cattle industry practices would be to mandate organic free-range practices, in which animals are still raised for food, but they live healthy, sane lives, and are given free access to the outdoors. They should have sunlight and clean water and the ability to live out a relatively normal, healthy life. And when they are slaughtered, it should be conducted in the most humane manner possible -- one that respects the life of each creature and how that creature is giving up its flesh for the purpose of sustaining the life of a human being. That is slightly better approach to creating meat for consumption by human beings, and it is practiced by a few small organic and Kosher beef producers. Organic, free-range meats are available in the United States, but they don't make up the majority of meats available at grocery stores today.

Another form of cruelty to animals is using them in experiments, which is often done by the cosmetic industry, the food industry, and to some extent by the U.S. military. Animals are routinely used in painful experiments, which I find to be an unacceptable practice. These are living, breathing, conscious creatures, and just like human beings, they should not be subjected to cruel treatments if we are to call ourselves an advanced civilization of any kind.

These animals feel the pain of these experiments. If a research worker is giving a pig third-degree burns so it can test burn-recovery drugs, that is cruel and unnecessary, and should be outlawed.

Cruelty to Nature

Lastly, we must discuss cruelty to nature. This is a phrase that's not often used in popular culture. To explain this concept, we must first recognize that plants are also living, breathing beings. They have a nervous system, a structural system and a circulatory system. They are very much alive, although not in the same way that mammals or human beings are alive. Plants are indeed living creatures, and we need to recognize that and start looking at trees, for example, as tree-shaped beings. By and large, we fail to do that today, and through this failure, we as a species allow ourselves to commit outrageous acts of cruelty towards nature.

Some of the ways we express that cruelty is by polluting the rivers, streams and air with industrial wastes. We are killing the oceans through sound pollution and military sonar buoys (which is one reason why so many dolphins and whales are turning up on beaches these days). We are killing the coral by dumping toxic metals onto our crops, which creates toxic runoff that empties into the rivers, streams, and oceans. We are cutting down rainforests and systematically destroying the natural ecosystem of the planet.

Little by little we are destroying nature here on Planet Earth, but this is not just an environmental issue: it's an issue of cruelty. It is cruel to destroy an ecosystem, because doing so simultaneously destroys the life that depends on that ecosystem.

Too often, those of us in western society think of plants as inanimate objects. However, if we could see them on time-lapse photography, we would recognize that they are living, breathing, moving creatures. On a slow scale of time, populations of trees actually migrate. A sunflower will track the sun as it moves across the sky, minute by minute, so that it's always getting the maximum sunlight possible. Flowers open and close in response to the cycles of daylight. These are not just automatic, machine-like reactions, as some might argue. These are the conscious actions of living, breathing creatures that deserve to be treated humanely. If we fail to recognize this in nature and continue to behave cruelly toward it, we will find that there are terrible, devastating, natural results of our actions.

Nature will eventually return to a state of balance, but finding that balance may involve some dramatic and unpleasant changes in the world around us. Nature can do just fine without human beings, and if we continue on our current path of cruelty towards nature, I have no doubt that we will be setting in motion a chain of events that will result in the sharp reduction of human population on this planet. I believe this will occur through so-called "natural disasters," such as climate change or pandemics of infectious disease (the bird flu virus is a strong candidate). This is not nature's revenge. This is simply cause and effect of our cruelty to nature. It's a reflection of our own cruelty to nature, coming back to haunt us.

When we are cruel to animals, they can't fight back. But nature is resilient when we are cruel to it. Nature doesn't fight back; it overcomes. If we were to wipe out every single tree, uproot every blade of grass and kill every plant on the planet tomorrow, we might think we had conquered nature. But within a few short years, humanity would be wiped out due to climate changes and the devastation of the food supply. And a few short years after that, nature would return in full force, with far greater health and biodiversity without mankind. The wildlife, rivers and streams would, in time, return to their pristine, original state, and life in the oceans would again become abundant. All without man.

I only hope that our civilization can find ways to put an end to this cruelty without having to be wiped out by nature. I hope that we can find a way to live in balance with nature. But to do that, we must put a stop to our cruelty. This means changing the way we live in harmony with our surrounding environment and taking an honest look at how we pollute the rivers and streams, oceans, airways, and the entire planet.

There is no “them,” only us

Whether discussing cruelty towards people, animals or plants, all cruelty stems from a prevailing distortion carried by nearly everyone on this planet: the belief that we are separate. If person A attacks person B, it is only because he believes he is separate from person B. If a society attacks and destroys nature, it is only because it believes it is not part of nature. But this is a distortion: we are all connected through an intricate web of intentions, energy and chemistry. One act of cruelty towards a human being gives rise to many such cruel acts in return. One act of cruelty towards an animal is returned to us in a darkening of our own hearts. One act of cruelty towards nature sets in motion a chain of events that ultimately returns to threaten our health, our food supply, and the very life of our planet.

Cruelty can only be acted out by those who suffer from the illusion that we are separate, individual people who exist in isolation from our world, our conscious animals, and the abundant plant and microbial life that sustains us. And thus, the solution to cruelty seems clear: teach connectness. Call it Karma, or call it quantum physics. You can calculate it with mathematics and the laws of life sciences, or intuit it from feelings and emotions. Either way, it is the same truth: we are all connected. We are part of the same system, and we depend on each other. All of us: the people, the animals, the plants, even the planet... we all experience the reverberations of cruelty created by people, industries, or nations. Simultaneously, we all benefit from the waves of peace, love and connectedness being broadcast by those who meditate with positive intention in churches, mosques, shrines and temples all around the world.

Without them, frankly, we would already be lost.

Perhaps you should consider joining them. Any moment in which you find peace, silence, clarity of thought, and love for others is a moment of creation and connectedness that ripples out through the lives and souls of every living thing on this planet. You can make a change through intention alone. Ending cruelty starts with having sufficient numbers of people meditating on connectedness.

About the Author



The Health Ranger (Mike Adams) is a holistic nutritionist with over 5,000 hours of study on nutrition, wellness, food toxicology and the true causes of disease and health. He is the author of *The 7 Laws of Nutrition*, *Grocery Warning*, *Health Seduction*, and many other books available at <http://www.TruthPublishing.com>.

Adams is also the creator of the popular *Honest Food Guide*, a free downloadable nutritional guide found at <http://www.HonestFoodGuide.org>. In addition, more than 1,500 free articles on health, nutrition and wellness have been authored by Adams and are available at <http://www.NewsTarget.com>.

Adams uses no prescription drugs whatsoever and relies exclusively on natural health, whole foods, superfoods, nutritional supplements and exercise to achieve optimum health. To prove the value of nutrition and physical exercise in enhancing health, Adams publishes detailed statistics on his own blood chemistry (with full lab results) at <http://www.NewsTarget.com/AdamsHealthStats.html>.

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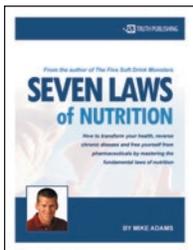


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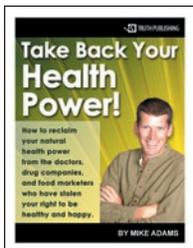
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