

'VAGABOND FITNESS'  
a non-fiction book  
by Hank Schachte

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I am trying to convey to you an attitude that is conducive to good health on the road, though as Thoreau (pronounced thorough) was fond of saying, "I have traveled much in Concord," and this road could include your driveway.

We should probably touch lightly here on the subjects of ingestion: food, drink and drugs. During the day as you wander the planet inquiringly, from time to time you may notice other needs rearing their burdensome heads, and some of them, like air and water (hard to find in their natural state) sleep and food and someplace to deposit the byproducts of all that combustion, are not going to go away unsatisfied.

Habits, hunger and other irritations, are mainly just your body's reminder of what you did yesterday, and these impulses, strong as they can sometimes be, are not necessarily to be taken for intelligence. You have to be willing to push these feelings through the rational side of your brain, to understand where they come from, so you can expunge the ridiculous.

Also, when decisions are made, keep an eye on tomorrow; whatever you do today, you're going to want to do tomorrow. Do you want to eat less tomorrow? Then relax, let the urge pass, it will, you know, and tomorrow you reap the good karma. That's the way changes are made (assuming you want some).

For myself I think whatever you're contemplating ingesting, you have an obligation to try and understand the ramifications, both internally and externally, of what you are about to do.

Internally, drugs, including alcohol, are toxins, just like aspirin, and the body tries immediately they are ingested to get rid of them, feeling rightly or wrongly that A MISTAKE HAS BEEN MADE. In fact, some of the effects which might amuse our (sort of) conscious minds may be attributed to all that adrenaline etc. being stirred up in our body's defense against the dark invader, a not unheroic solo experience, but if done habitually perhaps taxing in the long run.

Externally, in some parts of the world the powerful can cut off your head or some other offending appendage you may subsequently miss and throw the rest of you in jail forever; also you have no idea where the money you give for this pleasure will go or what will be done with it or in fact what has already been done to someone somewhere in the name of getting it (the money) from you, and in general the more you start inquiring with that inquiring mind you are herding about the planet, the sadder it all begins to look.

Take heart, the same things and worse are done just to feed you! Do you remember reading the apologists for slavery and being embarrassed at how patently self-serving and base they seemed from the vaulted vantage of our superior century? Well then you have some inkling of how our progeny are going to view our apologies for slaughtering rare (in universal terms) sentient beings and their babies (which is what cows etc. really are) just to feed and clothe ourselves on this unbalanced little orb.

This is patently an unnecessary cruelty. I have lived vigorously and well most of my (lengthening) life on vegetables and prefer canvas and the like to leather as being lighter, cheaper, more comfortable and less problematic from the progeny standpoint, though lest you think I speak from a position of ignorance let me add that I have (sadly) tried hunting, fishing, keeping domestic animals for slaughter, poultry, dairy herds, and doing my own killing and butchering and am satisfied it is cruel, as any child who happens by is likely to tell you (oh, you emperor in your fine duds).

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