

## **HARMLESSNESS IS THE SUPREME RELIGION**

If you can not give life, you should not take life either. If you love your own life dearly, let others also live their lives freely. Nature has taught us, that we should be kind to all Life is a blessing to each one, and we should not take anyone's life. Life is so precious to each one, why should we take it at all? We have a tongue, so that we can sing praises of the Lord then why should we succumb to its desires, and drink blood of creatures? Why should we make our stomach a graveyard? Don't make it a crematory. These innocent animals and birds, without them the life would be so boring. Why then are we so cruel to them, why are we killing and eating them? Let us stop this right now, let us walk on the path of Truth & Harmlessness.

"AHIMSA", commonly translated as nonviolence, is a very well known word even in the English language. However, the word "non-violence" does not fully convey its deeper meaning. Webster's Dictionary defines ahimsa as the Hindu and Buddhist doctrine of refraining from harming any living being, and the American Heritage Dictionary further defines it as having sacredness for all living creatures as strictly practiced by the Jains. Both these definitions together do come close to its fuller meaning: refraining from harming any living being; and the sacredness of all the life.

Shrimad Rajchandraji went on to say in Atma Siddhi Shashtra,

"Daya Shanti Samata Kshama, Satya Tyag Vairag;  
Hoy Mumukshu Ghat Vishe, Teh Sada Sujag".

In other words, he put the responsibility on us, to observe a constant vigilance. Of course, he also put daya ahead of all other qualities of a true religious person.

Narsinh Mehta also started his famous poet:

Vaishnava Jana To Tene Re Kahiye, Je Pid Parai Jane Re.

This is a very fundamental principle of the whole Indian culture.

Normally, we consider vegetarianism as Jiv Daya, because there are countless cruelties involved in eating meat. But, Jiv Daya can not stop there. It takes us into reading carefully all ingredient labels; it also takes us into avoiding the use of animals in cosmetics and their testing; and use of silk, wool, ivory, pearls, etc. beauty items for fashion; it also questions the use of animals in schools; or using the animals for our entertainment in zoo, circus, or a cage at home. In a very short sentence, I would put it as "Animals are not for ours to eat, wear, to experiment on, or for our entertainment."

In America, 7 billion animals are killed every year, of which 99% are slaughtered for food. Thus, our vegetarian diet keeps us away from a major portion of that violence. However, this number is staggeringly huge. Even the 1% of animals killed for non-food purposes amount to 70 million. That means, one animal is killed per vegetarian household, every year, for the purposes of leather, cosmetics, testing and entertainment. Can you imagine, that your family will participate in consumption of 25 animals in next 25 years, for the shoes, car seats, purses, cosmetics, cosmetics, etc.? This is the reason for taking some extra effort, learning all the Jiv Daya issues.

- Narendrabhai Sheth

## **SCRIPTURES**

By Anuja Shah (Dallas, TX)

I will discuss how we believe in the principles of Ahimsa and where they come from our Jain scriptures.

Pratikraman discusses within Samayik, in the third lesson, how we should ask for basically all of our sins to be dissolved. It says, living souls, with one, two, three, four, or five senses, that I have

inflicted pain, crushed, attacked, covered with dust, rubbed, collided with one another, tormented by turning on one side or completely upside down, moved from one place to another, frightened, bothered, alarmed, or separated from life, may all such sins be dissolved.

It discusses in our first vow, nonviolence, how many little creatures have senses and they do get hurt with many things that we do. Even while walking, we can crush living beings, seeds, plants, dew, anthills, spider webs, live water, and live earth. By hurting animals, and everything else, it just combines the pains and everything they feel more and more. It goes into all the senses that they have and how much pain we can put onto them by our carelessness. Try not to hurt or kill the smallest living beings.

On the limitation on consumption and occupations: it also goes into the occupations people have, how those can affect the different living beings. Also, anything you buy from a company which helps to endorse their hurting the animals or simply killing.

And last but not least - in wrongdoings a Jain cannot have an occupation that would hurt or damage animals.

## **THE SHOW MUST - NOT - GO ON**

by Ruchi Khara (Dallas, TX)

Animals used in traveling shows are subjected to severe abuses at county fairs, shopping malls and theme parks. Attractions include wrestling bears, fire jumping lions and piano playing rabbits. These acts may be amusing to the audience, but they are not fun for the animals. Forcing animals to perform acts that are unnatural to them requires rigorous training methods that can include electric prods and food deprivation. Animals are sometimes drugged or have their teeth and claws surgically impaired.

Confined to tiny transport cages, animals must endure constant stress. They often suffer from temperature extremes and irregular

feeding and watering. Without exercise, they become listless and prone to illness. Many animals resort to self-mutilation in reaction to stress or boredom. Incidences of animals attacking spectators, especially children are frequent. When an animal show comes to your town, the following steps should be taken:

1. Voice your concerns to the fair manager or promoter. Tell them about the abuse and warn them that the show will be boycotted.
2. Have everyone you know write the Secretary of Agriculture, 14th Street and Independence Ave, SW, Washington, DC 20250. Ask them that traveling shows be banned due to the cruelty involved.
3. Educate the group that animal acts appeal to most: children. Show them that animal acts are not needed for entertainment. Take them to see dazzling human performances rather than pathetic animal acts. If all of these steps are taken, together we can help stop animal exploitation now and in years to come.

## **ANIMALS IN ENTERTAINMENT**

by Samir Sanghani (Houston, TX)

It is easy for Jains to avoid eating meat and using animal products for these are obvious products of violence. However, the true Jain analyzes all of his/her actions and takes great care in assuring that s/he is not also promoting violence in any indirect way. Some animals are cute, some are cuddly and lovable; some animals are ferocious, strange, or mysterious to us humans. Some animals possess great skills: they run fast and perform interesting tricks. These are things which are, in their natural state, are not bad. However, it is the exploitation for their looks and skills for our entertainment, that we as intelligent Jains must realize and consider.

Horse racing and dog racing is the first example. If gambling does

not present a moral problem, then watching a bunch of fine animals test their skills seems to be a reasonable sport. However, how are the animals treated before and after the race? Race horses are often only important to owners when they are racing. It is common for trainers and even veterinarians to give pain killing drugs to horses that have small injuries or bone fractures so that they do not miss a race. This often leads to the injury worsening, or to the horse breaking down on the track. More often than not, this leads to lameness for the horse. Veterinarians of race horses admit that 60 to 90 percent of racehorses end up significantly lame . Permanent injuries are also caused by hard track surfaces and racing in all types of weather (many tracks stay open year round to squeeze as much money as possible). Horses usually start racing at the age of two, before their bone has fully developed, leading to disformity.

Most disturbing is the fate of a horse who has ran his career or has been permanently disabled. Unless a horse becomes famous for winning the nation's top race, it is never rewarded an easy retirement. Usually, a horse is killed in an unceremonious death where it's body parts are turned into dog food or glue. Beyond the glamour and elite image, race horses lead stressful lives which too often end in crippling injuries and premature death.

The next form of entertainment is even more disturbing to analyze, as it has long been a favorite of all children: the Circus. The major problem with circuses is that they are constantly on the road. An animal who may be used to its natural habitat is suddenly forced to join a circus where they are usually kept in cramped living compartments most of the time. The Animal Welfare Act requires that animal transport need only allow the animal to stand up and turn around when confined. Imagine an elephant, horse, or any large creature living in a room only about twice the size of its body. It is like a human living in a closet nine months out of the year! While traveling, animals are given last priority for care. Another by-product of wide traveling is the changes in climate. Unlike humans, who dress according to the weather, animals are pre- dressed for their particular environment, and they end up suffering unnoticed when they are

moved to unnatural climates. The hot climates are hard on animals like bears, while others like the lions suffer in colder places. During the off-season winter months, animals are usually kept in small unpleasant barn stalls or even in trucks. Few circuses spend money on winter homes since they are only used for several months a year.

This stressful life becomes even more horrifying during training! Physical punishment has long been a standard training method to lead animals to perform acts (such as riding bikes and elephants standing on two legs) which are stressful, uncomfortable, and totally unnatural. For safety, many animals are drugged and have their teeth removed (since, it is after all natural for them to try to resist the torture.) The tools used by trainers in the circus, like the lion whips, the tight collars, the muzzles, these are all reminders to the audience that the animals are being FORCED to perform. Most shows try to depict animals as either being ferocious, or just stupid, compared to their brave or commanding human counterpart. These are demeaning acts which show nothing about the true nature of the animals.

The final institution examined is the toughest to digest for most people. The zoo, an accepted and lovable place, not only is a favorite family trip, but also is portrayed as a haven for animals and endangered species. Zoos claim to educate people and protect species, but they usually fall far short of this. Although zoos may have small plaques displaying the animals name and where they come from, little else about the animal's life is discussed. What's more, the natural state of the animal cannot be observed because it is kept in a confined area, which at best, is made to look like the area where he has come from (with no relation to climate, weather, and other wildlife). Bird's wings are usually clipped so they cannot fly, fish are kept in tanks with little water, and animals which naturally live in herds or groups, are kept alone, or at most with one or two others. The natural instincts of the animals are totally denied. Instead of hunting and mating (natural urges), they are fed regularly and are bred as the administration wishes! Because of the confinement, animals have little privacy, have little exercise, and almost no mental

stimulation - all resulting in abnormal or self-destructive behavior. Have you ever seen an animal pacing back and forth... that is a known sign of insanity in animals (humans do it to!!!) As for species protection, keeping a few endangered animals in captivity does nothing to help the natural habitat of the endangered animal (which, unfortunately, is the cause of endangerment - man's encroachment and destruction of the animal's natural habitat). In the few rare cases that controlled breeding does work on endangered species, it is almost impossible to release captive-bred animals into the wild, as they are used to regular feeding and protection!

And what about the dignity of the animals? With all their base instincts and desires being cut off, what can they do? Instead of educating the public about wild-life, zoos create a dishonorable image of the animals. One survey done at the zoo in Buffalo, NY found that most people passed by animal cages quickly, and described them as "funny-looking, dirty, or lazy". What can you expect, having taken them from their majestic lands to put them into small prisons! It is inhumane, disgraceful, and un-Jain.

So what can we, the small population of Jains, do about this? The first two practices, Racing and Circuses, are pure profit operations. By not attending and pouring money into these rackets, you are making a big statement. Also, one can try to publicize the life and cruelty accorded the animals... publicity which both institutions have worked hard to purposely avoid! The zoo, however, is not usually a profit making business. They are funded by donations and city money. A concerned citizen can start by voicing complaints to the zoo management and directors, especially if you see certain badly treated animals. You can get involved with the zoological society of the community, which tries to raise money specifically to improve animal living conditions. With larger zoos, it is impractical to try to close them down, however, one can try to stop tax money from being spent on substandard exhibits. However, if you are not able to actively work to improve animal conditions, then the least you can do is not patronize the zoo. The most important thing to remember is that, no matter how much these institutions are a part of life, to participate is to accept and

support the violence that they stand for.

## **PREDATOR CONTROL**

by Manish Mehta (Dallas, TX)

Why is it that Jains try not to kill animals? They will probably say it is because of Ahimsa. Jains are taught that it is not right to kill anything because of the theory of non-violence. Although this may be our foremost reason, there are other reasons which lie behind walls that most of us are not exposed to.

One of the reasons why animal killing is very harmful is predator control. This is the killing of predators of certain animals so there are more of the protected animals. Animals that predator controllers are trying to save are cows, pigs, etc. They want more of these so more meat can be produced. This can lead to severe destruction in the ecological system. When an animal does not have enough predators, there will be an overpopulation of prey. This can lead to not enough food for the animal and many diseases can spread around. In truth, this is destroying nature. There are many animals that are killed for the overpopulation of another animal. From 1937-1970, Animal Damage Control (ADC) killed 2,823,000 coyotes, 477,104 bobcats, 23,830 bears, 50,283 red wolves, 1,744 mountain lions, and millions of other animals for the protection of cows. All this killing is for the sole purpose of having more meat, and the cost is \$30 million fully funded by taxpayer dollars. What this means is that we, unknowingly, are helping the ADC achieve this.

I will describe the method of these killings. First, governments of thirty-one states offer bounties for predators, dead or alive. Money for these animals comes from taxes. Second, notoriously cruel and indiscriminate traps which have been banned in more than 70 countries are set up. Many capture animals that were not intended to be killed. Finally, many animals are poisoned. Fluroacetate, a super toxic poison, is injected into bait carcasses and placed in predator habitats. This is so dangerous that it was banned for a time in the US but it was later brought back.



Predator control is very dangerous to both the animals and the ecological community. If it is not stopped, who knows what may happen to mother nature.

## **LEATHER & SILK**

by Swapana Mehta (Dallas, TX)

Every year approximately 230 million cattle, 350 million sheep, 175 million goats and 700 million pigs are killed for their skins and flesh. The largest producers of these skins are the Soviet Union, United States and India.

Millions of animals suffer the horrors of factory farming for the production of leather goods. They are stuffed in extremely cluttered areas, deprived of food, undergo unanaesthised castration and branding. Skins of young animals are the most valued. The most prized are the abortion induced pregnancies, as they produce the most luxurious leather. And what is the need for leather?

Durability, quality, feel, and texture can be copied on alternative substances, including cotton, rubber and canvas. Vanity is harder to copy. Carseats, leather jackets, leather belts and watch-bands are all unnecessary. Available alternatives include vinyl, acetate, cotton, canvas and metal. Nonleather shoes are often hard to find, but we must strive to find noleather ones.

Silk is another product that is a product of violence. To produce a hundred grams of pure silk, a 150,000 chrysalis or silk caterpillars must be killed. They are taken from their habitats and boiled alive. Why? We have artificial silks, rayon, nylon and polyester. And yet we must use silk! The texture, quality, feel and colors are all replicable. Again, vanity is the only exception. We must refrain from allowing our vanity to be the cause of so much violence.

## **EGGS...ARE THEY ACCEPTABLE?**

by Aalap Shah (Houston, TX)

The EGG. A defenseless food or more? Is it a part of our vegetarian diet or is it a killer food?

Did you know 90% of all factories treat hens, living animals, in an inhumane way? Female hens live a terrible life. Their entire life is secluded with 4 or 5 hens, all in one cage. A hen's actual life span is anywhere from 15 to 20 years, but in a factory it is reduced to only 1 or 2 years! These caged hens cannot stand or stretch with the other hens inside. The cage is somewhere around 18 inches and the average hen's wing span is 32 inches!! Hens are smashed into cages which leads to skin bleeds, they are unable to move as their feet get stuck in cage wires, and many of them die of starvation.

Hens are raised in warehouses with 25,000 other hens. They have no access to fresh air, and thousands die of heat when the air conditioner breaks down. In a typical case at Union County, NC half a million hens died when the airconditioner broke and a heat wave passed and killed the poor hens. With no space and lots of sickness, hens kill other hens. These hens are tortured, they have to release their anger. Factory owners instead of making more space for the hens, debeak the hens. Debeaking meaning slicing off the beaks with a hot iron. Hens are left unable to eat or drink, some are even left dead.

Males are of "no use", as these factory owners say, and send these hens into plastic bags to suffocate. The egg industry is totally automatic, NOT NATURAL. If hens with all this abuse don't do their job by producing eggs, then they are considered "useless" and are slaughtered. All that for chicken and scrambled eggs?

Heard enough? Here comes the Unhealthy Result. Eggs are high in cholesterol and fat. Many harmful chemicals go into making the yolk yellow. Tomorrow is a new day. Start by quitting eggs - save a life other than your own. AHIMSA!!!

**MOM, I WANT TO BE A VEGAN**  
by Alpa Chheda (Houston, TX)

"You want to be a what?" my mother asked. "A vegan. They eat no animal products at all. No eggs or dairy products."

"What about protein? You are not going to have any energy. A growing girl needs all the protein she can get!" Not exactly. Protein is made up of combinations of 22 amino acids. The eight acids that the body can not manufacture can be provided by a balanced vegan diet. Animal proteins prove unnecessary when vegetable proteins are available. Only 2-10% of the total calories consumed in one day need to be in the form of protein. Excess calcium increases the blood's acidity causing calcium to be excreted from the body to restore a natural pH level to the body and causes osteoporosis. Osteoporosis results from a decrease in the calcium level of the bone, not from insufficient calcium intake. Excessive protein consumption has also been linked to cancer of the colon, breast, prostate, and pancreas.

"But why do you want to be a vegan?" my mother said. "Cows are abused for their milk." "Not really. When I was younger we had a cow. I remember we fed the calves and then took enough milk for the family. The cow never minded."

That was in India. In the United States, cows kept for milk live on factory farms. They do not graze leisurely in a field. They are crowded into concrete milking pens where they are milked two or three times a day. These machines can cut a cow's udder, aiding the development of mastitis, a bacterial infection which causes deterioration of milk quality. Bacteria spreads from cow to cow and causes death if unchecked. Electricity from these machines also shocks these unsuspecting animals.

Normal life expectancy of a cow is 20-25 years, yet the factory farm cow lives 4-5 years. Through artificial insemination, farmers impregnate the cow to attain high productivity levels, and often use harmful and unethical drugs.

Humans are the only animals who drink milk beyond infancy, and they are the only animals to drink the milk of another animal. Can

you imagine a buffalo drinking a cow's milk? Can you imagine actually suckling a cow? If you are a mother imagine your infant drinking the milk of another woman. Humans drink the milk of someone who is not their mother, and not of their species.

Today I drink soy milk and avoid eating cheese. It is an easy alternative which prevents my diet from playing a part of a great injustice.

## **BRINGING JIV DAYA IN DAILY LIFE**

by Sonalben Sheth (San Diego, CA)

In order to bring change in our life we require knowledge. About 17 years ago, I found out about silk. First, I stopped buying silk, and I found other varieties to choose from. My selection narrowed, but I was able to buy enough sarees that I needed. And, one of the alternatives that I found was to buy Ahimsak silk from Khadi Bhandar. That one is a little bit rougher than the finer one, but it is still acceptable.

Then a question came in my mind, "What should I do with the old sarees that I had already bought out of ignorance?" Then I considered, "What would I do if I have a piece of meat in my pizza?" The answer is, I would throw away the whole pizza, and so the same way I threw away all the silk sarees that I had.

Slowly after silk, we realized about leather and we started looking for alternatives. We found that most Payless Shoes Source shoes and purses are made from manmade materials, so we shop there mostly. Also, now we do not buy leather wallets, belts, or watchbands. Naturally, we would not buy a car with leather seats either.

After finding alternates for silk and leather, for a while, we thought that our house was clean. We had yet to realize, that not all the food items we thought were vegetarian, were really not 100% vegetarian! For example, some yogurts had gelatin, some food fattening included lard, most of the lecithins and glycerides did

not identify source, most of the cheeses were coagulated with animal rennet or pork, and so on. We had some work to do. We started a project of calling or writing manufacturers, which we still do today. We made our own list of acceptable groceries.

At the same time I found out about cruelties being involved in the manufacture of cosmetics. Immediately I called companies and trying to find alternatives. Initially we found cruelty free products at health food stores and specialty mail order businesses, but now it has become easy to get at least some cruelty- free products in the regular supermarkets too. When we called the mail order houses for cosmetics, we learned that they carried cruelty-free household cleaning items too. Now we buy only cruelty-free soap, shampoo, dishwashing detergent, laundry detergent, etc.

There is one area in which I would like to thank my mother. When we were young, she used to tell us not to have pets, but I did not understand the reason at that time. But recently I realized why, when my children wanted a hamster. We bought one. We were all excited to watch her. But soon we also saw that she was very uncomfortable inside the cage. Many times, in her two years of life, she successfully tried to escape, and every time we found and put her back in the cage. We could not bear this. We thought of taking her into jungle and setting her free there. But we were afraid that she may not survive there on her own. I felt very sad, and remembered that mother was right. After that, we have not kept any pets.

The last thing I would like to mention is the medicines. Most medicines have animal ingredients and are tested on animals. We are still working on this area.

Finally, I would like to urge you to think seriously about the cruelties involved in all these areas. Please visit health food stores, talk to salespersons, find cruelty-free products, buy them, and try them.

## **DAIRY INDUSTRY IN AMERICA**

by Narendrabhai Sheth (San Diego, CA)

In India, we have grown up with stories of Vrindavan, how Krishna Bhagwan raised cows, and how he and his friends feasted on butter. All that has become a strong foundation of our cultural heritage. That is why all our festivity sweets are centered around milk, yogurt, buttermilk, ghee, and various dairy products. At the same time, we never explored developing any cheese product, because that would have necessitated rennet, a product of the slaughterhouse.

In our culture, we have given the cow a very special status. We respect her like our mother: we call her "Gay Mata". On certain festivals we decorate her, put a tilak in her forehead, and worship her. We also call her "Kamdhenu", the one who fulfills all our wishes. When she can no longer give milk, we send her to a Panjarapol, where she is well taken care of, until her natural death.

When a baby calf is born, he or she suckles the mother cow. After the baby is fully satisfied, we milk the cow until her breast is all empty, so that the mother's body can go on to produce new fresh supply of milk. This is the only biological fact that we put to our advantage. Because of this carefulness, we consider cow's milk innocent and Ahimsak.

This is the understanding, the belief, the cultural heritage, with which we came to America.

In America, at first, we saw that everything was big, productive and efficient. Even today, food is relatively cheap, so we are not surprised to see the milk also very cheap. Slowly we have increased our consumption of dairy products in all areas. Now we are eating far more ice cream and milk candy than we ever ate in India. We also top many food items like pizza and tostada with cheese.

We call ourselves vegetarians. Occasionally, some Americans stop to question us, "How can you still drink milk?" At that time we

explain that we don't have to kill a cow for getting her milk, therefore, there is no violence in drinking milk. In fact, we even hail it as a good essential source of protein, especially since we don't eat any meat.

But a cow is not treated here the same way we did her in India. When taken to the slaughterhouse, she is butchered just like any other animal. When alive, she is treated just like another machine: a machine that converts grass into milk every day.

I will describe, how much humiliating a cow's life is in America. Let's create an example. Suppose you and your shareholder friends invest in a dairy farm. Once you accept that your cows are your machines for converting grass into milk, then as a businessman, all you want to see is a highest possible bottomline profit number. You may be a very kind person at heart, but you are required to keep your investors happy for they have no other concerns but money.

Under these circumstances, let us face a daily dilemma. One of your cows gives birth to a baby calf. At this point, you have two choices. The first choice is to let the baby drink away half of the milk, turning profitability from that cow into a loss. And the other choice is to sell that baby calf to a veal manufacturer for cash and feed the mother cow some genetic chemical hormones, so that she does not stop milking inspite of the mental shock of loss of her child. If you are not a Jain farmer, and if you do not have a whole community of Jains willing to pay higher prices for truly Ahimsak milk, which choice will you and your shareholders make?

In India, an ordinary engineer or an average accountant earns Rs. 2,000 per month and pays approximately Rs.15 per gallon for milk. In America, an engineer or an accountant earns \$4,000 per month and only pays \$3 per gallon for milk. What causes this tenfold disparity? In due fairness, the price of milk here should be around 30 dollars per gallon! We have always thought, that the American cows are bigger, and healthier, and all other food items also are relatively inexpensive in America, so we have happily accepted the low price of milk, without any further questions.

However, let me tell you some facts, and please consider them very kindly. When a baby cow is born, the male baby cow is sold, the very next day, to a veal factory, for his soft flesh. A female baby cow is given soy milk, and powerful steroids, so that she becomes capable of pregnancy within a very short time. She is repeatedly impregnated artificially, continuously fed hormones and milked until she gets exhausted to below the profitability margin. Within 4-5 years, she becomes a candidate for slaughter. If she was in India, she could have lived for at least 20-25 years. But she was, unfortunately, born in America.

Because of such low milk prices, we consume far much more milk than we did in India. There we ate ice cream only on birthdays, or when someone graduated from high school. Here we find a stock of ice cream cans in every refrigerator. In India, we ate burfi, penda, and other sweets only on wedding occasions. Here we top pizza and Mexican foods with cheese almost every day. In India, milk candy was a rare treat. Here, we have made our children take them for granted. We have never tried to find out, where all this milk comes from.

And then, where does it go? Where does all this milk go in our body? Well, now-a-days, we hear again and again about the death of our friends dying from heart attacks. We hear about cholesterol clogging up their arteries. Where does this cholesterol come from? Well, cholesterol is a waxy substance found only in animal products such as meat, fish, eggs and milk. There is no cholesterol in plant food. Since milk does not grow on trees, it cannot be free from cholesterol, not even skim milk. One of my best friends just died last year. He had 2 out of 3 arteries blocked, and he was only 49 years old. He was a vegetarian, but he loved drinking a lots of milk. My father had a heart attack when he was 56. My grand father died at 63, and my grand mother died at 52. Will I still go on calling milk a good healthy food? No way!

Do we really need to drink milk? Ever since childhood, I was taught that I needed to drink it for good healthy growth. And I believed it very sincerely, because it was an integral part of Indian



culture. And that is how we raised our children also. I never stopped to think otherwise, until one day somebody asked me a few years ago, if I knew of any other animal, that continued drinking milk beyond the age of 2 years. He also asked me, if any other specie existed, that fed on milk of some other specie. These questions convinced me, and assured me, and I started looking for alternatives. I found plenty of them, and I am glad that I did so. Now-a-days, we feel even guilty, that we have fed our children so much cheese and ice cream. How would we feel, if one of them gets a heart attack at an early age? Who would be responsible for clogging their arteries? The only thing that I can tell you, is that we would be very sorry about our ignorance. And we would not continue it any more, once we have learned this.

Now you may want to know, what do I drink? Well, I have found many milk alternatives in health food stores. I have seen several preparations made from soy beans, rice, cashews, almonds, and so on. I use a powder, called "Better Than Milk". It has a taste, fairly close to that of the milk. It costs only twice the real milk, but it gives me a good feeling, that I am out of this dairy scandal, where the life of a Gay Mata is degraded to a machine living in hell. All these milk alternatives are equally rich in protein and calcium, and they contain no cholesterol. So they are healthier on both counts.

Today I have given you something to think about. And if your heart says, that you want to make your life a living statement of Jiv Daya, please cut down, if you can not immediately stop completely, at least cut down your total milk consumption. Every time you drink or eat some dairy product, think of the baby calf, who had the first right on that milk, but it had been denied.

## **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

by Zarana Sanghani (Houston, TX)

(Jiv Daya represents compassion towards all life forms. The Jiv Daya & Vegetarianism Committee has spent much of its time and efforts educating Jains on animal compassion, for they are

voiceless creatures. However, as Jains, we must also bring Jiv Daya to all of our activities, including our relationships with one another. - editor)

Domestic violence is the number one killer of young women - more than muggings and rapes combined. The number of atrocities committed everyday because of the harm a person inflicts onto a loved one is horrible and unbelievable. The abuses between family members are the most damaging and possibly the hardest to control because of its different forms: physical and verbal.

Most evident is the physical abuse. Often to release stress, a person may strike his/her child or spouse because it is easier to vent anger on someone who will later forgive because of a family relationship. However, it is important to remember to control actions and maintain respect that must exist in the family bonds. When attempting to discipline children, parents must keep in mind the fine line between discipline and abuse.

Harder to recognize but sometimes more destructive is verbal abuse. Small forms of verbal abuse can be seen everywhere - I know that sometimes even I am mean to my brother because I've had a bad day and I know I can scream at him and he'll still be there for me. But when you are in a situation where someone depends on you for support and love, you have to watch your words around them. Many will contest that they love their family, not many can say they show their love at all times. As Jains, we take an extra effort to respect every organism and living being, but sometimes it is easy to forget that respect when dealing with a loved one that is taken for granted. There is much that an individual depends upon family and friends for, and domestic violence can shatter the trust and faith s/he may put into this source of security and support.

## **AUSTIN**

A meeting was held at the residence of President Mahendrabhai and Minaxiben Mehta. Many non-Jains, especially from the

Vaishnav, Swaminarayan, and Swadhyay groups joined. Narendrabhai introduced various aspects of Jiv Daya and Sonalben described how they brought them in their daily household life.

A 30 minute documentary, "We are All Noah", was shown. It starts with a Biblical story of Noah, who kindly rescued animals at the time of the Great Flood. It shows how, in the name of science, modern man is using/abusing/exploiting poor, helpless, voiceless animals. They discuss the subjects of cosmetic testing on animals, dissection in schools, and their non- animal alternatives. They also talk about the issues of pound seizure, hunting, food, veal, eggs, dairy cows, etc. The video makes a plea to all the informed, compassionate Christians not to participate in such cruelties to animals. Especially when their fate is sealed by our actions.

A short version of the video, "Diet For a New America", was shown. This part discussed the health aspects of vegetarian diets; especially heart attacks, strokes, cancer, osteoporosis, etc. A copy of this video is already sent to all the Jain centers in North America. If you have not already seen it, please do so. Besides health, it also examines the issues of compassion and ecology and environmental effects of non-vegetarian diets.

After the video, a tofu (a soybean derivative) product, "Better Than Milk?" was introduced. This milk alternative is completely free from cholesterol, and yet it is richer than a cow's milk in protein and calcium! The taste also comes pretty close to it. Above all, it can even be used for making tea. A sample of tea was prepared and offered to all those who were interested in trying it.

## **LUBBOCK**

A similar meeting was also organized by Neela Gada, at her residence, for the members of Lubbock Jain Youth Group, and other adult residents of Lubbock. Here there were more non-Jains than Jains in the audience. We watched a movie and debated how

much one person can do.

Finally, the evening was concluded with "soy-tea." The overall impact of the discussion was different on different people. Some felt offended, some felt shocked, but most felt enlightened. After this discussion, some Texan youths have decided to put together a list of the easily available cruelty-free products. Here is a beginning:

SHOES - Dress/Hiking Payless Shoes Source

Tennis - Ecoshoes Nike

Casual Women's Keds HAIR PRODUCTS Nexus, Paul Mitchell

CLEANSERS Whole Foods Store

TOILETRIES The Body Shop

- Neela Gada

"Better Than Milk" - this soy powder can be purchased from most health food stores. If desired, a 6-pack can be ordered at wholesale prices from:

Vegeway Distributors  
P.O. Box 23464  
Chappanooga, TN 37422  
Phone: (615) 899-1790

## **AN APPEAL TO ALL JAIN FAMILIES**

The theme of our next Convention, at Chicago, is "Peace Through Non-Violence." Our committee will have a seminar on some of these issues. We also plan to display cruelty-free cosmetics, etc. in a booth in the exhibition hall. Do visit us and talk to us. We will also be bringing literature to provide many answers. So do take advantage of our presence there and lookout for our articles in the Souvenir. We are also thinking of presenting a small Compassionate Fashion Show during one of the evenings.

We would like a reasonable treat in return from you.

1. Admit that both silk and leather are products of violence.
2. Do not wear them at least during the 4 days of Convention. We all have many non-silk yet rich looking clothes. Please bring them for this occasion.
3. Non-leather shoes and purses are not very expensive. We would urge you to spend about \$25, and take a step in right direction.
4. Support us. Our committee consists mainly of youth, between ages 15 to 30. For most of us, this is the very first year as a committee. We need your continued financial as well as spiritual support.
5. Don't stop at meat, silk and zoo. There are many more issues to consider. Some of them are discussed in this supplement, some were discussed in Jain Digest before, and we will continue discussing them in future. Read them.
6. Give us your feedback. Write to us, or call us. We will print your views also. Let us all work together.

This supplement was prepared by the Jiv Daya & Vegetarianism Committee of JAINA. If you would like more information on these topics, please contact your Jain Society for your local contact. Otherwise, you may contact Narendrabhai Sheth: 9133 Mesa Woods Avenue, San Diego, CA 92126 (619) 693-8272, or e-mail [JivDaya@aol.com](mailto:JivDaya@aol.com).