

Seventy-two miles, solo, non-stop, paddling at night and most of the day, every year my mind tells me that I can't do it. It says, take a short cut, take a nap, hide in the bushes, sleep at a friend's house, or drink a cup of tea, anything other than paddle Big Blue in one day!

Even though it's the middle of summer, the night air in Lake Tahoe is cold and the water temperature is even colder. The notion to SUP the entire Lake Tahoe alone, in one day, may seem like a crazy idea. In and of itself it is a crazy idea.

One person, alone, circumnavigating a 72-mile lake. But this act is not based in and of itself. It is a commitment to a higher cause, a purpose with passion, the very core of my being. It is based on my un-yielding belief that life is created and sustained by our highest selves and our highest ideals.

The Vegan 1 Day project was born to amplify that notion.

I will SUP non-stop the entirety of Lake Tahoe in one day, and people will pledge their personal investment to adopt a vegan diet for at least one day. One day out of the year, one day a month, one day a week, or one day at a time. The choice becomes yours.

This year, on May 28th, I completed the solo, non-stop paddle for the 10th consecutive year. It took me 14 hours and 30 minutes.

Every year, it's the same scenario, I look at the lake, and feel overwhelmed. But one of those little miracles happens when I actually put the board in the water and stand on it. I feel the motion with the paddle and I relax and sink into enjoying the moment. I see the beauty of my surroundings and I realize that it's an adventure!

The process I go through paddling around the lake is quite similar to the external challenges that many people experience going vegan. For the person new to a plant-based diet, there will be the metaphorical challenges of navigating wildfire smoke-filled skies, head winds, or rough waves; but, for me, while paddling Lake Tahoe, my resistance to an obstacle can be far worse than the actual obstacle itself.

Most people, like myself have a very difficult time watching animal abuse. If the abuse farm animals endure is so bad that we can't even watch it, is it something we should be willing to support when we sit down to eat?

The answer for me is no. These animals are abused because we pay to abuse them when we buy meat, dairy, and egg products.

When I explain how going vegan is a viable solution, and choosing to eat plants instead of animals is a simple yet effective alternative to the inherent cruelties of the meat industry, some people look at me as if I've asked them to paddle solo, non-stop, 72 miles around Lake Tahoe. Overwhelmed.

A life caring about others, the environment, and our health, while eating delicious vegan food is hardly a life of endurance and suffering.

But because of our habituation to animal foods, we appear like lone paddlers, standing on the shore, contemplating the great vegan crossing.

Everything we want to accomplish in life takes intentionality. Whether we're adopting a plant-based diet or we want to paddle around Lake Tahoe, the intention behind our actions helps shape our experience. For me, the paddle around the lake is a spiritual

journey, a pilgrimage I take every year. I am healthy and grateful to be alive.

Paddling seventy-two miles around the lake is a beautiful thing to do. For me, living vegan transcends my ordinary self and sanctifies my soul. It's my passion for living, my core value that all life matters, and that the enjoyment of that life is something to be experienced and shared. My intention is to do something good while living the fullness of one day.

Join us for a vegan potluck to celebrate the Vegan 1 Day Project on July 15th at 6 pm at Adrift Tahoe SUP-Surf shop in Kings Beach.