



*We are sentience.*

*Sentience uncontaminated loves itself and all its forms.*

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If you do not love animals, you will never go anywhere in spirituality.

If you are getting anywhere, you will not eat them. It just works this way. It is a sign of refining consciousness.

Nisargadatta Maharaj ate a small amount of meat, but he is an exception in many, many ways from the rule. You can read why he ate a little meat [HERE](#).

We are sentience. Sentience uncontaminated loves itself and all its forms. All the apparent myriad of forms are forms of sentience, consciousness, knowing.

The first of the four Buddhist vows is, “*Sentient beings are numberless; I vow to save them all.*”

Not just this being or that being, but ALL of them.

I was quite shocked to learn when I was a Buddhist monk, that Buddhist monks from many countries ate meat. Go figure.

You need – as part of your spiritual growth – to know that you are sentience only and that all sentience is wonderful, to be protected and nurtured no matter what form it takes. I am my brother's keeper, my parents' keeper, the keeper and shepherd of all the birds, insects, animals, vegetation – all living things. They are mine to protect.

During the past decade there has been a remarkable turning around in the mass consciousness in the West regarding our relationship with animals. It manifests as rescue and humane groups regarding companion animals, the vegetarian movement associated with farm animals, the anti-fur and anti-circus animal groups, etc.

In the U.S., this work is progressing on several fronts: Rescue and humane groups, the No-Kill advocate groups, the activist groups and political action groups, and finally, the underground activists unfairly characterized as terrorists.

Regarding the rescue and humane groups, the ones for which I have the highest regard are [Alley Cat Allies](#), [the Stray Cat Alliance](#) and [Rescue Me](#). The latter two are local California groups.

The No-Kill shelter movement is spearheaded by the brilliant Nathan Winograd. When I was active in trying to find a new General Manager for Los Angeles's Animal Services, no matter who or where I called all over the country, one name was on everyone's lips: Nathan Winograd.

Nathan has launched a revolution towards changing the way pound systems all over the country are operated.

So, how was this accomplished? Take a look at [Nathan's site](#), and tell him I sent you. If what he says strikes deep and true, help him out. You may also like to read his [No-Kill Declaration](#).

The third prong of the growing sentient being network are the political activist groups, whose activities range from the usual leaf letting and picketing, to political pressure, to civil disobedience.

Nationally, there is [PETA](#), People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Their vast website will show you many of their past and current campaigns and achievements.

I spent 27 years investigating myself before I found out I did not exist. Since that time, I have been increasingly involved in saving and protecting all life. It may not appear to make sense from a theoretic, Advaitin perspective, but it makes total, universal sense from the perspective of heart.

I hope that some day, all of mankind will view with horror and guilt how we have treated animals for the past thousands of years.

I am sure some of you will ask what this has to do with spirituality. Aren't spiritual people supposed to be passive and, like all good Advaitins, recognize that this is all illusion only and that the movements within consciousness are pre-ordained anyway?

Yes, this world is an illusion, but only in the sense that apparent separate consciousnesses are filled with contaminating thoughts, concepts, imagining, etc. which tends to cover over or distort the basic love we have for ourselves and all of sentience.

Robert was totally compassionate about animals. He was vegan. He wore no leather. He loved his dog Dimitri. He said if it were not for Dimitri, he would not have much to do with the world. He hated how people treated animals. Ramana Maharshi's last words supposedly were, "Has the peacock been fed?"

We should look towards the examples of great Advaitins rather than mess with reasons why we should not be involved in compassionate actions in the world. As Robert would say, "Do not be a cold fish," which was his precautionary warning about what happens to a lot of California Advaitins.

This is Nathan's Declaration of a No-Kill Nation. Please visit his [site](#). It has a vast richness concerning all things related to saving animals' lives.

