

THE EATER'S AGREEMENT

I hereby agree, from this day forward, to fully participate in life on earth. I agree to inhabit the appropriate vehicle for such participation - a body. As a requisite for the sustaining of that body, and of the life that dwells therein, I agree to be an eater. This agreement fully binds me for the duration of my stay on earth.

As an eater, I agree to hunger. I agree to have a body that needs food. I agree to eat food. I recognize that as the biological need to eat is fulfilled with greater awareness and efficiency, the benefits of my well-being will increase. I further acknowledge that ignorance of the eating process may cause undesirable consequences.

Because the essence of my participation in life is one of learning and exploration, I agree to experience uncertainty as an eater. I recognize there are a great variety of foods to choose from, and I may not know which to eat. I may have a choice of different nutritional approaches, and not know which to follow. I may have an assortment of habits, and not know how to manage them. I recognize that my relationship to food is a learning process, and I will inevitably make mistakes. Therefore, as an eater, I agree to accept my humanness and learn as I go along.

I acknowledge that as the body changes from infancy to old age, so will the eating process change. I recognize that my body may call for different foods as the days, seasons, and years progress. My dietary needs will also shift in accord with changes in my life-style and environment. I understand that there is no one perfect diet.

As an eater, I accept pain. I recognize that I may suffer pain when the body is disturbed by my choice of food or eating habits. I may also experience pain when emotional and spiritual hungers are confused with physical hunger. I further understand that eating to cure a pain cannot be remedied by eating may bring even more pain. I further agree to accept a body that is imperfect and vulnerable, that naturally decays with the passage of time. I recognize there will be moments when I am incapable of caring for it myself. I agree, then, that to live in a body is to need the help of others. I also agree to be

vulnerable as an eater. I acknowledge that I will be helpless as an infant and will need to be fed. I may be equally helpless when I am old and unwell. I further recognize that even when I am fully capable, I may still need the warmth and care of someone who can feed me. Therefore, as an eater, I agree to be nourished by others.

If I have a woman's body, I acknowledge that I have a special relationship to eating and nourishment. I recognize that as a giver of life, I am the nourisher of life as well. Whether through my cooking or the milk of my body, I acknowledge that the union of food and love is a quality that marks my womanhood and has a profound effect on human-kind.

As an eater, I acknowledge the domain of the sacred. I recognize that the act of eating may be ritualized and inspired. It may be given symbolic meanings that are religious or spiritual in nature. It may even be joyous.

I further agree that eating is an activity that joins me with all humanity. I recognize that to be an eater is to be accountable for the care of the earth and its resources. I acknowledge that despite our differences, we are all ultimately nourished by the same source. As such, I agree to share.

I recognize that at its deepest level, eating is an affirmation of life. Each time I eat, I agree somewhere inside to continue life on earth. I acknowledge that this choice to eat is a fundamental act of love and nourishment, a true celebration of my existence. As a human being on earth, I agree to be an eater. I choose life again and again...

*From: Nourishing Wisdom
by Marc David*

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