

pleasure

Pleasure. Where did all this guilt come from? Why has “pleasure” become a dirty word? Hello! Enjoyment is a good thing—plain and simple.

I don’t know where we got the idea that what’s good for us has to be boring, distasteful, or difficult. But we ought to clear it up right now. Think about it. The desire for



pleasure evolved to increase our chances for survival. Tasty food leads us to eat, love encourages us to reproduce. Taking care of the earth or others gives us a feeling of satisfaction. You see—much of what feels good and right to us is beneficial for our health and is necessary for the survival of the human race.

Many of the good things available in life—friends, family, good food, making love—are pleasurable. Often our instincts can point us in the right direction. Think about some of the things you enjoy: a Sunday afternoon nap, a hot shower, a soothing massage, your kitty curled up on your lap, the serenity you experience while fishing. The good feelings we get tell us we are on the right track.

I know some of you are skeptical. You believe in the “no pain, no gain” philosophy of health. You lead a Spartan existence, believing your sacrifices will pay off in good health and long life. Well, they certainly will make your life *seem* a lot longer. Actually, it may not make as big a difference as you think, unless you have serious medical problems that warrant such strict guidelines. Rather, we’re learning that many of life’s pleasures have health benefits—loving relationships, beautiful scenery, music, long walks in the woods, a good book, and even long hours at work (provided we enjoy them).

Granted, too much of some good things may not be in our best interest. The rule of thumb is usually moderation. But in some cases, more really is better. Some of life’s greatest blessings fall into that category. Add as many of those to your day as you can. It’s time to stop feeling guilty about seeking pleasure. The simple, delightful beauties of life are nothing your mother would be ashamed of! So, go ahead! Enjoy!