

June 3, 2014 - Marci's TED Talk Pick #9

It's Tuesday and here is the TED Talk I picked for you!

Title:	Graham Hill: Why I'm a Weekday Vegetarian
Source:	TED: Ideas Worth Spreading <www.ted.com>
Event:	TED2010
Link:	http://www.ted.com/talks/graham_hill_weekday_vegetarian

We're going back to 2010 again this week for a TED Talk by Graham Hill. You may remember him from his 2011 talk "Less Stuff, More Happiness" which we used at IEB in Musashi Sakai. It was later introduced on *Super Presentation*, the Wednesday night NHK show featuring TED Talks. I always enjoy Graham. His messages are clear and simple.

Graham's 2010 talk is about vegetarianism. Although I am not a vegetarian, I choose to eat more vegetables and fish than meat. I do this because it's better for the environment and better for my body. Really, better for the environment means better for my body and vice versa.

Some people choose to become vegetarians because they think it's morally ok to eat plants but not ok to eat animals. Personally, I don't see a difference between plants, humans, animals or even rocks. We are all energy and eating is a way of exchanging energy. I value the life-energy of the carrot as much as the cow. How about you?

Here are some questions to consider before watching:

1. How often do you eat meat?
2. Are you a vegetarian? If so, why? If not, have you ever considered becoming one?

After you finish watching, think about these questions:

1. How do you feel about Graham's plan?
2. How have your eating habits changed since you were a child?

English Transcript from TED.com:

(I **highlighted in yellow** words and phrases to review or add to your vocabulary.)

0:17 About a year ago, I asked myself a question: "Knowing what I know, why am I not a vegetarian?" After all, I'm one of the green guys: I grew up with hippie parents in a log cabin. I started a site called TreeHugger -- I care about this stuff. I knew that eating a mere hamburger a day can increase my risk of dying by a third. Cruelty: I knew that the 10 billion animals we raise each year for meat are raised in factory farm conditions that we, hypocritically, wouldn't even consider for our own cats, dogs and other pets. Environmentally, meat, amazingly, causes more emissions than all of transportation combined: cars, trains, planes, buses, boats, all of it. And beef production uses 100 times the water that most vegetables do.

1:20 I also knew that I'm not alone. We as a society are eating twice as much meat as we did in the 50s. So **what was once** the special little side treat **now is** the main, much more regular. So really, any of these **angles** should have been enough to convince me to go vegetarian. Yet, there I was -- chk, chk, chk -- tucking into a big old steak.

1:45 So why was I **stalling**? I realized that what I was being pitched was a binary solution. It was either you're a meat eater or you're a vegetarian, and I guess I just wasn't quite ready. Imagine your last hamburger. (Laughter) So my common sense, my good intentions, were in conflict with **my taste buds**. And I'd commit to doing it later, and not surprisingly, later never came. **Sound familiar?**

2:24 So I wondered, might there be a third solution? And I thought about it, and I came up with one. I've been doing it for the last year, and it's great. It's called weekday veg. The name says it all: Nothing with a face Monday through Friday. On the weekend, your choice. Simple. If you want to take it to the next level, remember, the **major culprits** in terms of environmental damage and health are red and **processed meats**. So you want to swap those out with some good, sustainably harvested fish. It's structured, so it ends up being simple to remember, and it's okay to break it here and there. After all, cutting five days a week is cutting 70 percent of your meat intake.

3:13 The program has been great, weekday veg. My footprint's smaller, I'm lessening pollution, I feel better about the animals, I'm even saving money. Best of all, I'm healthier, I know that I'm going to live longer, and I've even lost a little weight.

3:32 So, please **ask yourselves**, for your health, for your pocketbook, for the environment, for the animals: **What's stopping you from** giving weekday veg a shot? After all, if all of us ate half as much meat, it would be like half of us were vegetarians.

3:54 Thank you.

3:56 (Applause)