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Display Settings: AbstractCan J Diet Pract Res. 2012 Winter;73(4):163-8.**The process of exiting vegetarianism: an exploratory study.**Menzies K, Sheeshka J.

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Abstract**PURPOSE:** The experience, reasons, and contexts associated with leaving vegetarianism were explored.**METHODS:** Interviews were conducted with a convenience sample of 19 ex-vegetarians and 15 continuing vegetarians.**RESULTS:** Exiting vegetarianism is similar to the process of leaving other important individual identities, including exiting diets containing meat. It is a process, not an event, and partially a response to inconvenience, particularly when the person's table companions were not vegetarians. Major life changes and declines in self-perceived health provided occasions to reassess life choices, including the vegetarian commitment. Ex-vegetarians interpreted their vegetarianism as a transition to a new, healthier diet. Including a comparison group of continuing vegetarians revealed that the ex-vegetarians were more likely to have become vegetarians as a result of concern about the well-being of animals and the environment, not animal rights, a value more difficult to compromise.**CONCLUSIONS:** Exiting processes show the five central food values of taste, health, time, cost, and social relationships undermine people's commitment to a diet chosen largely for moral reasons.

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