

RAO, from page 5

them all off the face of the Earth, it's another 16 years. By 2026, they'll be gone if we continue doing what we are doing.

We are on ecological quicksand. Imagine if a weight-lifter was lifting five times his weight, and he was standing on quicksand and he was sinking. Knowing this weight alone is too much for the quicksand to bear, what is the first thing he should do?

E.G.: Drop the weight.

S.R.: Drop the weight! No one is going to stand there and say, I think I can lift three-fourths of that weight, or half that weight – drop it! Because you are on quicksand. Get out of the quicksand first before you think about weight-lifting again. That is what I'm talking about, so when we frame it this way, people do respond. Have faith in them. They will respond.

SAILESH RAO

E.G.: Have you always been

vegan?

S.R.: I became a vegan in 2008, when I found out what it was doing to the environment. I was lacto vegetarian (a person who does not eat meat but who does consume dairy products), but I thought that I could never give up milk because I love my milk sweets, I love my pizza, I love my yogurt. But I had this sense of shame when I saw what it was doing to the environment.

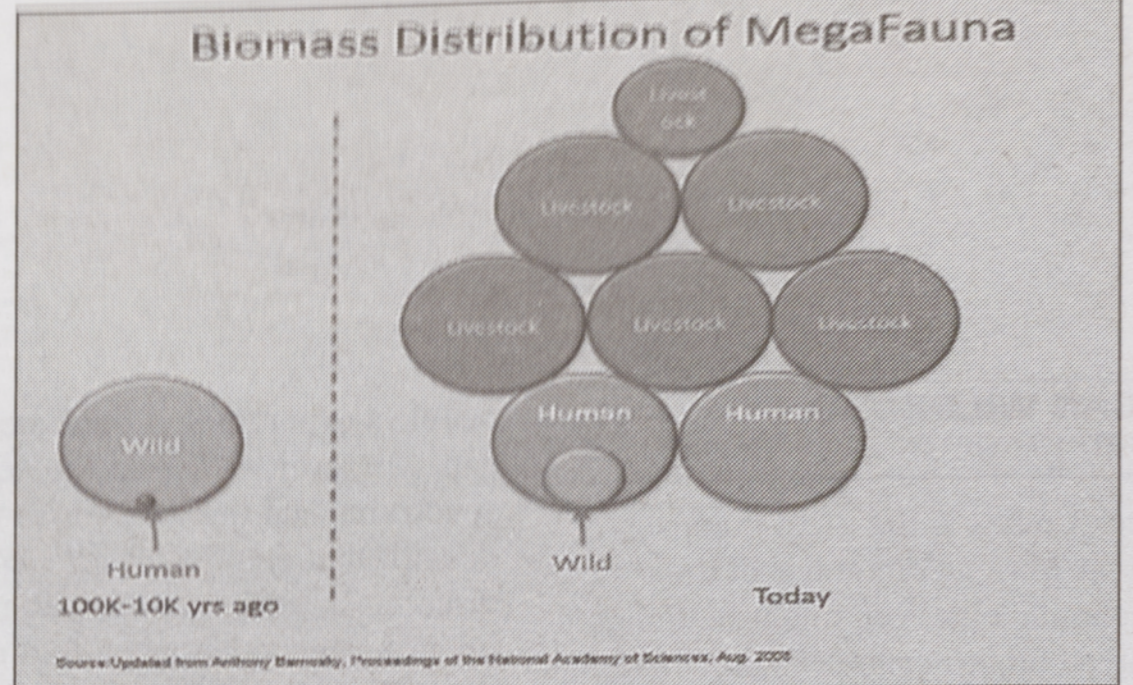
Because the way things are framed for us by scientists, and by the mainstream media, is that lacto vegetarianism is just a little bit

worse than veganism, in terms of impact. And that's an accounting gimmick. Because if everyone in the world became lacto-vegetarian, the planet would be destroyed today. Because you keep impregnating dairy cows to make milk, so you get new cows coming out, and if you don't kill them and eat them, they are going to be running around eating your forests for the next 25 years. I saw that in India. In India, a lot of people are lacto vegetarian, and hardly anyone ate meat, at that time. Very few people eat beef, so the cows are proliferated, and they have 10 times the density of cows as the U.S.

E.G.: On the Climate Healers' website, there is a page about going vegan, and as soon as you click on the page, a number ticker begins to count all the animals, by species, that have been killed for consumption since the time you opened the page – which is really disturbing. But I wanted to ask you, climate change aside, the fact that humans kill about 56 billion animals a year for consumption (according to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations FAOSTAT 2008), what does this mean to you spiritually?

S.R.: I will tell you a story about what happened to me in Marrakesh, Morocco. I was speaking to a high school – 250 high school students were there, and it was about veganism and climate change. I asked, "How many of you are vegan?" And only one child raised his hand. It was clear that he had to raise his hand because everybody knew that he was vegan. They were all looking at him. Then I asked them, "How many of you would deliberately hurt an innocent animal, unnecessarily?" Nobody raised their hand.

Biomass Distribution of MegaFauna



This slide from Sailesh Rao's lecture shows the distribution over time of Earth's wildlife compared to humans and livestock.

And I told them, by definition, all of you are vegan in your heart. But who you are in your heart and what you do in your mind don't match. So we are bringing that into alignment. That is spirituality.

E.G.: Going back to your second book, "Carbon Yoga," what is the connection between carbon and yoga?

S.R.: Yoga means unity. It's union. True yoga is really about getting what you think, what you say and what you do in alignment with who you are. What we do as yoga here in the U.S. is really the third step of an eight-step process. And it's just the calisthenics part of it. It's really what they call posture. It's been misconstrued as all of it. It's not.

CLIMATE HEALERS

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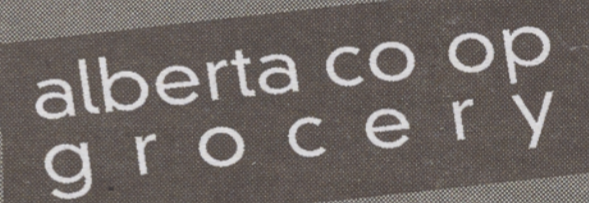
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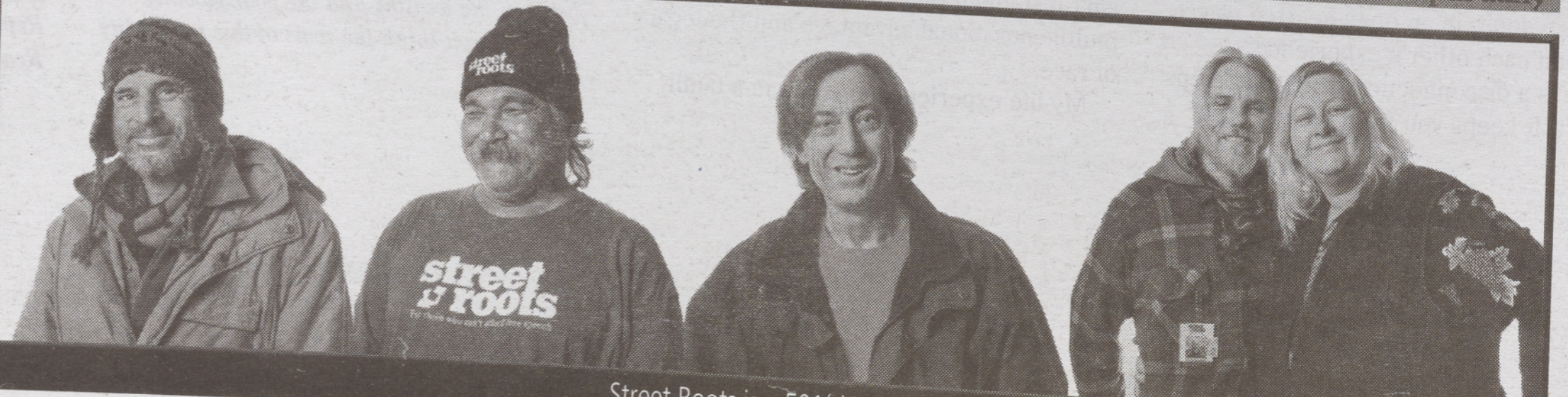
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