

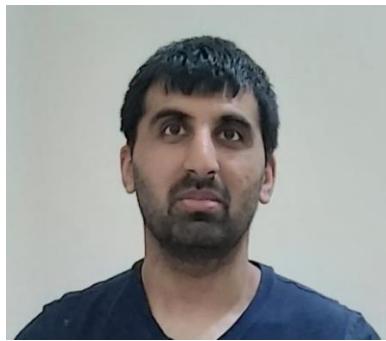
## Muslim Vegan Voices

Here are three statements by real-life Muslim vegans who answered our 2021-2022 questionnaire. We have included the photo we were sent for the first of these. They are in no particular order.

*The views expressed here are those of the individuals themselves and are intended as stimuli for deep thinking, discussion and debate in RE lessons.*

**Adnan, 27 years old, lives in the USA, vegan 3-5 years**

**Adnan is Muslim and describes himself as 'religious'**



I initially went vegan out of concern for animal suffering. I have studied nutrition. Although foods were never discussed, I learned how easy it is to be vegan from metabolism and nutrition perspectives. My reasons for being vegan are animal liberation first, also the environment and my health. Veganism is just best for everything else too.

Best thing about being vegan is not actively contributing to animal suffering.

The most challenging thing for me is social pressure. People treat you differently when they find out you think animal exploitation is morally wrong. There is a lot of

misinformation and cultural bias about veganism. More people would agree with veganism if they knew what it meant. I think children should learn about veganism at school as it can save animals by choosing compassion and they should research what they use and who they eat. Adults rarely tell their children where animal products come from. Until a child knows what the consequences of their choices are, the blame is 100% on the parents for not being truthful.

**Cathleen, 61 years old, lives in the USA, vegan 6-9 years**

**Cathleen is Muslim and describes herself as 'religious'**

Buddhist teachings, as well as animal suffering first motivated me towards veganism. I had been a vegetarian before I knew the dark realities of Big Agriculture. One day at a fundraising luncheon for a farm sanctuary, the sanctuary owner told me that if you're not vegan, you might as well eat meat. That was when I began to evolve from vegetarianism to veganism. Now also motivated to be vegan due to concern for the environment as well as animal suffering.

I am still as motivated as ever by animal suffering. But I am more aware than I was in the past of the horrendous damage that Big Agriculture inflicts on the environment, and that it is the number one driver of global warming. So, while my first motive is alleviating animal suffering, protecting the environment and healing the earth is a close second.

Veganism, for me, means being a servant of Allah who walks gently upon the earth. It means living my life without harming other beings. And it means a peaceful world. And it means a healed planet. It means a world in which biodiversity might flourish again. It means a food system that is not oppressive to animals and workers. It means the end of cognitive dissonance towards animals. If we stop eating them, then in the end, we will reject practices like animal experimentation, hunting, and the exploitation of animals for the entertainment industry.

Veganism, means understanding that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or amuse ourselves with. I don't do these things, and I am an activist trying to raise awareness of the importance of these issues, and to get laws passed that prohibit these practices. I also get involved in campaigns to reach out to large companies to pressure them to not engage in these practices. In short, veganism looks like animal liberation to me.

The best thing about being vegan is living a life without harming other beings.

The most challenging thing is that I'm out of sync with society. It's frustrating that so many people just don't get it.

**Shireen, 46 years old, lives in the UK, vegan 6-9 years**

**Shireen is Muslim and describes herself as not very religious**

To me, veganism is a social justice movement for animal and human justice. I do all I can do. I do not wear eat or use animals.

The best thing about being vegan is the knowledge that you are doing your best to avoid animal suffering.