



Dear Chris,

How have you been? A few weeks ago, I decided to go vegan, and let me tell you, it hasn't all been smooth sailing!

Almost a month ago, I saw a video on YouTube talking about the environmental and ethical concerns of eating and using animal products. Did you know that most animals that are raised for meat are kept in conditions where they can barely move? Even with free-range animal products, I don't feel comfortable using them since the animals can't give consent. Not to mention, the meat industry produces 8.1 gigatons of carbon dioxide every year! I just don't want those emissions on my conscience. I'd much rather get my protein from a plant-based source.

To be honest, getting used to not eating meat or animal products was the easiest part! There are a lot of ways to get delicious meals without using animal products, especially considering how many plant-based meat substitutes are on the market nowadays. My friend has been supportive too! At first, I was worried they wouldn't understand my reasons for going vegan, but they've actually been very understanding. They're even making an effort to eat less meat in their own lives. Although it took a while for me to stop reaching for the dairy milk in the mornings, it's overall been an easy transition to oat milk, and no animal products in general.

The real struggles come in when I eat with others. Mum doesn't really know how to cook vegan food, so I've ended up cooking a lot of my own food. When she does make a 'vegan' dish, it always turns out that she's put in 'just a little' butter, or ground beef, or used pork fat to fry the vegetables. I eat it anyway to avoid wasting food, but it's been hard to stay on track. Besides that, I've had trouble when eating out with friends. It's hard to find a restaurant with vegan options, and I have to go through the whole menu before going out to make sure there's something I can eat. I can't say I don't miss being able to pick a place to eat on the spot without meticulous planning!

Despite the struggles, being vegan is worth it to me. It's been a huge weight off my chest. I'm still working out the kinks of a vegan lifestyle, but it gets easier every day! More and more people are starting to see the appeal of a vegan diet each day, so I have a rich community to find support from. Why don't you give veganism a try as well?

Love,  
Chloe