

Anthroposophic Nutrition

Anthroposophic nutrition is oriented on the specific needs of the individual; there are no prescribed rules. It was developed at the beginning of the 20th century as an adjunct to nutritional science, also incorporating non-material planes of existence (ether, spiritual). Anthroposophy means wisdom of the human being and was established by Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). Anthroposophic nutrition is based on his understanding of nature and man and is open to all cultures. The specifics of the practice of anthroposophic nutrition are flexible and can be adapted to individual countries and cultures.

Foundations

In anthroposophic nutrition, factors that lead to growth and ripening (forming powers and vital powers) are included as quality factors, as well as, nutrients and active substances in food. Nutritional and quality recommendations are based on all of these criteria. Foodstuffs should, as far as possible, originate from organic-dynamic agriculture. The food processing methods utilized should maintain the quality of the high agricultural standards while supporting the needs of the person. The foodstuffs should be a product of fair trade (fair economy, associative economy).

In addition to this, it is recommended to consider the rhythms in nature (seasons) and regionally grown products when making food choices. Based on the anthroposophic understanding of nature, the effects of foodstuffs are described without imposing a recommendation either for the inclusion or exclusion of these foods. However, there can be a food which is appropriate for certain people, yet not suitable for others.

This assessment is founded on the anthroposophic understanding of man. In this light, man is not only seen as a physical being, but also as having other distinct vital, psychic and spiritual components. Hence, it is possible to take into account different constitutional types, temperaments, or rhythms of the body.

Free Food Choice and Individual Responsibility

Anthroposophic nutrition leaves people free to choose the food they eat based on knowledge (acquired through learning about nutrition), awareness of nutritional needs (inner satisfaction) and independent implementation (active effort). This requires spiritual interest and insightful perceptions, or even training starting in childhood. In practice, a mainly ovo-lacto diet with small amounts of meat or fish has proved to be reliable. Grains are preferable as the staple food.

The sensory perceptions (nutrition through the senses) are significant components of nutrition. A conscious food culture (regular meals, meals together with others, a calm and pleasant atmosphere at the table) are also important elements of anthroposophic nutrition.

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