# Long image description for “Research excerpts discussing how veg\*ns will “soften” or “downplay” their veganism.”

The images show five excerpts from two studies.

The first three excerpts are from the study “‘Actually, I Don’t Eat Meat’: A Multiple-Goals Perspective of Communication About Vegetarianism.” by Lynsey Kluever Romo and Erin Donovan-Kicken.

Excerpt One: “Talking about vegetarianism without judging others Another dilemma vegetarians faced was how to talk about their lifestyle without judging others or implying that they believed what the other person was eating (or not eating) was immoral. This was a concern for 75% of participants. As Sid, 35, a vegetarian for 10 years, said, ‘‘some people feel threatened by vegetarianism, [they] don’t understand it; [they] assume that I think their way of life is wrong.’’ It thus became very important for vegetarians to explain themselves to meat eaters without making nonvegetarians feel judged. At times, every participant said they preferred to minimize confrontation by avoiding the topic of their vegetarianism all together. As Anne, 34, a 20-year vegetarian, explained:

‘Vegetarian disclosure is like a time bomb. If you really don’t know someone you don’t know if you’re walking into a situation where they’re going to take something that’s part of your identity and be offended by it on a personal level.’”

Excerpt Two: “Even though animal rights was a large reason Alicia became a vegetarian, she said she avoided talking about morality because it ‘‘implies judgment’’ of the other person, and she did not want others to feel guilty or judged. For the most part, participants did not discuss the moral reasons behind their vegetarianism, emphasizing health benefits or the fact that they were raised vegetarian—two motivations that would be less likely to offend.

Two participants reported that they simply told others that they did not enjoy the taste of meat, which helped prevent meat eaters from feeling defensive about their eating habits.”

Excerpt Three: “Downplay: An additional way participants made vegetarianism less of an issue (or even a nonissue) was by downplaying or deemphasizing their lifestyle. The act of downplaying was employed by every participant at times and took several forms from keeping the conversation as short as possible to avoiding using the word ‘‘vegetarian’’ altogether.”

The last two excerpts are from the study “Beyond Hippies and Rabbit Food: The Social Effects of Vegetarianism and Veganism” by Ana Lindquist

Excerpt Four: “many subjects did feel that the vegetarian or vegan label was stigmatized—whether they believed it to be actually deviant or not—and that they therefore downplayed it.”

Excerpt Five: “Additionally, Goffman found that stigmatized individuals sometimes respond to social situations by “defensive cowering,” or downplaying their identity (1963, p. 63). This correlates to the findings of numerous studies on vegetarianism which uncover that respondents often tried to avoid drawing attention to their diet.”

Image Source: From the section “[Vegans Want to Be Judged for Who They Are, Not Who People Think They Are](https://bitesizevegan.org/why-vegans-self-silence/#vegansjudgedforwhotheyare)” on the article “[Why Vegans WON’T Tell You They’re Vegan: The Other Side of Vegan Stigma](https://bitesizevegan.org/why-vegans-self-silence/)”