



A Pollyanna Nutritional Optimist

A “naïve optimist” is one way to describe the guy in front of me in the checkout line at Whole Foods. Or, we might also call him a “Pollyanna”, having wandered from his home in Central Utopia.



Pollyanna was a fictional character, created by author Eleanor H. Porter, in a novel by the same name in 1913. As a young orphan, Pollyanna devoutly practiced a game her father had taught her of always finding the positive in any situation.

In general, a positive attitude is terrific... in general.

Over time, due to her unyielding optimism, Pollyanna became known as the “Glad Girl”. At some point during the many decades of novels and movies about the adventures of the young Glad Girl, the word

“Pollyanna” became synonymous with anyone who held a steadfast belief in the positive spin on any situation. Eventually, however, the name gained a derogatory meaning to describe the naïve optimist.

While I was waiting to check out, this Pollyanna-dude apparently decided he could make points with the attractive lady in front of him by commenting on the nutrition products she had stacked on the conveyor belt. Most of us in line were fidgeting and becoming impatient (waiting for a price check on dried cumquats, or something) when he made his move to strike up a conversation. In a word... Yes.

“That’s a lot of vitamins, you have there...,” he says while poking his finger at her stack of bottles, “...that must get expensive each month.”

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She glances back at him, and with a courteous but short tone, she responds...

“Sometimes... but it is worth it.”

Mistakenly, interpreting her polite response as an invitation to annoy her, he continues...

“Yeah... I don’t do any of that stuff. I stay healthy by eating right. You look like you are in great shape. You don’t look like you need any of that stuff. ”

Without looking back, she mumbles a subdued “thank you”, which is then followed by the pollyanna-fella going on, ad nauseam, about something to do with his grams of protein per meal, or his five servings of fruit, or his percentage of body fat... I don't know what all he was babbling about, and I suspect neither did the lady in front of him.

However, while I was witnessing this one-sided exchange – all the while, biting my tongue – I was reminded that even with all the information available to the average consumer, there are still droves of naïve nutritional optimists out there who believe they get all their nutritional needs met with the foods they eat. I personally know several individuals who fit this profile, and my guess is, so do you.

[Pol-ly-an-na-ish - adjective: unreasonably or illogically optimistic]

To those who follow a Pollyanna diet, nutritional supplements are a silly waste of money. Someone who is Pollyannaish will believe proper nutrition can be achieved by eating the proper quantities of correctly balanced foods.

A Pollyanna must rely on idealist assumptions to support their perspective. It sounds like a wonderful place – this Utopian world – where a Pollyanna imagines they live...:

- In Utopia, everyone eats five to seven servings of organically grown, pesticide-free fruits and vegetables, which satisfy them with enough vitamins, antioxidants and minerals to stay healthy.
- In Utopia, a proper ratio of protein, fat, and carbohydrate is consumed to maintain a perfect body weight without the rigors associated with dieting. And since there is no dieting, there is no risk of exhausting nutritional stores in the body due to sustenance denial.
- In Utopia, the soil in which fruits and vegetables are grown is cared for in such a manner as to ensure the ideal balance of vitamins and minerals are present to support a healthy immune system. Since the soil is managed properly, there is no need for fertilizers that risk throwing off the delicate balance of nutrients.
- In Utopia, there is no need for pesticides or herbicides, since there are no unwanted weeds or pests because the farming techniques are... well... perfect. So, PN's don't have to worry about deadly toxins building up in their livers.
- In Utopia, the meats and fish are not filled with hormones, antibiotics or heavy metals, and they are prepared and treated with respect, without risks for E.coli or parasites.
- In Utopia, the foods are always fresh, have never been processed with chemical stabilizers, hydrogenated oils, or preservatives of any kind. The food is never pasteurized (heated) to kill everything in it, including the enzymes. Food is not exposed to microwave ovens, and it is certainly not irradiated to extend shelf life, or placed under harsh heating lamps for extended periods until just after someone asks, “You want fries with that?”
- In Utopia, there is no need for soda pop, artificial sweeteners, coffee or alcohol, because everyone only drinks plenty of pure water that is free of microbial contaminants, arsenic and

heavy metals, pharmaceutical residues, fluorides, chlorines, and highly toxic substances that carry such long names that they are given cute little 3-letter abbreviations, such as:

- PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenyls)
- PCE (Tetrachloroethylene)
- TCB (Trichlorobenzene)
- TCE (Trichloroethylene)
- DCA (Dichloroethane)
- DCB (Dichlorobenzenes)
- DCE (Dichloroethene)
- DCP (Dichloropropane)
- DCM (Dichloromethane)
- HCB (Hexachlorobenzene)
- HCH (Hexachlorohexane)
- And others

- In Utopia, there is no concern about environmental pollution – that taxes the immune system and adds to free radical damage – from car exhaust, second-hand smoke, or emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds in the home. This perfect environment is void of radiation, electromagnetic and microwave bombardment from cell phones, radio and TV broadcast antennas, high-power lines, and computer monitors, and since this is a land of only natural substances, there is no worry about being greeted by a fog of perfume as you walk into a department store during the holidays.
- In Utopia, no one thinks about the side effects (or nutrient depletions) of drugs, because pharmaceutical drugs are not necessary in a land where the food is of such high quality that it is – once again – the real medicine for the body.
- And, in Utopia, nutritional supplements are not needed, because the thousands of micronutrients and phytochemicals, vitamins and minerals, are all present in a perfect balance to support the body and maintain a healthy, vibrant life.

nutritional supplements are not called “nutritional replacements” for a reason. These are intended to “supplement” a sensible eating plan and lifestyle. No amount of supplements can overcome poor choices in your life.

Yes, Utopia sounds like a dreamy little village. The Pollyannas have done a wonderful job of envisioning the perfect place to raise a family and live a happy life.

From the sound of it, Utopia could even give Andy Griffith’s town, Mayberry, some competition as the most ideal setting.

Unfortunately, the reality is that we don't live in Utopia, so the Pollyanna's grand assumptions are wrong. In our world, if we want to remain healthy (or restore health) we need to consider nutritional supplementation.

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I'm not sure if Mr. Pollyanna-dude has ever been successful with using his technique of criticizing a lady's choices in nutrition as his pick-up line, but I suspect not. However, I do have to give him points for a vivid imagination.

The Glad Girl would be proud.

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*[Please note: As always, if you have thoughts or questions about this post, please leave us a note, either in the comments section **of this post**, or on our **Facebook page**.]*