

**What exactly was your reaction when you saw just how badly the animals were really being treated? Did you cry?**

**Investigator 1:** I was horrified and terribly saddened. But I had a good idea of what I was going to see, and I prepared myself for it. ... Because it is so critical to conceal my identity and my sympathy for animals while undercover, I [can only] cry on the inside when I see the abuse and the cruelty. I can never let my coworkers see that side of me. Sometimes, I will let out a good cry at home or in my car after a particularly disturbing day.

**Investigator 2:** There were some nights I would get home and get emotional about the day's events. You have to hold it inside until you get home. If the other employees see you react in an emotional way, it would blow your cover. The people whom I have met working at a hog farm would never get emotional or upset due to the mistreatment of the animals, and so we must act in that same manner.

**What toll does it take on you mentally and emotionally? How do you handle working in facilities that abuse animals?**

**Investigator 1:** The job is challenging, both mentally and emotionally. It always helps me tremendously to look at the big picture and focus on the light at the end of the tunnel. Personal sacrifice is almost always necessary to achieve great change. But I take solace in those ... moments that I spend, one-on-one, with the animals whom I meet on an assignment. Looking into the sad eyes of a suffering animal motivates me and energizes me to do more. And I realize that my mental and emotional anguish pales in comparison to the suffering and pain this animal is feeling right now. I get to go home after work every day, but the animals never leave.

**Investigator 2:** It can take a large toll on you. Seeing what happens firsthand day in and day out definitely affects you. There are times during a case when I have had nightmares about it. The only way to really get through it is to always keep in mind that this would all be happening if I was there or not. By being there, I have the opportunity to help stop abuse.

**What do you do to unwind at the end of the day or the end of an investigation? For example, do you talk through what happened with counselors, use exercise or meditation, etc.?**

**Investigator 1:** I don't see a counselor, but I regularly talk to a few people at PETA. These are some of the greatest people with whom I could ever hope to work—smart, dedicated, passionate individuals who understand exactly what I am going through and support me throughout the entire process. And in case you were wondering, these people also kick ass and take names. At the end of a long, hard day, I like to listen to music, often played at a loud volume, and then I like to cook up a tasty hot vegan meal and watch sports on the tube or talk to my friends and family on the phone. I also work on a

screenplay in my free time, which is a great escape for me.

**Investigator 2:** I have never talked to counselors, partially due to the sensitivity of our work. The single biggest thing that has helped me cope on the job is exercising. Wherever I go, one of the first things I look for in the area is a gym. I get all of my stress and frustrations out in there. Another thing that really helps me get through these jobs is music. Music can be very motivating, and it helps get you amped up enough to go into these places.

**Did they ever try to make you do anything to the animals while you were undercover?**

**Investigator 1:** My coworkers would occasionally ask or encourage me to do some inhumane thing to animals. Of course, I wouldn't.

**Investigator 2:** Definitely. Hog farms and other farmed animal institutions have a whole other culture inside of them than [the culture] which is in place in the real world. In the real world, if someone is abusing an animal, then they are usually the outcast, and looked down upon. Inside these places, it is the norm to abuse them. When I didn't, most of the other employees encouraged me to. When I continued to not abuse them, their encouragement became more and more aggressive. In their minds, the more you hit and abuse them, it makes the job go easier and faster.

**Has being an undercover investigator made you go vegan or vegetarian? And have you changed other people's minds (maybe family) about eating meat?**

**Investigator 1:** I was already vegan prior to my employment as an undercover investigator. I believe I have changed many, many people's minds about eating meat and other animal products with the images that I capture, which are then posted on PETA's Web site for millions to see. Images are the most powerful medium possible to inform or persuade someone. If you want to change people's mindsets about eating meat, it is always a good idea to start with your family and friends and then branch out into a more public forum. Talk to them and definitely send them links to videos and pictures and Web sites via e-mail. Some of these people are going to think you are judging them, and they may even tell you to buzz off. But don't let them discourage you. It's a common defense mechanism. After all, ignorance is bliss, and you're upsetting the "natural" balance of things. Simply tell them that you are not judging them in any way, shape, or form, but rather, you are just giving them all the facts so that [they] can make up [their] own minds.

**Investigator 2:** I was vegetarian when I started, and I have gone vegan since. Through these cases, we have a large platform to reach the public. There are many times people write in and say that after seeing the cases, they have gone vegetarian. That has always been one of the most important things to me. Even if only one person goes vegetarian from a case, it makes it all worth it. As far as family, that has been a little slower going. I was able to convince my family to skip the turkey last Thanksgiving and have pasta instead.

**Since this is more underground activism, does it restrict you from above-ground activism?**

**Investigator 1:** It is true that being an undercover investigator is more of an underground, behind-the-scenes form of activism, and it does restrict my above-ground activism to some degree, particularly when I am on assignment. However, I find that I can still send and forward e-mails to my friends and family to inform them about various animal rights issues and campaigns. And I always include a link to a video or a photograph or a Web site where they can learn more about these issues if they choose.

**Investigator 2:** Yes it does. If we acted above ground, then our names or pictures may get out to the public, which may stop us from being able to do future investigations. When I retire from investigating, I plan to do more above-ground work.

**Have any of these places where you went undercover been shut down by law enforcement?**

**Investigator 1:** Not yet. Most laws in this country still favor corporations and disregard the value of an animal's life. But I am certain that as we keep plugging along and as people become more informed and public outrage grows stronger, sweeping change will happen. As a result, more and more places will close and more and more abusers will be prosecuted.

**Investigator 2:** Yes. A "no kill" animal prison called All Creatures Great and Small, located in North Carolina. It was a several-months-long investigation, and we worked with the state on it afterward. They eventually shut them down for good, which changed the lives of hundreds of dogs and hundreds of cats who were living in horrid conditions there. The owners were hoarders and did not provide any veterinary care after dogs were injured in almost daily fights. Through PETA's tireless efforts, animals will never again [be] hurt, cold, or hungry there.

**How are you able to keep your sanity?**

**Investigator 1:** If I want to do all I can possibly do to help animals, I have to stay sane and focused. If I lose it or explode, that will not help animals. If I let the insanity get to me and destroy me, then I will no longer be an asset to the animal rights movement. I would not be making the best use of my time and my ability to effect change for animals. I force myself to look at the big picture.

**Investigator 2:** Who said that we do? ;) Truth is, it gets hard. Sometimes the only way to get through it is to take it one day at a time. Even then, there are times when it gets to you, and you aren't sure if you can make it that one more day. But by forcing yourself to go that one more day, that's what makes all the difference. You have to focus on the fact that by being there, you can show the world what is happening, and someday, hopefully, it will stop happening.

**Why do you think that the people working in these places think it is so funny to torture these poor animals? I don't know many human beings who would find that funny.**

**Investigator 1:** I believe these types of people are either very disturbed, really trying to impress their coworkers, and/or they were raised in a very malicious, violent home. Many of them think it's macho and entertaining to abuse an animal. Many think it makes them look cool, in control, and powerful. As you and I know, there is nothing less cool and more cowardly than abusing an innocent, defenseless animal.

**Investigator 2:** I think that there are different reasons for different people. For some of them, they have been in the industry for so long that they get very desensitized to the abuse. They stop looking at these helpless animals as just that and start seeing them as merchandise on an assembly line. The faster they move them along, the easier the job is. Maybe by finding it funny, it is sort of a defense mechanism, where their mind justifies to them that it is OK to abuse them. For other people, I think they are just sick and twisted sadists who take pleasure in the pain of other creatures, probably because they have so much pain in their own lives.

**Did you ever go into a place that haunted you afterward? Did witnessing everything just follow you or haunt you for the rest of your life, like you will never ever forget it no matter what?**

**Investigator 1:** Witnessing abuse and cruelty is extremely disturbing and horrific. But I do not let it haunt me. As with any highly stressful situation in your life, it will eat away at you and destroy you if you let it, or it will make you stronger. My experiences undercover have made me stronger and more determined to do everything in my power to help animals. I have to remain positive and productive for the sake of animals.

**Investigator 2:** Yes, there are certain instances from every job I've been on that will remain with me forever. Pigs are very intelligent, sensitive, and emotional creatures. There were many times that they would look at me with such a terrified look. Their eyes were screaming out to me for help, and I could do nothing. They communicate very well with their eyes, and I will never forget that.