

What Does Nudism and Nude Recreation Mean to Me?

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Nudism and nude recreation have become a foundation of who I am, much like the foundations of wildlife biology my religious faith are. They have been parts of my life that have guided and shaped me in my journey as a person. Nude recreation first appeared in my life when I was eight, when my parents took Sofie and I to Mountain Air Ranch for the first time. They had explained the basic idea of nude recreation to us a week before and asked if we would want to explore it with them, and by being the adventurous kids we were, had eagerly agreed. Our first time there had been very exciting, we were both very delighted by the various activities the resort provided and by the large community of kids that existed at the time, and by the end of the day were begging our parents to take us back again. My parents became members shortly after, and Mountain Air Ranch became a regular part of our lives, but we were told that it had to remain a secret.

As a kid this was like being told that we had to keep treasure island a secret, it seemed so strange why anyone would not share this place with as many other people as possible. Our parents said that not everyone would understand its magic, and that some would consider a place like MAR to be wrong, so my sister and I did our best to keep the secret and all our enjoyment with it. Of course, we didn't always succeed, and throughout my childhood there were always awkward responses when friends asked what it was that made weekends so much fun, and where my family and I would disappear to in the mountains.

But secrets aside, my fondest childhood memories took place because of MAR: hiking through the woods, playing with friends for hours in the pool, water balloon fights, face painting, mud pits, pool volleyball, sleepovers, campouts under the stars and more. After some time, this great enjoyment of the resort's activities and my place in the community lead me to understand and appreciate something beyond the recreation. When I was thirteen or so, I began to understand more of the difference between nudism and nude recreation, as one is the enjoyment of physical freedom and the other is the enjoyment of what you can do with it. I saw this difference because of my friends, and the break of my secrecy.

I was in middle school, and I had become very close with two of my friends. We spend most of our free time together and believed that we would be friends forever, and during one of our sleepovers I let the secret slip. Neither of them thought it was an inherently wrong thing to do, but neither of them wanted anything to do with it.

This came as a surprise to me, since I always viewed nude recreation as a secret treasure that the world had yet to discover and was very curious as to why they didn't want to experience it for themselves. They each had their own reasons, but they essentially were that nudism was not something they were, or ever would be, interested in. I pondered this for a long time, and by reviewing their reasons for rejecting I discovered my reasons for accepting, and learned what nudism meant to me. It has always been physical freedom, but beyond that is it much more. I found self-confidence much earlier than most people because I was very comfortable with my body. I rarely saw flaws in my body and never struggled with body image or eating disorders, even when many other girls in my school were.

For a long time though, I felt shy and unsure of myself when I was forced to dress up for events such as weddings, dances or holidays, and I didn't know why until I learned about gender identity. I identify as genderfluid, which means that I can identify as male, female, or something in between, depending on the day. I discovered this about myself when I was researching gender identity one day and this term describes exactly how I felt. I have always felt more masculine than most other girls and often found myself drawn to my father and his activities around the house more than those of my mother, also taking more of an interest in science, mathematics, and other "masculine" things. I believe nudism may have contributed to my identity since I often feel neutral, or in between the two genders, and remember feeling this was most of the time when participating in nude recreation.

Nudism allows me freedom, not only because of its lack of physical bonds but because of the mental freedom I experience. I don't see everyone always as the gender they are but instead find myself seeing their personalities much more strongly. People are who they are with nudism, it lets us strip away everything of the world outside and be simply themselves in their most pure forms. We each become not our parts and possessions but our spirits and experiences that define us.

Nudism is the purest, most 'human' way to exist, bringing us back to the essential pleasures and ideas of our ancestors, and it can guide us in any way if we let it. I believe I am as accepting and adventurous as I am because of my contemplation of its values and my experiences with the community. I live my life with these values and experiences in mind and let them guide me as my faith and passion do. Even though I am a great distance away from my childhood home and nude community, I do not feel alone. Nudism and nude recreation are a foundation of who I am not only because it has occupied much of my childhood free time, but because it helped me to accept myself in every way I am and will continue to do so in the future.