

Smoking is good for you

Non-smokers be warned: the following text may also be good for your mental health. The title is pure provocation. And the concept behind it? It's all too easy to repeat something that has already been said a million times. In contrast, it's much harder to take a more unfamiliar stand. Take up and maintain an original position: that's what creates true differentiation.

What you are reading here is not a new medical discovery but the communication of a conviction. Seen from a strictly medical point of view it is obvious that smoking damages the body. There's no argument about that. What damages the smoker even more, however, are the constant attacks on the conscience by doctors, politicians and the media. If you smoke in the certainty that you are doing something bad and dangerous you are actually putting yourself in greater danger. You are living up to the expectation that you are causing damage to yourself and your environment. Whether that is true or not is beside the point. The issue is rather to see how well the smoker can fight against this generally held attitude and expectation. How much strength of character he can find to parry the attacks – perhaps not outwardly but at least inwardly. Smoking can damage your health. The bad feeling you get from it is fatal.

Work is good for you

Are you obsessed? Do you work more than the amount defined by our society as healthy? Are you criticised for being a workaholic? Let's just leave on one side the possibility that work really is the main focus of your life. That work protects you from having to come to terms with yourself and your situation in life. Let's simply assume that you do what you do with love, lust and passion. Let's assume you are like the watchmaker who needs all his concentration and focus for his work. This is not entirely positive for the world around you, that much is clear. It is positive for you, providing you are not riding on the guilt train. Only that way leads to destruction. You don't run any greater risk of suffering a heart attack if you do what you do with love, lust and passion. Build up your immunity against all that well-worn criticism. Smile at the pseudo-happy masses with their leisure-orientated attitude. Work yourself well.

Alcohol is good for you

At this point I really can brag openly and unashamedly because the statement contained in this heading has even been medically proven. It is only when you spin statistics wilfully and maliciously for your own purposes that you come to the conclusion that alcohol is somehow harmful. Just as with smoking and work, it's just a question of volume. One thing is for sure, however: if you go without alcohol completely your health is more at risk than if you enjoy it in moderation. The red wine drinker gets it in the neck, but really it's not a question of whether you get the requisite amount of alcohol from your favourite grape juice or from white spirits. The alcohol carrier is not important. The Queen Mother lived to 101 with her daily glass of gin (according to official sources).

The tragedy is that the clear language of statistics is often dismissed by the medical profession as a pure anecdote. Let us say it here once again: don't listen to things that are repeated a million times. That doesn't make it any truer. Establish your own opinion and position. And above all, stand up for what you choose to do.

What do these three provocations have in common? Something that is repeated a million times is still not necessarily true. Something that is true is still not necessarily my perception. My perception has a major impact on whether what I do is damaging or beneficial. And one thing remains indisputable: the thing that carries the greatest risk of death by far is life itself. 100 %. Indubitably.