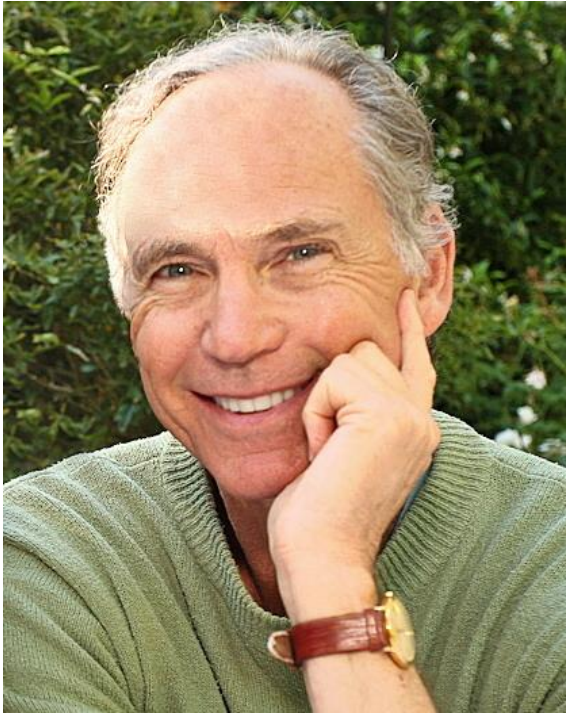


–an **EVEN** exclusive interview –

with



John Robbins

**Author, Advocate,
Spokesperson for a
Sane, Ethical and
Sustainable Future**

John Robbins is the author of nine bestsellers that have collectively sold more than 3 million copies and have been translated into 26 languages. His books include The Food Revolution, and the classic, Diet for a New America. He is Co-Founder, along with his son, Ocean, of the 200,000-member Food Revolution Network.

As an advocate for a compassionate and healthy way of life, John is the recipient of the Rachel Carson Award, the Albert Schweitzer Humanitarian Award, the Peace Abbey's Courage of Conscience Award, Green America's Lifetime Achievement Award, and many other accolades.

The only son of the founder of the Baskin-Robbins 31 Flavors ice cream empire, John Robbins was groomed to follow in his father's footsteps, but chose to walk away from Baskin-Robbins and the immense wealth it represented to "pursue the deeper American Dream...the dream of a society at peace with its conscience because it respects and lives in harmony with all life forms."

John is the Founder and Board Chair Emeritus of EarthSave International, and has served on the Boards of many nonprofit organizations. His life and work have also been featured in an award-winning hour long PBS special titled Diet for a New America.

John lives with his wife of 48 years, Deo, their son Ocean and his wife Michele, and their grandsons, River and Bodhi, outside Santa Cruz, California. Their home is powered entirely by solar electricity.



EVEN: How did veganism become part of your life?

John: There is so much suffering in this world. Each of us has our personal pain, but there is also the greater planetary anguish, the extinction of species, environmental destruction, wars and violence, racism and grinding poverty. Ceasing to eat food products made from animals, and in particular those from factory farms, is my effort to reduce and prevent a bit of the suffering.

EVEN: Who was an influential person in your life earlier on that led you to veganism?

John: I really didn't have any role models for this, at first. What I had was an attunement to what is called in the 12-Step programs your "higher power." Other traditions call it your "higher self," or your "inner wisdom."

EVEN: What advice would you give to a vegan advocate wanting to become more of an activist?

John: One of my teachers, Dr. Martin Luther King, used to say that you have no moral authority with those who can feel your underlying contempt.

EVEN: What do you think makes veganism hard for people?

John: Going about it in a dogmatic and rigid way; that takes the joy out of it and leads to social isolation.



EVEN: What, in your opinion, is the most misunderstood idea about veganism?

John: That it's about deprivation.

EVEN: What one thing from your thinking in childhood do you wish you could change?

John: In my childhood, I thought that ice cream was wonderful. I no longer think that, of course, but that was a needed step for me. A better question would ask what is current in my thinking that I would like to change. That is a lot more challenging of a question. And my reply would be that I'd like to change any thoughts or beliefs or assumptions that create distance between me and other people, that create walls of defensiveness or judgment.

EVEN: If you were to mentor a younger person today, what guidance might you offer? What encouraging words might you share with a newbie?

John: Never betray your authenticity. Always honor your integrity. Seek to live with respect both for yourself and for others.

EVEN : Do you have a favorite vegan meal or food you can tell us about that really makes veganism work for you?

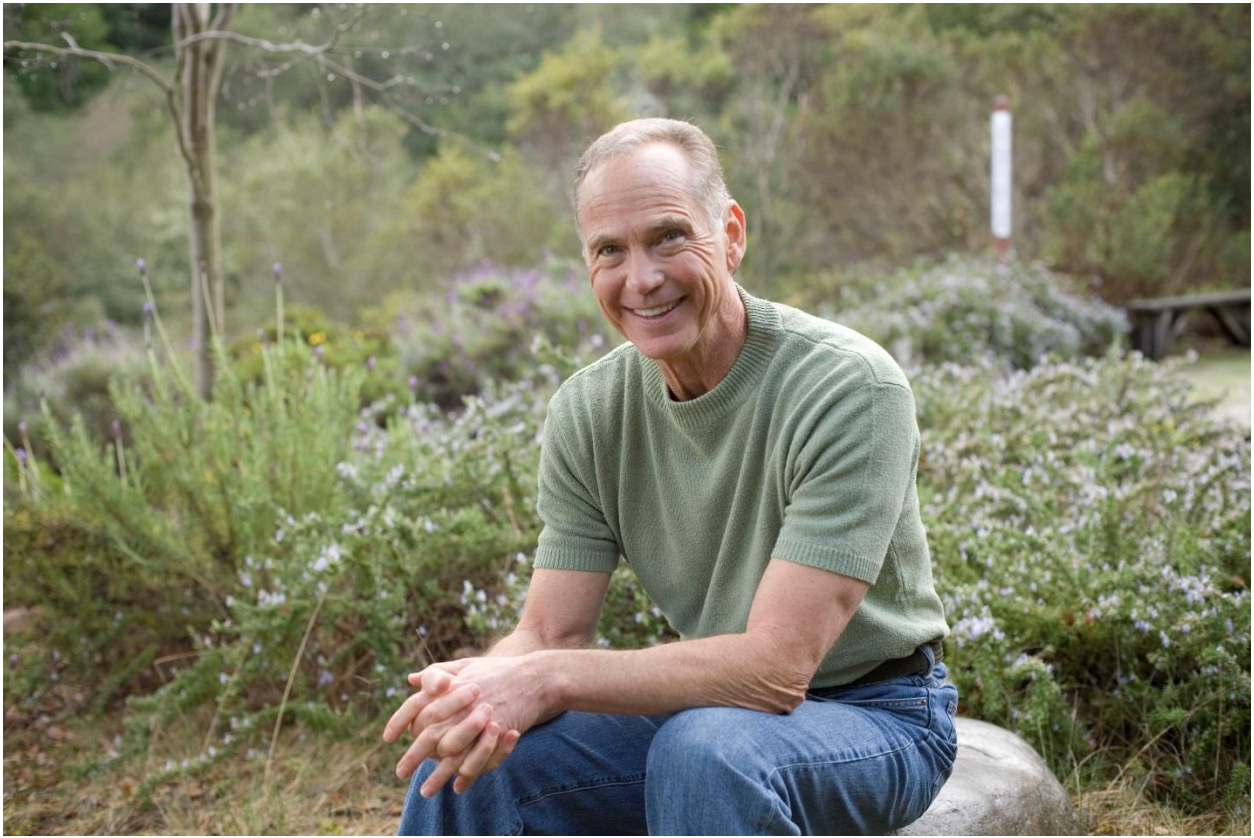
John: I eat very simply. A bowl of lightly steamed veggies is a delight to me. Add some lentils or other legumes and perhaps a tomato sauce and I'm in heaven.

EVEN: What one thing makes veganism worthwhile for you?

John: Making my life a statement of my compassion.

EVEN: Any opinion or insight on the future of veganism in today's world?

John: I think we need to appreciate and be grateful for the small steps people take, rather than asking them, in effect, to sign a purity pact. What do you think the odds are that in 15 years, half the people in the country will be vegan? I would say, probably zero. But what do you think the odds are that in 15 years, half the meals eaten in the country will be vegan? I think we have a real shot at that.



[John Robbins Info](#)

[The Food Revolution Network](#)

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