

What is Naturism?

The Wikipedia encyclopedia defines Naturism as *a lifestyle in harmony with nature, expressed through social nudity, and characterized by self-respect of people with different opinions and of the environment.* <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naturism>>

In my opinion, this is too broad of a definition of naturism because it encompasses characteristics that are not always naturistic. The social nudity issue is the prime example. Being in harmony with nature, the core principle of naturism, may, and often does, include social nudity; however, social nudity is not necessary to be a naturist. A lot of people who have never practiced even private outdoor nudity, let alone social nudity, lead lifestyles in harmony with nature. They keep their carbon footprints to a minimum, they practice conservation, they respect and protect the environment and so on. Conversely, social nudists who live in monster houses that consume too much energy, have two or three gas guzzler cars per family and don't practice recycling, or in any other way protect or respect the environment, are not naturists. The bottom line is that not all naturists practice social nudity and not all social nudists are naturists.

The *self-respect of people with different opinions* is also too broad to encompass all of naturism. A true naturist would have no respect for individuals who advocate mountain top removal as a mining technique, or developers who unnecessarily eat up green space (e.g., those who build the monster houses) or anyone else who goes along with damaging the environment for the sake of profit.

Considering all of these aspects, I contend that the definition of naturism, cited above, should be narrowed to read: *a lifestyle in harmony with nature characterized by respect for and protection of the environment.*

This definition does not preclude the practice of social nudity, it simply does not put it as a defining characteristic of naturism. Meaning that the practice of social nudity is a choice which is not necessary for one to be identified as a naturist; whereas respect for and protection of the environment most certainly is.