

HUMANIST MOTIVATIONS AND GOALS

WHAT MOTIVATES HUMANISTS?

“It will never rain roses: when we want to have more roses we must plant more trees.”

GEORGE ELIOT,
(Mary Anne Evans), author



Humanists believe that **human beings alone are responsible** for making the world a better place. We cannot expect help to come from elsewhere. They believe if we want to change things, we must do the work ourselves.

Credit: Allan Warren



JAMES BALDWIN,
author

‘The world is before you and you need not take it or leave it as it was before you came in.’

Humanists believe this is the **one life** we have. They don’t believe that wrongs will be put right in a future life. We need to work together to support **fairness and happiness in the here and now.**



WHAT KIND OF WORLD DO HUMANISTS WANT?

Many humanists believe that human beings share many needs, desires, and feelings. These can help us to see what kind of world we should work for.

Humanists want to see a world that promotes the following values:

- **Freedom:** we should all be free to choose what we believe and live how we want as long as we cause no harm to others
- **Fairness:** we should all be treated equally with the same rights and opportunities regardless of our gender, nationality, skin colour, sexuality, religion or belief, or disabilities
- **Kindness:** we should treat other people with warmth and respect and we should try to live together peacefully



‘Humanists want a world where people are free and people live good, happy, and fulfilling lives as far as possible.’

NAOMI PHILLIPS

‘I believe the world that humanists would want is a world where everybody is treated equally and with fairness and with respect.’

MICHELLE BECKETT



‘A humanist’s ideal world would be one in which everybody feels that they can be their genuine selves.’

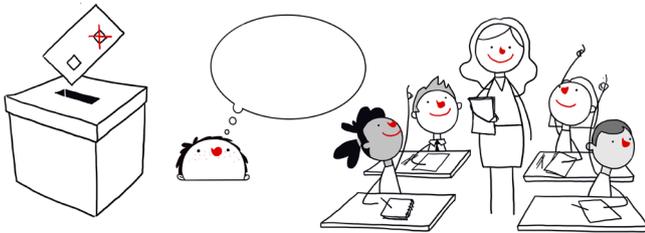
ALEX WILLIAMS

HUMAN RIGHTS

Many humanists support **human rights**. Human rights are international laws designed to give everyone the freedom to live their lives the way they wish. They can help to ensure that everyone is treated equally.

Human rights say that everyone should have...

- The freedom to believe what they want
- The freedom to say what they believe
- The right to an education
- The right to marry and start a family
- The right to privacy
- The right to take part in elections



'Being a humanist empowers me to live a meaningful life, to take a stand against inequality and injustices, and to create a better world for future generations.'

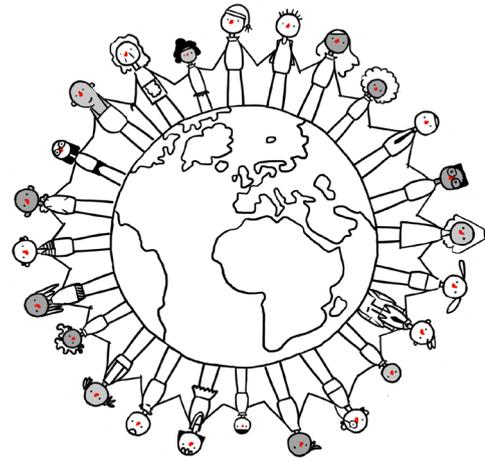


MAACHELLE FARLEY,
Humanists
Barbados



QUESTIONS:

- What motivates humanists to try to build a better world in the here and now?
- What values would humanists like to see more of in the world?
- Why might a humanist think the world is better today than in the past?



ARE HUMANISTS HAPPY WITH THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE?

Human beings have made significant progress over the past few hundred years towards a fairer and kinder society. People have better access to healthcare and live longer than ever before. More people have a say in how their countries are run. A smaller proportion of people live in poverty. More children have access to free education. Many countries have introduced human rights and freedoms for their citizens. However, these benefits are not available to everyone, and many countries still have a long way to go. For humanists, there is still a great deal of work to be done.

'Most of us try to do things that are good for ourselves and our loved ones. I do this, but then I see that millions of people who try to do things that are good for themselves and their loved ones also struggle to earn enough, to stay well enough, to look after their children and grandparents. So, this leads me to think, what can we do to make it fair? It's pointless to think I can do this on my own... I think we have to work with people in ways that are fair for all – never thinking that person is worse or better than me because of what they look like or where they were born.'

MICHAEL ROSEN,
What is humanism?

