

# The Affirmations of Humanism: A Statement of Principles

## Moral Excellence

- We believe in the common moral decencies: altruism, integrity, honesty, truthfulness, responsibility. Humanist ethics is amenable to critical, rational guidance. There are normative standards that we discover together. Moral principles are tested by their consequences.
- We believe in the worth, dignity and autonomy of the individual and the right of every human being to the greatest possible freedom compatible with the rights of others.
- We deplore divisive narrow-minded loyalties based on race, religion, gender, nationality, creed, class, sexual orientation or ethnicity.
- We believe everyone has a duty of care to all humanity.
- We believe that morality is an intrinsic part of human nature based on an understanding and a concern for others, needing no external sanction.
- We are deeply concerned with the moral education of our children. We want to nourish reason, compassion and responsibility.
- We are not against things but for positive change.
- We cultivate the arts of negotiation and compromise as a means of resolving differences and achieving mutual understanding.
- We want to protect and enhance the earth, to preserve it for future generations and to avoid inflicting needless suffering on other species.

## Democracy

- We believe in an open and pluralistic society and that democracy is the best guarantee of protecting human rights.
- We believe every human being deserves to be free from authoritarian elites and repressive majorities.
- We respect the right to privacy. Mature adults should be allowed to fulfill their aspirations, to express their sexual preferences, to exercise reproductive freedom, to have access to comprehensive and informed health-care, and to die with dignity.

## Science

- We believe in the application of reason and science to the understanding of the universe and to the solving of human problems.
- We deplore efforts to denigrate human intelligence, to seek to explain the world in supernatural terms, and to look outside nature for salvation.
- We are skeptical of untested claims to knowledge, and we are open to novel ideas and seek new departures in our thinking.

## Hope and Meaning

- We are engaged by the arts no less than by the sciences.
- We are citizens of the universe and are excited by discoveries still to be made in the cosmos.
- We affirm humanism as a realistic alternative to theologies of despair and ideologies of violence and as a source of rich personal significance and genuine satisfaction in the service to others.
- We believe in optimism rather than pessimism, hope rather than despair, learning in the place of dogma, truth instead of ignorance, joy rather than guilt or sin, tolerance in the place of fear, love instead of hatred, compassion over selfishness, beauty instead of ugliness, and reason rather than blind faith or irrationality.
- We believe in the fullest realization of the best and noblest that we are capable of as human beings
- Humor is a must. We believe healthy, good-natured humor can reveal new perspectives and helps us combat negative and dogmatic thinking.