



## Toolkit 6 - Worksheet 6c – What's It All For? Quotes From Humanists

'As for the meaning of life, I do not believe it has any. I do not at all ask what it is, but I suspect that it has none and this is a source of great comfort to me. We make of it what we can and that is all there is about it.'

Isaiah Berlin, philosopher (1909 - 1997), in a letter.

'I believe in living, the enjoyment of being, the fulfilment of our powers, the wonders of nature, the marvels of the cosmos. We don't have to bother ourselves too much about what lies behind it all. It's there. We are here. What is is. Our job is to get on with things, trying to make life better as we go.'

Claire Rayner, writer and broadcaster.

'Wear a smile and have friends; wear a scowl and have wrinkles. What do we live for if not to make the world less difficult for each other?'

Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot), 19<sup>th</sup> century novelist and journalist.

'You are an intelligent human being. Your life is valuable for its own sake. You are not second-class in the universe, deriving meaning and purpose from some other mind. You are not inherently evil - you are inherently human, possessing the positive rational potential to help make this a world of morality, peace, and joy. Trust yourself.'

Dan Barker in Losing Faith in Faith: From Preacher to Atheist (1992)

'All the great religions have a place for awe, for ecstatic transport at the wonder and beauty of creation. And it's exactly this feeling of spine-shivering awe - almost worship - this flooding of the chest with ecstatic wonder, that modern science can provide.'

Richard Dawkins, zoologist.



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'This spiritual experience came one evening as I stood looking over the green ocean towards the red sunset. A great calm came over me. I became lost in the beauty of the scene. My spirit reached out and became one with the spirit of the sea and sky. I was one with the universe beyond. I seemed to become one with all life. This experience had a profound effect on me. It came to me often when I was alone with Nature. It swept over me as I looked out to the stars at night. It was a continuous inspiration. I felt that I was more than an individual. The life of all time was within me and about me. I must serve it... I have said that this experience is my religion, yet it leaves me an agnostic... I have no sense of a personal God. My philosophy is founded on the experience I described. I cannot be other than a world citizen, identifying with all peoples.'

Fenner Brockway, politician (1888 - 1988)