

Eight Commitments of Ethical Culture



- 1. Ethics is central.**
The most central issue in our lives involves creating a more humane environment.
- 2. Ethics begins with choice.**
Creating a more humane environment begins by affirming the need to make significant choices in our lives.
- 3. We choose to treat each other as ends, not merely means.**
To enable us to be whole, in a fragmented world, we choose to treat each other as unique individuals having intrinsic worth.
- 4. We seek to act with integrity.**
Treating one another as ends requires that we learn to act with integrity. This includes keeping commitments, and being more open, honest, caring, and responsive.
- 5. We are committed to educate ourselves.**
Personal progress is possible, both in wisdom and in social life. Learning how to build ethical relationships and cultivate a humane community is a life-long endeavor.
- 6. Self-reflection and our social nature require us to shape a more humane world.**
Spiritual life is rooted in self-reflection, but can only come to full flower in community. This is because people are social, needing both primary relationships and larger supportive groups to become fully human. Our social nature requires that we reach beyond ourselves to decrease suffering and increase creativity in the world.
- 7. Democratic process is essential to our task.**
The democratic process is essential to a humane social order because it respects the worth of persons and elicits and allows a greater expression of human capacities. Democratic process also implies a commitment to shared responsibility and authority.
- 8. Life itself inspires religious response.**
Although awareness of impending death intensifies the human quest for meaning, and lends perspective to all our achievements, the mystery of life itself, the need to belong, to feel connected to the universe, and the desire for celebration and joy, are primary factors motivating human "religious" response.