

Naturalism - Dr. Joseph Chuman

Nature comprises the totally existent, and there is no reality outside of nature...“naturalism” encompasses material substance, non-material energy and forces, as well as ideas. Naturalism implies discernable regularities in nature, while disavowing incorporeal substances that transcend empirical perception. If such entities exist their “reality” remains totally unknown and are effectively otiose to human activity, except to stimulate the imagination and emotions emergent from the recognition of human finitude.

Naturalism seeks to overcome dualism and views mind as dependent upon physical substance and activity. There are no minds without bodies. Ideas emerge from humankind’s interaction with nature and the social environment.

Naturalism - Human beings are part of nature and nature is all there is. I find no evidence of supernatural or of extra-natural dimensions or forces. Conceptions of divine or spiritual dimensions are products of the remarkable imagination of humankind and, although those concepts may be useful as metaphoric images, as part of an understanding of reality they are antithetical to Ethical Humanism. In a world saturated with supernatural escape, we are the ones who are clear in our commitment to the natural world and human relational experience as the source of ultimate meaning. Our nontheism can not just be a neutrality stand but a positive statement that the traditional god idea is inadequate and foreign to Ethical Humanism.