

Concept of Worldview

Worldview: A collection of beliefs about life and the universe held by an individual or group; the lens through which the world is viewed by an individual or group; the overall perspective from which the world is interpreted.

Elements of a Worldview

The collection of beliefs within a worldview often includes views about the following:

- **human nature**—beliefs about the basic make-up of people; e.g., people are naturally good or naturally evil, outward or inward looking
- **the good life**—the goals to strive for in living one’s life; e.g., virtuous action, personal accomplishment, peace of mind, adventure, love
- **equality with others**—belief about the status of some individuals or groups in relation to others; e.g., all people are equal as opposed to some people deserve special privileges
- **responsibilities to others**—beliefs about the extent of obligations to others; e.g., care for self first or care for others first
- **relationship between the individual and the state**—beliefs about the balance between individual and collective rights; e.g., individual rights are more important than the rights of the collective (society) or vice versa
- **relationship of humans with nature**—beliefs about the way human beings should look on and act toward the environment; e.g., preserving nature is more important than using natural resources to support human activity
- **sources of ethical wisdom**—beliefs about the ultimate authority for ethical principles; e.g., religious deity, science, natural rights.