

The Ten Central Human Capabilities presented by Martha Nussbaum (1997)

“1. Life. Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely, or before one's life is so reduced as to be not worth living.

2. BODILY HEALTH. Being able to have good health, including reproductive health; to be adequately nourished; to have adequate shelter.

3. BODILY INTEGRITY. Being able to move freely from place to place; to be secure against violent assault, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.

4. SENSES, IMAGINATION, AND THOUGHT. Being able to use the senses; being able to imagine, to think, and to reason-and to do these things in a "truly human" way, a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education, including, but by no means limited to, literacy and basic mathematical and scientific training. Being able to use imagination and thought in connection with experiencing and producing expressive works and events of one's own choice, religious, literary, musical, and so forth. Being able to use one's mind in ways protected by guarantees of freedom of expression with respect to both political and artistic speech and freedom of religious exercise. Being able to have pleasurable experiences and to avoid non-beneficial pain.

5. EMOTIONS. Being able to have attachments to things and people outside ourselves; to love those who love and care for us, to grieve at their absence; in general, to love, to grieve, to experience longing, gratitude, and justified anger. Not having one's emotional development blighted by fear and anxiety. Supporting this capability means supporting forms of human association that can be shown to be crucial in their development.

6. PRACTICAL REASON. Being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life. This entails protection for the liberty of conscience and religious observance.

7. AFFILIATION.

A. FRIENDSHIP. Being able to live for and to others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship. Protecting this capability means, once again, protecting institutions that constitute such forms of affiliation, and also protecting the freedoms of assembly and political speech.

B. Respect. Having the social bases of self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. This entails provisions of non-discrimination on the basis of race, sex, ethnicity, caste, religion, and national origin.

8. OTHER SPECIES. Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature.

9. PLAY. Being able to laugh, to play, and to enjoy recreational activities.

10. CONTROL OVER ONE'S ENVIRONMENT.

A. POLITICAL. Being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one's life; having the right of political participation, protections of free speech and association.

B. MATERIAL. Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods); having the right to employment; having freedom from unwarranted search and seizure”. (Martha Nussbaum, 1997).