Humane Capitalism - The end of GROWTH?

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Discussion, Comprehension, Confusing words.



Activity One: Ask and answer.

Do you feel that your aim as a human being is to:

- ☐ Grow wiser
- ☐ Grow richer
- ☐ Become stronger
- ☐ Become fitter
- ☐ Grow spiritually

Do you agree with the following statements?

1. The aim of capitalism is to accumulate capital and extract profit. Capitalism requires growth and yet perpetual growth on a finite planet will lead to an environmental catastrophe. Therefore Capitalism has to end.

2. Capitalism can exist without growth and we need to find a new model because the alternatives have been tested and have failed - feudalism or communism. We need a new 'post growth' era where we can focus on objectives other than the accumulation of wealth.

3. Capitalism would collapse without growth and there is no other solution which would not lead to large scale chaos and the breakdown of society. Without growth we cannot have a welfare state.

(For an interesting article on this subject click here - https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/25/capitalism-economic-system-survival-earth).

Activity Two: **Read the article** paying attention to your intonation and stress and then answer the comprehension questions.

Humanity is more important than money — it's time for capitalism to get an upgrade
Jul 13, 2018 / Andrew Yang

What capitalism prioritizes, the world does more of. So how can we change capitalism so that it focuses on what humans really want and need? Entrepreneur Andrew Yang has a surprising proposal.

Think of the activities on the list below:



- Parenting or caring for loved ones
- Teaching or nurturing children
- Creating art, music, dance
- Working in struggling regions near our hometowns
- Preserving the environment
- Reading or writing for pleasure or personal growth
- Preventative health care
- Character-building for your kids, your team, yourself
- Building community connections
- Having a hobby
- Becoming involved in local government

Most of us do some or many of these things — and usually, we don't do them for money. What these activities add up to is what we might call a normal life, a well-rounded life of care and character, rich with community and creativity and balance. When you do these things, you don't think of yourself as participating in capitalism.

But the fact is, capitalism moves and energizes the modern world. And what capitalism values, our world does more of; what it doesn't, we do less of. Many of us feel like the activities of a normal life are becoming harder and harder to accomplish. So the question becomes: In a system where capitalism is a prime determinant of value, how can we preserve what we truly value as humans, what matters to us beyond money?

Imagine a new type of capitalist economy that's geared towards maximizing human well-being and fulfillment. These goals and GDP would sometimes go hand-in-hand, but there would be times when they wouldn't be aligned. For example, an airline removing passengers who'd already boarded a plane in order to maximize its profitability would be good for capital but bad for people. The same goes for a drug company charging extortionate rates for a life-saving drug.

But what if this idea was repeated over and over again throughout the economy? Let's call it human-centered capitalism — or human capitalism for short.



Human capitalism would have a few core tenets:
1. Humanity is more important than money.
2. The unit of an economy is each person, not each dollar.
3. Markets exist to serve our common goals and values.

In business, there's a saying that "what gets measured gets managed for," so we need to start measuring different things. The concepts of GDP and economic progress didn't exist until the Great Depression. However, when economist Simon Kuznets introduced it to Congress in 1934, he cautioned, "The welfare of a nation can … scarcely be inferred from a measurement of national income as defined above." It's almost like he saw income inequality and bad jobs coming.

Our economic system must shift to focus on bettering the lot of the average person. Instead of having our humanity subverted to serve the marketplace, capitalism has to be made to serve human ends and goals.

- In addition to GDP and job statistics, the government could adopt measurements like:
- Average physical fitness and mental health
- Quality of infrastructure
- Proportion of the elderly in quality care
- Marriage rates and success
- Global temperature variance and sea levels
- Re-acclimation of incarcerated individuals and rates of criminality
- Artistic and cultural vibrancy
- Dynamism and mobility
- Social and economic equity
- Civic engagement
- Cybersecurity

(Source - to read the rest of this article:https://ideas.ted.com/humanity-is-more-important-than-money-its-time-for-capitalism-to-get-an-upgrade/)

QUESTIONS:

1. How does the author describe a well-rounded life? Think of a synonym for 'well-rounded'.
2. What do you need for your life to be well-rounded?
3. What would a new type of capitalist economy be geared towards?
4. When was the concept of GDP first introduced?
5. What does the author think that governments should measure about from GDP?

Activity Three - **Making People happy Versus Doing business to Make Profit.**

Let's have a look at a confusing area - **MAKE vs DO**:

We use DO for actions, obligations and repetitive tasks

We use MAKE for creating or producing something, and for actions you choose to do

DO generally refers to the action itself, and MAKE usually refers to the result.
Example - When you make dinner. You eat the result.

MAKE with the themes - (food, money, relationship, communication)

MAKE a phone call
MAKE a speech
MAKE confession
MAKE money
MAKE a difference
MAKE a decision
MAKE noise
MAKE a move
MAKE progress
MAKE an exception
Make a mistake



DO with the themes - (work/study, taking care of your body, general good or bad actions)

DO business
DO work
DO housework
DO homework
DO good
DO someone a favor
DO nothing / something / everything / anything
DO your best

Earning some money versus not having any money. Here's another confusing pair:

SOME vs ANY

In general, SOME is used in positive sentences and ANY is used in negative sentences and questions.

- ✓ I got some more information from the company
- ✓ I am going to have my own company some day
- ✓ There are some people waiting in the office for you



- ✓ I didn't get any information about the new project
- ✓ Did you hear anything strange in the meeting?
- ✓ Does anyone know the solution to this problem?

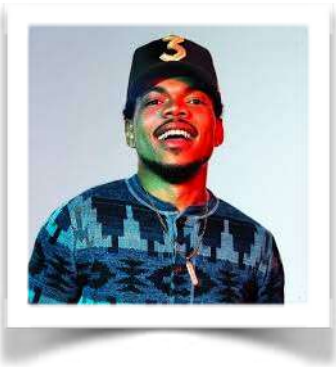
- ✓ Situation where the rules are broken
- ✓ We can use SOME in questions when offering / requesting
- ✓ e.g. Would you like some more time to complete the project?

We use ANY in positive sentences when mean 'it doesn't matter'
e.g. You can call me any time

Activity Four - Fill the gaps in the text:

We all go about our daily tasks, …… the best we can, trying to …… ends meet. Sometimes we stop to help others but mostly we don't find …… time for this. We are constantly being pulled in different directions and we don't manage to …… time for those we love, let alone to …… someone a favor or generally …… good. We need to ask ourselves - can we …… anything to change this world we are in? Can we find some kind of a way forward on our individual level to …… the world a less selfish place?

Activity Five - Listening comprehension.
Listen to the song and read the lyrics.
Then say which of the statements is relevant to the song lyrics as far as you understand:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFnEFrv9ThY
Chance The Rapper - First World Problems (ft. Daniel Caesar) - Lyrics



STATEMENTS: Relevant to the song or not? **Yes or No**…

- ☐ Life goes on an you can't stop it.
- ☐ I'm tired of working all the time.
- ☐ Small children should not wear Diapers.
- ☐ There are problems in society.
- ☐ We are a pretending to be satisfied by material things.
- ☐ The songwriter is aware of suffering in his country.
- ☐ We should all walk around naked to appreciate the simple things in life.
- ☐ Kids need their fathers' time and attention not their money.
- ☐ The songwriter does not believe in the American Dream.
- ☐ The songwriter is nostalgic about the past.
- ☐ His daily comfort prevents him from acting to help with social problems in his community.
- ☐ African Americans still have to work hard to get ahead in society and are not sure to.

Activity Five - Role Plays

A. You are a big business owner and you have to implement a big transition in your company. You explain to a group of managers that they will be let go. They react badly and one of them tells you exactly what he thinks. You try to explain that the company has to transform in order to continue to be profitable.

B. You are a lord and you are talking to a serf on your property telling him that he has to move out of his cottage because you are moving another family in there as they have more sons to work the land. He will be destitute and has a family to support. He tries to explain but you explain that you have no choice because the farm will be much more productive with more farm hands to help with the work.

C. You are a factory owner in Bangladesh. You are angry with a group of child workers as they are producing less jeans than they should. You threaten them. One of them tries to stand up to you but you explain that the client needs the price to go down and so they need to be more productive in the factory.

