

# We should embrace nihilism for growth

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



## NIHILISTIC PERSPECTIVE

“ Nihilism is the belief that all values are baseless and that nothing can be known or communicated. It is often associated with extreme pessimism and a radical skepticism that condemns existence. A true nihilist would believe in nothing, have no loyalties and no purpose other than, perhaps, an impulse to destroy” (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/n/nihilism.htm>). In a nihilist perspective, there are no beliefs in dogma, religion and other socially constructed norms and standards. Nihilists question the set of universally made way of thinking and that there is nothing real in this world.

## SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

“ Social constructs are institutionalized entity or artifacts in a social system, invented or constructed by participants in a particular culture or society that exist because people agree to behave as if it exist, or agree to follow certain conventional rules, or behave as if such agreement or rules existed” ([wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org)). Social constructs are created entities in which people or groups of people perceived them to be true. Social constructs are perceived realities that are put into a convention to be turned into social beliefs. Some examples of social constructs are religion, morality, sexuality, class and many more.

These social constructs play a major role in people’s daily lives. Social constructs became an integral part of people’s daily lives. These became inevitable realities of their existence. Basically, how people act are based on social constructions. Social constructions dictate the everyday lives of people. Social constructs determine how people will act and what their

pattern of actions is. These social constructs are the perceived rightness of actions in a particular given situation. Therefore, people's lives are controlled and move by social constructs.

Social constructs evolve and changes as time pass by. It depends on the richness of thought of human beings. The minds of human beings are very rich and full of possibilities. People have the capability of evolving one system of thought into another. A particular social construct is not permanent and will not last forever because it only depends on the people who were the ones who constructed them. Social constructs are dynamic because the minds of people are also dynamic. What most people are experiencing now may just become a history of tomorrow.

#### THE WORLD AS A REALM OF MEANING AND CAN BE DISCLOSED BY NIHILISM

For Heidegger, he viewed the world as a realm of meanings and possibilities. These possibilities are for Da-sein to discover and the meanings are for Da-sein to assimilate. This world for Heidegger is where the Da-sein is situated and part of the facticities given to the Da-sein. This world is for the Da-sein to discover and understand. The world gives meaning to the existence of man and man is to exhaust these meanings or possibilities. Hence, the world is where the Da-sein interacts and for him to assimilate.

This word "aletheia" describes the world for Heidegger. "Aletheia" means revelation and concealment which constitutes the world's disclosedness to man. The world is the realm of meanings for man that man is always in constant assimilation. Even if it reveals itself to man, it also conceals something to man and that the task of man to assimilate and understand is a

never-ending task and that Heidegger called man as “ always already understanding the world”.

The word “ always” signifies the infinity of understanding that man is task to reveal the world, the never-ending task of correlation and understanding. Man as Da-sein is the very nature and function of man as a being who is thrown into this world. “ Da” means there and “ sein” means being. Da-sein is openness to the world and the readiness of man to exhaust and assimilate. Da-sein is the there of being of man, the very thrown ness of man into a particular context. To understand more of man as Da-sein, we will tackle on the succeeding parts the functions of being a Da-sein.

According to the great Heidegger, attunement is man’s mood or state of mind in which affects his perception of reality. He viewed man as always in the mood and is always ready to understand reality. Man as being thrown into this world, attunement is already embedded in his being. This attunement as already embedded in the being of man girds man to understand. Given the facticity of Da-sein as being-in-a-world, he is always in the mood to seize reality or to be conscious of reality and thus constituting man’s openness to the world. Da-sein as the there of being is always situated in the world thus, a temporal being.

This situated ness of man gives him ample opportunity to correlate with the world and to fulfill his very nature as an understanding being who is already attuned to do so. Man becomes conscious by virtue of interaction, which is the very process of understanding for Heidegger. To correlate with the world is to exhaust its possibilities, to assimilate its meaning. Through interaction, man becomes conscious of reality, becomes conscious of meaning. Reality is

already in the realm of meanings, which constitutes the world, and it is only for man that he can be conscious of and that is by virtue of correlating with the world.

To question dogma and religion and other social constructs can be a tool for better understanding of reality. As discussed, Heidegger emphasized that man can slowly reveal the reality of beings by correlating with the world which is the world of meaning and possibilities. The world has its own meaning. The nihilistic view in its proper use, such as not totally for destruction but of finding the truth behind the world, it can open man's eye to the real meaning of this world. Man as Da-sein in being a nihilist can be able to arrive at a better truth regarding the world. The world still has a lot to give in man's understanding of it that is why dogmas and principles of today must be questioned because it is still not in its absolute state.

#### NIHILISM AS A TOOL TO A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF REALITY

Man's life is full of socially constructed norms and beliefs that are the ones dictating what he ought to do and act. There is religion that dictates morality and there is government that dictates who are enemies and not such as who are terrorists and not terrorists. A society is comprised of many ideas and perspectives that battles to gain monopoly. Man is put in the center of contrasting views.

With the birth of nihilism, there came an opportunity to arrive in a truth wherein wrong dogma and beliefs can be erased and replaced with better ones. Nihilism can give good effects if not put in its extreme nature of destruction. Questioning beliefs and dogma is a healthy process to

undertake. Through questioning, man can slowly reveal to himself the true essence of his existence. Questioning must also not be intertwined with destruction because it can be a truly great means for development and better understanding.

" I hope to bring some balance and clarity to a number of realities that seem to attract a great deal of misunderstanding: [1] the very serious issues of violence in Islam [including recent Muslim violence]; [2] the abhorrence that many Muslims have of violence; [stereotypes of Islam and Muslims as inherently violent]; and [4] the larger context of violence in our world [not just the Muslim world], much of which is woven into the fabric of our society in such a way that we may not even regard it as our own violence" (Hussain, 2006). The misunderstandings such as looking as a Muslim to be violent can be corrected by the nihilist perspective. People can arrive to a certain truth that not all Muslims are violent and stereotyping can be erased.

#### NIHILISM AS A TOOL TO END CHAOS AND VIOLENCE IN THIS WORLD

The chaotic world is brought about by the differences in beliefs and norms and even in the practices of different religions. These are products of social constructions. With different beliefs and principles and with the devotion to such beliefs and principles, it brings chaos and even to violence. People seem to impose their own beliefs to other people which also have their own set of beliefs. By imposing one's beliefs, it creates an atmosphere of competition that gives tensions and chaos to this world.

Nihilism can be a tool to end all chaos and find peace in this world. People, in there different perspectives, can look at the common ground of their

different beliefs. To question their own beliefs is a healthy process and even comparing their own beliefs to others is also a healthy process. This is an act of nihilism. People will not destroy their principles and beliefs but rather, developing it to be better set of beliefs and principles.

One example can be seen in the realm of religion where we can see differences but looking at the greater reality of it, there are much more similarities that can be used in arriving to a better belief, a belief that can be bannered by all people from different contexts. Even the difference of science and religion, if nihilistic perspective can be used in a proper way of dialectics and questioning, people may arrive at a certain truth that science and religion has its common ground and that one will not be an opposition of the other.

## CONCLUSION

The world is a realm of meaning and possibilities and is plague with socially constructed beliefs and principles. With the birth of nihilism, which is a perspective that most of a time attributed to destruction, the world may find better understanding in its hand. By the method of questioning which is a healthy process, people can arrive to better understanding of reality and the very principles and beliefs that they believe. Therefore, we should embrace nihilism.

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