

A Theory of Human Motivation

The 'physiological' needs.—The needs that are usually taken as the starting point for motivation theory are the so called physiological drives.[...]

It should be pointed out again that any of the physiological needs and the consummatory behavior involved with them serve as channels for all sorts of other needs as well. That is to say, the person who thinks he is hungry may actually be seeking more for comfort, or dependence, than for vitamins or proteins. [...]



Abraham Harold Maslow

April 1, 1908 – June 8, 1970

At once other (and 'higher') needs emerge and these, rather than physiological hungers, dominate the organism. And when these in turn are satisfied, again new (and still 'higher') needs emerge and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency. [...]

The safety needs.—If the physiological needs are relatively well gratified, there then emerges a new set of needs, which we may categorize roughly as the safety needs. All that has been said of the physiological needs is equally true, although in lesser degree, of these desires. [...]

The love needs.—If both the physiological and the safety needs are fairly well gratified, then there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs, and the whole cycle already described will repeat itself with this new center. Now the person will feel keenly, as never before, the absence of friends, or a sweetheart, or a wife, or children. [...] One thing that must be stressed at this point is that love is not synonymous with sex. [...] Also not to be overlooked is the fact that the love needs involve both giving and receiving love. [...]

The esteem needs.—All people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others. By firmly based self-esteem, we mean that which is soundly based upon real capacity, achievement and respect from others. [...]

The need for self-actualization.—Even if all these needs are satisfied, we may still often (if not always) expect that a new discontent and restlessness will soon develop, unless the individual is doing what he is fitted for. A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, he must be. This need we may call self-actualization. [...] The specific form that these needs will take will of course vary greatly from person to person. In one individual it may take the form of the desire to be an ideal mother, in another it may be expressed athletically, and in still another it may be expressed in painting pictures or in inventions. [...]

Vocabulary help:

Consummatory: A response or act that ends goal-directed behaviour

Prepotency: Superiority in power, force or influence

Gratified: gratify – give someone satisfaction

Keenly: In an eager or enthusiastic manner

Pathological: Involved or caused by a physical or mental disease

Discontent: To be unhappy with the current situation

Restlessness: Inability to rest or relax

Tasks:

1. Read the text and identify all needs Maslow points out.
2. Draw a pyramid of the needs below (You can be as creative as you like). Make sure you leave space to write in it.
3. Fill in the needs from the text into your pyramid with a short description of the need.