## The expanded hierarchy of needs

It is important to note that Maslow's (1943, 1954) five-stage model has been expanded to include cognitive and aesthetic needs (Maslow, 1970a) and later transcendence needs (Maslow, 1970b).

Changes to the original five-stage model are highlighted and include a seven-stage model and an eight-stage model; both developed during the 1960s and 1970s.

1. Biological and physiological needs - air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.

2. Safety needs - protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.

3. Love and belongingness needs - friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliating, being part of a group (family, friends, work).

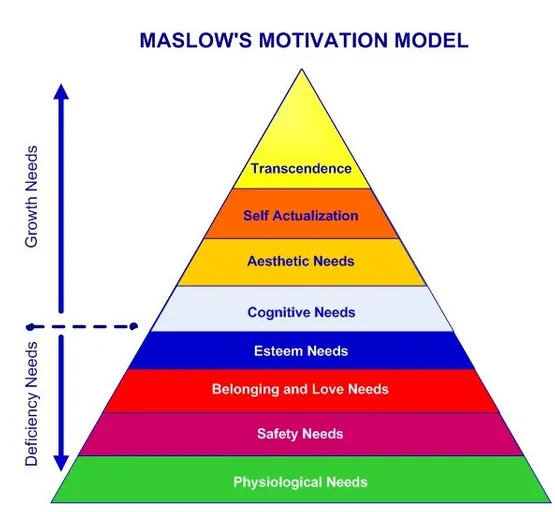
4. Esteem needs - which Maslow classified into two categories: (i) esteem for oneself (dignity, achievement, mastery, independence) and (ii) the need to be accepted and valued by others (e.g., status, prestige).

5. Cognitive needs - knowledge and understanding, curiosity, exploration, need for meaning and predictability.

6. Aesthetic needs - appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form, etc.

7. Self-actualization needs - realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. A desire “to become everything one is capable of becoming”(Maslow, 1987, p. 64).

8. Transcendence needs - A person is motivated by values which transcend beyond the personal self (e.g., mystical experiences and certain experiences with nature, aesthetic experiences, sexual experiences, service to others, the pursuit of science, religious faith, etc.).



## Self-actualization

Instead of focusing on [psychopathology](https://www.simplypsychology.org/abnormal-psychology.html) and what goes wrong with people, Maslow (1943) formulated a more positive account of human behavior which focused on what goes right. He was interested in human potential, and how we fulfill that potential.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow (1943, 1954) stated that human motivation is based on people seeking fulfillment and change through personal growth. Self-actualized people are those who were fulfilled and doing all they were capable of.

The growth of [self-actualization](https://www.simplypsychology.org/self-actualization.html) (Maslow, 1962) refers to the need for personal growth and discovery that is present throughout a person’s life. For Maslow, a person is always 'becoming' and never remains static in these terms. In self-actualization, a person comes to find a meaning to life that is important to them.

As each individual is unique, the motivation for self-actualization leads people in different directions (Kenrick et al., 2010). For some people self-actualization can be achieved through creating works of art or literature, for others through sport, in the classroom, or within a corporate setting.

Maslow (1962) believed self-actualization could be measured through the concept of peak experiences. This occurs when a person experiences the world totally for what it is, and there are feelings of euphoria, joy, and wonder.

It is important to note that self-actualization is a continual process of becoming rather than a perfect state one reaches of a 'happy ever after' (Hoffman, 1988).

Maslow offers the following description of self-actualization:

'It refers to the person’s desire for self-fulfillment, namely, to the tendency for him to become actualized in what he is potentially.

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' (Maslow, 1943, p. 382–383).

## Characteristics of self-actualized people

Although we are all, theoretically, capable of self-actualizing, most of us will not do so, or only to a limited degree. Maslow (1970) estimated that only two percent of people would reach the state of self-actualization.

He was especially interested in the characteristics of people whom he considered to have achieved their potential as individuals.

By studying 18 people he considered to be self-actualized (including Abraham Lincoln and Albert Einstein) Maslow (1970) identified 15 characteristics of a self-actualized person.

### ****Characteristics of self-actualizers:****

1. They perceive reality efficiently and can tolerate uncertainty;

2. Accept themselves and others for what they are;

3. Spontaneous in thought and action;

4. Problem-centered (not self-centered);

5. Unusual sense of humor;

6. Able to look at life objectively;

7. Highly creative;

8. Resistant to enculturation, but not purposely unconventional;

9. Concerned for the welfare of humanity;

10. Capable of deep appreciation of basic life-experience;

11. Establish deep satisfying interpersonal relationships with a few people;

12. Peak experiences;

13. Need for privacy;

14. Democratic attitudes;

15. Strong moral/ethical standards.

### ****Behavior leading to self-actualization:****

(a) Experiencing life like a child, with full absorption and concentration;

(b) Trying new things instead of sticking to safe paths;

(c) Listening to your own feelings in evaluating experiences instead of the voice of tradition, authority or the majority;

(d) Avoiding pretense ('game playing') and being honest;

(e) Being prepared to be unpopular if your views do not coincide with those of the majority;

(f) Taking responsibility and working hard;

(g) Trying to identify your defenses and having the courage to give them up.

The characteristics of self-actualizers and the behaviors leading to self-actualization are shown in the list above.  Although people achieve self-actualization in their own unique way, they tend to share certain characteristics.  However, self-actualization is a matter of degree, 'There are no perfect human beings' (Maslow,1970a, p. 176).

It is not necessary to display all 15 characteristics to become self-actualized, and not only self-actualized people will display them.

Maslow did not equate self-actualization with perfection. Self-actualization merely involves achieving one's potential. Thus, someone can be silly, wasteful, vain and impolite, and still self-actualize. Less than two percent of the population achieve self-actualization.

## Educational applications

Maslow's (1962) hierarchy of needs theory has made a major contribution to teaching and classroom management in schools. Rather than reducing behavior to a [response in the environment](https://www.simplypsychology.org/operant-conditioning.html), Maslow (1970a) adopts a holistic approach to education and learning.

Maslow looks at the complete physical, emotional, social, and intellectual qualities of an individual and how they impact on learning.

Applications of Maslow's hierarchy theory to the work of the classroom teacher are obvious. Before a student's cognitive needs can be met, they must first fulfill their basic physiological needs.

For example, a tired and hungry student will find it difficult to focus on learning. Students need to feel emotionally and physically safe and accepted within the classroom to progress and reach their full potential.

Maslow suggests students must be shown that they are valued and respected in the classroom, and the teacher should create a supportive environment. Students with a [low self-esteem](https://www.simplypsychology.org/self-esteem.html) will not progress academically at an optimum rate until their self-esteem is strengthened.