

The Humanistic Approach

Humanistic psychology expanded its influence throughout the 1970s and the 1980s. Its impact can be understood in terms of three major areas:

- 1) It offered a **new set of values** for approaching an understanding of human nature and the human condition.
- 2) It offered an expanded horizon of **methods of inquiry** in the study of human behavior.
- 3) It offered a broader range of more effective methods in the **professional practice of psychotherapy**.

Assumptions:

- Humans have **free will**; this is called **personal agency**.
- All individuals are unique and have an innate (inborn) **drive to achieve their maximum potential**.
- A proper understanding of human behavior can only be achieved by studying humans – **not animals**.

Maslow's Childhood

- Schultz & Schultz in their book, Theories of Personality (2016), describes Maslow's **painful, lonely childhood** under the heading "**Maslow: Alone in the World.**"
- Maslow's mother was **cruel, almost psychopathic, and punished him for the slightest misdeed.** He said he never experienced any love or affection from her.
- **The lack of love and security in his childhood** made Maslow acutely aware of the **human need for affection and belonging**
- Maslow's father was **frequently absent from home, spent much of his time with friends, drinking and womanizing, and showed little interest in his children's lives.**

- Third Force (1st force: Psychodynamic Theory, 2nd force: Behavioral Theory, 3rd force: Humanistic Theory)

- Only emotionally disturb side of the human nature (Psychoanalysis)

- Subjective reality is the primary guide for human behavior.

- Its study of Strengths & virtues (PP)

- Psychology should study the individual case (**idiographic**) rather than the average performance of groups (**nomothetic**).

- The **whole person** should be studied in their environmental context.

- The goal of psychology is to formulate **a complete description of what it means to be a human being** (e.g. the importance of language, emotions, and how humans seek to find meaning in their lives).

Methodology: Qualitative Research; Case Studies; Informal Interviews; Q-Sort Method (for congruence); Content Analysis; Phenomenological Framework

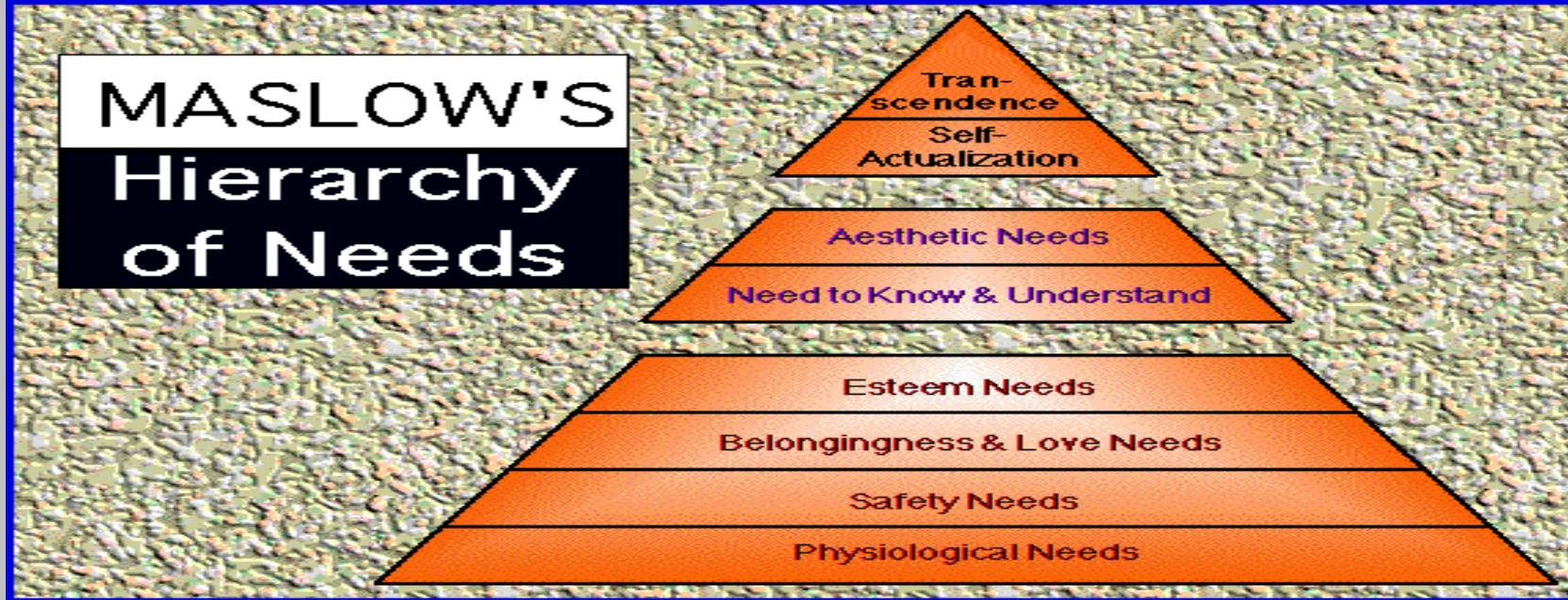
Maslow`s Hierarchy of Needs



- Third Force (Humanistic) : Psychoanalysis as first force & Behaviorism as second force
- **Theory of Human Motivation:** The basis of Maslow's theory is that **human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs**, and that certain **lower needs** (deficiency needs) need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied.
- Hierarchy of Needs



Hierarchy of Needs



- Maslow recognized that **not all personality types** followed this hierarchy.
- Suggested that flow through the hierarchy can occur at any level at any time and many times simultaneously.
- **Growth motivation** (in contrast to deficit motivation), **being needs** (or **B-needs**, in contrast to **D-needs**), and **self-actualization**.

- 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.
- **Biological and physiological needs** – air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep, etc.
- **Safety needs** – protection from elements, security, order, law, stability, freedom from fear.
- **Love and belongingness needs** – friendship, intimacy, trust, and acceptance, receiving and giving affection and love. Affiliating, being part of a group (family, friends, work).
- **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).
- **Cognitive needs** – knowledge and understanding, curiosity, exploration, need for meaning and predictability.
- **Aesthetic needs** – appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form, etc.
- **Self-actualization needs** – realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth, and peak experiences.
- **Transcendence needs** – A person is motivated by values that transcend beyond the personal self.

- **Cognitive Needs (Maslow's Later Additions):** Maslow added to the hierarchy two sets of needs that had been neglected in his early formulation—the **cognitive needs** (to know and understand) and **the aesthetic needs** (for beauty and order)

Definition: Cognitive needs are the **desire to know, understand, explore, and make sense of the environment.**

They are **not physiological or emotional**, but **intellectual motives** that drive curiosity, learning, and comprehension.

- **Nature:** These needs appear after basic safety and belongingness needs are partially met. They are **innate** — humans have a natural drive toward knowledge. Frustration of cognitive needs leads to confusion, distrust, and meaninglessness.
- People need to know and understand their world; curiosity is itself a basic human motive.

- **Cognitive Needs to personality growth and integration:**
- **Self-Actualization Connection:**
 - Understanding oneself and the world is essential for realizing potential.
 - Knowledge brings order, coherence, and meaning—central to healthy personality.
- **Personality Traits:**
 - High curiosity and openness to experience (Big Five: **Openness**) align with cognitive needs.
 - People driven by cognitive needs tend to be creative, autonomous, and introspective—hallmarks of **self-actualizers** (Maslow's personality profile).
- **Pathology of Cognitive Deprivation:**
 - Lack of opportunities to learn or explore leads to rigidity, fear of change, and dependency.
 - Schultz notes: "Frustration of the desire to know may result in skepticism, mistrust, and loss of meaning." (*p. 324*)

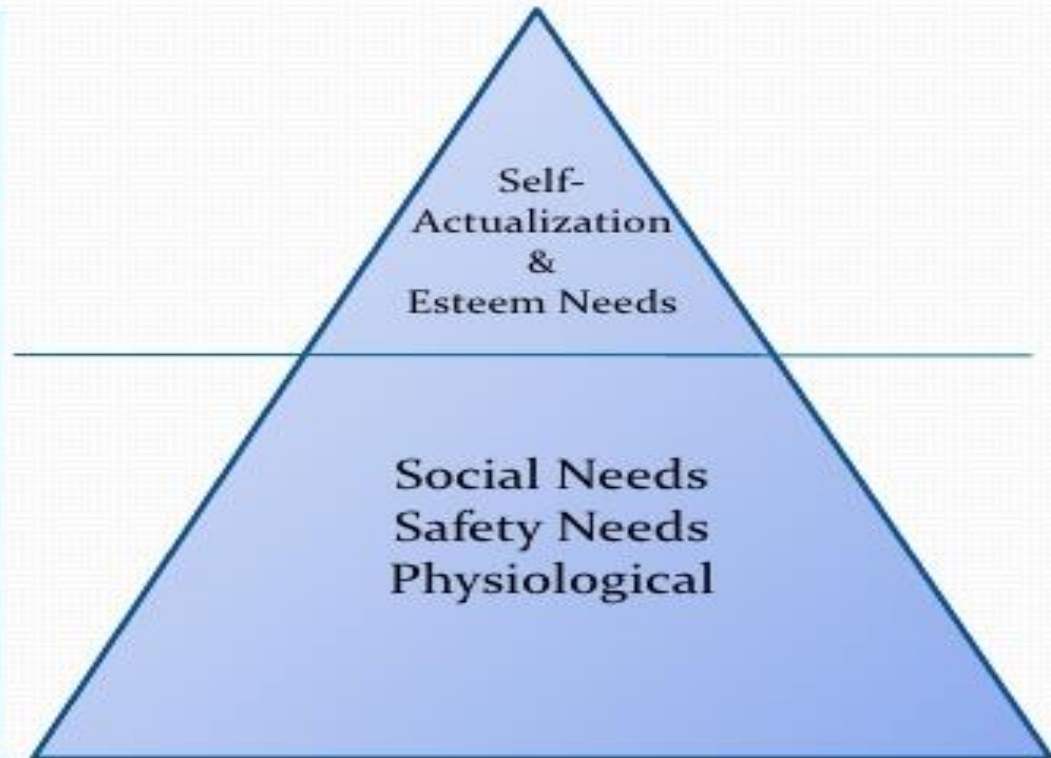
Hersberg's Model of Motivation

Two-Factor Theory:

Hygiene vs. Motivational Factors

Achievement Growth Potential The Work Itself	Motivational Factors
Recognition Advancement Responsibility	
Interpersonal Relations	
Job Security Company Policy	Hygiene or Maintenance Factors
Working Conditions Salary	

Compare to Maslow



Characteristics of Needs

Characteristic	Explanation (from Schultz)
1. Needs are arranged in a hierarchy.	Lower needs must be at least partially satisfied before higher needs emerge. Deficiency in basic needs dominates behavior until fulfilled.
2. Lower needs are stronger and more urgent.	Physiological and safety needs exert the greatest influence because they are vital to survival. Higher needs (esteem, self-actualization) are weaker and more easily repressed.
3. Higher needs appear later in development.	Biological needs emerge in infancy; social and self-actualizing motives appear in adolescence or adulthood.
4. Satisfaction of a need is only temporary.	Once a need is met, it loses motivational power and the next higher need becomes dominant.
5. Needs are universal but the means of satisfaction differ culturally.	All humans share the same basic needs, yet the expressions vary across societies.
6. Needs are interrelated rather than strictly separate.	Even while a dominant need guides behavior, parts of several needs operate simultaneously.
7. Higher needs contribute more to psychological growth.	Lower needs prevent illness; higher ones promote health and growth. Self-actualization represents full human potential.
8. Deprivation of lower needs produces pathology.	Chronic frustration of basic needs can cause maladjustment, anxiety, or neurosis.

Maslow's Conditions for Achieving Self-Actualization

- Maslow believed that few people reach true self-actualization because **certain internal and external conditions** must be met. Schultz lists these as *“conditions necessary for self-actualization”* or *“criteria for self-actualizing people.”*

1. Freedom from Societal or Self-Imposed Constraints: Individuals must be free to express themselves honestly and act according to their own nature.

- Conformity, fear of disapproval, and rigid cultural norms block growth.
Example: Artists or scientists flourish in environments that allow experimentation.

2. No Overpowering Basic Needs: Physiological and safety needs must be largely satisfied.

- Chronic **insecurity, hunger, or fear** prevents higher motivation.
- *Example:* A person struggling daily for food rarely contemplates meaning or purpose.

3. Security in Love and Belongingness: A person must have received genuine affection and acceptance, especially in early life. This emotional grounding fosters confidence to pursue individuality. *Maslow's interpretation: people deprived of love may crave approval rather than growth.*

4. Realistic Knowledge of Self and Others: The individual must have **accurate self-perception** and see others as they truly are. Self-deception or denial prevents authentic growth.

“To be self-actualized is to know and accept one’s nature.” — Schultz summarizing Maslow.

5. Openness to Experience: Self-actualizers are **spontaneous, accepting, and creative**. They approach life with **freshness, wonder, and curiosity** rather than rigidity.

They experience “peak experiences” — moments of total involvement and unity.

6. Focus on Growth Rather Than Deficiency: Motivation must shift from **deficiency needs (D-needs)** to **growth needs (B-values)** such as truth, beauty, and justice. This transition marks the movement toward self-actualization.

Maslow called these “Being values” or “Metamotives.”

7. Choice and Commitment to Growth: At every life decision, people can choose **safety** or **growth**. Self-actualization requires choosing growth **repeatedly**, even when uncomfortable.

Maslow: “Growth must be chosen again and again; fear must be overcome again and again.”

Characteristics of Self-Actualizing People

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Efficient Perception of Reality✓ Acceptance of self and others✓ Spontaneity, Simplicity, Naturalness✓ Focus of Problem Centering✓ Detachment: The need for Privacy✓ Autonomy: Independent of culture & Environment✓ Peak Experiences✓ Deep Interpersonal relations✓ Democratic Values and attitude | <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Discrimination: Means and Ends, Good and Evil✓ Philosophical, Unhostile sense of Humor✓ Creativity: Resistance to enculturation (nonconformists in the best sense) - the gradual acquisition of the characteristics and norms of a culture or group by a person, another culture, etc.✓ Imperfections Values (acceptance)✓ Resolution of Dichotomies |
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Category	Description
1. Realistic perception of reality	They perceive reality accurately, without distortion, and can accept the good and the bad aspects of people and situations.
2. Acceptance of self, others, and nature	They accept themselves and others as they are — with all their shortcomings — without unnecessary guilt or shame.
3. Spontaneity and simplicity	They are natural, spontaneous, and uncomplicated in thought and behavior; not pretentious or artificial.
4. Problem-centering	Their focus is often outside themselves — they dedicate themselves to causes or missions beyond personal gain.
5. Autonomy and independence	They maintain inner detachment from cultural and social pressures, relying on their own growth and values.
6. Continued freshness of appreciation	They are able to appreciate the simple experiences of life repeatedly with a sense of awe, joy, and wonder.
7. Peak experiences	They have deep moments of ecstasy, unity, and transcendence — intense but temporary moments of self-loss and connection with greater reality.
8. Gemeinschaftsgefühl (Social interest)	They feel a deep sense of kinship, empathy, and compassion for all humanity; concerned for others' welfare.
9. Deep interpersonal relationships	They form few but profound relationships based on mutual growth, honesty, and love rather than superficial bonds.
10. Democratic character structure	They respect all people regardless of class, race, or education; open to learning from anyone

- **Meta-needs (self actualized person) and meta-pathologies (e.g. economic depression or a war, or are living in rural poverty etc.)**

- ✓ Truth, rather than dishonesty.
- ✓ Goodness, rather than evil.
- ✓ Beauty, not ugliness or vulgarity.
- ✓ Unity, wholeness, and transcendence of opposites, not arbitrariness or forced choices.
- ✓ Aliveness, not deadness or **the mechanization of life.**
- ✓ Uniqueness, not bland uniformity.
- ✓ Perfection and necessity, not sloppiness, inconsistency, or accident.
- ✓ Completion, rather than incompleteness.

- ✓ Justice and order, not injustice and lawlessness.
- ✓ Simplicity, not unnecessary complexity.
- ✓ Richness, not environmental impoverishment (poverty).
- ✓ Effortlessness, not strain (pressure)
- ✓ Playfulness, not grim, humorless, drudgery.
- ✓ Self-sufficiency, not dependency.
- ✓ Meaningfulness, rather than senselessness.

Points to Discuss:

- Exceptions in the hierarchy of needs.
- Desire to know and understand the Aesthetic needs
- Deprived Needs vs. Growth need
- Why self actualization is not universal? - **Jonah complex**
- The Jonah complex is an abnormal syndrome **defined as the fear of being or doing one's best.**
- Probably all of us have **some timidity (fearfulness) about seeking perfection or greatness.**
- People allow **false humility (modesty)** to suppress creativity, and therefore they prevent themselves from becoming self-actualizing person.

- **Eupsychia** is Maslow's *ideal society* — one populated by **self-actualizing individuals** who live by **Being-values (B-values)** such as truth, goodness, beauty, and justice.
- It represents the **extension of self-actualization from the individual to society**.
- Maslow envisioned a culture that would nurture growth, creativity, and self-fulfillment rather than anxiety and repression.”
- **Eupsychian Management:** Maslow applied his concept of self-actualization to **industry and management**, proposing that businesses could be more productive if they met their employees' higher needs.
 - practiced **human-centered management** — giving workers autonomy, respect, and purpose.
- * *Ashrams*-places for personal growth

Transpersonal Psychology (fourth force): **Transpersonal psychology** is a field or school of thought in psychology centered on the spiritual aspects of human life. The term transpersonal psychology was first introduced in the 1960s by psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Victor Frankl. This field utilizes psychological methods and theories to examine the spiritual subject matter.

- “**Metamotivation** refers to the motives of self-actualizing people — the motives beyond the basic needs that drive the average person.”
— *Schultz & Schultz, Theories of Personality (2016, p. 327)*
- Maslow coined *metamotivation* (from Greek *meta* = beyond) to describe the **higher-level drives of self-actualizers** — those who have already satisfied deficiency needs and now seek to fulfill their “**Being**” values (**B-values**).
- Ordinary people are motivated by **deficiency (D) needs** → removing deficits (hunger, insecurity, lack of love).
- **Self-actualizers** are motivated by **Being (B) needs** → growth, meaning, purpose, and values.
- Thus, **metamotivation = motivation for growth**, not for lack-reduction.

Educational Implications

- Teach people to be authentic.
- Teach people to become world citizens.
- Help people to discover their vocation in life.
- Teach people that life is precious, there is joy in life.
- We must accept the person and help them find their inner self.
- We must see that basic needs are satisfied.
- We should refresh consciousness.
- Teach people that controls are good, complete abandon (wildness) is bad
- Teach people to transcend the trifling (small) problems and tackle the serious problems of life.
- Teach people to make good choices.

Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)

- The Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) was developed by **Everett L. Shostrom (1964)**.
- It is based on Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization and his concept of **Being (B) motivation versus Deficiency (D) motivation**.
- The POI measures how closely an individual's values and behaviors match the characteristics of **self-actualizing people described by Maslow**.
- **Purpose:** To **assess the degree of self-actualization** in a person — that is, how “growth-oriented,” autonomous, and inner-directed they are in daily living.
- **Structure:** Contains **150 forced-choice items**.
- Produces **two major scores** and **ten sub-scales**.
- Each item asks the respondent to choose between two statements representing **different life orientations** (e.g., inner-directed vs. outer-directed).

Sub-Scales (10 in total): Each reflects traits associated with self-actualization as per Maslow

Sub-scale	Description
1. Self-actualizing value (SAV)	Valuing growth and self-fulfillment over status or material success.
2. Existentiality (Ex)	Flexibility and acceptance of life’s uncertainty.
3. Feeling reactivity (Fr)	Awareness of one’s own emotions and sensitivity to feelings.
4. Spontaneity (S)	Natural, genuine expression without pretense.
5. Self-regard (Sr)	Positive self-acceptance and self-esteem.
6. Self-acceptance (Sa)	Willingness to recognize strengths and weaknesses without guilt.
7. Nature of man – constructive (Nc)	Viewing human nature as essentially good.
8. Synergy (Sy)	Ability to reconcile opposites (e.g., work and play, self and others).
9. Acceptance of aggression (A)	Integration of assertiveness and energy in a healthy way.
10. Capacity for intimate contact (C)	Ability to form deep, meaningful, and honest relationships.

Interpretation: High scores indicate a **self-actualizing orientation** — individuals are inner-directed, autonomous, and capable of living fully in the present. Low scores indicate **deficiency-orientation** — dependence on others’ approval, rigid values, and anxiety about unmet needs.

Research on Maslow's Ideas — Key Highlights

Aspect	Research Highlights / Findings
1. Support for hierarchy of needs	Empirical studies provide partial support . Some needs (physiological, safety, belongingness) appear universal, but the strict hierarchy is not always confirmed — needs often overlap or vary across cultures.
2. Self-actualization as a measurable construct	Tools like the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) and the Short Index of Self-Actualization attempt to operationalize Maslow's concept. Research shows that self-actualizing individuals tend to be more autonomous, creative, and psychologically healthy.
3. Cross-cultural studies	Later studies indicate cultural differences in the order and expression of needs — for example, collectivist cultures may prioritize belongingness or social harmony over self-actualization.
4. Correlates of self-actualization	Research links high self-actualization scores with greater self-acceptance, emotional stability, inner control, creativity, and life satisfaction .
5. Peak experiences	Empirical research confirms that peak experiences can be described and measured; they are associated with well-being, transcendence, and flow states (closely related to Csikszentmihalyi's work).
6. Criticisms	- Lack of rigorous experimental evidence ; based mostly on qualitative and case studies.- Sample bias (Maslow's self-actualizers were historically male, Western, and eminent).- Cultural relativity : concept of self-actualization may reflect Western individualism.
7. Contemporary relevance	Despite criticism, Maslow's ideas influenced positive psychology, organizational behavior, education, and humanistic counseling — especially concepts like growth motivation, intrinsic values, and well-being .

Evaluation:

Current Researches -Positive Psychology:

Contributions: **Strengths**

- ✓ Humanistic ideas have been applied to person-centered therapy
- ✓ Humanistic ideas have been applied to education (open-classroom policy, life-long learning, self-directed education, and student-centered learning)
- ✓ Maslow's hierarchy of needs is widely used in health and social work as a framework for assessing clients' needs.
- ✓ Conscious experience – a sense of moving through space and time – needed to be human.

Limitations

- ✓ Unscientific – subjective concepts – **Self Actualizing personality - 1 out of 3000 college students**
- ✓ Ethnocentric (biased towards Western culture)
- ✓ Belief in free will is in opposition to the deterministic laws of science
- ✓ Subjective explanations will be distorted by Freudian defense mechanisms
- ✓ Criticisms: Methodology: conscious experience is private and subjective and Does not predict what traits, abilities, interests we will develop.

<http://www.performance-unlimited.com/samain.htm> ; <http://brainmeta.com/personality/sa.phb>