

Abraham Maslow and his Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow has set up a hierarchy of five levels of basic needs. Beyond these needs, higher levels of needs exist. These include needs for understanding, esthetic appreciation and purely spiritual needs.

In the levels of the five basic needs, the person does not feel, or reach, the second need until the demands of the first have been satisfied, nor the third until the second has been satisfied, and so on. Maslow's basic needs are as follows:

Physiological Needs

These are biological needs. They consist of needs for oxygen, food, water, and a relatively constant body temperature. They are the strongest needs, because if a person were deprived of all needs, the physiological ones would be what we would first try to satisfy.

Safety Needs

When all physiological needs are satisfied and are no longer controlling thoughts and behaviors, the needs for security can become active. Adults have little awareness of their security needs except in times of emergency or periods of disorganization in the social structure (such as widespread rioting). Children often display the signs of insecurity and the need to be safe.

Needs of Love, Affection and Belongingness

When the needs for safety and for physiological well-being are satisfied, the next class of needs for love, affection and belongingness can emerge. Maslow states that people seek to overcome feelings of loneliness and alienation. This involves both giving and receiving love, affection and the sense of belonging.

Needs for Esteem

When the first three classes of needs are satisfied, the needs for esteem can become dominant. These involve needs for both self-esteem and for the esteem a person gets from others. Humans have a need for a stable, firmly based, high level of self-respect, and respect from others. When these needs are satisfied, the person feels self-confident and valuable as a person in the world. When these needs are frustrated, the person feels inferior, weak, helpless and worthless.

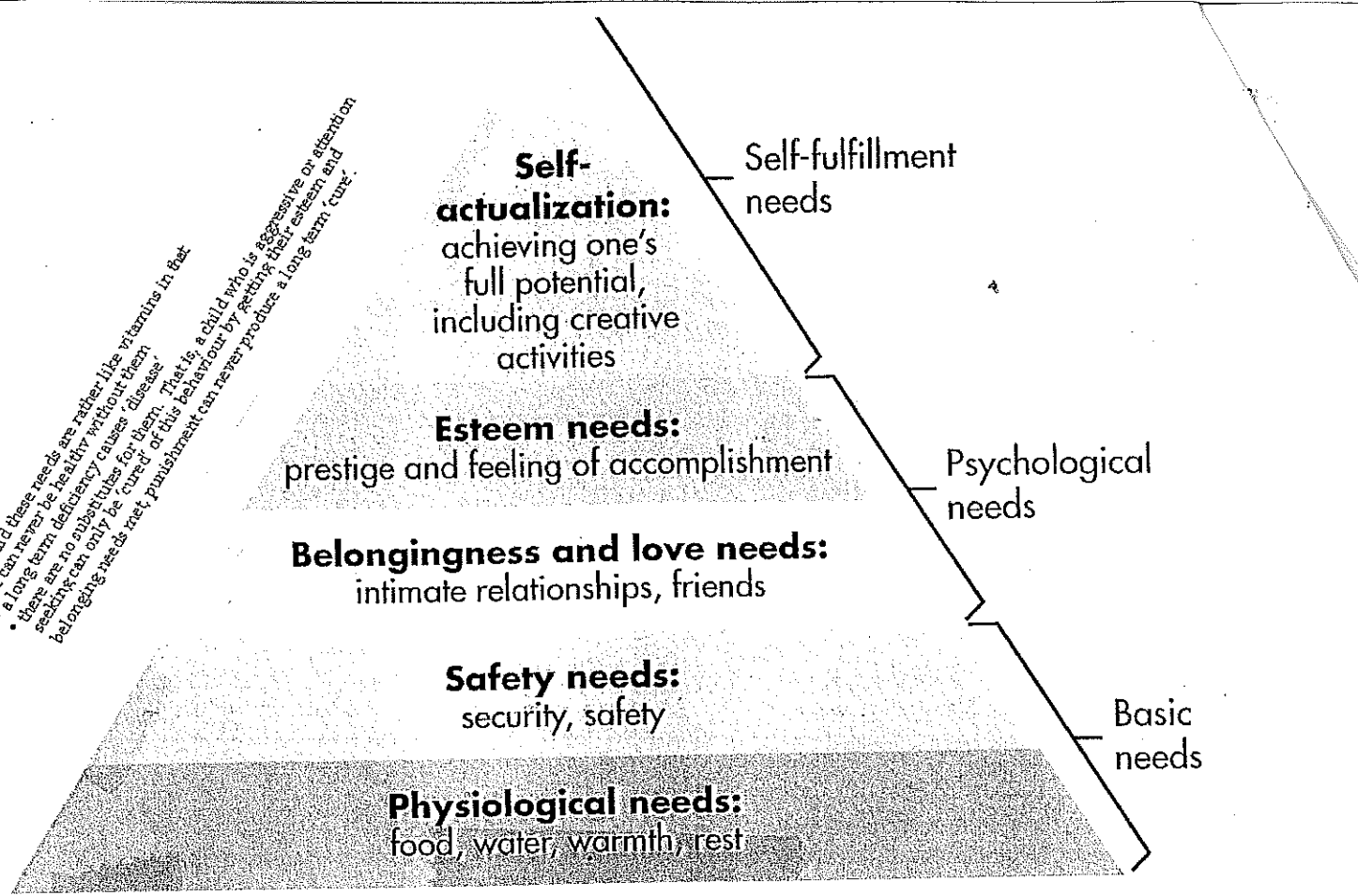
Needs for Self-Actualization

When all of the foregoing needs are satisfied, then and only then are the needs for self-actualization activated. Maslow describes self-actualization as a person's need to be and do that which the person was "born to do." "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, and a poet must write." These needs make themselves felt in signs of restlessness. The person feels on edge, tense, lacking something, in short, restless. If a person is hungry, unsafe, not loved or accepted, or lacking self-esteem, it is very easy to know what the person is restless about. It is not always clear what a person wants when there is a need for self-actualization.

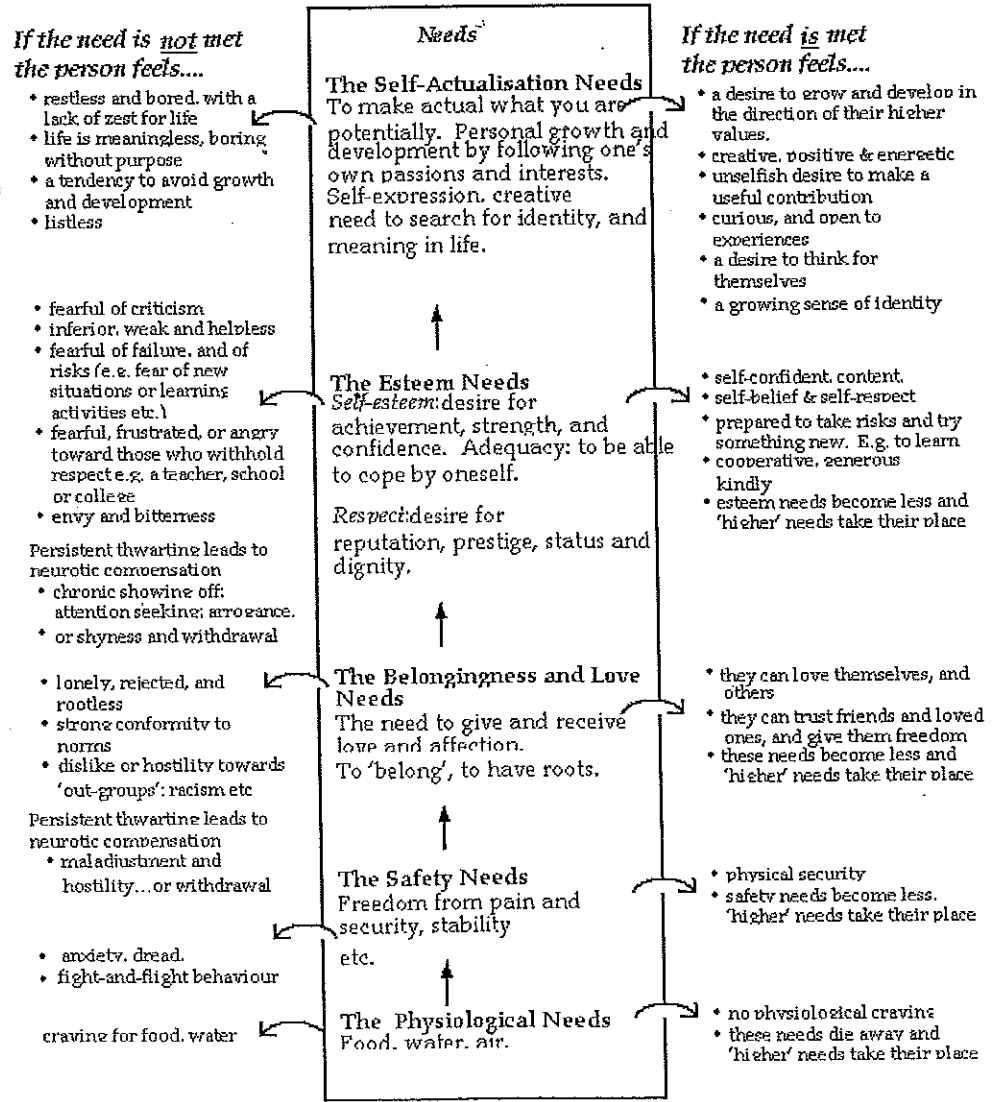
The hierarchic theory is often represented as a pyramid, with the larger, lower levels representing the lower needs, and the upper point representing the need for self-actualization. Maslow believes that the only reason that people would not move well in direction of self-actualization is because of hindrances placed in their way by society.

Maslow said these needs are rather like vitamins in that:

- we can never be healthy without them
- a long term deficiency causes 'disease'
- there are no substitutes for them. That is a child who is aggressive or attention seeking can only be cured of this behaviour by getting their esteem and belonging needs met, punishment can never produce a long term 'cure'.



Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Applying Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Name: _____

Directions: Read the handout and fill in the information below from the handout.

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Maslow identifies ____ levels of basic needs. Three additional levels exist. They are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

If the first need _____ is NOT met, the person can't move to the second need _____.

Physiological Needs

These are _____ needs. Three examples would be:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Safety Needs

Adults have little awareness of their _____ needs except in times of _____ or periods of disorganization in the _____ structure.

Needs of Love, Affection and Belongingness

People seek to overcome feelings of _____ and _____. This involves giving and receiving _____, _____, and _____.

Needs for Esteem

These needs can become dominant when the first _____ classes of needs are met. When these needs are met a person feels _____ and _____ as a person in the world.

Needs for Self-Actualization

Self-Actualization is the person's need to be and do that which the person was _____. These needs make themselves felt in signs of _____. When there is a need for self-actualization, it is not always clear _____.

1. Use the article provided to list one example of how each need is met or NOT met.

NEED	MET	NOT MET
Physiological Needs	No cravings	Crave food and water
Safety Needs		
Needs of Love, Affection and Belongingness		
Needs for Esteem		
Needs for Self-Actualization		

2. In your opinion, which need is the most difficult for your age group to fulfill and why?

3. Direct Application of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs:

- A. Select one cartoon character from a TV show or film and decide where he/she/it fits on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.
- B. Compose a poem or song, a skit, or a visual that explains the character's placement at the beginning, middle and end of the show.
- C. Be prepared to share your creation with the class!

Consider the following (Attach answers to your final product):

1. Does the character move between or among the needs? Why or why not?
2. What roles do others play in the character's placement on the "pyramid?"
3. Looking at their final location on the pyramid, what would have to happen to move the characters up one place on the pyramid?