System Needs of an Individual

Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs

Maslow suggests that individuals are motivated by unsatisfied needs, which are arranged in a pyramid in order of their importance to individual functioning.

Most Important*:

Physiological needs: In order to function individuals have certain physiological needs to sustain basic living function. These needs are air, food, water, rest, sex etc. When these needs are not met individuals feel discomfort (ex: sickness, pain, tiredness etc.) These needs are most important because they are biological in nature, and if not satisfied over a long period of time the individual will die. Once these basic needs are met the individual is able to think about other things.

Safety: These needs are mostly psychological in nature. An individual can function more freely when they generally feel safe. This will take on different meanings for different individuals. An individual may feel safe in a home with a security system, while another individual may value safety through religious thought that when they perish they might pass on to a place which they view as safe.

Love: Individuals need to feel accepted through love and belonging. This may pertain to the love of a partner, or on a more basic level feeling as though the individual is part of a group where they are accepted.

Ego: The individual needs self-esteem through various routes. On an individual level, through feeling that they are able to accomplish tasks. On a societal level individuals need to get recognition from others. For example, an individual might need praise to know that they have accomplished tasks well. This need for other’s recognition may also be accomplished through ownership of different personal possessions (a car, home, stereo etc.)
**Self-Actualization**: The individual needs to be able to engage in some sort of life work that engages them and brings them satisfaction. This work may not be done as a way to meet the individual’s monetary needs, rather it may be some activity that the individual considers to be life giving. This desire of the individual also motivates them to become everything that they are capable of becoming.

**Least Important**

*most and least important refer to the needs of an individual to function on a basic level.*

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