HW **HealthTeamWorks Workforce Development**

4 The Role of Maslow's Hierarchy in Care Management
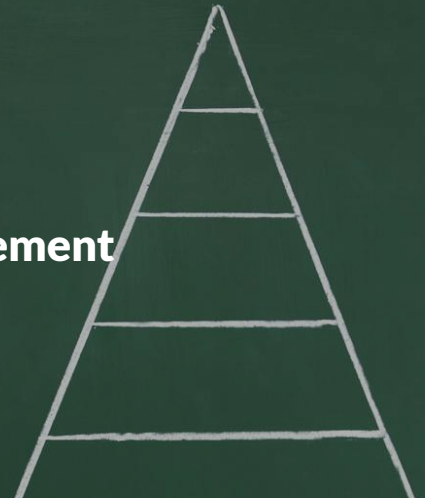
Introduction & Learning Objectives

HW **HealthTeamWorks Workforce_Development**

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Abraham Maslow (1908 - 1970) was a humanistic psychologist born in the early part of the century, when Freudian psychoanalysis was the popular brand of psychology.

Maslow believed the Freudian approach wrongly focused on the 'negative' or dysfunctional aspects of a person.

Maslow, on the other hand, pioneered a new field of something called 'positive psychology' – a different approach to psychoanalysis that focuses on a person's positive traits. He believed in focusing on positive traits and using these traits to improve one's life and circumstances.

Through the study and application of this new field of psychology, Abraham Maslow developed his model called 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs'.

Learning Objectives

Following the completion of this course, the learner should be able to:

- Accurately define and discuss Abraham Maslow's theory.

- Demonstrate the important role that Maslow's theory performs in Care Management to patients or other members of your practice.

- Expertly illustrate the impact of social needs on the health outcomes of patients who are both enrolled and not enrolled in Care Management.
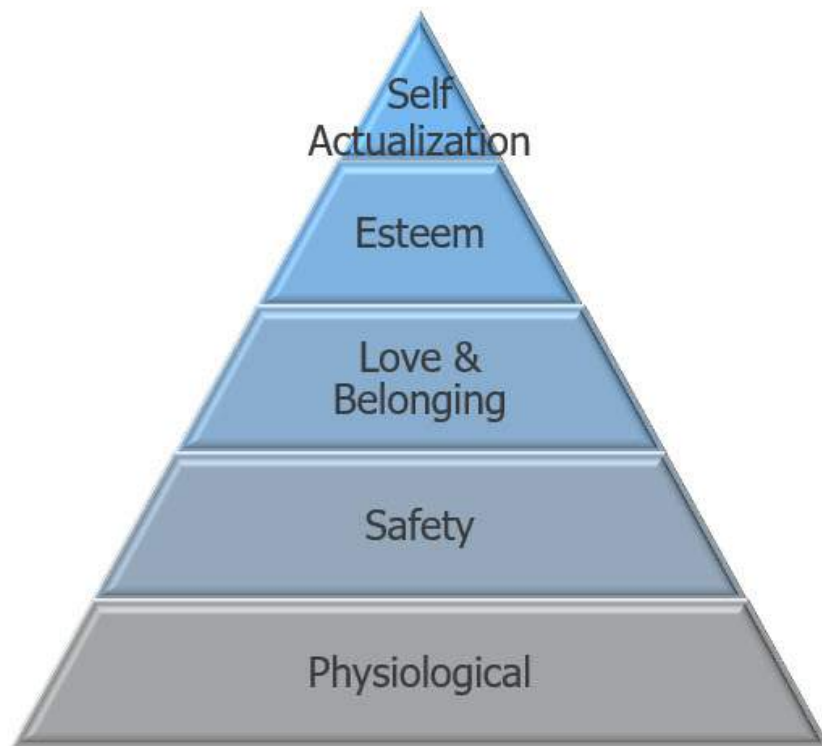
Maslow's Hierarchy

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The theory is that, as humans, we are motivated to fulfill five levels of need. The needs that sit lower in the levels of the hierarchy are foundational and must be fulfilled before we can attend to the needs that are higher up. These needs, in order from the bottom up, are:

1 Physiological Needs

2 Safety Needs

3 Love & Belonging Needs

4 Esteem Needs

5 Self-Actualization
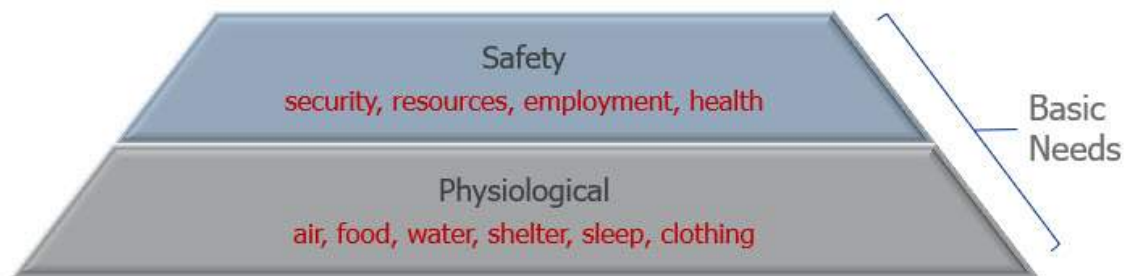
Now let's look more in depth at each level of need.

At the bottom of the pyramid are 'Physiological Needs'. This includes our most basic survival needs like air, food, shelter, warmth, clothing, water.

Next up, at the second level, are 'Safety Needs'. These include things like feeling safe and secure, having a job, and feeling healthy.

The first two levels combined are the "Basic" needs – essentially, these are the basic things that any human needs to survive.

At the third level is 'Love and Belonging'. These are needs such as friendship, intimacy, family, and developing connections with others.

And next up – at the fourth level – are 'Esteem' needs. Esteem needs fall into two categories – first is esteem for oneself (self-esteem, dignity, achieving independence) and the other category is about reputation and the desire for recognition & respect from others.
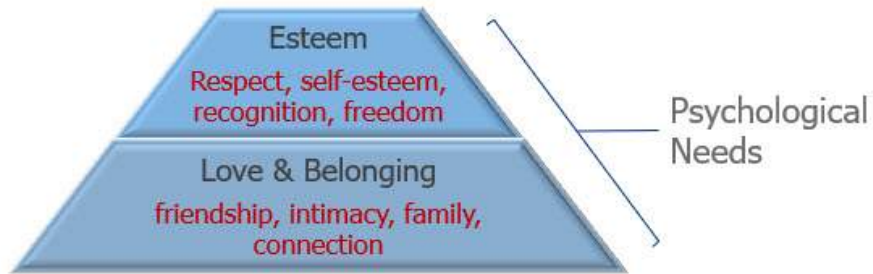
These two levels combined (the third and fourth tiers) are what are referred to as 'Psychological Needs'. These are the needs that, when fulfilled, provide a sense of pride, connectedness and belonging in the world.
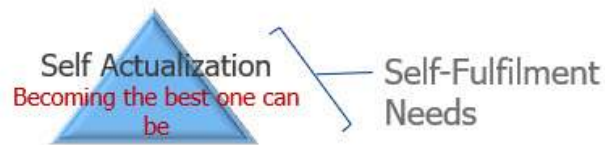
And last – at the top of the pyramid – is 'Self-Actualization' or becoming the best that one can be. This fifth level, or tier, is about achieving our potential and seeking personal growth. It is the only tier in the pyramid affiliated with 'self-fulfillment needs.'

Deficiencies and Growth

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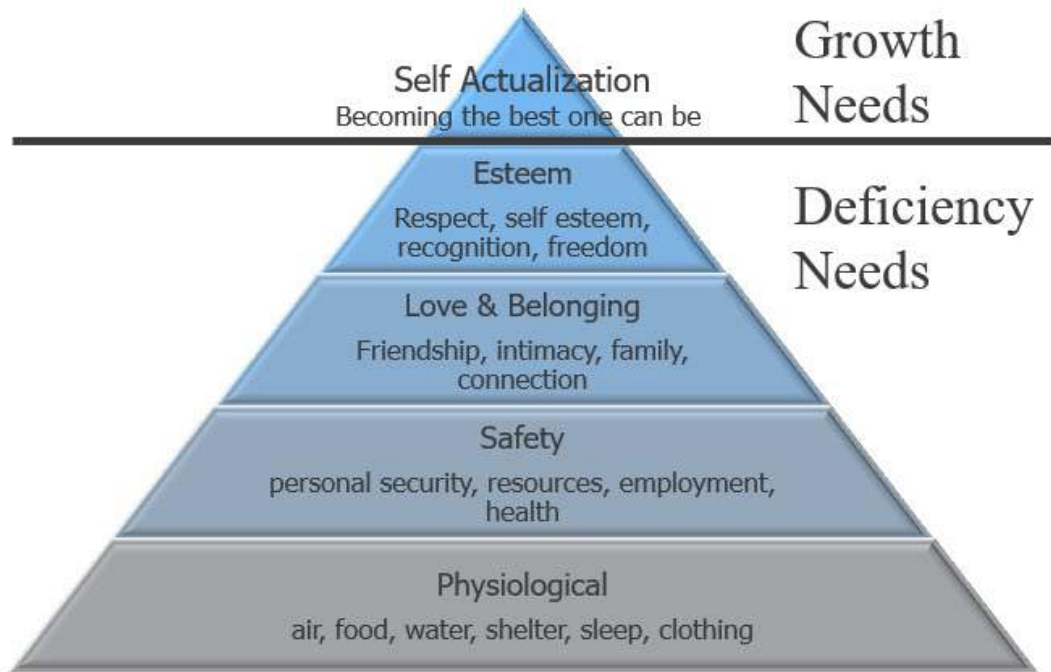

Next, let's take a look at Maslow's concepts of deficiency and growth. It's not as complicated as it sounds, and it's an important concept that we will use as Care Managers.

Let's divide Maslow's pyramid into two segments. First, we have deficiency needs. As you can see, this includes all but the top of the pyramid.

- Physiological

- Safety

- Love and belonging

- Esteem Needs

All of these needs are unique in that, when we don't have them, we seek to fulfill them – thus, they are aptly named 'deficiency needs.' Through the lack of any one of these, we will try to meet the need. And, by meeting these needs, we avoid uncomfortable feelings or consequences.

- Without air, we can't breathe – and our body will innately do what it can to meet the need, without us even thinking about it.

- When we become dehydrated, we experience thirst – and try to quench the thirst

- When we need food, we feel hunger – and find food to satiate the hunger

- When we lack a sense of belonging we feel isolated and strive to find something to fill the loneliness

- When we lack recognition, we seek ways to be recognized (whether this is + or -)

It's the lack of fulfillment of any of these needs that cause us to take steps toward fulfillment.

And next – we have Growth Needs.

Self-Actualization is the only growth need and is at the top of the pyramid. Growth needs don't come from 'lack' of something. They come from a place where one desires improvement – or…. GROWTH.

We will explore this concept in more depth in two other future modules on patient activation and addressing social needs.

Maslow's and Social Needs

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The last concept about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs that's critical to understand is that it is not a rigid ladder where each person tackles one tier and moves to the next, and never has to address the lower tiers again.

The hierarchy exists on a continuum, which means that our experience of it is fluid, and, depending on our circumstances at any given point in life, we can move in and out of each level as issues arise.

- If someone loses their job (or income, like during a government shutdown) and they don't have savings for back up, they are most likely focused on addressing basic physiological needs (e.g. ensuring there's food to put on the table, diapers for the baby, enough money to pay the rent/mortgage).

- Another example – a successful executive who is at a very good place in life experiences a mugging and physical assault while walking to their car in a parking garage. This person has experienced trauma and lost their sense of safety and well-being. This experience will move them to focus on Safety needs until they return to feeling safe again.

- Next, let's consider a young adolescent man, living in poverty with a single mother in the inner city. Meals are inconsistent, and it's a struggle to survive. An older cousin of his, whom he admires, has picked up with a gang. Despite his mother's warnings, he starts to run with the gang too and begins committing robberies & selling drugs. Suddenly, he has money to eat and buy things he was never able to buy before. And – his psychological needs (love/belonging and esteem) are now being fulfilled. While this is a dramatic example, it also illustrates that any one of us may seek to fulfill these needs in whatever way possible – whether it's positive or negative, culturally acceptable or not.

So. Why does all of this matter to you as a Care Manager?

An issue identified in the 'physiological' or 'safety' domain can dramatically impair an individual's ability to self-manage. These issues in the 'Basic Needs' category must be addressed before it can be expected that a patient will be able to manage a medical or behavioral health condition.

When we – as healthcare professionals – expect our patients to adhere to medications and follow treatment plans, we are essentially expecting the equivalent of self-actualization. And, as we have learned already, self-actualization is difficult to achieve when struggling to meet basic human needs.

This is important to you as a healthcare professional and patient advocate because you need to be aware of where a patient currently 'resides' within this pyramid. Understanding this will help you have empathy for the people you work with, and also help you to meet patients where they are and address the most pressing needs at the current time.

The Impact of Social Needs on Health

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This is an important place where care management fits into patient care – it's the VALUE of having RN's, Social Workers and other care manager roles on the care team.

- A physician plays the very critical role of diagnosing problems, conditions, and prescribing a treatment plan.

- Care Managers – whether it's an RN or SW or CHW – are there to identify and work to resolve the issues that either prevent the patient from adhering to the treatment plan, or even potential issues that are inhibiting a normal RESPONSE to the treatment plan.

Consider how social needs can impact an individual's health and ability to adhere to a treatment plan or improve their health and circumstances.

Review each of the scenarios below and identify 2 – 3 ways the situation could potentially impact an individual's health:

- No transportation

- Not enough food

- Grandparent on a fixed income caring for grandchildren

- Single mom, unable to pay for childcare

- A young child with severe asthma, family living in subsidized housing with pest infestation

We will explore Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs again in future modules, at how it relates to patient activation toward engagement and self-management, as well as working with vulnerable populations with social needs.

Until we cover that material, challenge yourself to think about some of the patients you currently work with – or even patients that you've worked with in the past - and view their situation and concerns through the lens of Maslow's. Consider where they are or were on the pyramid during the course of working with them and how their drive to fulfill certain needs may have impacted their ability to fulfill other needs.

Test Your Knowledge

Looking at the lists below, which list of needs correctly identifies the needs in Maslow's Hierarchy?

○
Physiological Needs
Safety Needs
Love
Belonging
Health Needs

○
Physiological Needs
Safety Needs
Love and Belonging
Esteem Needs
Self-Actualization

○
Shelter
Safety Needs
Religious Support
Self-Actualization

○
Physiological Needs
Safety Needs
Happiness
Religious Needs
Self-Actualization

On Maslow's pyramid, Physiological Needs and Safety Needs are considered basic needs. Why? (Choose all that are correct.)

○ They are the easiest to achieve.

○ Everyone has them.

○ They are the most fun.

○ We all need those needs to survive.

Why do you as a Care Manager need to know where your patients "reside" within Maslow's pyramid? (Choose all that are correct.)

☐ You can help to meet patients where they are and address their most pressing needs first.

☐ It's not important to know where a patient resides on the pyramid.

☐ Knowing where a patient sits on the scale helps you better understand their barriers to care.

☐ It's the same as knowing their risk-tier from risk stratification.

As a Care Manager, the basic needs of a patient must be met before they can manage a medical or behavioral health condition.

○   True

○   False

What are Maslow's deficiency needs?

☐   Esteem

☐   Physiological

☐   Self-Actualization

☐   Safety Needs

Activity Instructions

Practical application of what you are learning helps with skill development and retention. We have created an activity that will guide you in that type of application.

☐ Visit https://www.healthteamworks.org/resource/essentials-care-management-activities-and-resources.

☐ Find and download the activity assigned for this course.

☐ Complete the activity. You are encouraged to work with your team to complete the activity.

☐ Email the completed activity to caremanagement_nachc@healthteamworks.org.

☐ Make sure to add the Course Activity Title you are submitting and your full name to the Subject Line of your email.

☐ You will receive feedback on your completed assignments.