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What stops us from self-actualizing?
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So, I'm curious. Maslow's hierarchy of needs points to self-actualization - be all you can be - as the highest level human need (the needs in order from lowest to highest are: BASIC: physiological (health, food, sleep, sex, water, etc.), and security (of the body, of employment, of resources, of morality, of property; insurance, etc.). If basic needs are not met, there can be no movement towards self-actualization. Over and above the basic needs are the SOCIAL and PSYCHOLOGICAL needs: belonging (love, affection, friendship, family sexual intimacy, etc.), esteem (self-esteem, esteem from others, personal worth, social recognition, confidence, achievement, etc.) and self-actualization (morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, acceptance of facts, etc.)

According to Maslow's theory, if you want be on the path of true self-actualization (Pink's 3.0?), you need to take care of your BASIC needs first. That is, if you're hungry, you need to get food. If you feel unsafe, you constantly have to be vigilant and on guard. This is where you spend the plurality of your time and energy.

Truth be told, only about two percent of the population is actually, proactively, consciously self-actualizing, according to Maslow.

So, the question now becomes, what is it that is preventing one from being all one can be, from self-actualizing – realizing Pink's 3.0? Is it only a lack of trust, autonomy and purpose?

According to Maslow, the 98% of those who don't self-actualize –i.e., those who fail to achieve Pink's 3.0 state of motivation (and who have their BASIC needs) are preoccupied with social and psychological needs – belonging, and esteem.

I'd be curious how Mr. Pink would address this question.

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 self-actualizers exhibited a number of qualities:

They are reality-centered they know the difference between what is fake and what is real; what is honest from what is dishonest.
They are problem-oriented they see life as solution, not problem, oriented; they are not victims.
They don't necessarily have an "end" in sight;' they see the journey as, if not more, important than the end.
They enjoy solitude; they are comfortable in their own skins; they enjoy fewer close personal friends than shallow relationships with a host of acquaintances.
They enjoy being autonomous being free from or independent from physical and social needs. They consciously resist social pressure to be to "fit in."
They have a healthy sense of humor not engaging in sarcasm, put-down humor or humor at the expense of others.
They accept others just as they are. They don't try to change others, or themselves if they have a quirk or other non-harmful quality.
They are spontaneous and simple eschewing pretension or artificiality.
They have a sense of humility and respect towards others, all others and a strong sense of

ethics.
They have a sense of wonder and appreciation, are creative and have more peak experiences (being one with life and/or God) than most.
They transcend common dichotomies: spiritual/physical, selfish/unselfish, masculine/feminine.
They need truth, goodness, beauty, wholeness, aliveness, uniqueness, completion, justice, simplicity, richness, effortlessness, playfulness, self-sufficiency, and meaningfulness in their lives.

So, you ask, everyone wants these qualities, right? Yes, most everyone does. And, here's the deal.

If you are striving, efforting or struggling to satisfy your Basic needs, then movement towards self-actualization will be halted or quite slow. If you're starving, without financial support or need a roof over your head, you're not concerned with the qualities of self-actualization, and rightly so.

BUT, if your basic needs are pretty well met, and you're spending an inordinate amount of time and energy on your social and psychological needs - at the expense of self-actualizing why? What is it about belonging, friendship, sexual intimacy, self-esteem, esteem from others, self-worth, confidence, achievement, and the like that takes much of your time and energy?

And, you, what did you see with this exercise? Are you on or near the road to self-actualization?

So, some questions for self-reflection are:

- Which of your needs are being met and which aren't? Why?
- Where do you spend the majority or plurality of your time and energy? Why?
- Do you often feel stressed and overwhelmed? Why?
- Do you have time and energy to move towards self-actualization? If not, who or what prevents you from doing so? Is that OK?
- Do you know folks who exhibit some or many of the self-actualization qualities Maslow describes? What's it like to be around him, her or them?
- What did you see about yourself from this exercise?
- How much time and energy do you devote to social/psychological needs? Why?

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