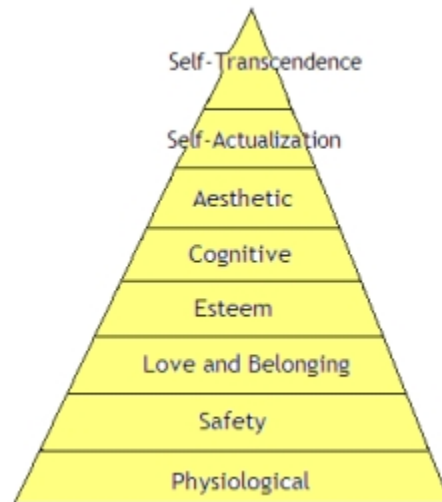


Creative Coaching Philosophy

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Coaching (and the human potential movement) are based upon Abraham Maslow's theory of human needs. Beyond survival and competence needs, people seek self-actualization and then self-transcendence.



Self-actualization is becoming more of yourself in your natural abilities, talents, and core being. This is what most coaches and programs focus on. In early versions of Maslow's theory, self-actualization was the pyramid's peak. Maslow later added another level, *self-transcendence*, that is often not mentioned by these efforts. Although he later struggled with the idea of whether self-transcendence was distinct from self-actualization, in Creative Coaching this is a meaningful distinction.

Self-transcendence is concern with a larger purpose and helping others to fulfill their potential. This is what Creative Coaching focuses on, along with the other layers of health. Self-transcendence is not simply "good works," such as making donations, teaching, or volunteering at a shelter. It is a state of connectedness and presence that can be experienced by being deeply grounded in the present and the larger world.

As described by John Davis, Ph.D. in *Some Basic Concepts of Transpersonal Psychology*:

"Self-transcendence refers to the direct experience of a fundamental connection, harmony, or unity with others and the world. The 'self' which is

transcended is the personality or ego-self, the collection of self-concepts, self-images, and roles which develops through one's interactions. Transpersonal approaches hold that this ego-self is not the same as one's true nature or essence and that self-transcendence opens one to the experience of this deeper nature.

The notion of self-transcendence is a key part of Maslow's thinking and the roots of transpersonal psychology. Toward the end of his career, Maslow's transpersonal interests led him to add a sixth level to his widely-known Hierarchy of Needs. This sixth level, a meta-need for self-transcendence and a motivation toward peak experiences, extends beyond the deficiency needs and the need for self-actualization. He found that such a need was present for some but not all self-actualizing persons. A sense of self-transcendence is a defining characteristic of mystical experiences."

Self-transcendence, as described by Jeffrey Kluger, is composed of three traits:

- Self-forgetfulness - the ability to become immersed in an experience;
- Transpersonal identification - a feeling of connectedness to a larger universe; and
- Mysticism - an openness to things not literally provable.