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Foreword

From low to high, the degrees of consciousness are: disgrace, guilt feelings, apathy, sorrow, dread, want, angriness, pridefullness, bravery, disinterest, willingness, acceptance, understanding, love, delight, peace, enlightenment.

Altho we can jump in and out of different levels at assorted times, generally there's a prevailing "normal" for us.

This book will go over these levels in order. There is a logarithmic scale to define where a person is, so there are far fewer people at the higher levels than at the lower ones. An step-up from one level to another will result in tremendous changes in your life.

Awareness Building and Consciousness Raising Facts

Discover the truth behind every single choice you make as a human being

Chapter 1:

Maslow's Hierarchy Of Needs

Synopsis

Psychologist Abraham Maslow first introduced his concept of a hierarchy of needs in his 1943 paper "A Theory of Human Motivation"¹ and his subsequent book, *Motivation and Personality*.² This hierarchy proposes that individuals are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to extra needs.

The Needs

Maslow thought that these needs are like instincts and play a major role in motivating conduct. Physiological, security, social, and esteem requirements are deficiency needs (a.k.a. D-needs), meaning that these needs come up due to deprivation. Fulfilling these lower-level needs is important in order to prevent unpleasant feelings or results.

Maslow termed the highest-level of the pyramid as growth needs (aka being needs or B-needs). Growth needs don't come from a lack of something, but instead from a want to grow as an individual.

There are 5 different levels in Maslow's hierarchy of needs:

1. Physiologic Needs

These include the commonest needs that are critical to survival, like the need for water, air, food and rest. Maslow thought that these needs are the commonest and natural needs in the hierarchy as all needs become lower till these physiologic needs are fulfilled.

2. Protection Needs

These include needs for refuge and protection. Protection needs are crucial for survival, but they're not as exacting as the physiologic needs. Examples of protection needs include a desire for firm employment, health insurance, safe places to live and protection from the environment.

3. Social Needs

These include needs for belonging, love and tenderness. Maslow believed these needs to be less common than physiologic and protection needs. Kinships like friendships, romantic attachments

and family units help fill this need for company and acceptance, as does involvement in social, community or spiritual groups.

4. Regard Needs

After the first 3 needs have been fulfilled, regard needs becomes progressively crucial. These include the need for things that reflect on self-regard, personal worth, social recognition and achievement.

5. Self- actualising Needs

This is the highest level of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Self-actualizing individuals are self-conscious, concerned with personal growth, less worried with the opinions of other people and interested satisfying their potential.

Chapter 2:

Disgrace and Guilt

Synopsis

Disgrace – Just a notch above demise. You're probably mulling over suicide at this level. Either that or you're a serial murderer. Consider this as self-directed hate.

Guilt – A notch above disgrace, but you still might be having thoughts of self-destruction. You consider yourself a sinner, not able to forgive yourself for past transgressions.

The First 2

Disgrace is said to be one step above demise. At this level, the basic emotion one feels is humiliation. It's not surprising that this level, being so close to death, is where many thoughts of self-destruction are found. Those who suffer from sexual assault are often found here, and without therapy they tend to stay here.

Deep, insalubrious disgrace is the internal feeling that we're "dirty", flawed as a individual, or not good enough. In a few individuals it can result in low self-regard. Individuals living with rudimentary shame might believe these feelings are normal, and might think others feel the same way. While these feelings might be quite common, they're not the norm, and can block fulfilling our happiness.

Like other human emotions we might perceive as "all bad", there surely is a positive aspect of disgrace. In a positive setting, disgrace is the feeling message that let's us recognize we aren't acting inside our morals and values.

There are so many non-helpful messages we collect throughout our lives that may become internal, automatic messages. We may unconsciously (unwittingly) repeat these messages in our mind again and again. We generally collect, or formulate these non-helpful messages when we're forming our self-image (how we see ourselves, and how we think others see us). The result of feeling this sort of disgrace is devastating and always painful.

Not too far from disgrace is the level of guilt. Once one is stuck in this level, beliefs of worthlessness and an inability to forgive oneself are most common.

Among the definitions of guilt, that have been proposed, are the following: Guilt is a message of disapproval from the conscience which says in effect, 'you should be ashamed of yourself. Guilt is anger toward yourself. Guilt is "a bothered conscience. Everyone who's thought very deeply on the matter agrees that guilt is a function of the conscience. Everybody has a conscience. It's the conscience that differentiates the good from the bad. William Shakespeare wrote, my conscience hath a thousand several tongues and every tongue brings in a several tale and every tale condemns me for a villain.

But conscience doesn't function in the same way for everyone. Some of the most atrocious crimes that have ever been perpetrated were executed by men who felt no remorse for their evil actions. Adolph Hitler's final solution to the "Jewish problem" was the indiscriminate wiping out of men and women and children. There are absolutely no grounds that he ever felt any remorse or self doubt. It's been alleged that Stalin was responsible for the death of twenty to thirty million individuals during his reign as Russia's premier, but again there's no evidence that there was any sorrow or feeling of wrong doing.

On the other hand a few individuals have such consciences that seem to work overtime. It's not strange for somebody to call and say, "I owe you an apology." More often than not, I wasn't even aware of the supposed offense and it involved some sort of minor occurrence that I never gave afterthought. Yet the person who calls suffers from a pained conscience.

Clearly, a person must have an awareness of what he has done when they feel disgrace. But once you've recognized it and addressed it

there's no reason use guilt feelings as a tool to motivate yourself or other people to do right.

In order to effectively cope with guilt we must firstly know as best we can, what's really right and what's really wrong. Put differently we need to separate true guilt from false guilt and we need to wipe out as much of the moot or arguable guilt as we can from our system of values. We frequently hear individuals say "Let your conscience be your guide" and we react to that by stating "No, your conscience isn't always correct." But the fact of the matter is that you can't live very effectively if you perpetually go against your conscience. So what's needed is a willingness to let your conscience be molded and changed by what is right. To do that you've got to be a truth seeker. You've to be willing to change when the right ways conflict with old patterns of behavior and belief.

Chapter 3:

Apathy and Sorrow

Synopsis

Apathy – Feeling hopeless or exploited. The state of instructed helplessness. Many homeless individuals are bound here.

Sorrow – A state of ceaseless sadness and loss. You may sink here after losing a loved one.

A Closer Look

Apathy

The level of hopelessness and despair; this is the basic consciousness found among those who are homeless or living in poverty. At this level, one has abdicated themselves to their current situation and feels dead to life around them.

In dealing with apathetic individuals, I often wish I could rip my heart out of my chest and stick it in their chest to give them the courage they need to get moving. But I'd never do that because it would make a real mess of my cardiovascular system, I'd die an agonizing death, and there's no guarantee the other individual is the same blood type as me.

It's absolutely OK to admit you're on the wrong path and to be uncertain and frustrated about what to do next. This is a very human situation. The benefit of dealing with those hard feelings is that they'll help you clarify what you do want, and therein lies the energy to pursue new opportunities for greater happiness and fulfillment.

Sorrow

Many of us have felt this at times of calamity in our lives. However, having this as your primary level of consciousness, you live a life of ceaseless regret and remorse. This is the level where you feel all your chances have passed you by. You ultimately feel you're a failure.

As the years go by, life has a way of dealing it's pain and challenges to everybody. And the longer you live, the greater your chances of being hit by a major sorrow. And there's no easy way out or quick cure for it. Such is life.

You may be tempted to lessen this tragedy in your life by numbing your mind with alcohol or drugs, or escape from it by reading or watching TV incessantly. But it is an important part of eventual grief resolution that you experience and express grief fully, especially in the beginning.

Staying active is one way to take one's mind off sorrow chiefly, activities help distract inhabit from whatever it is that's causing their sorrow and it likewise helps channel unspent energies that build up when one is sad. Keeping active also releases endorphins – natural mood boosters that somehow cheer people up.

Chapter 4:

Dread and Want

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