Humanism

Chapter 13
Abraham Maslow

- 1908-1970
- Born Brooklyn, NY
- Experienced Anti-Semitism as child
- Not close to parents
- Cruel, “schizophrenic” mother, afraid of father
- Siblings were favored
- Questioned how he turned out so well
- Birth of daughter, WW II
Human Needs: A Hierarchical Theory

- Human experience associated with growth
  - Vs. the “balance” perspective we’ve seen so far
  - Instead, humans as “wanting animals,” always desiring something → *motivated*
  - More than one type of motivation, more than one type of need...
  - Not all needs are equal
On Motivation...

- Human motivation associated with reducing tensions (i.e. what we lack)
  - D-needs (deficiency needs)
    - Physiological survival (food, shelter, sex, rest)
    - Safety

D-need $\rightarrow$ Motivation $\rightarrow$ Tension reduction
...and Metamotivation

- Metamotivations are growth tendencies
  - B-Needs (being needs)
    - Drive to self-actualize, fulfill inherent potential, enrich our lives, seek stimulation
    - No NOT arise from deficiency
    - Push us to make the most of ourselves

B-Needs ➔ Metamotivations ➔ Tension Increase
Hierarchy of Needs

- Drive to become *self-actualized* and to fulfill potentials
- Needs organized in hierarchy
- Must satisfy D-Needs before addressing B-Needs
  - Some individuals, because of life circumstances, may never move from D-needs
- The higher one goes:
  - Greater physical health
  - Greater psychological health
Hierarchical Needs: Another Pyramid

- Physiological Needs
- Safety
- Belonging and Love
- Self-Esteem
- Self-Actualization
Yet Another Pyramid: Knowing and Understanding

- Knowing is more important and potent than understanding
  - Children initially curious, seek comprehension later
  - Not sharply delineated, overlap with other needs
Maslow’s Needs:
In order of relative importance

Primary Needs

- **Physiological Needs**
  - Strongest needs, basic survival
  - Oxygen, water, food, shelter, sex
  - If not met, no motivation for higher needs

- **Safety Needs**
  - Orderly, stable, predictable world
  - Structure, discipline for children
    - Otherwise anxious, insecure
  - In unsafe environments, individuals expend all of their energies w/safety needs
Maslow’s Needs (cont.)

Secondary Needs (more rare)

- Belonging and Love Needs
  - Affection and intimate relationships
  - Group membership
    - Family, community, gang, etc.
Maslow’s Needs (cont.)

- **Self-esteem Needs**
  - Two forms
    - Respect from others
    - Self-respect
  - Competence, confidence, mastery, achievement
  - Otherwise discouragement, sense of inferiority
  - Respect from others more important as a young person, self-respect more important with age
Maslow’s Needs (cont.)

- Self-actualization
  - Possible only after other needs met and if individual has courage to choose them
  - Experience unique and different for each individual
  - Not easily described to make another understand
    - Simply, fulfill highest potential (whatever that may be...)
Some criticized Maslow for only studying healthy people—pseudo research—friends
- Stands out from other personality theorists
- Interest in health and human wellbeing

The Self-Actualized Person
- One who is fulfilling themselves, doing all that they can do
- Self-actualizers have peak experiences
- 15 characteristics (Awareness, Honesty, Freedom, & Trust) – p. 364
Peak Experiences

- Intensification of experience
- Loss or transcendence of self
- “Epiphany”
- Not necessarily religious, may feel like it
- Experience sense of unity with, meaningfulness in life
- Transformative \(\rightarrow\) things seem different after a peak experience
Peak Experiences (cont.)

- All humans, not just self-actualizers capable of peaking
- **Moments** of self-actualization
- Can distinguish between process and product
- Focus on the ends, but can appreciate the journey too
  - The process may be more important
Carl Rogers

- 1902-1987
- Born outside Chicago
- American Midwest Farm Family
  - Little other social life
- Seminary student before psychology
  - Departs parents fundamentalist thinking
  - Unwilling to profess specific set of beliefs
The Rise of Phenomenology

- Rogers Influenced by **phenomenology**
  - Greek: *phainomenon* (that which appears or shows itself)
  - The view that reality is that which is experienced in the moment
  - Human awareness, perception

- The **phenomenal field**
  - The sum total of experiences
  - Everything potentially available to consciousness at any one moment
  - We respond to the phenomenal field → *constructed* reality
Actualization

- Organisms possess tendency to maintain, actualize and enhance one’s self
  - Genetic potential (type of flower)
  - Environmental resources (quality of the bloom)
- All behavior is goal-directed
  - Meeting needs as they are perceived
Organismic Valuing Process

- Subconsciously guides us towards productive growth experiences
  - Not encumbered by external rules
  - Societal values are congruent with growth

- Our inner processes are intrinsically growth producing
The Self

- The **Self** is the structure that functions at the interface of organism and environment
  - Incorporate experiences that enhance the self become incorporated into the self
  - Think of a membrane...
- The **self-concept** is the portion of the phenomenal field that can take perspective in the situation
  - Object of perception: Can distinguish between “I” and “you”, self-other
  - Values of society, experiences, etc.
The Self & Self-Concept:
An Example

Child hits brother

- Self-satisfaction
- But parents withdraw affections
- So, child gives up his satisfaction in order to consider himself as lovable to his parents
  - Denies he wants to hit his brother. But...
  - Over time, view parent’s attitudes as own
- This is a poor way to create a self
  - Must ACCEPT child’s satisfaction
  - Parents ACCEPT own beliefs → not impose beliefs on child, threaten child’s self-concept
  - Educate, but accept
Experiences

- Symbolized
  - Accepted into consciousness and organized as a part of the self

- Denied/Distorted
  - Experiences incongruent with self-structure
  - A young woman brought up in a family in which aggression is considered to be unfeminine
    - Lose ability to be assertive (distorted concept of aggression)
Congruence / Incongruence

- **Congruence** is a goal of self where symbolized (idealized) experiences match actual experiences
  - Integrate both sides of the coin
  - Free from inner tension, psychological adjusted
  - Not unrestrained behavior

- **Incongruence** occurs when there is disconnect between symbolized and actual experiences → the “good” but punishing mother
  - One may distort or deny incongruence
  - Maintaining the distortion can disrupt needs
Denied Experiences

Distorted Experiences

Congruent Experiences

Self-Structure

Experience

Distorted Experiences

Denied Experiences

Congruent Experiences
Personality Development

- Did not posit a stage theory
- Focused on factors associated with emergence of self-actualization
  - Genetic determinants
  - Environmental influences, too!

- Children have two basic needs
Personality Development: Positive Regard

- Positive regard
  - Loved and accepted by others for who one is
  - Children crave acceptance, will make major changes to earn the acceptance of others
- Unconditional positive regard is the ideal
  - Given to children with no contingencies, “no strings attached”
    - Can object to behaviors, but not the child or his/her feelings
    - “Writing on the wall destroys it” vs. “You are bad...”
Personality Development: Positive Regard

- Problems can arise when parents give conditional positive regard
  - Regard only given in certain circumstances
  - Children learn that parents only love them if they behave, think, and feel in certain ways
- Children experience conditions of worth
  - Provisions under which a child will be accepted
  - Integrate the values of others
  - Incongruence
Personality Development: Positive Self-Regard

- Positive self-regard
  - Follows automatically with unconditional positive regard
  - Favorable view of self, self-acceptance
Person-Centered Therapy

- Rogers’ approach to psychotherapy
- AKA Client-centered or nondirective therapy
  - Therapist engages in reflective listening
- Conditions for Therapeutic Change
  - Empathy
  - Acceptance
  - Genuineness
Conditions for Therapeutic Change

- **Empathy** refers to the ability of the therapist to experience another person’s feelings "as if" they were one’s own
  - Intellectual identification with or vicariously experiencing the thoughts/feelings of another
  - NOT sympathy: harmony of feeling in which whatever affects one affects the other

- **Acceptance** refers to a therapist’s ability to remain nonjudgmental when a client recounts things
  - No conditions of worth!

- **Genuineness** describes a therapist who is integrated, and deeply aware of experiences in the therapy relationship
Responses to Emotional Communications

Child: “I’m afraid of the dark!”

Evaluative response: value judgments
“You shouldn’t be afraid of the dark!”

Interpretive response: telling what the problem REALLY is
“That’s because you’re a child—you’ll grow out of it.”
Reassuring response: soothing

“Lots of children are afraid of the dark.”

Probing response: information seeking

“What about the dark frightens you?”

Reflective response: capture underlying feelings in the original communication

“You’re very scared/worried.”