

Preserving Self-Esteem Strategies

Whenever anyone has offended me, I try to raise my soul so high that the offense cannot reach it. Rene Descartes. "QTIP principle: Quit Taking It Personally"

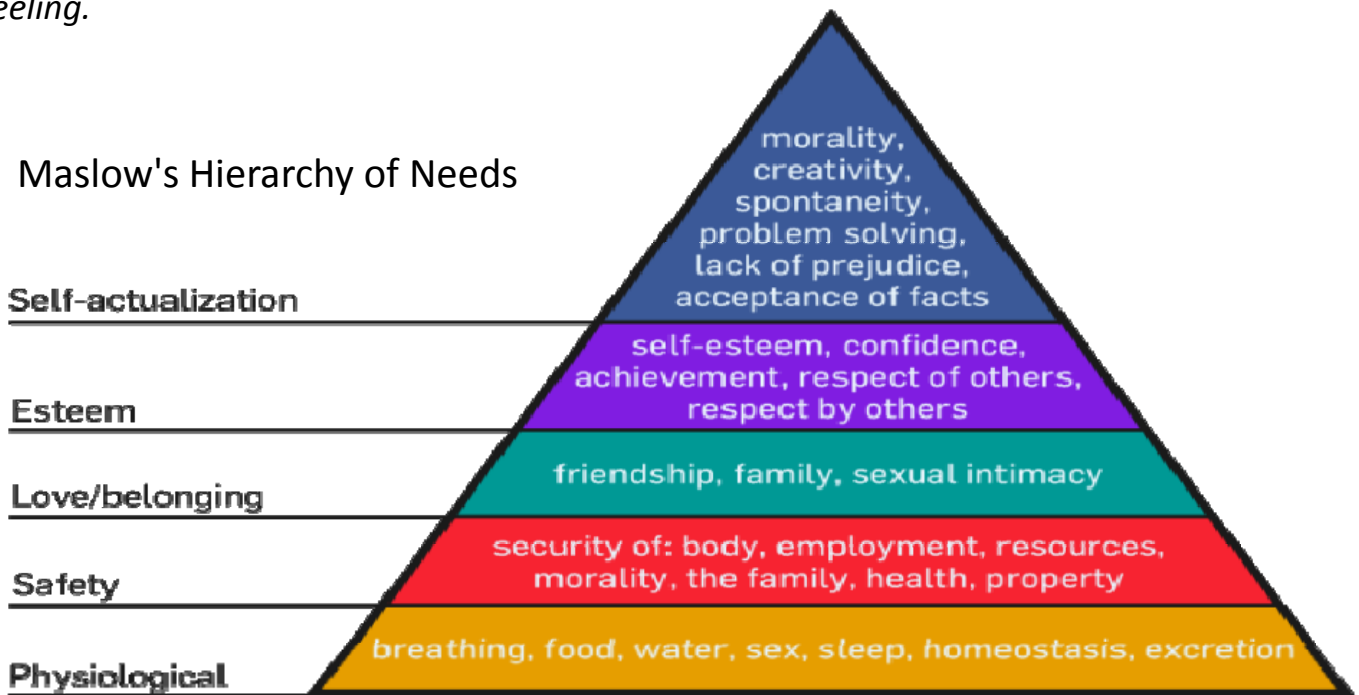
The Art of Dealing with Insults

Bring your curiosity to the conversation. If you experience someone's comment (email or conversation) as bellicose, set it aside to get yourself some perspective. Then return to it and thank them for their genuine attempt to offer you feedback about something you have done. Though ill-delivered, they have gone out of their way to tell you their frustrations, and that counts for something. Then ask for more information to help you understand their frustration. In so doing, you also offer them the chance to change their approach, not by asking them to, but by modeling a kind reply.

Accept what is yours to own and deflect what is not. If the other party does not choose to model your reply's demeanor and you find their second response to be more insulting than the first, it is a true test of your good will. Walk around or entertain yourself for 30 minutes. Before you reply, consciously remind yourself that you can accept feedback that's reasonable (even if delivered unreasonably) and reject what is beyond your control or truly not yours to own. Your reply should be terse and follow those principles.

Choose not to accept the insult. If you receive numerous follow-up responses from your "opponent", with additional insults and increasingly plaintive remarks about your lack of response, read each of them carefully, and very consciously elect not to reply. With each one, remind yourself that their words say more about them than they could ever say about you. And with that thought, you let each one go. You will feel the weight lifting from your shoulders.

You can get hooked by words you find insulting of you or of people and things you care about. But when you view each as a test only for you with yourself, and not a competition you must win over the other person, you can already feel the shift in reaction. It's a beautiful feeling.



A. Physiological needs: Lunch breaks, rest breaks, sufficient wages.

B. Safety Needs: Safe working environment, retirement benefits, job security.

C. Social Needs: A sense of community via team-based projects/social events.

D. Esteem Needs: Recognize achievements, make people feel appreciated, offer job titles which convey the importance of a position or a project.

E. Self Actualization: Challenge and opportunity to reach full career potential.

25 Killer Actions to Boost Your Self-Confidence

- 1. Groom yourself.** A shower, hair grooming, tooth brushing and perfume can turn mood around completely.
- 2. Dress nicely.** It doesn't necessarily mean wearing a \$500 outfit, but could mean casual clothes that are nice looking and presentable.
- 3. Photoshop your self-image.** Use your mental Photoshopping skills, and work on your self-image. If it's not a very good one, change it.
- 4. Think positive.** Change thoughts, and by doing so make great things happened. "C'mon, I can do this! Only a little bit left!"
- 5. Kill negative thoughts.** Such as "This is too hard. I want to stop and go watch TV." Imagine negative self-talk as bugs that should be mentally squashed.
- 6. Get to know yourself.** Analyze the negative and positive thoughts you have about yourself and your limitations.
- 7. Act positive.** Action is the key to developing self-confidence. Talk to people in a positive way and put energy into your actions.
- 8. Be kind and generous.** Being kind to others, and generous with yourself and your time and what you have, is a tremendous way to improve self-image.
- 9. Get prepared.** It's hard to be confident if you don't think you'll do well at something. Beat that feeling by preparing yourself as much as possible.
- 10. Know your principles and live them.** Think about your principles ... you might have them but perhaps you haven't given them much thought.
- 11. Speak slowly.** A person in authority speaks slowly. A person who feels that he isn't worth listening to will speak quickly.
- 12. Stand tall.** People who stand tall and confident are more attractive. That's a good thing any day.
- 13. Increase competence.** By studying and practicing. Just do small bits at a time. Set aside 30 min a day to practice, and practice will increase your competence.
- 14. Set a small goal and achieve it.** The more you achieve small goals, the better you'll be at it, and soon you'll be setting and achieving bigger goals.
- 15. Change a small habit.** Like writing things down. Or waking up 10 minutes earlier. Or drinking a glass of water when you wake up.
- 16. Focus on solutions.** "I'm fat & lazy!" how can you solve that? "I can't motivate myself!" how can you solve that? "But I have no energy!" So what's the solution?
- 17. Smile.** It will help you be kinder to others. A little tiny thing that can have a chain reaction.
- 18. Volunteer.** Volunteer for a good cause, to spread some cheer, to make the lives of others better.
- 19. Be grateful.** While being grateful for what you have in life and for what others have given you is very humbling, it can also be very rewarding.
- 20. Exercise.** Can be one of the most empowering activities. Take a walk a few times a week, and you'll see benefits.
- 21. Empower yourself with knowledge.** You become more knowledgeable by doing research and studying. The Internet is a great tool.
- 22. Do something you've been procrastinating on.** What's on your to-do list that's been sitting there? Do it first thing in the morning.
- 23. Get active.** Doing something could lead to mistakes, but mistakes are a part of life. Without mistakes, we'd never get better.
- 24. Work on small things.** Trying to take on a huge task can be overwhelming; learn to break off small chunks and work in bursts.
- 25. Clear your desk.** If your desk is messy, and the world around you is in chaos, clearing off your desk is a way of getting a little piece of your life under control.