Self-Actualization

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, when a person is thriving for self-actualization, that person comes to find a meaning to life that is important to them. This is the final need, which is at the apex of the pyramid. According to Maslow, self-actualization represents the highest order motivations, the things that drive us as individuals to realize our potential, or our "ideal self." Although people achieve self-actualization in their own unique way, they tend to share certain characteristics. Maslow states that the journey through self-actualization is when people look at life objectively, help others and seek fulfillment and change through personal growth. On a nursing exam, it is important to remember that self-actualization is prioritized last.



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Self-Actualization Hierarchy

Fifth Need

(5) Hand

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Self-Actualization Needs

Helping Others

Helping Others

Self-actualizers are accepting of themselves and others as they are. They are capable of appreciation for basic life experience, and tend to establish interpersonal relationships full of depth. They experience feelings of happiness and affection for others, and respect all people. To help patients with self-actualization needs nurses can focus on a person's strengths and possibilities rather than the problems.

Objectivity

Objectively Knowing Right from Wrong

Self-actualizers look at life objectively. They focus on problems outside of themselves, and are able to discriminate between good and bad. They have the ability to see the big picture and use creativity for solving problems. They also listen to intuition instead of external influence of the majority or societal norms, are open and honest, and take responsibility for their actions.

Personal Growth

Person Growing

Self-Actualization needs include the awareness of one's potential, self-fulfillment, and seeking personal growth. Individuals experience the urge to pursue and fulfill their unique potentials.

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