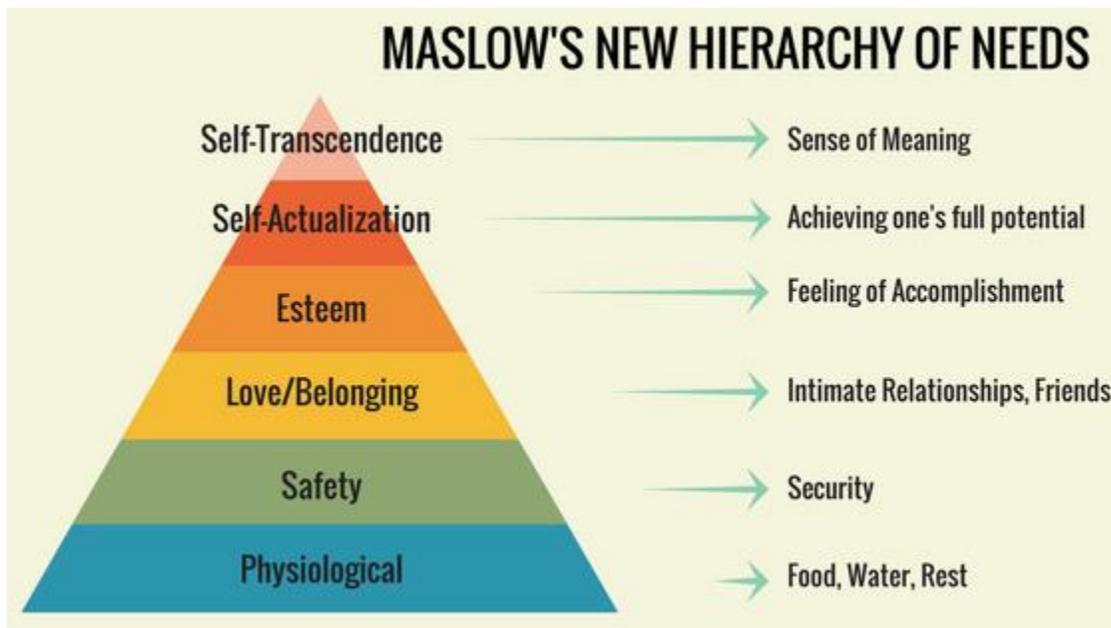


June 21, 2019

Conscious Intelligence (CQ): Beyond basic needs to full potential and beyond

The initial blog on our new CQ offering described what we mean by the term. To summarize that piece, CQ is about leaders moving beyond their ego. Most would agree that being an ego-driven leader is not optimal, as it largely represents being on auto-pilot. The ego is a program which provided for our identity and survival needs but is no longer necessary. CQ opens the door to much greater freedom of choice, effectiveness, and peace of mind.

Maslow, well known for his Hierarchy of Needs model, provides a useful way to look at CQ.



The model posits that human beings have basic needs, which Maslow called “deficiency needs.” People suffer—often in the form of anxiety—if these needs go unmet. As children we develop strategies for dealing with these anxieties. In the CQ curriculum we call them ego strategies. They are represented in the Enneagram system by the nine personality types. For example, the Enneagram type 2—the Helper or Giver—used the strategy of putting other’s needs first. The idea was: “if I’m useful to others, they will like me and include me. In addition, my feelings of self-esteem come from feeling useful to others in my work.” Each Enneagram type developed a unique strategy for handling our basic needs. The problem is that these survival strategies become automatic, so the individual loses a great deal of freedom. Choice disappears as individuals rely on auto-pilot to navigate life. At some point, often mid-life (hence, the infamous “mid-life crisis”), these ego strategies begin to break down. As in the example above, the Helper/Giver strategy of pleasing people doesn’t serve them when they become senior leaders and have to make tough people decisions.

Enter CQ. CQ helps individuals identify these auto-pilot strategies and unwind them. The benefits become more choice, greater effectiveness, and more enjoyment in work and life. Maslow stated that the deficiency needs—security, approval, and mastery—were only useful in reducing anxiety. Underlying each of these needs is a basic fear: that I’m not safe, I don’t belong, or I’m incompetent. Clearly, we want to alleviate these fears. And our egos have figured out how to do that. Anyone reading this piece has largely succeeded in meeting these needs.

The problem is that many people stop here. They don’t realize there are higher states, so they maximize the lower states as best they can. For example, achieving ever greater success at work. The difficulty, according to Maslow, is that this approach only alleviates anxiety, it doesn’t lead to enjoyment, peak experiences, and greater effectiveness (more choice and creativity).

So, what are these higher states? Maslow originally identified one: self-actualization. He defined it as:

- Morality
- Contributing
- Creativity
- Spontaneity (vs. auto-pilot)
- Problem solving (choice)
- Discovery (curiosity)

Only later Maslow added another level of development, self-transcendence. He wrote:

“Transcendence refers to the very highest and most inclusive or holistic levels of human consciousness, behaving and relating, as ends rather than means, to oneself, to significant others, to human beings in general, to other species, to nature, and to the cosmos”.

Attributes of self-transcendence include:

- Freedom from fear
- Consciousness (which is a result of mindfulness)
- Unconditional love for others, selflessness
- Meaning in serving something beyond oneself
- Joy, peace, well being
- Peak experiences, flow

The CQ offering from FCG is an invitation to explore and practice these higher states through practical exercises in self-awareness, self-management, mindfulness, empathy, and compassion. The FCG teachers have all been on their own journey of self-transcendence and can each attest to the benefits personally and professionally.

If you are curious about CQ, keep reading these blogs for more descriptions of the CQ offering. Or contact us to discuss it.

The CQ Team at FCG