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Volume 1: Session 3

“What a man can be, he must be. This need we call self-actualization” —Abraham Maslow

[Courtesy of DASA Meditation.](#)

Read time: 3 min 10 sec

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(5 min 38 sec)



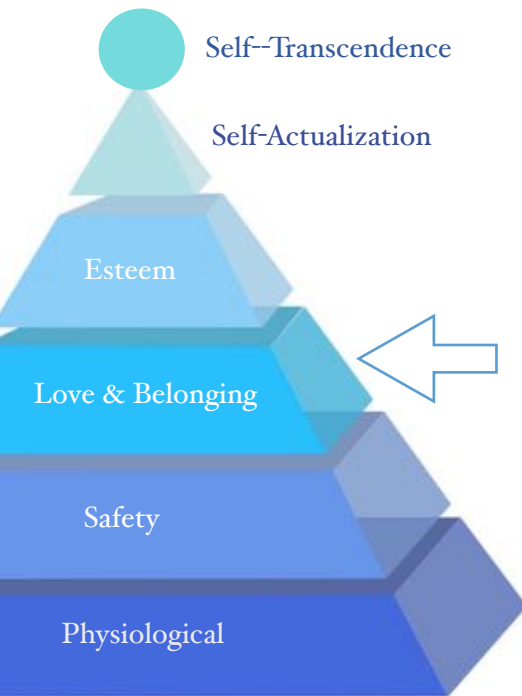
Abraham Maslow is considered to be the father of Humanistic Psychology.

## Self-Actualization: Access the Ultimate Awareness

The world famous psychologist Abraham Maslow once said, “We can never be happy unless we rise and become all that we were meant to be.”

[Maslow](#) was the tenth most cited psychologist of the 20th century.<sup>1</sup> As one of the founders of humanistic psychology, he was best recognized for developing the theory of human motivation known as *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*. Maslow believed that human behavior is influenced by both internal and external factors, along with free will.

**Maslow focused on the positive aspect of mental health, and defined the powerful human need for personal growth and fulfillment as self-actualization.** In essence, being self-actualized offers heightened states of awareness coupled with a deep sense of fulfillment.



The German neurologist/psychiatrist [Kurt Goldstein](#) was the first in 1934 to introduce the concept of self-actualization. Goldstein's theory included all living organisms, with the primary motive of realizing potential. Almost a decade later, Maslow expanded on Goldstein's theory to publish the human-focused *Hierarchy of Needs* in 1943.

**Maslow believed, we all have an innate impulse to improve ourselves, an impulse or drive toward actualizing more of our potential.**

Maslow's original five-level hierarchy is often presented as a pyramid-shaped graphic. Beginning at the bottom, as needs are fulfilled we naturally rise up to the next level including: physiological needs, safety, then love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization.

On June 8, 1970, Abraham Maslow passed suddenly at the age of 62. His work on transcendence was later published in 1971 in the book [The Farther Reaches of Human Nature](#).

In 1969 Maslow amended his model to add one final motivational step beyond self-actualization called SELF-TRANSCENDENCE.

“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.”

—[Abraham Maslow](#)

**In simple terms, rising to transcendence is breaking free of the confines of the world into free thought and good and right action.** A person that has reached this higher state sees the universal thread of life, understands the likeness in each living being, and has the vision that we can all rise as one. They not only see the connection; *they are the connection*.



“A human being is part of the whole, called by us “Universe.”

He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness.

This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and affection for a few persons nearest to us.

Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”

—[Albert Einstein](#)

According to Maslow, transcendence brings the individual to what he termed **“peak experiences” in which they transcend their own personal concerns and see from a higher perspective.**

These experiences often bring strong positive emotions like joy, peace, and a well-developed sense of awareness (Messerly, 2017)

### How does this relate to DASA Meditation?



DASA is an acronym for Developing Awareness through Self Actualization. This deep and effective meditation is well-designed to help us reach our full potential by releasing deep levels of stress and increasing our self-awareness.

Maslow said, “What is necessary to change a person, is to change the awareness of himself.”

My observation is that people on the self-actualization path are free and happy. They are usually moving toward a higher expression of themselves, yet at the same time intensely focused on the greater good. Maslow often used Albert Einstein, Ruth Benedict, and Eleanor Roosevelt as quintessential examples.

Why aren't we all working toward self-actualization, or at least working toward the goal of reaching our highest potential? Being on the path of self-actualization can be challenging, yet at the same time incredibly rewarding. We must remain open to understand our feelings and motives, and to rise to our highest potential each and every day.

I love this quote from [Steve Jobs](#)...

“Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma – which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of others' opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most importantly, have the courage to

As seen in the movie  
*Awake: The Life of  
Yogananda*

Steve Jobs Memorial  
October 17, 2011

“On the way out, they  
handed us a copy of the  
book, *The Autobiography  
of a Yogi*.  
Jobs’ final message to us  
was to actualize.”

—Mark Benioff, CEO  
Apple Silicon Valley

follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.”

Maslow wrote, **“One can choose to go back toward safety, or forward toward growth. Growth must be chosen *again and again*. Fear must be overcome *again and again*.”** He also recommends that we **“Be independent of the good opinion of other people.”**

Essentially, what Maslow is saying is the same as Jobs—don’t let others dampen your inner voice or inner knowing. That’s what I appreciate most about my meditation practice. It’s the perfect daily tool to facilitate self-actualization. It quiets the chatter of my mind and allows my inner guidance to emerge with clarity.



**The regular practice of meditation encourages self-reflection and growth of awareness.** With time, we can reach new heights of personal growth. One day we will look back to see just how far we have come.

"These peak experiences are times that you feel truly at peace and in harmony with your environment and also the whole universe. These experiences are marked by a feeling of euphoria and deep joy and gratitude." —[Abraham Maslow](#)

#### RESOURCE LINK

##### 1) [Encountering Abraham Maslow Documentary Video YouTube \(11:23\)](#)

A short documentary on the life and influence of Abraham Maslow, narrated by Jessica Grogan, PhD.



[Email Lorraine or  
find an instructor.](#)

Lorraine Alexander, second-generation DASA Meditation was introduced to meditation at the young age of 15. After decades of evidence-based practice, she helps others raise their awareness and transmute stress in order to live their best life.

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