

Brain-Based Learning
(Applied to 'Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs')

Point of This Assignment: 1) To apply Brain-Based Learning theory to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory. 2) To identify any needs you have that may be interfering with your ability to focus on school. 3) To help you prioritize your needs according to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory, then to Brain-Based Learning.

STEP 1: Identify Your Needs

List below any issues, problems, needs, wants, or distractions that you are currently experiencing that can potentially distract you from pursuing your educational goals. These things should be things that are interfering with your ability to stay focused on this journey. These things can include lack of motivation, money problems, job, poor self-esteem, relationships, childcare issues, lack academic skills, transportation problems, and wanting to have fun, etc. *(You don't need to fill in every blank; just fill in as many as are appropriate.)*

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____

If necessary, list others on an additional sheet of paper

STEP 2: Understand “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory”

Turn to the following page that shows a triangle, and is titled, “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory”. Review and understand that theory.

STEP 3: Apply “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory to Your Needs”

Now, go back to your list of issues, problems or distractions, and decide which of the types of needs does this distraction fall under (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5). If you are unsure where something may go, then ask yourself what that thing means to you. (*Car = can mean #2-Safety and Security; #3-Popularity with friends; or #4-Ego – feel good about self*). If an item represents more than one type of need, then list all that apply, but take note of which need is primary.

STEP 4: Prioritize According to “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory”

Once you have done that, then you will relist those issues, problems, and distractions on the list below based on the number you gave them. **Start with your #1’s (basic physiological) needs first, and then your #2 (security) needs second, etc.**

Note you could have any combination of all five levels of needs.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____
- 6) _____
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____
- 11) _____
- 12) _____

The application of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory has three applications: 1) To help you register what often **drives** your values, actions, and decision-making processes. 2) As a student it can help you recognize what can potentially **interfere** with you achieving your goals. 3) To help you to **prioritize** your many life issues when they become overwhelming.

On another note, if you are not sure how to address the needs you listed above, please do not hesitate to ask for help.

Now that you have prioritized your issues, problems and distractions according to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory, you should be able to better focus where you should be spending your energy in addressing your needs – **consider starting by addressing those issues that are lowest on Maslow’s triangle (#1s first, #2s second, etc.)** If you ever find yourself feeling overwhelmed by multiple, simultaneous issues, using this approach can be helpful.

STEP 5: Apply “Brain-Based Learning” to “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory”:

Go back to your prioritized list of needs on Page 2, and now apply Brain-Based Learning theory to that list. For each item you listed, ask yourself if this item primarily (*or any combination*) affects your:

- **Reptilian** (*physiological*) **Brain**’s ability to process information
- **Limbic** (*emotional*) **Brain**’s ability to process information
- **Neo-cortex** (*thinking*) **Brain**’s ability to process information

An item may affect more than one area of the brain, but be sure to indicate which area is most affected. Write “Reptilian”, “Limbic” and/or “Neo-cortex” next to each item as appropriate.

Test your understanding:

What is the main point of this assignment?

Why were you expected to do this exercise?

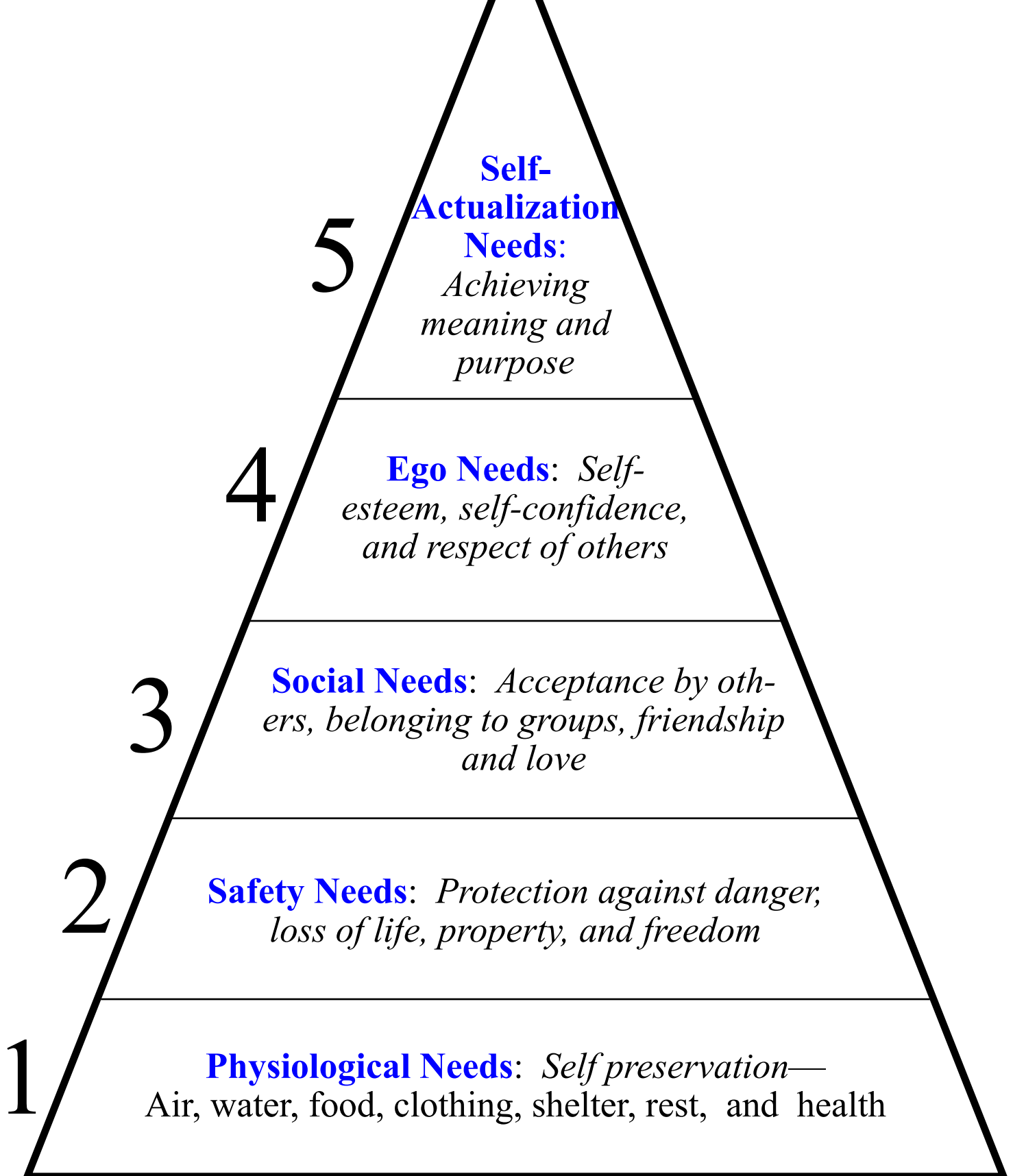
What type of person would need to do this exercise?

How well do you fit the profile of the person for whom this assignment was created?

Reflection: *(Write down your response after completing this assignment.)*

Maslow's Hierarchy-of-Needs Theory:

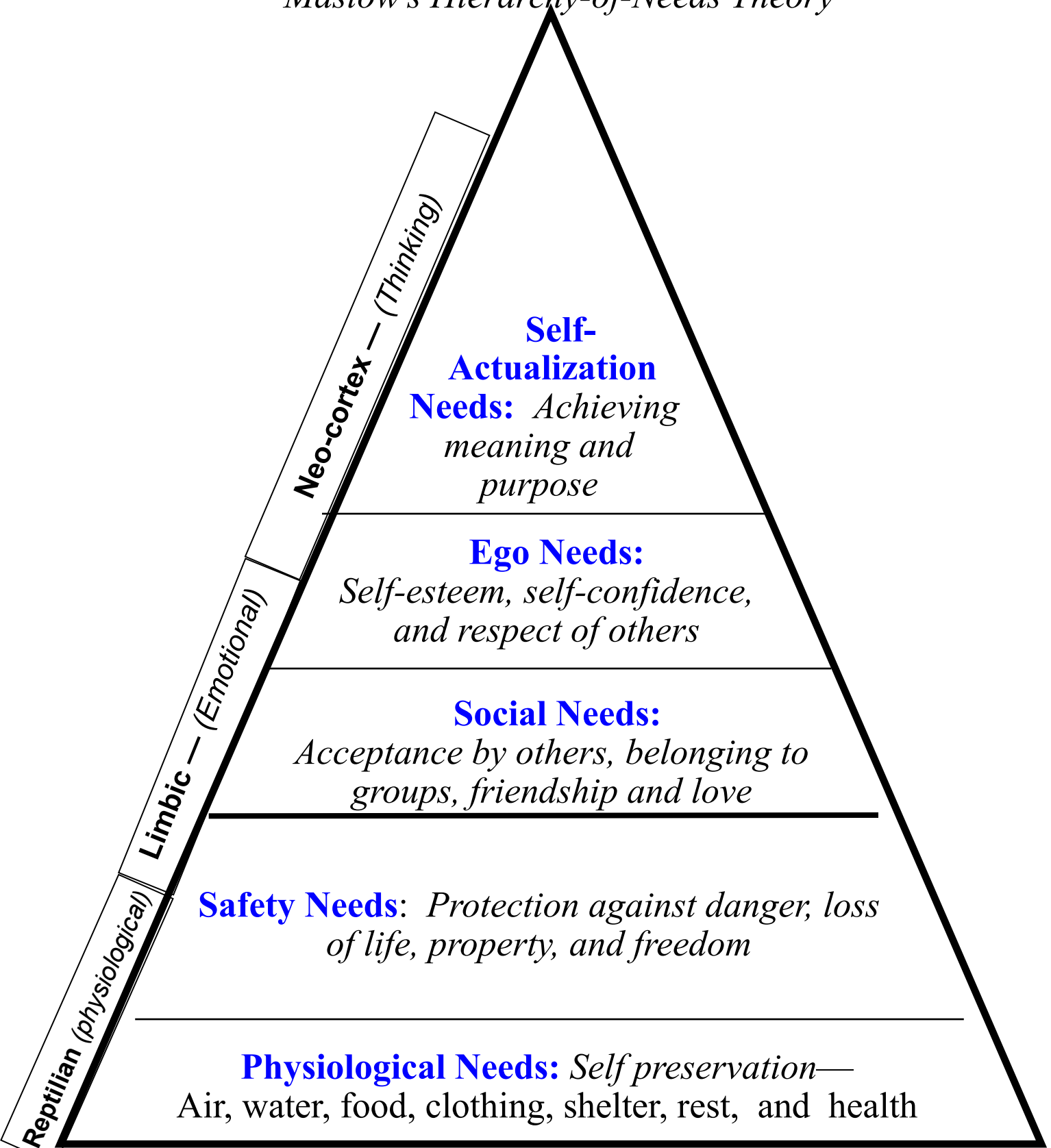
(Needs must be met in order from bottom to top)



Brain-Based Learning

Applied to

Maslow's Hierarchy-of-Needs Theory



Source: Motivation and Personality, 3/e, by Abraham H. Maslow (Robert D. Frager and James Fadiman, eds.) © 1997