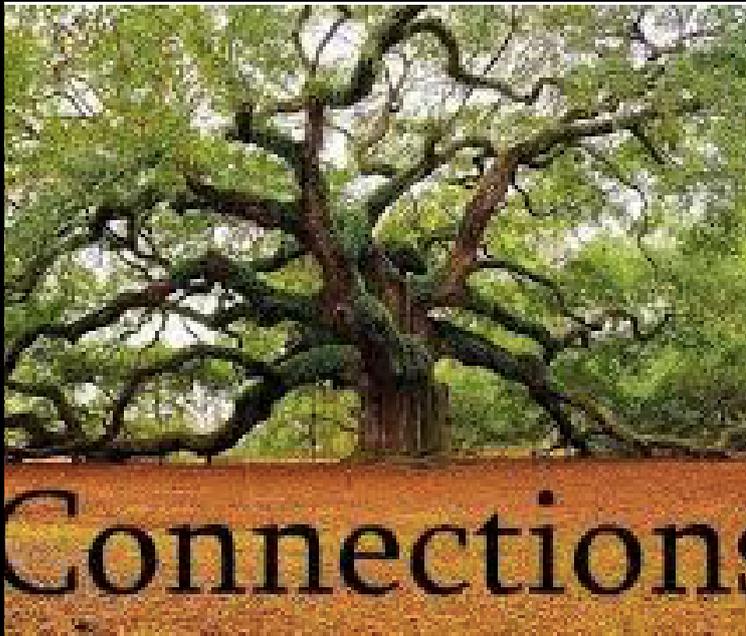


Next we have the need for significance. We all need to feel that our accomplishments matter and that we are important. If this need is at the top of your list you may be labelled as an over-achiever. People get this need met in a variety of ways. For example, writing a book, gaining and/or losing 100 lbs or being a leader or a parent can give you significance. There are many ways to gain significance through achievements and becoming an expert at something. On the negative side someone who has a high need for significance, yet feels insignificant, may get their need met by being a bully or a trouble causer. Can you see how significant this could make them feel? I've read this is why some kids will join a gang - for significance. We all need to feel significant to some degree, the only question is how much do you need? How high is this need on your list? Can you give significance to yourself or are you looking to others to validate you? It's also valuable to understand your partner's need for significance and how easily it may be for you to give them some. You can simply validate him or her and acknowledge their contribution to the family. The more you give, the more you get.



Then of course we all have the need for love and connection. All humans need at least a few very special people in their life to have a meaningful experience on this planet. Even babies who are not handled or loved as infants will fail to physically grow. They call this "failure to thrive syndrome." So we all need love and connection although some of us deny it and others crave it. How fulfilled are you on this one? Do you have friends who love you? Do you have a partner who loves you? How about parents and/or children? It's important to build these relationships to give and receive love. Animals/pets sometimes play a big part in the lives of people because they seem to give unconditional love which is what we are all ultimately looking for. Some of us who DONT have important love connections will give themselves love by eating. Food can be a poor substitute and there are other addictions that can be substitutes as well.

Finally the last two are the spiritual needs of personal growth and contribution. In regard to personal growth, Tony Robbins says "if we are not growing we're dying." Personal growth can provide fulfilment in the other 4 human needs. For those of you committed to your own personal growth you can be certain that life will get better. The need for uncertainty is always there because things will definitely change if you are growing. I believe that with personal growth you can feel that you are significantly contributing to your spiritual life, your family life, your work life and even the world at large depending on how open you are with your growth, gifts and talents. And when you work on yourself, it absolutely makes your life better and you will attract more love and connection without a doubt. With growth comes pain at times. Sometimes it is painful to make a mistake. It can also be difficult to look at your fears or say what you really feel but the rewards usually far outweigh any pain you may feel (and it's only temporary). Finally, we get to contribution and service work. At a certain point in life (hopefully earlier rather than later) you will learn the joy of giving. Anyone who spends time volunteering or working for charity can tell you why they do it.



6 HUMAN NEEDS



The first is the need for certainty. We all need to know that we are loved and that we have basics like food, clothing, shelter, etc. But some of us like certainty in all areas of our life so much that we may have a difficult time with change. We want a routine and may insist on it. We want safety in knowing the outcome of our day or in our relationship. People who strive for certainty do not like surprises at all so they often work hard at controlling people, schedules and circumstances in life. People who strive for certainty all the time are often disappointed, and it takes a lot of energy if their day does not go as planned. If they lose a job, their whole life may feel very chaotic and unsafe. If certainty is your primary driver you may be too invested in "playing it safe" and do whatever you can to live in a calm, status quo kind of life. If your life is unmanageable, then you may indulge in things like over-eating or drinking too much because when you do it because at least those activities provide some certainty. You are certain in how it makes you feel. We tend to use crutches when we have a high need for certainty yet feel we don't have control of what's happening in our life.

The next human need on the list is uncertainty or variety. Paradoxically, even if we have lots of certainty in our life, we also want to experience variety which is why we don't watch the same movie over and over and we eat a variety of foods. People who love uncertainty are not quick to settle down in life. We may date a variety of people or switch jobs often to get that needed spice in life. One of the ways people with a higher need variety meet this need is to go to a different place on vacation each year. They usually love meeting new people and hearing their stories. There are many ways to get the need for variety met positively and you should be aware of the negative ways as well. Some people are driven to thrill sports and adventures to get their needs met because they want to be surprised and get into that state of adrenaline rush. A negative way to get your need met might be taking risks that are inappropriate, like speeding, stealing or cheating on your spouse to feel more alive. It's just as easy to get your need met with a variety of foods, activities and projects if you are aware.

