13 Fundamental Psychological Needs.

Thirteen Fundamental Psychological Needs

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Preface

"Human needs specify innate psychological nutriments that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well–being" (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p. 229).

Although individuals may have different goals and wishes on the surface, deep down we all want the same things. Our fundamental needs are universal: Regardless of culture, age, and lifestyle, everyone ultimately has the same set of needs.

Needs are the basic requirements for our functioning and the nutriments for our well–being and advancement. We can only fully develop and flourish if all our basic needs are satisfied (at least to some degree), and none can be neglected without significant negative consequences. Needs are also a strong direct source of meaning and pleasure (and displeasure): events and activities that fulfil our needs are both meaningful and pleasurable.

Needs and design
If one thing can be said about design, it is that its relevance to the individual and to humanity at large——its purpose, meaning, success or failure——depends on the extent to which it satisfies people's needs. Needs are the fundament of our motivation system, and all human activity is essentially fueled by the aspiration of need fulfilment. Products, systems, buildings, technology, and all other 'artificial' phenomena envisioned and built by people are essentially instruments for need satisfaction.

13 fundamental needs
This booklet provides a typology of 13 fundamental psychological needs developed by Desmet and Fokkinga (2020). Each page shows a need and four corresponding sub–needs. These sub–needs illustrate the range and scope of the fundamental needs. Even though they are themselves not fundamental, they still represent relatively universal and general concepts. The (sub–) needs can, in turn, take shape as and through goals and desires that are specific to particular individuals and/or situations. You can use the overview as a source of design inspiration or, if you like, as a means to explore your personal happiness.
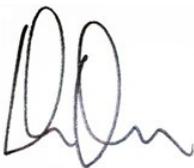
Pieter Desmet

Autonomy

Being the cause of your actions and feeling that you can do things your own way. Rather than feeling that external conditions and other people deter‐ mine your actions.

Freedom of decision

Having the freedom to determine your actions and to make your own decisions.

Individuality

Having an independent existence and qual‐ ities that distinguish you from other people.

Creative expression

Having the ability to imagine, create and communicate new things and ideas.

Self-reliance

Having the ability to do things and make decisions by yourself, without needing other people to help you.

Beauty

Feeling that the world is a place of elegance, coherence, and harmony. Rather than feeling that the world is disharmonious, unappealing, or ugly.

Unity & Order

Feeling that the world is a place of balance and harmony.

Elegance & Finesse

Having access to surroundings, objects, and ideas of elegance and finesse.

Artistic experiences

Having the ability to engage in acts of artistic perception, creation, and reflection.

Natural beauty

Having access to beautiful natural objects or environments.

Comfort

Having an easy, simple, relaxing life, rather than experiencing strain, difficulty or overstimulation.

Peace of mind

Having a mental state of calmness or tran‐quility.

Convenience

Having an easy and convenient life.

Simplicity

Feeling that the world is a place of clarity and simplicity.

Overview & Structure

Having a sense of overview and structure in your life.

Community

Being part of and accepted by a social group or entity that is important to you, rather than feeling you do not belong anywhere and have no social structure to rely on.

Social harmony

Living in a balanced and peaceful coexistence with others.

Affiliation & group identity

Having a sense of sameness, belonging and shared interests with a group.

Rooting (tradition, culture)

Having a sense of family origins, community, and tradition.

Conformity (fitting in)

Having attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that are similar to and match your social group.

Competence

Having control over your environment and being able to exercise your skills to master challenges, rather than feeling that you are incompetent or inef–fective.

Knowledge & Understanding

Having and increasing your knowledge about and understanding of the world.

Challenge

Being stimulated by challenges that require your skill and resolution.

Environmental control

Having the ability to direct the course of events in your environment.

Skill progression

Having the ability to develop your skills and competences.

Fitness

Having and using a body that is strong, healthy, and full of energy, rather than having a body that feels ill, weak, or listless.

Nourishment

Having access to nourishments that provide energy, and promote development.

Health

Being in a good physical and mental condition.

Energy & Strength

Having and using a strong body and mind that is full of energy.

Hygiene

Maintaining yourself and your surroundings clean in order to maintain good health.

Impact

Seeing that your actions or ideas have an impact on the world and contribute to something, rather than seeing that you have no influence and do not contribute to anything.

Influence

Seeing that your actions have an effect on people, things, or situations.

Contribution

Having the ability to make a meaningful contribution to individuals, communities, or the world in general.

Building something

Having the ability to create and build things.

Legacy

Feeling you are working to create and leave something for the ones who come after you.

Morality

Feeling that the world is a moral place and being able to act in line with your personal values, rather than feeling that the world is immoral and your actions conflict with your values.

Have guiding principles

Following a code of good conduct and having values that guide your behaviour.

Acting virtuously

Being able to act righteously and in line with moral standards.

A just society

Living in a society in which everyone is treated as equal and justice is provided to everyone.

Fulfilling duties

Having the ability to fulfill your duties towards individuals, communities, and society.

Purpose

Having a clear sense of what makes your life meaningful and valuable, in–stead of lacking direction, significance or meaning in your life.

Life goals & direction

Having aspirations and ambitions that guide your accomplishments in life.

Meaningful activities

Having the ability to engage in activities that give purpose and meaning to your life.

Personal growth

Having the ability to develop towards reaching your full potential.

Spirituality

Feeling connected to a transcendent or divine quality of existence in life.

Recognition

Getting appreciation for what you do and respect for who you are, instead of being disrespected, underappreciated or ignored.

Appreciation

Feeling you are valued and cherished for who we are.

Respect

Feeling you are taken seriously, considered worthy and treated with respect.

Status & Prestige

Having a worthy position in your social group or s society.

Popularity

Feeling you are liked and admired by others.

Relatedness

Having warm, mutual, trusting relationships with people who you care about, rather than feeling isolated or unable to make personal connections.

Love & Intimacy

Having access to love, tenderness and intimacy.

Camaraderie

Having close and accepting friendships.

To nurture and care

Being able to provide nurture and care.

Emotional support

Receiving empathy, compassion and genuine concern.

Security

Feeling that your conditions and environment keep you safe from harm and threats, rather than feeling that the world is dangerous, risky or a place of uncertainty.

Physical safety

Being safe and secure from pain, injury, or loss.

Financial security

Having the resources to support your living standards in the present and in the future.

Social stability

Feeling that you live in a stable world and in peace with others.

Conservation

Having the ability to preserve and maintain yourself and what is important to you.

Stimulation

Being mentally and physically stimulated by novel, varied, and relevant im–pulses and stimuli, rather than feeling bored, indifferent or apathetic.

Novelty

Having new and varied experiences or impulses.

Variation

Having the ability to enjoy variation or change.

Play

Engaging playful and amusing activities.

Bodily pleasure

Having satisfying bodily experiences and sensations.

Colophon

This booklet was based on the typology of fundamental human needs that was developed by Desmet and Fokkinga (2020).

References
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References
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