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What did Abraham Maslow mean by self-actualization?

Abraham Maslow referred to self-actualization as the instance when a person reaches their full potential. This kind of person uses all of their abilities. Maslow believed that a self-actualizing person has among other things the tendency to be committed to some kind of work, an objective perception of reality, and an attitude of creativeness. Maslow used case studies to draw conclusions about people he believed to be self-actualizing. Among these people were Albert Einstein, George Washington Carver, and Max Wertheimer. Maslow felt that self-actualization only happened when more immediate needs were met first. He felt that if a child did not experience love and belonging in the early years of their life, then they would not reach the point of self-actualization. Maslow's work has undergone criticism, because it was based on limited evidence. Maslow himself admitted that his work was in the preliminary stages, but that he believed that his work would be supported in the future.