

Cleveland Leather Awareness Weekend - CLAW

Virtual CLAW - Session I

April 25, 2020 2 - 2:45 PM

“Social Media In The COVID-19 Era”

Facilitated by: Dale Ross, msw

Session Facilitator –

Dale G. Ross, msw

Counselor – Therapist – Speaker - Writer

- Private therapist for 34 years (Southfield / Metro Detroit, MI)
- Founding member of LIFE-Detroit (Leather Institute For Education – Detroit)
- Chicago Hellfire Club (20 years) & Delta International Club - member
- Mr. Detroit Leather '83 & Semi-finalist IML '83
- Published online book “Stopping The Madness” covering 30 years of articles on Men, Gays/LGBT and the Leather Community - (on Amazon.com)
- Created and taught 2 university graduate courses on the issues of Gay/LGBT clients (always included a section on our Leather/Kink Community)
- Member of 4 AIDS speakers bureaus (in the 80's... early AIDS days)

Before we begin, can we agree that what is shared in this workshop will respect people's right to CONFIDENTIALITY....

IF we share anything with others outside this workshop we agree to not mention any names or specifics, so people can feel free (and encouraged) to share personal thoughts and ideas (even if they are not well thought out at this time...).

Thank You,

Dale

IF we came from 'dysfunctional families' (to what degree - LOL), then what common family activities resulted from our not experiencing or not learning important social skill sets... the subject of most TV/movie 'sit/coms' ??? We laugh at 'those people', while perhaps fearing we might be viewed as them...

Bullying is STILL a major social issue at all levels of society!!! We can't even get laws passed to protect children in schools!?!?

OPPRESSION

Targets

“Victims”

Asian, Latino, Etc.

Women

0 – 21 years old
50 & Up

Poor, Inadequate
Education

Gay, Lesbian
Bisexual, Trans

Judaism, Buddhist

Persons with disabilities

Persons AIDS or HIV+

High or Low
Intelligence

Identity Groups

“Privilege”
“Entitlement”

Race/Ethnicity

Sex

Age

*Class/Socio-
Economic Status*

*Sexual
Orientation*

Religion

Levels of Ability

HIV/AIDS

Intelligence

Agents

*“Persecutors -
“Aggressors”*

White/European

Men

Middle Aged
21 – 50

Wealthy, Well
Educated

Heterosexual

Christian

No visual disability

HIV Negative

Average
Intelligence

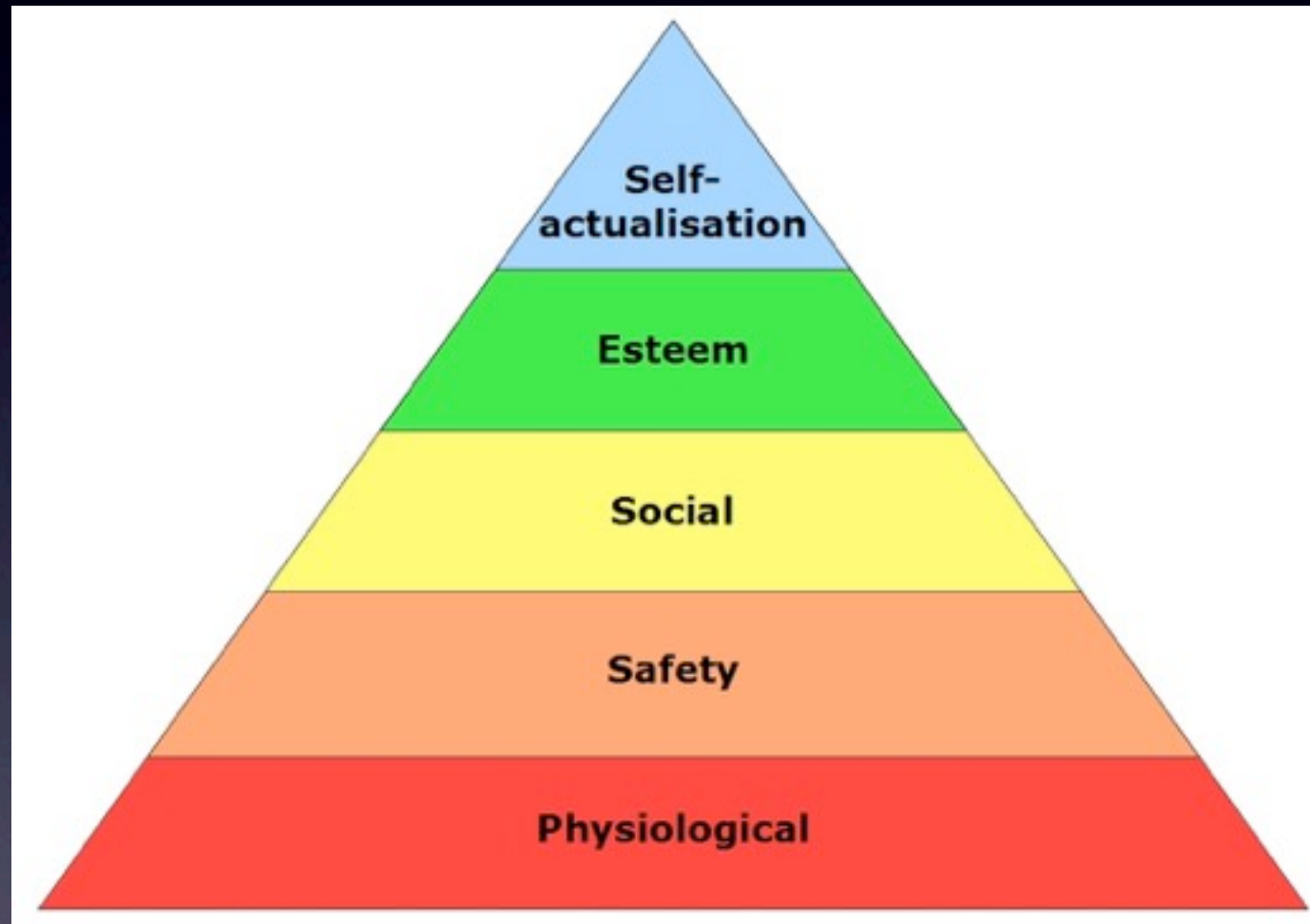
* Original chart appeared in “Out On Campus”, American College Personnel Association, Standing Committee for Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Awareness, Vol. 6, Issue #2, January 1991. Revisions by Dale G. Ross, msw., 1991, 1994, 2001 and 2020

Again, while the negative socializing was occurring, healthy socializing and important skill sets were often missing... and many of us are unaware we didn't acquire these important social 'tools'. Many 'simply withdraw', stay in the closet, or isolate out of fear.. or go online???

Perhaps, a 'silver lining' to this COVID-19 era is our learning to cooperate and help each other... including offering help and feedback about how others are coming across as we attempt to be 'social'???

Why Do People Socialize ?

Abraham Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs'



REASONS FOR JOINING A GROUP

1. Discovering and accepting previously unknown or unacceptable parts of myself.
2. Being able to say what was bothering me instead of holding it in.
3. Other members honestly telling me what they think of me.
4. Learning how to express my feelings.
5. The group's teaching me about the type of impression I make on others.
6. Expressing negative and/or positive feelings toward another member.
7. Learning that I must take ultimate responsibility for the way I live my life no matter how much guidance and support I get from others.
8. Learning how I come across to others.
9. Seeing that others could reveal embarrassing things and take other risks and benefit from it helped me to do the same.
10. Feeling more trustful of groups and of other people.

From: The Theory And Practice Of Group Psychotherapy, by Irvin Yalom, pg. 82, 1975

Why do we want and have sex ???
Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs'...

Perhaps, our social needs could be similar...
Do they (and we) know our expectations ???

Fantasy, and especially online fantasy, may become a 'poor quality coping mechanism'... escape from reality???

Just as vacations can be helpful, so we return to daily reality refreshed.

Like 'fast food' we get some immediate relief but it isn't sustaining, and our culture is still too slow to the longterm costs: 'Quantity vs Quality'...

I suggest this is similar to 'addiction' of any substance, or process (e.g. gambling), or even addictive lifestyles...
...What do you think?

What if ALL PEOPLE were 'unconditionally OK' ???

(behaviors / consequences could be separate discussions)

How might that change our views of ourselves and others, and help ease our stress of socializing...

Perhaps, it could even become 'fun' - grin.

Then, the question might become: How effective are your social skills, and would you like to learn to be more effective?

Who's 'willing, able and wanting' to help ???

The question of skill set '*abilities*', could become a social issue or concern, rather than an individual's personal struggle...

Similar to how health care for all could be an option, rather than our current struggles.

Perhaps, we could learn to trust others (*'cooperation vs competition'*) and it could be OK to not worry, or not try and be '*perfect*'... or even desirable - grin !?!

Thank you for your participation in this first ever
Virtual CLAW event...

If you would like to contact me with questions,
comments or to receive a resource list:

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