

## **A MODEL OF HUMAN NEEDS AS CONTRADICTIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Need theories by Abraham Maslow, David McClelland, and Eric Berne have for a long time provided insights into human behavior in organizations. Maslow proposed a hierarchical arrangement of needs; McClelland posited an independent set of needs, and Berne implicitly stated an independent set of needs. This paper compares these three theories to arrive at a model that posits human needs as a system of three interrelated sets of opposing needs. For example, a person may oscillate between (1) a Need for Structure vs. a Need for Uncertainty; (2) a Need for People vs. a Need for Privacy; and (3) a Need for Satiation vs. a Need for Transcending Compulsions. The paper further proposes that these needs are related to an individual's holistic selfimage in terms of three broad and interrelated dimensions of Competence, Attractiveness and Values. Personal growth process may then be seen as a resolution of ambiguity of an individual's selfimage on these three dimensions.