

Core Concerns: Appreciation

by Sophia Tutorial



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we'll discuss the role of appreciation in both creating and resolving conflict. The areas of focus include:

1. Appreciation as a Core Concern
 - a. In Conflict
 - b. In Conflict Resolution

1. Appreciation as a Core Concern

In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a **core concern** is one of five emotional or relational needs all humans feel within relationships or negotiations. All of these core needs fit into the esteem and love/belonging levels on Maslow's hierarchy.

As you learned previously, physiological and safety needs are below esteem and love/belonging on the hierarchy. If something happens that forces us to lose our sense of security or access to basic physiological needs, we focus on obtaining those needs first.

Appreciation, or a perception that one is heard, understood, and valued by others, is a core concern that falls on the esteem level in Maslow's hierarchy.

We all need to feel appreciated, and we need to feel that appreciation in many contexts in our lives, such as at home and at work. We even want to feel appreciated in the larger community with acquaintances and neighbors.



TERMS TO KNOW

Core Concern

One of 5 emotional or relational needs all humans feel within relationships or in negotiation.

Appreciation

A perception that one is heard, understood, and valued by others.

1a. In Conflict

Because appreciation is a core concern, not being appreciated can lead to conflict in any of these relationship contexts.

- *Home:* You might get into an argument with somebody at home over who's doing what around the house. You're angry because something isn't getting done, but underneath that anger may be the sense that you don't feel appreciated. You feel like you're being taken for granted.
- *Family:* Perhaps there was an anniversary or a birthday, and your sister forgot; she didn't even call or send you a card. She didn't appreciate you in a way in which you would like to be appreciated. That lack of appreciation can then lead to some feelings of resentment, anger, and hurt.
- *Professional Workplace:* You've been working hard and getting paid, but you're not getting any recognition. Other people on your team have gotten some awards; in fact, a person who's been there for less time than you just got promoted. You're feeling unappreciated, and this starts to lead to some conflicts with your coworkers because you're exhibiting resentment. At the core of the conflict is your hurt over not being recognized.
- *Neighborhood:* You find out that your neighbors are going to be planting some trees. You have a garden, and it's always been sunny in that area of your backyard. You feel as though you're not being appreciated because they didn't take the time to have a conversation about something that's going to affect your property.

1b. In Conflict Resolution

In conflict resolution, it's very important to bring appreciation into the process. At the very beginning, the conflict-resolver will let the parties know that they are appreciated simply for coming in good faith and agreeing to be part of the process.

Then within the process, each party gets an equal chance to speak and be heard. This is a core part of conflict resolution because both parties need to feel appreciated through their positions being heard and valued.



BIG IDEA

Once the core concerns have been met, the larger needs of esteem and love/belonging can surface and be fulfilled. Appreciation is one of these concerns in the esteem category, and a perceived lack of appreciation can lead to or escalate a conflict. However, making sure both parties are appreciated in the conflict resolution process can make it easier to come to an agreement.



SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned that the esteem and love/belonging levels of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs also include core concerns; **appreciation is a core concern** that falls into the esteem category. You now understand that in the conflict resolution process, appreciation is important to address because a perceived lack of appreciation can often be at the heart of the presented issues in a conflict. Good luck!

Source: Adapted from Sophia tutorial by Marlene Johnson.



TERMS TO KNOW

Appreciation

A perception that one is heard, understood, and valued by others.

Core Concern

Per Harvard Negotiation Project, one of 5 emotional or relational needs all humans feel within relationships or in negotiation.