

# The Need for Relationships

by Sophia Tutorial



## WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, we will discuss relationships as a basic human need by looking at:

1. Importance of Relationships
2. Interdependence and the Strength of Relationships

## 1. Importance of Relationships

The parties in a conflict are always part of some sort of **relationship**, or a group of two or more that shares a sense of interdependence formed around:

- Common goals
- Values
- Shared experiences

Because we are all social beings, we have an inherent need to relate to others; it's in our very genetic code that we need to live in groups in order to survive in nature.

These groups could be:

- Family groups
- Tribal groups
- Community groups

In these groups, our shared experiences, goals, and values are what bind us together, even on a national level.

### IN CONTEXT

As social animals, we feel that we have a relationship with our fellow humans that manifests itself within our communities, with our friends, and with our families.

We have different kinds of relationships, but they all develop from ongoing shared experiences: When in school, we may meet friends and form relationships with them; if we're raising children, we might form relationships with other families who have children; at work, we form relationships with the people we're collaborating on projects with.

All the different places we go in our lives, from community clubs to places of worship, bring us into contact with people with whom we form relationships.



#### TERM TO KNOW

### Relationship

Groups of two or more that share a sense of interdependence formed around common goals, values, and shared experiences.

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## 2. Interdependence and the Strength of Relationships

Then, out of these relationships comes an **interdependence**, or a state in which each member of a relationship is mutually dependent on the others.

This reliance and responsibility can be:

- Emotional
- Economical
- Ecological
- Moral

We come to feel a sense of mutual responsibility for one another; this sense of interdependence is really based on the positive relationships we have with one another.

The more experiences we share together, or the more long-term the relationship is, the more we experience a sense of belonging together. We feel that we have to care for one another, as our mutual interests are in each other's welfare and needs.

➞ **EXAMPLE** When there's been a natural disaster or community tragedy, people bind together as citizens to help one another work through it. We also see it very close to home in those we consider family. We say we'd do anything to protect them, and we become dependent on people in the community to help protect us as well.

Thus these dependencies form within:

- Our communities
- Our families
- Larger society

The more shared experiences we have, the more we're willing to go to bat for one another, or to really seek to help someone meet their welfare and needs.

➞ **EXAMPLE** Someone who has experienced homelessness may feel a strong connection to others currently experiencing it. They have dedicated their life to volunteering their time and resources to help build programs and create policies to end homelessness and help those affected by it.

On a larger level, we feel interdependence as the need to protect these mutual interests, but we certainly also

feel it on a personal level in the need to protect our families.



## TERM TO KNOW

### Interdependence

A state in which each member of a relationship is mutually dependent on the others (e.g., emotionally, economically, ecologically and/or morally reliant on and responsible to each other).



## BIG IDEA

Relationships are key to who we are in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, as they fall right into the category of love and belonging. We all have a very strong need to feel connected to one another; these connections are based on the interdependence we feel with one another, whether it be on a very close level (familial) or on a larger scale (societal).



## SUMMARY

In this lesson, you learned the **importance of relationships** as a basic human need. We form relationships with our families, friends, and communities through a sense of shared experiences and values. You now understand that the more shared experiences we have in a relationship, the more we feel a sense of **interdependence that strengthens the relationship** and manifests itself in the need to protect the interests of the other members of the relationship. Good luck!

Source: Adapted from Sophia tutorial by Marlene Johnson.



## TERMS TO KNOW

### Interdependence

A state in which each member of a relationship is mutually dependent on the others (e.g. emotionally, economically, ecologically and/or morally reliant on and responsible to each other).

### Relationship

Groups of two or more that share a sense of interdependence formed around common goals, values, and shared experiences.