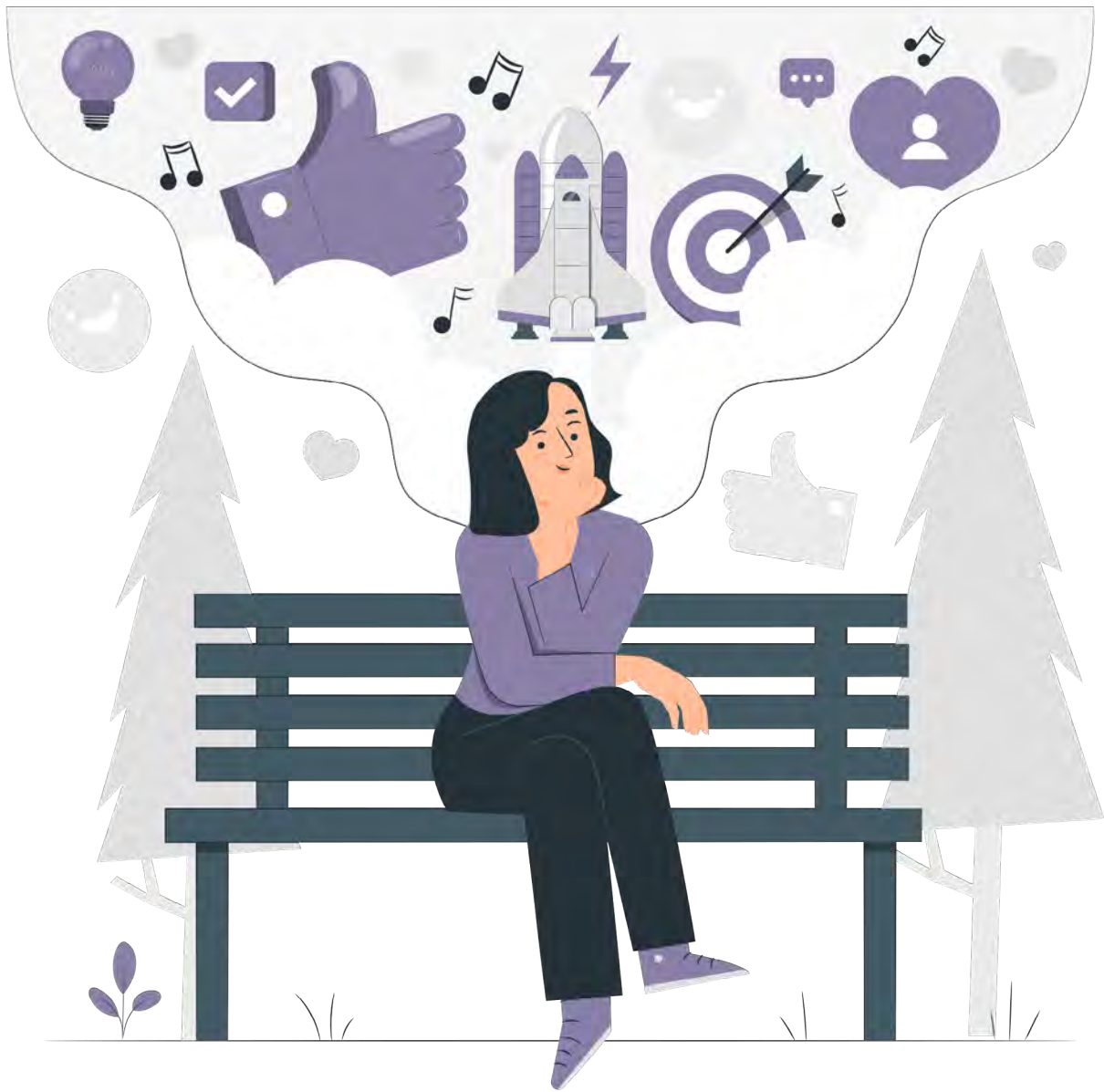


THE SKILLS YOU NEED GUIDE TO

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



THE SKILLS YOU NEED GUIDE TO

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Skills You Need

**This is one of a series of eBooks
by Skills You Need available for sale at:**

www.skillsyouneed.com

Skills You Need

This is one of a series of eBooks
by Skills You Need available for sale at:
www.skillsyouneed.com

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other non-commercial uses permitted by copyright law.

ISBN: 978-1-911084-51-8

Published by Skills You Need Ltd
© 2025 Skills You Need Ltd
This version was published in January 2025

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
1 PRACTICAL STEPS TOWARDS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	10
ORGANISING YOUR TIME	11
DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL RESILIENCE	18
TOP TIPS FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	23
2 DEVELOPING A PERSONAL VISION AND GOALS	27
DEFINING SUCCESS	28
REFINING YOUR PERSONAL VISION	33
SETTING PERSONAL GOALS	37
3 PLANNING YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	40
THE SWOT PROCESS	45
4 IDENTIFYING SUITABLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES	50
LEARNING SHAPE	51
LEARNING STYLES	52
HABITS AND LEARNING	57
ATTITUDE AND MINDSET	58
NEUROPLASTICITY - CHANGING YOUR MINDSET	60
IDENTIFYING YOUR PREFERENCES	61

5 REVIEWING YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	79
INTRODUCING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	80
DEVELOPING AND USING REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	81
KEEPING A LEARNING JOURNAL	82
THE BENEFITS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	86
EVALUATING YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	87
AN ANNUAL REVIEW OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	89
CELEBRATING SUCCESS AND DEALING WITH FAILURE	90
DEALING WITH FAILURE	93
REVIEWING YOUR GOALS	97
MOVING TOWARDS REFLECTIVE PRACTICE	98
6 RECORDING YOUR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	99
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING	100
RECORDING ACHIEVEMENTS	101
RECORDING YOUR SKILLS AND ABILITIES	102
YOUR MEMORY IS NOT INFALLIBLE	103
7 A SPECIAL CASE: CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	104
RECORDING YOUR DEVELOPMENT	108
CONCLUSION	110

Introduction

Personal development is a lifelong process. It is a way for people to assess their skills and qualities, consider their aims in life and set goals in order to realise and maximise their potential.

Early life development and early formative experiences within the family, and in other settings such as at school, can help to shape us as adults. Personal development should not, however, stop later in life.

This book is designed to help you to identify the skills you need to set life goals that can enhance your personal life, employability prospects, raise your confidence, and lead to a more fulfilling, higher quality life. It aims to help you plan to make relevant, positive and effective life choices and decisions for your future, to support personal empowerment.

It contains information and advice to help you to think about your personal development and ways in which you can work towards goals and your full potential.

Using This Book

This eBook can be used to help with thinking about personal development at any level, from a small change like learning a new language for a holiday, to major changes like a new career. The processes and tools described can be used formally or informally, and also in full or in part.

Where appropriate, the book also signposts you to other relevant resources, such as other eBooks available from Skills You Need.

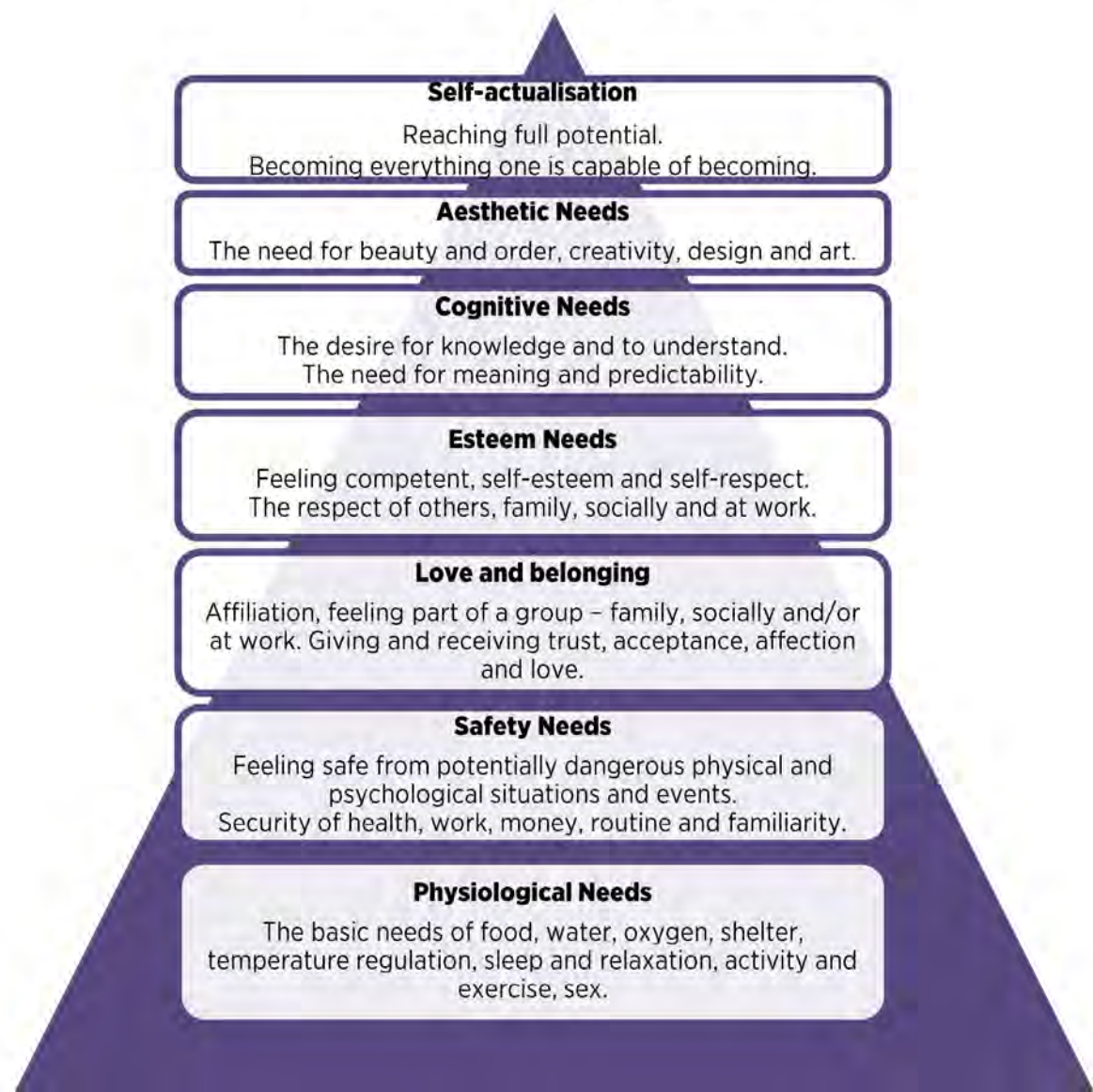
The key is to take what you want and find useful at any given time, and leave the rest.

Why Is Personal Development Important?

There are many ideas surrounding personal development, one of which is Abraham Maslow's process of self-actualisation. Maslow (1970) suggested that all individuals have an in-built need for personal development which occurs through a process called self-actualisation.

The extent to which people are able to develop depends on certain needs being met. These needs form a hierarchy. Only when one level of need is satisfied can a higher one be developed (see Figure 1). As change occurs throughout life, however, the level of need motivating someone's behaviour at any one time will also change.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



The levels are:

- At the bottom of the hierarchy are **the basic physiological needs for food, drink, sex and sleep**, i.e., the basics for survival.
- **Second are the needs for safety and security** in both the physical and economic sense.
- Thirdly, progression can be made to **satisfying the need for love and belonging**.
- The fourth level refers to **meeting the need for self-esteem and self-worth**. This is the level most closely related to 'self-empowerment'.
- The fifth level relates to **the need to understand**. This level includes more abstract ideas such as curiosity and the search for meaning or purpose and a deeper understanding.
- The sixth relates to **aesthetic needs for beauty, symmetry and order**.
- Finally, at the top of Maslow's hierarchy is the **need for self-actualisation**.

Maslow suggested that all individuals need to see themselves as competent and autonomous, and that everyone has limitless room for growth. Self-actualisation is the desire that everybody has 'to become everything that they are capable of becoming'. In other words, it refers to self-fulfilment and the need to reach full potential as a unique human being.

Maslow believed that the path to self-actualisation involved being in touch with your feelings, experiencing life fully and with total concentration.

Managing Your Personal Development

There are a number of steps to take in managing your personal development, and these are covered by the chapters of this book. The steps are:

1. Practical Steps Towards Personal Development

It is easy to make excuses for not getting started on personal development.

Most of us are busy and have any number of other things to do. Chapter 1 explains how you can clear away some of these excuses and get ready to start your personal development.

2. Developing a Personal Vision

Personal development does not have to be for work purposes. It can be for fun, or just because you want to do it. Most of us, however, find it easier to motivate ourselves to learn and improve if we can articulate why we want to do it, whether for work or not. You may, for example, want to develop your writing skills to get a better or different job, learn a musical instrument so that you can play in a band, or learn a foreign language so you can manage better when you go on holiday.

Developing your personal vision—a clear idea of where you want to be in a few months or years, and why—is a crucial part of developing this purpose, and Chapter 2 explains how to start this process.

3. Planning Your Personal Development

Once you are clear about where you want to be, you can start planning how to get there. Drawing up a personal development plan is not essential, and you may feel that it is a step too far for casual development like learning a foreign language or how to play bridge in an evening class.

Having at least some kind of written plan may, however, make it easier to get started, and to see whether you are making progress. Chapter 3 suggests how you might go about this process.

4. Starting the Improvement Process

There are a number of different ways in which you can learn and develop, and Chapter 4 explains how you might go about finding suitable opportunities.

It explores some of the theories about learning, and suggests why different types of learning may be more effective for different subjects or different people. This chapter may be particularly helpful if you are thinking about how to learn a new skill, but none of the options that you have identified really appeals. It may help you to identify new options that you had not previously considered.

5. Reviewing Your Personal Development

For effective learning and development, it is important to reflect on your experience, and consider what you have learnt from it. **Chapter 5 explains that regular review of what you have been doing will help with your learning.**

This may sound excessive for casual development activities like evening classes or online language learning. However, getting into habits of reflection and review will help to ensure that you keep learning from your experiences, whether planned development activity or random events. For more formal learning, or long-term development goals, reviewing your development will also ensure that your activities continue to move you towards your goals, and that your goals or vision remain relevant to you.

6. Recording Your Personal Development

It is often a good idea to keep a record of your personal development, particularly for formal learning. Chapter 6 gives some ideas about how you might do this.

By writing down key developments in your learning and development as and when they occur, you will be able to reflect on your successes at a later date. This reflection may also help to motivate you to learn more skills in the future.

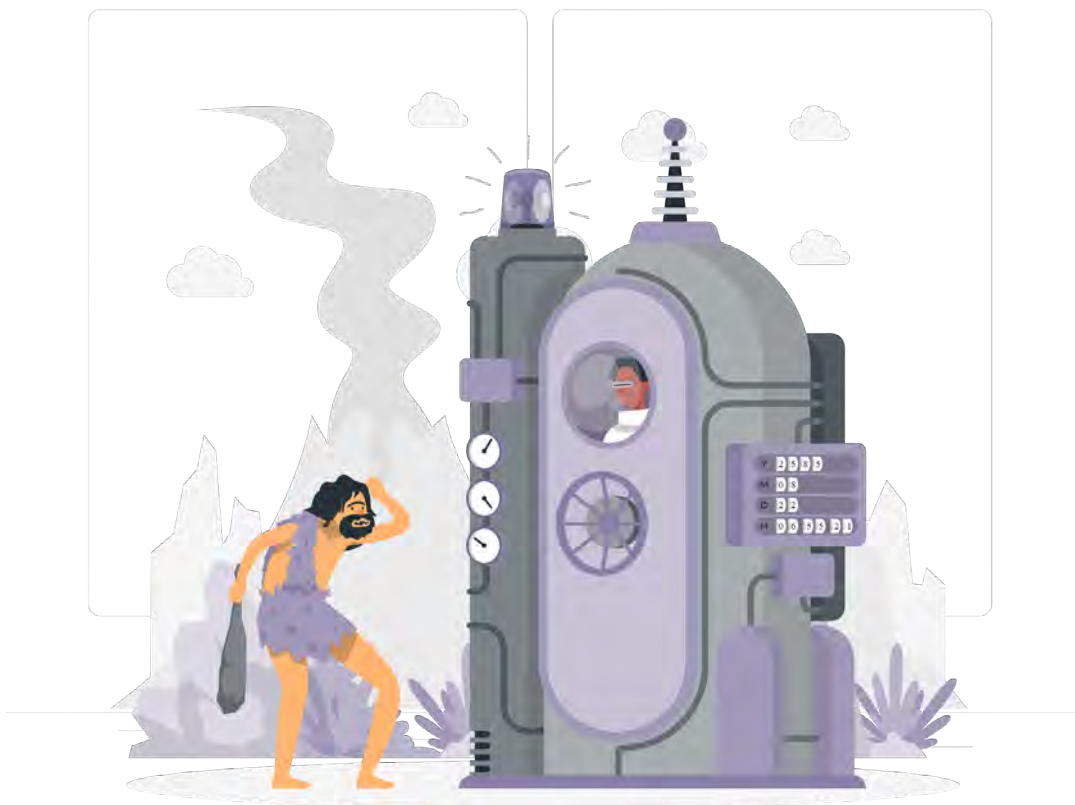
The Journey and the Destination

The process of personal development can sometimes seem challenging, and even a chore.

It is, however, important to remember that the journey matters as much, if not more, than the destination.

- If you are not enjoying the process of personal development, it is hard to remain motivated even if you concentrate on its end point, your goal.
- If you do not enjoy the journey, you may not like the destination very much, either. For example, if you do not like having to play a musical instrument during practice, why would you enjoy playing it in a band?

Personal development is just that: personal and individual. Nobody else can tell you what to do, or whether you will enjoy it. Only you can take responsibility for it, and ensure that it takes you where you want to go.



**The full eBook
is available at**

www.skillsyouneed.com