**Motivational Concepts**

The term**Motivation**is defined asa need or desire that energizes and directs behavior toward a goal. It is often described as a mixture of natures psychological push and nurtures cognitive pull.

There are three perspectives on motivation: the instinct theory, the drive-reduction theory and the arousal theory.

**Instinct Theory**- an instinct is defined as a complex behavior that is rigidly patterned throughout a species and is unlearned. Most psychologists believe that this explains animal behavior and not human motives. It does however support the idea that genes predispose species-specific behavior.

**Drive-Reduction Theory**- the idea that a physiological need creates an aroused tension state (a drive) that motivates an organism to satisfy this need. The aim of this drive-reduction is**Homeostasis**, the maintenance of a balanced or constant internal state. We are also pulled by **Incentives**, positive or negative environmental stimuli that motivate behavior. For example, our body needs energy; we feel hungry and are motivated to find food.

**Arousal Theory-**we are driven to experience some level of stimulation. Without stimulation we are bored and unhappy, with too much stimulation we become overwhelmed and stressed and seek to reduce arousal.

Abraham Maslow (1970) developed a hierarchy of needs in order to describe which needs in our lives take priority over others. The hierarchy begins with physiological needs that must be satisfied before the higher-level safety needs become active and so on.

**Self Actualization Needs**

* Need to live up ones fullest and unique potential.
* Need for self-esteem achievement, competence, and independence, for recognition and respect from others.

**Belongingness and love needs**

* Need to love and be loved, to belong and be accepted; need to avoid loneliness and alienation.

**Safety needs**

* Need to feel that the world is organized and predictable; need to feel safe, secure, and stable.

**Physiological needs**

* Need to satisfy hunger and thirst.

Some common motivators covered in this unit include hunger, sex and the desire to achieve. These will be covered over the next three lessons.