



# The Barrett Model

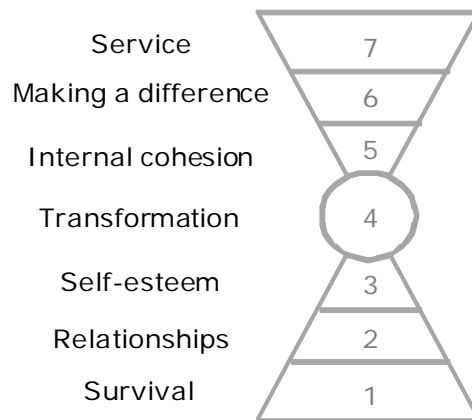
By Richard Barrett

The Seven Levels of Consciousness model was conceived in 1997 by Richard Barrett, founder and chairman of the Barrett Values Centre. Barrett is an author, keynote speaker and consultant on leadership, values and culture in business and society.

The distinguishing feature of the Seven Levels of Consciousness model is that it is evolutionary in nature. It provides a framework for understanding the stages in the development of both individual and group consciousness. The model covers both the internal dimensions of consciousness - our inner journey into self-knowledge and meaning, and the external dimensions of consciousness – the gradual expansion of our sense of identity in terms of who and what we care about in our lives.

Barrett realised that with some minor modifications Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs could be turned into a model for mapping the evolution of consciousness in individuals, and all forms of human group structures – organisations, communities, nations, etc.

By 1998, the model was complete and was being used as the foundation of the Cultural Transformation Tools (CTT) to map the values of organisations, and their leaders.



Barrett made three changes to Maslow’s model, and created a way of using the new model to measure the consciousness of individuals and organisations by mapping their values:

1. Changed the model from needs to consciousness
2. Expanded the concept of self-actualisation
3. Re-labelled the basic needs
4. Developed a way of using the model as a measurement instrument

An overview of the first three changes is shown in the following table.

MASLOW	BARRETT	
Hierarchy of Needs	Levels Consciousness	
Self-actualisation	7	Service
	6	Making a Difference
	5	Internal Cohesion
Know and understand	4	Transformation
Self-esteem	3	Self-esteem
Belonging	2	Relationships
Safety	1	Survival
Physiological		

### 1. From Needs to Consciousness

The shift from needs to consciousness was made because Barrett realised that when people have underlying anxieties or subconscious fears about one of their basic needs, their subconscious remains focused on that need. Even though it would appear to an outside observer that they have satisfied that need, they cannot get enough of what they want to assuage their anxiety or subconscious fears. For example, there are people who are never satisfied with the amount of money they earn, even though they

are wealthy. These people are not operating from *need*: they are operating from survival *consciousness*. They are preoccupied with making money. Other people cannot get enough love: they operate from relationship consciousness. In business, we often find people who cannot get enough power: they have a need to be respected by others. They operate from self-esteem consciousness.

## 2. Expanding the concept of Self-Actualisation

Barrett expanded the concept of self-actualisation by recognising this as a four-stage process. The first stage is also known as the stage of individuation. Individuation is the process by which we become the master of our own destiny by letting go of the aspects of our personal and cultural conditioning that prevent us from becoming our true self and fulfilling our potential.

Prior to individuation (Transformation), we are conditioned by the expectations of those around us—by the family and the culture we were brought up in. We align, and are loyal to the groups with which we identify. It is through these groups that we satisfy our deficiency needs. During individuation (the first stage of self-actualisation) we establish a sense of our own personal authority and our own voice. We are able to let go of our need to identify with our background social environment because we have learned how to master our deficiency needs. We now choose to live by the values and beliefs that resonate deeply with who we are.

During the second stage of self-actualisation we uncover the transcendent meaning to our lives (Internal Cohesion). We then shift to Making a Difference Consciousness when we are able to actualise our sense of meaning by creating positive change in the world. When making a difference becomes a way of life we move to the Service level of consciousness.

## 3. Re-labelling the Basic Needs

Barrett changed the names of the basic needs by grouping “physiological” and “safety” needs into Survival Consciousness, and re-labelling “love and belonging” as Relationship Consciousness.

## 4. Developing a measurement Instrument

Lastly, Barrett realised that each level of consciousness is characterised by specific values and behaviours. Therefore, if people were asked to choose the values that were important to them or the values that characterised the culture of their organisation, then it would be possible to map their individual consciousness and the consciousness of their organisation.

The measurement instruments that Barrett developed are called the Cultural Transformation Tools (CTT). A fuller description of the origins of the Barrett Model is provided in the document From Maslow to Barrett.