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## Peaking: Maslow's fusion of science and spirituality

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Meditating, transcendent experiences and the awareness of merging with the world were the last things I expected when I took motivation and personality with Abraham Maslow at Brandeis University. I was expecting classes about what motivates people to do things. I, at the time, also thought science and spirituality were in two separate and forever divided worlds. I was wrong on both counts. Maslow considered transcendent experiences, peak experiences, and the mystic world legitimate areas of study for a theoretical

psychologist. These experiences are the result of a confluence of many variables including satisfying basic needs, being part of a supportive and loving community and commitment to a greater goal. According to Maslow, "When we enter into such experiences, we gain the fullest appreciation possible of our precious uniqueness in the universe, our strengths, and talents: we accept what we are." The various forms of an experiential phenomenon which Maslow studied he named foothill, plateau, and peak. These experiences are extremely beautiful and valuable moments in a person's life. 'real experiencing' is so often enjoyable and even rapturous, if it is holistic enough, i.e., cosmic and mystical enough. It is often 'enjoyable' even when it is

also painful and sad." While they are spontaneous in nature and occur with the greatest frequency among the healthiest people, Maslow does give us some hints on ways to increase our chances in experiencing one and the states with strong conviction that these experiences are possible for everyone. He names one of the ways we resist these spiritual moments as the Jonah complex. This lecture will focus on Maslow's contributions to bridging the divide between science and spirituality and will present unreported Maslow source material on achieving and benefitting from peak experiences. Kopolow, L.(2019) (prepublication) "Beyond Striving: The Last Maslowian's guide to Self-Actualization, Peak Experience, and Happiness."

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