

7. *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature*

A.H. Maslow, Penguin Books, 1976

Professor Maslow might be *the* psychologist of wellness. He researched what makes good people and good societies. He writes that self-actualized people [admirable or saintly people] “...are devoted to some task, call, vocation, beloved work (‘outside themselves’). This is something for which the person is a ‘natural,’ something he or she was born to do, in some sense.” (p. 291.)

Maslow states that we all need a value system, good or bad – and wonders what makes a “good” value system. So, he talked with people who appeared to have one (p. 7), and drew conclusions, including: “In...peak experiences it becomes impossible to differentiate sharply between the self and the non-self. As the person becomes integrated so does his world. As he feels good, so does the world look good... Observe first of all that this is an empirical statement and not a philosophical or theological one. Anyone can repeat these findings. I am definitely speaking of human experiences and not of supernatural ones.” (p. 159; *Annie’s highlighting.*)

Lake Tahoe – the world looks good



Much of what our technological society believes to be true falls under “cultural.” Maslow, working at the farther edges of wellness, where psychology morphs into spirituality, shows that much of what has been considered the domain of religion and religious teachers, is in fact the fulfillment of our humanity. This type of spirituality does not require adherence to organized religion.

We move now to books examining the universal nature of the human spirit.