



# Some thoughts on Atheism

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## I N T R O D U C T I O N

These are a few thoughts coming from a dissection that once happened on the internet when one of my friends said this:

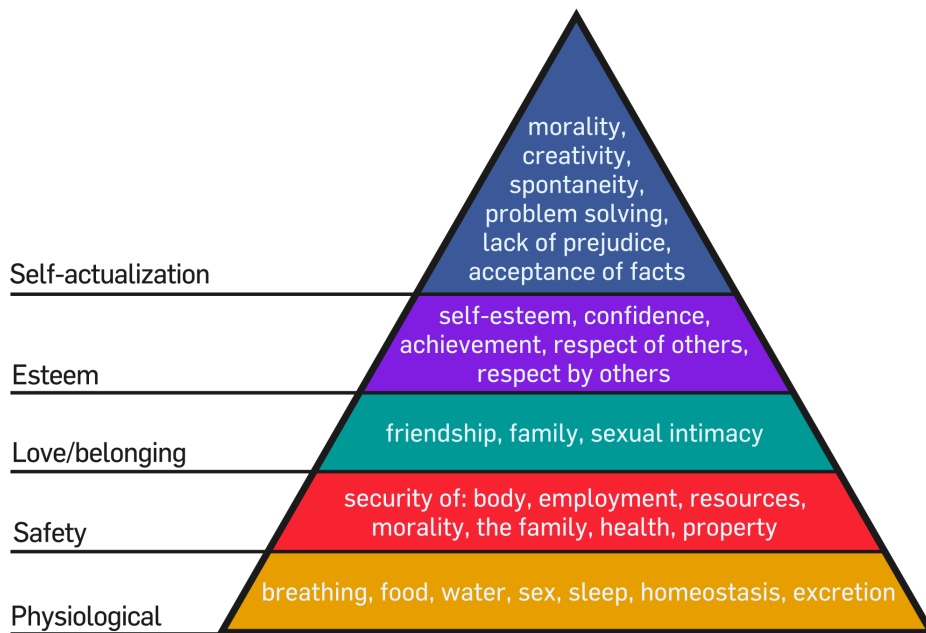
*Atheists are just modern versions of religious fundamentalists: they both take religion too literally.* — Sina

There is a famous quote that I guess is exactly where we should start by:

*In fact, "atheism" is a term that should not even exist. No one ever needs to identify himself as a "non-astrologer" or a "non-chemist". We do not have words for people who doubt that Elvis is still alive or that aliens have traversed the galaxy only to molest ranchers and their cattle. Atheism is nothing more than the noises reasonable people make in the presence of unjustified religious beliefs.* — Sam Harris

If you don't believe in God, you just don't believe in it and that's all. Now giving it a name and trying to build a culture on that is kinda what a religion is. Question is why is it so or is it really so?

One of my dear friends, Shokoofeh, once told me about an interesting concept called Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The idea is simple: From the bottom to the top is the hierarchy, and this hierarchy is in such order that one probably will sacrifice the upper ones to save the bottom ones. In other words, one might lose a job to get into a relationship it wants because Love/belonging is higher than Esteem



One interesting aspect of this triangle is that Love is exactly the same level as Belonging. Now as you may know we are in horrible times when it comes to belonging. Thanks to social networks people feel isolated and lonely which highly increases the level of needing social belonging.

What I'm about to tell is only an educated guess so don't blame me, it's only a theory based on my observations and point of view. I've seen many Atheists and nonatheistic religions. A common observation on almost all of them was that people could be divided into two groups:

- People who had religious backgrounds and at some point lost their faith, they did not believe in god but missed being a religious person. This group missed the feeling of being watched after by God. In general these were the people who weren't happy about not believing in God. And they didn't call themselves anything at all.
- People who didn't believe in God and were proud of not believing in God. These were the people who called themselves Atheists and actively defended their ideas.

An interesting factor was both of these groups craved a sense of belonging. Something I noticed during my involvement in some non-profit organizations was people either were there for their ideas or to feel belonged. Now an even more interesting observation was that most of the people who were there to feel belonged were nonatheists.

After a few searches I found something worth mentioning. Most of the physiology website I found suggested that a big contributor to the belonging factor is religion. And if you actually think about it, it makes a lot of sense: A big job of the religion is to be your source of belonging. You feel as if you're part of a bigger thing, you do the traditions and hang out with the people. Almost every activity of the religious is about feeling belonged.

In the other side are nonatheistic religions like Hinduism, Jainism, Church of Satan, Creativity, Syntheism, etc. If you look deep into these religions you'll see many different beliefs, traditions and activities, with all of these differences there is one significant similarity between all of them: they are all selling their members a sense of belonging.

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## C O N C L U S I O N

What I understood so far was that as much as Atheists might hate religions and advertise against them, they need the basic belonging offers of the religions and that's the reason they call themselves a word, to feel connected to others with a same attitude, to feel belonged. If we agree that biggest factor of a religion is selling belonging, then we can agree with Sina that Atheists and religious people

are very much the same.

*Thanks for putting your time into this.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. King', with a period at the end. The signature is stylized and cursive.