You can read article after article on the different motivational theories. The focus of most is that motivation refers to forces that give us incentive to actually do something. When you wake up in the morning something stimulates you to get out of bed and get started with the day.

Motivation can come from factors outside of us. In the morning, it might be an alarm clock or a person “suggesting” we get out of bed. We call this external stimulus, extrinsic motivation. Or, you might wake up and decide on your own that you need to get started. We call this internal stimulus, intrinsic motivation.

Motivation can be positive or negative, tangible or intangible, subtle or obvious. Motivation is concerned with the process by which behavior is energized and directed. That is, what gets people excited? Although there are many approaches to motivation that critical thinkers can use to move, drive, induce, provoke, arouse, stimulate, lure, coax, influence, compel, tempt, prod, spur, push, and otherwise get someone else to accept their stand on a claim. We will look at one, Maslow’s Need Theory.