

DEFENSE MECHANISMS

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Based on Freud's psychoanalytic theory

- Tactic devised by our unconscious mind
- Safeguard the mind from anxiety
- Uses tactics like manipulating, denying, distorting reality etc



Repression

Definition:

“Pushing” threatening or conflicting events or situations out of conscious memory

Example:

Elise, who was abused as a child, cannot remember the abuse at all



REGRESSION

**DEAL WITH ANXIETY
WITH AN INFANTILE
METHOD OF COPING**



Rationalization



Aesop's The Fox and the Grapes fable is an apt example of rationalization.

Displacement



Denial



Reaction formation

- Reaction Formation is the converting of unwanted or dangerous thoughts, feelings or impulses into their opposites.



Sublimation

Sublimation would be acting out unacceptable impulses in a socially acceptable way.



For example you would become a surgeon because you desire to cut.

Projection

Definition:

Placing one's own unacceptable thoughts onto others, as if the thoughts belonged to them and not to oneself

Example:

Keisha is attracted to her sister's husband but denies this and believes the husband is really attracted to her



Other mechanisms

COMPENSATION:

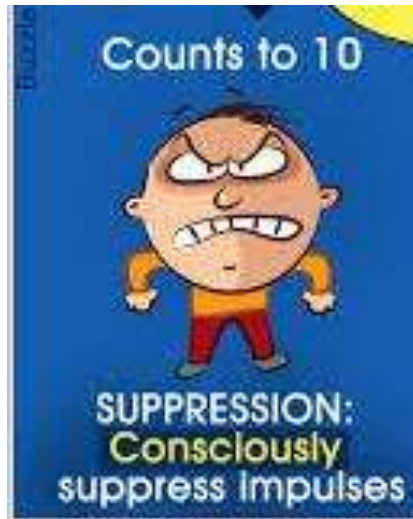
- An attempt to make up for deficiency by directing his energies to another aspect of one's personality in which no deficiency exists.



Suppression

Delay paying attention to a thought, emotion, or need in order to cope with the present reality.

Example: counting to 10 long breaths when angry



- **Humor**
- **Fantasy/ Day dreaming**
- **Passive aggressive behavior**
- **Introjection**
- **Splitting**
- **Withdrawal**

Conclusion

- Normal people use different defenses throughout life.
- A defense mechanism becomes maladaptive when its use becomes persistent.
- Physical or mental health of the individual is affected when our ego becomes too dependent on these mechanisms



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