



EGO DEFENSE MECHANISM

FREUD'S MODEL OF PERSONALITY STRUCTURE.

ID

- ⌘ Primitive, instinctive component of personality.
- ⌘ Operates on the pleasure principle.
- ⌘ Reserve of psychic energy.
- ⌘ Demands immediate gratification of demands.
- ⌘ Engages primary process thinking, that is primitive, illogical, irrational, and fantasy oriented.



Ego

☞ *Decision-making* component of personality and operates according to the reality principle.

☞ Is guided by the *reality principle*, which seeks to delay gratification of the id's urges until appropriate outlets and situations can be found.

☞ The ego engages in *secondary-process* thinking, which is relatively rational, realistic, and oriented toward problem solving.

☞ Strives to avoid negative consequences.



•Superego

∞ *Superego is the moral component of personality* that incorporates social standards about what represents right and wrong.

The superego emerges out of the ego at around 3 to 5 years of age.

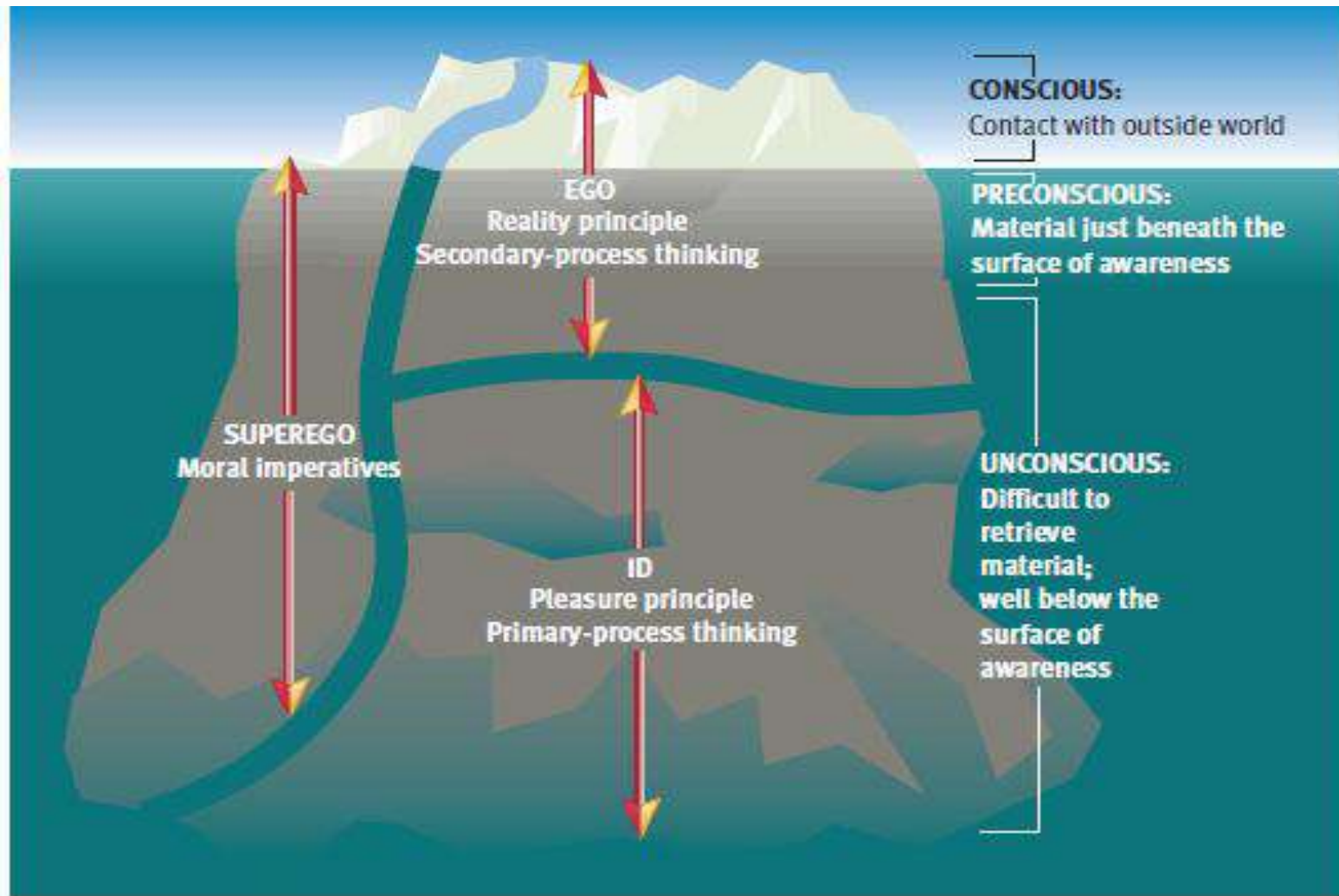
∞ In some people, the superego can become irrationally demanding in its striving for moral perfection. Such people are plagued by excessive feelings of guilt.



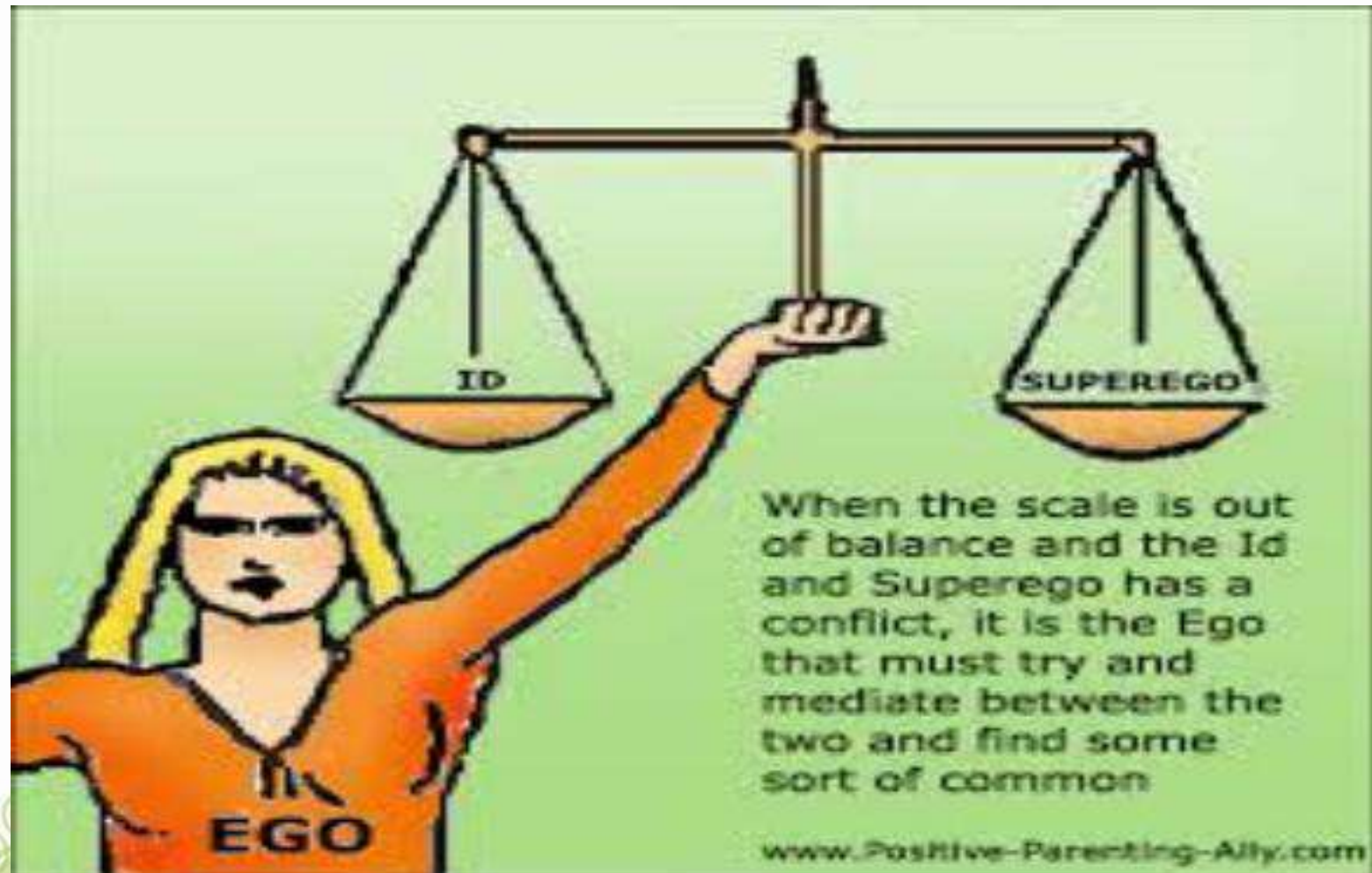
LEVELS OF AWARENESS

- ❧ The *conscious* consists of whatever one is aware of at a particular point in time.
- ❧ The *preconscious* contains material just beneath the surface of awareness that can easily be retrieved.
- ❧ The *unconscious contains* thoughts, memories, and desires that are well below the surface of conscious awareness but that nonetheless exert great influence on behavior.

FREUD'S MODEL ON PERSONALITY STRUCTURE.



“the balance”



“Genesis of defense mechanisms”

The ego deals with the demands of reality, the id, and the superego as best as it can.



But when the anxiety becomes overwhelming, the ego must defend itself.

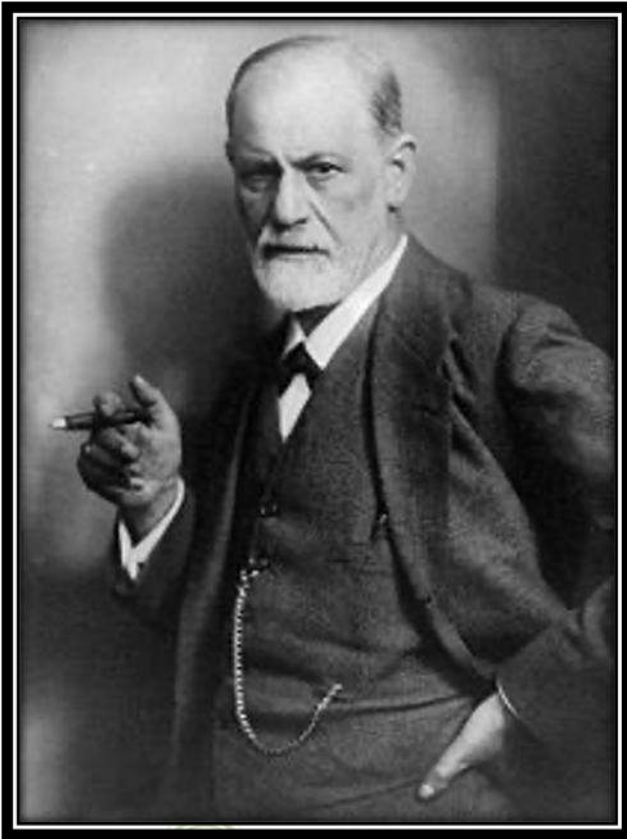


It does so by unconsciously blocking the impulses or distorting them into a more acceptable, less threatening form.



The techniques are called the **ego defense mechanisms**

Defense Mechanisms



Acc to Sigmund Freud

'Father of Psychoanalysis'

“Unconscious mental processes employed by the ego to reduce anxiety.”

“Anxiety : Freudian Concept”

∞ Freud identified three different types of anxiety:

- 1. Reality Anxiety:** *This is the most basic form of anxiety and is typically based on fears of real and possible events, such as being bitten by a dog or falling from a ladder. The most common way of reducing tension from Reality Anxiety is taking oneself away from the situation, running away from the dog or simply refusing to go up the ladder.*
- 2. Neurotic Anxiety:** *This is a form of anxiety which comes from an unconscious fear that the basic impulses of the ID will take control of the person, leading to eventual punishment.*
- 3. Moral Anxiety:** *This form of anxiety comes from a fear of violating values and moral codes, and appears as feelings of guilt or shame.*

“defense mechanisms”

- ✓ Defense mechanisms are largely unconscious resources used by the ego to reduce conflict between the id and superego and thereby anxiety.

- ✓ Under the pressure of excessive anxiety , the ego sometimes is forced to take extreme measures to relieve the pressure. These measures are called defense mechanism.

- ∞ All defense have two things in common:
 1. They deny , falsify , or distort reality.
 2. They operate unconsciously.(person not aware of it)

Q1: What exactly do defense mechanisms defend against?

- ⌘ Above all else, defense mechanisms shield the individual from the emotional discomfort that's so often elicited by stress.
- ⌘ Their main purpose is to ward off unwelcome emotions or to reduce their intensity.

Q2: How do they work?

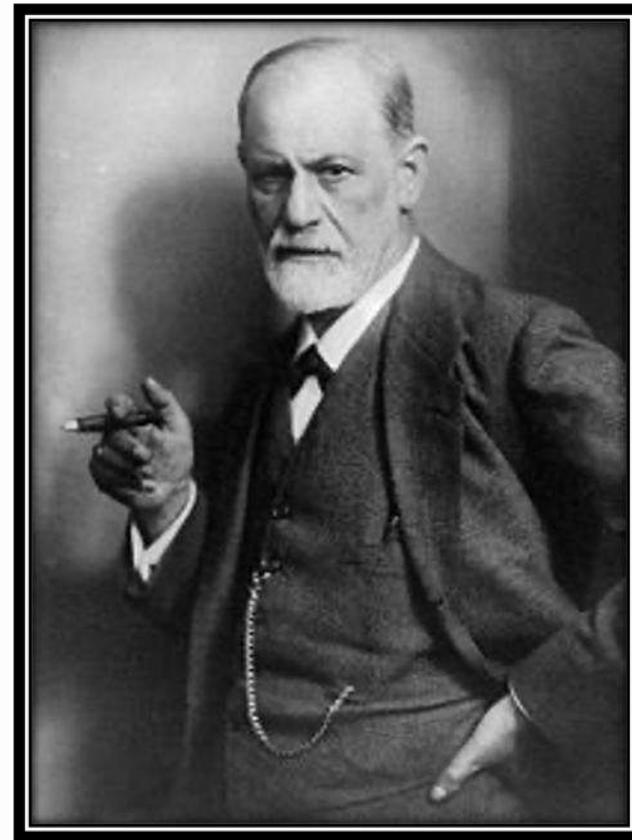
- ⌘ Through *self-deception*.
- ⌘ *Defense* mechanisms accomplish their goals by distorting reality so that it doesn't appear so threatening.

- ⌘ Defences used by a person are specific to Id impulses i.e specific defences are effective in handling specific Id impulses.
- ⌘ Quiet often inappropriate defences are used, primarily because those defences person feels most comfortable using.
- ⌘ Normally as development progresses, defences used in previous stage should be completely replaced by defences in next stage but quiet often defences perceived in previous stages do persist in adult life, primarily because developmental process was not smooth and there were points of fixation.
- ⌘ Defences most preferably used by a person determines his personality and as well as psychopathology.

Freudian Defense Mechanisms

∞ Freud's list of basic Defense Mechanisms (9) includes:

1. • Denial
2. • Displacement
3. • Intellectualization
4. • Projection
5. • Rationalization.
6. • Reaction Formation
7. • Regression
8. • Repression
9. • Sublimation

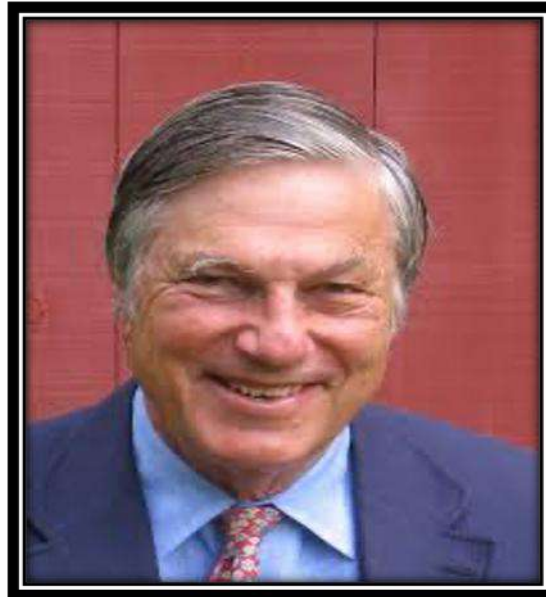


Anna Freud



- ❖ Identified as the First voice of Ego-Psychology
- ❖ Best known for elucidating the Defence Mechanisms in the book – **EGO AND THE MECHANISM OF DEFENCE, 1936.**
- ❖ The **Identified Defence mechanisms** were –
 1. Regression,
 2. Repression,
 3. Reaction- Formation,
 4. Isolation ,
 5. Undoing,
 6. Projection,
 7. Introjection,
 8. Turning against the self ,
 9. Reversal,
 10. sublimation

GEORGE EMAN VAILLANT



George Eman Vaillant, M.D. (born 1934) is an American psychiatrist and Professor at Harvard Medical School and Director of Research for the Department of Psychiatry, Brigham and Women's Hospital

Classification of Defence Mechanisms

Developmental Classification

- Oral Stage : Distortion, Denial, Projection
- Anal Stage : Identification, Undoing, RF, Isolation, Regression
- Phallic Stage : Intellectualization, Repression
- Latency Stage : Repression, Symbolization, Sublimation.

Classification of Defence Mechanisms

✓ George Vaillant 1977 categorized defenses to form a continuum according to their psychoanalytical developmental level

⌘ Level I

Narcissistic defenses

⌘ Level II

Immature defenses

⌘ Level III

Neurotic defenses

⌘ Level IV

Mature defenses

TYPES OF DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Pathological

1. Denial.
2. Distortion.
3. Projection.

Immature Defenses

1. Acting out.
2. Blocking
3. Hypochondriasis.
4. Introjection
5. Passive-aggressive behavior
6. Regression
7. Schizoid fantasy.
8. Somatization

Neurotic Defenses

1. Controlling
2. Displacement
3. Externalization
4. Inhibition
5. Intellectualization
6. Isolation
7. Rationalization
8. Dissociation
9. Reaction formation
10. Repression
11. Sexualization

Mature Defenses

1. Altruism
2. Anticipation
3. Asceticism
4. Humor
5. **Sublimation**
6. Suppression .

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PATHOLOGICAL/NARCICISTIC

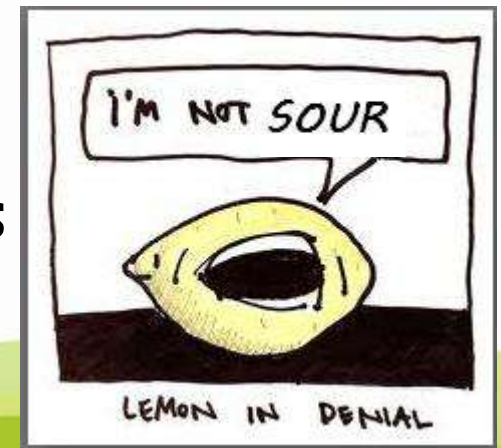
- ⌘ The mechanisms on this level, when predominating, almost always are severely **pathological**.
- ⌘ These defences, **permit one to effectively rearrange external experiences to eliminate the need to cope with reality.**
- ⌘ The pathological users of these mechanisms frequently **appear irrational or insane to others.**
- ⌘ These are the "psychotic" defences, common in overt **psychosis**.

DENIAL

- ⌘ Protecting oneself from unpleasant reality by refusing to perceive.
- ⌘ Denial abolishes external reality.
- ⌘ Denial may be used in both normal and pathological states.

e.g.1. A smoker concludes that the evidence linking cigarette use to health or face it problems is scientifically worthless.

2. Denying that your physician's diagnosis of cancer is correct and seeking a second opinion.



DENIAL



- ✧ The person doesn't acknowledge the validity of the matter but acknowledges its presence. They oppose force with force.
- ✧ For example, the alcoholic expresses, "I may like to drink, but I'm not an alcoholic."
- ✧ Or a smoker concludes that the evidence linking cigarette use to health problems is bogus.

DISTORTION

Grossly reshaping external reality to suit inner needs (including unrealistic megalomania beliefs, hallucinations, wish-fulfilling delusions)

Using sustained feelings of delusional superiority or entitlement.



PROJECTION

✧ **Attributing one's own thoughts, feelings, or motives to another.**

✧ **On a psychotic level, this defense mechanism takes the form of frank delusions about external reality and includes both perception of one's own feelings in another and subsequent acting on the perception (psychotic paranoid delusions).**

✧ **e.g. An angry man might accuse others of being hostile and antagonistic.**



Stress/conflict (profound threat to self)

Affective withdrawal from intimate ties

Efforts to appear normal through defence mechanisms

Paranoid defence fails to relieve anxiety

Maladaptive state

Delusional disorder

PROJECTION

(displacement outward)



- ❧ The person attributes one's own perceived negative attributes onto someone else.
- ❧ For example, Bill blames the instructor for a bad grade when he didn't study.
- ❧ Sara says, "You envy me," when Sara really envies the other person.
- ❧ Sam cheats on his spouse and blames the spouse for cheating.

IMMATURE

- ⌘ These mechanisms are often present in adults and more commonly present in adolescents.
- ⌘ These mechanisms lessen distress and anxiety provoked by threatening people or by uncomfortable reality.
- ⌘ These are the so-called "immature" defences and overuse almost always leads to serious problems in a person's ability to cope effectively.
- ⌘ These defences are often seen in severe depression and personality disorders.
- ⌘ In adolescence, the occurrence of all of these defences is normal.

ACTING OUT



- ☞ Direct expression of an unconscious wish or impulse in action, without conscious awareness of the emotion that drives that expressive behaviour.
- ☞ The unconscious fantasy is lived out impulsively in behaviour, thereby gratifying the impulse, rather than the prohibition against it.
- ☞ Acting out involves chronically giving in to an impulse to avoid the tension that would result from the postponement of expression.

BLOCKING

- ⌘ Temporarily or transiently inhibiting thinking.
- ⌘ Affects and impulses may also be involved.
- ⌘ Blocking closely resembles repression.
- ⌘ But differs in that tension arises when the impulse, affect, or thought is inhibited.

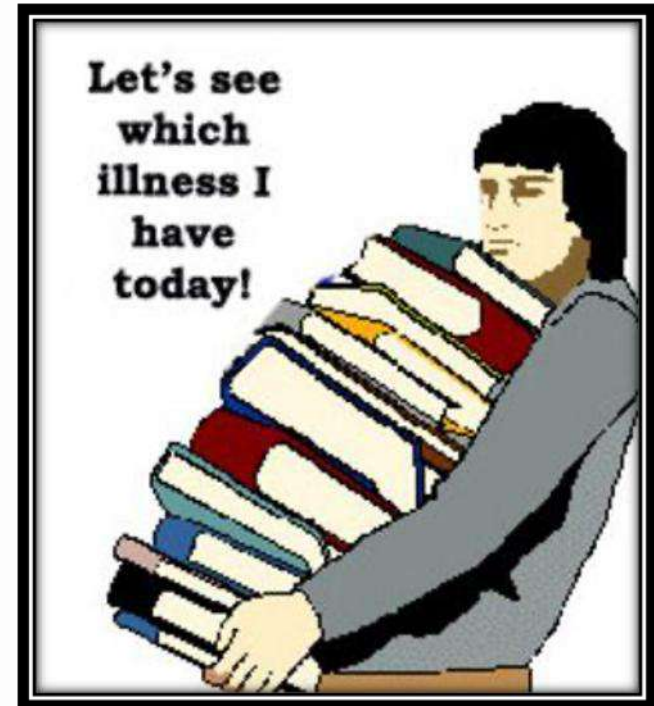
- ⌘ “Blocking : Incomplete & Denial : Complete”

HYPOCHONDRIASIS

☞ An excessive preoccupation or worry about having a serious illness.

☞ Responsibility can be avoided, guilt may be circumvented, and instinctual impulses are warded off.

☞ Because hypochondriacal introjects are ego-alien, the afflicted person experiences dysphoria and a sense of affliction.



INTROJECTION

- ⌘ Identifying with some idea or object so deeply that it becomes a part of that person. It aims to obliterate the awareness of the object being persistently there at the outside.
- ⌘ Introjection may be of the **loved one** (to develop ideals and values) or may be **of the aggressor** (to obliterate or make the object disappear)
- ⌘ Through the introjection of a loved object, the painful awareness of separateness or the threat of loss may be avoided.
- ⌘ e.g. when a person becomes depressed due to the loss of a loved one, his feelings are directed to the mental image he possesses of the loved one.

Identification with the aggressor...

∞ **Identification with the aggressor** is a version of introjection that focuses on the adoption, not of general or positive traits, but of negative or feared traits. If you are afraid of someone, you can partially conquer that fear by becoming more like them.

∞ A more dramatic example is one called the **Stockholm Syndrome**. After a hostage crisis in Stockholm, psychologists were surprised to find that the hostages were not only not terribly angry at their captors, but often downright sympathetic

PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Expressing aggression toward others indirectly through passivity, masochism, and turning against the self.

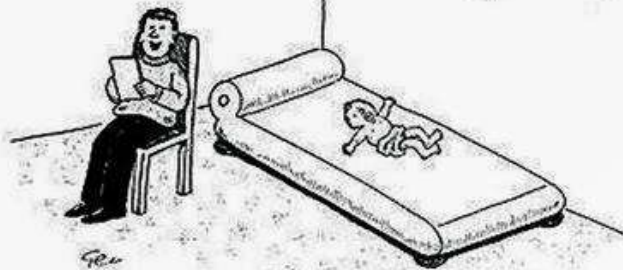
Eg: A passive aggressive person may be uncooperative in carrying out their duties or other tasks, may deliberately ignore someone when spoken to and might adopt a negative view of their situation, such as their job, and of those around them (e.g. colleagues).

REGRESSION

- ⌘ Temporary reversion of the ego to an earlier stage of development rather than handling unacceptable impulses in a more adult way.
- ⌘ E.g. An adult has a temper tantrum when of behavior he doesn't get his way.



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"Well, I think the regression therapy has been really successful, Mr Potts."

REGRESSION



I have decided that I no longer want to be an adult... if anyone needs me I will be in my couch cushion fort... colouring.



FANTASY

- ✧ Tendency to retreat into fantasy in order to resolve inner and outer conflicts.
- ✧ Gratifying frustrated desires by imaginary achievements.
- ✧ E.g A socially inept and inhibited young man imagines himself chosen by a group of women to provide them with sexual satisfaction



SOMATIZATION




∞ Converting psychic derivatives into bodily symptoms and tending to react with somatic manifestations, rather than psychic manifestations.

NEUROTIC

- ⌘ These mechanisms are considered neurotic, but fairly common in adults.
- ⌘ Such defences have short-term advantages in coping, but can often cause long-term problems in relationships, work and in enjoying life when used as one's primary style of coping with the world.

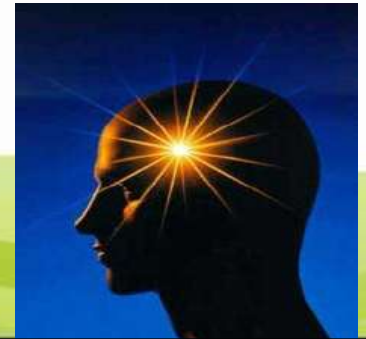
RATIONALIZATION

- ⌘ Rationalization is the process of constructing a logical justification for a decision that was originally arrived at through a different mental process
- ⌘ Rationalization is making excuses for one's mistakes, and by doing so avoiding self-condemnation or condemnation by others.
- ⌘ There are two types of rationalization.
- ⌘ One is "sour grapes," a term from Aesop's fable about the fox who said that the grapes too high to reach were sour anyway.
- ⌘ For example, a person after failing to get into a law school may justify himself by saying: "I would have hated being a lawyer anyway."

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- The second, more productive type of the rationalization is the "silver lining," an assumption that everything happens for the best, so one should try to find the blessing in disguise.
 - "So, I didn't get into law school, but now I can really focus on finding my true vocation."
 - Rationalization is a *post-hoc* (after the fact) defense mechanism, connected to the self-serving bias: failure is ascribed to outside factors.
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Repression

- ⌘ Repression and suppression are very similar defense mechanisms. **They both involve a process of pushing thoughts into the unconscious, and**
- ⌘ **preventing painful or dangerous thoughts from entering consciousness.**
- ⌘ The difference is that repression **is an unconscious force, while suppression is a conscious process, a conscious choice not to think about something.**
- ⌘ Repression is defined by **“Keeping distressing thoughts and feelings buried in the unconscious.”**



REPRESSION



- ∞ The person forces the unacceptable or threatening feeling out of awareness to a point where he/she becomes unaware of it.
- ∞ Examples could be a simple reprimand or as serious as a rape.
- ∞ A person is asked, “how do you get along with your mother” and he responds, “just fine” as he turns pale. Negative feelings about the mother are so unacceptable that they block his awareness.

Reaction Formation

- ✧ Reaction formation is a defense mechanism in which anxiety-producing or unacceptable emotions are replaced by their direct opposites
- ✧ e.g. 1. having a bias against a particular race or culture and then embracing that race or culture to the extreme.
- ✧ 2. one who is strongly attracted to pornography, but has moral or religious obligations to avoid it, might become its staunch critic.



CONTROLLING

Attempting to manage or regulate events or objects in the environment to minimize anxiety and to resolve inner conflicts.

Eg: orderliness in office



Displacement

☞ Shifting an emotion or drive cathexis from one idea or object to another that resembles the original in some aspect or quality.



☞ Displacement permits the symbolic representation of the original idea or object by one that is less highly cathected or evokes less distress.

☞ The example is a **worker**, angry at his **boss**, obviously unable to direct his anger and hostility to his intended target, comes home and yells at his **wife**. She, now also angry and upset, displaces her anger on the **child**, who then further displaces it on their **pet dog**.

EXTERNALIZATION

- ∞ Tending to perceive in the external world and in external objects elements of one's own personality, including instinctual impulses, conflicts, moods, attitudes, and styles of thinking.
- ∞ Externalization is a more general term than projection.

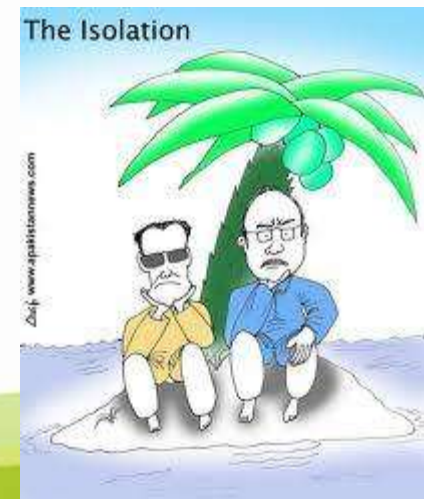
INTELLECTUALIZATION

- ⌘ Avoiding unacceptable emotions by focusing on the intellectual aspects.
- ⌘ e.g. focusing on the details of a funeral as opposed to the sadness and grief.
- ⌘ Intellectualization helps to protect us against anxiety by separation from the painful or stressful events, hiding the emotions it provokes behind big words, almost a scientific focus on the facts.



ISOLATION

- ⌘ Separation of feelings from ideas and events,
- ⌘ for example, describing a murder with graphic details with no emotional response.
- ⌘ a medical student dissects a cadaver without being disturbed by thoughts of death.
- ⌘ Isolation may be temporary (affect postponement).



DISSOCIATION

- ⌘ Temporary drastic modification of one's personal identity or character to avoid emotional distress;
- ⌘ Separation or postponement of a feeling that normally would accompany a situation or thought.
- ⌘ Fugue states and hysterical conversion reactions are common manifestations of dissociation.



Undoing

- ✧ The defense mechanism of "undoing" is based on the notion that it is possible to make amends, to correct mistakes made.
- ✧ In essence, it involves feeling guilty and trying to do something to undo the harm that may have been inflicted.
- ✧ It is trying to reverse or undo a feeling by acting in some opposite or compensatory manner.
- ✧ The simplest example of this defense mechanism at work is an apology.
- ✧ Freud used undoing to explain some obsessive-compulsive acts, such as a youth reciting the alphabet backwards to undo his sin of sexual thoughts and feelings



Where was this romantic side
when he said those nasty things
to me an hour ago?

Undoing: Where you try to undo the
bad you did with something good.

MATURE

- ⌘ These are commonly found among emotionally healthy adults and are considered mature, even though many have their origins in an immature stage of development.
- ⌘ They have been adapted through the years in order to optimize success in life and relationships.
- ⌘ The use of these defences enhances pleasure and feelings of control.
- ⌘ These defences help us integrate conflicting emotions and thoughts, while still remaining effective.

ALTRUISM

∞ **Constructive service to others that brings pleasure and personal satisfaction.**

∞ **Unlike the self-sacrifice sometimes characteristic of reaction formation, the individual receives gratification either vicariously or from the response of others.**

ANTICIPATION

- ⌘ Realistically anticipating or planning for future inner discomfort.
- ⌘ The mechanism is goal-directed and implies careful planning or worrying and premature but realistic affective anticipation of dire and potentially dreadful outcomes.

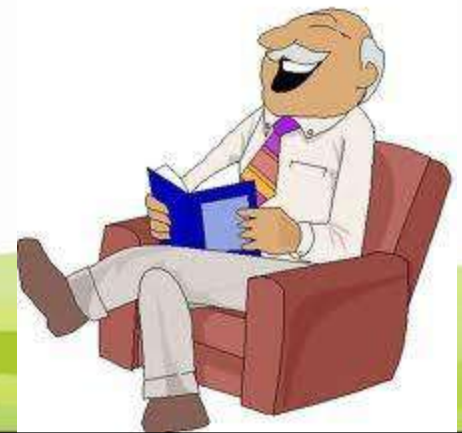


ASCETICISM

- ✧ Eliminating the pleasurable effects of experiences.
- ✧ There is a moral element in assigning values to specific pleasures.
- ✧ Gratification is derived from renunciation, and asceticism is directed against all base pleasures perceived consciously.

HUMOR

- ☞ Overt expression of ideas and feelings (especially those that are unpleasant to focus on or too terrible to talk about) that gives pleasure to others.
- ☞ Using comedy to overtly express feelings and thoughts without personal discomfort or immobilization and without producing an unpleasant effect on others.
- ☞ It allows the person to tolerate and yet focus on what is too terrible to be borne; it is different from wit, a form of displacement that involves distraction from the affective issue.



SUPPRESSION

- ⌘ **Consciously or semiconsciously postponing attention to a conscious impulse or conflict.**
- ⌘ Issues may be deliberately cut off, but they are not avoided.
- ⌘ Discomfort is acknowledged but minimized.

Sublimation

- ∞ Sublimation is the refocusing of psychic energy away from negative outlets to more positive outlets.
- ∞ In Freud's theory, erotic energy, or libido, is only allowed limited expression due to repression, and much of the remainder of a given group's erotic energy is used to develop its culture and civilization.
- ∞ Sublimation, therefore, is the process of transforming libido into "socially useful" achievements, re-channeling drives which cannot find an outlet into acceptable forms of expression, such as art.



When I'm angry, I box at the gym.

☞ Freud considered this defense mechanism the most productive, and psychoanalysts have continued to refer to sublimation as the only truly successful defense mechanism.

☞ Sublimation is related to displacement, another redirection of an impulse, but is considered the healthier one of the two.

☞ Many great charities were started by people who lost someone to a disease, or whose loved ones suffered from a disability.

☞ Anna Freud's own life appears to be an example of sublimation. Anna stayed with her father all her life, never marrying, but she worked hard to advance his theory.

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"I thank you for listening"

