



BEHAVIORAL
SCIENCES

MD

BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Defense
Mechanism

DEFENCE MECHANISM

PSYCHIC STRUCTURES

Psychic structures are based on Freudian theory.

The **Id** controls primitive instincts and drives (what we want to do):

- Present at birth
- Influences sex and aggression

The **Ego** tries to “accommodate” reality:

- Rational
- Resolves conflicts between id and superego

The **Superego** determines our conscience or moral compass (what we ought to do):

- Begins development by age 5
- Learned from caretakers
- Insists on socially acceptable behaviour, sometimes to the point of individual deprivation
- Can be punitive

DEFENCE MECHANISM

DEFENSE MECHANISMS

- Defenses are the primary tools of the ego used to manage the internal conflicts between the id and superego. They are the means by which the ego wards off anxiety, and controls instinctive urges and unpleasant effects (emotions).
- All defenses are unconscious, with one exception: suppression.
- Defenses change over time; we are only aware of our defenses in retrospect.
- Defenses are adaptive as well as maladaptive.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Projection is when a person attributes his own wishes, desires, thoughts, or emotions to someone else. Internal states are perceived as a part of someone else or of the world in general.

- A cheating spouse accuses partner of cheating.
- A girl talks about her doll as having certain feelings, which are really what the girl feels.
- This is the main defense mechanism seen in Paranoid personality disorder.
- Paranoia results from the use of projection.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Denial is not allowing reality to penetrate to avoid acknowledgment of a painful aspect of reality.

- After surviving a heart attack, a patient insists on continuing his lifestyle as if nothing had happened.
- A woman prepares dinner for her husband expecting him to come home, even though he died a month earlier.
- Substance users are often “in denial,” claiming that they are not addicted and do not have a problem in the face of clearly dysfunctional or dangerous behavior.
- Denial is often the first response to bad news, such as the impending death of a loved one or oneself.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Splitting is when people and things in the world are idealized (all good) or devalued (all bad). The world is pictured in extreme terms rather than a more realistic blend of good and bad qualities.

- “This doctor is a miracle worker, but that doctor is totally incompetent.”
- “He’s just so perfect and wonderful,” says a teenage girl in love.
- “No one from that family will ever amount to anything; they are all just plain no good.”
- This is the main defense mechanism seen in borderline personality disorder.
- Prejudice and behavioural stereotypes are also a result of splitting.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Blocking is a temporary, or transient, block in thinking or an inability to remember.

- A student is unable to recall the fact needed to answer the exam question, although he recalls it as he walks out of the exam.
- In the middle of a conversation, a woman pauses, looks confused, and asks what she was just talking about.
- In a conversation you forget someone's name.
- Blocking often happens in embarrassing moments.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Regression is returning to an earlier stage of development you have already completed (unconscious childish behavior in an adult).

- A husband speaks to his wife in “baby talk” when he is sick.
- A man assumes a fetal position after a traumatic event.
- A previously toilet trained child wets the bed following the birth of a new sibling.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Somatization is when psychological conflict is converted into bodily symptoms.

- A student gets a headache while taking an exam.
- A woman feel queasy and nauseated before asking someone out on a date.
- A man who witnesses a traumatic event becomes blind.

This is the main defense mechanism of Somatic symptom disorders.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Introjection (identification) is when we acquire characteristics of others as our own. It is the unconscious form of imitation. Introjection is the opposite of projection.

- A resident dresses and acts like the attending physician.
- A child scolds her friend out loud in the same manner that she was scolded by her mother.
- A teenager adopts the style and mannerisms of a rock star.
- This defense mechanism is used in **Psychotherapy**.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Anxiety Defenses

Displacement is when the target of an emotion or drive changes to a substitute target.

- A recently disciplined employee yells at his wife instead of his boss.
- A woman watching a movie featuring love scenes with a handsome actor goes out and seduces an unattractive man.
- In family therapy, one child in a family is often singled out and blamed for all the family's problems, i.e., treated as a scapegoat.
- This is the defense mechanism seen in Phobias.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Repression is when an idea or feeling is withheld from consciousness. It is also called unconscious forgetting.

- A child who was abused by her mother and treated for the abuse now has no memory of any mistreatment by her mother.
- A man who survived 6 months as a hostage cannot recall anything about his life during that time period.
- This is one of the most basic defense mechanisms.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Isolation of affect is the separation of an idea or event from the emotions (affect) that accompany it.

- A child who has been beaten discusses the beatings without any display of emotion.
- A combat pilot is calm while ejecting out of his plummeting aircraft.
- A patient who recently severed his finger in an accident describes the incident to his physician with no emotional reaction.
- This is an important adaptive defense mechanism for self-preservation.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Intellectualization is when facts and logic are used to avoid confronting emotions.

- A patient with a bone protruding from his leg focuses on the physics that allow such an event to occur.
- A medical student speaks excessively about medical details in order to avoid the emotional content of a bad diagnosis.
- A boy who, for the first time, is about to ask a girl out talks with his friend about the importance of mating rituals for the long-term survival of the species and the mechanisms by which societies arrange for these rituals.
- Physicians who are too concerned with the technical aspects of the profession
- and not enough with the patient may well be using intellectualization.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Acting out is when an emotional or behavioural outburst masks underlying feelings or ideas.

- A child throws temper tantrum when abandoned
- New-onset drug use in an adolescent boy after parents' divorce
- “Whistling in the dark” to hide underlying fear

This is a defense mechanism that can be seen in Borderline and Antisocial personality disorders.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Rationalization is when rational explanations are used to justify attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours that are unacceptable. This is not a reasoned action, but a search for reasons to allow an unacceptable action.

- A murderer saying, “Yes, I believe killing is wrong but I killed him because he really deserved it.”
- A teenage girl who makes a vow of chastity until marriage tells herself that oral sex is not really sex and can give a string of reasons.
- An alcoholic man tells his wife that he drinks because of stress at work.
- This defense mechanism is seen in substance use disorders.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Reaction formation is when an unacceptable impulse is transformed into its opposite. Excessive overreaction can be a sign of reaction formation.

- A student who always wanted to be a physician expresses relief and says, “This is the best news I’ve ever heard,” after not being accepted into medical school.
- A teenage boy intrigued by “dirty pictures” organizes an anti-pornography campaign.
- Two co-workers fight all the time because they are very attracted to each other.
- This defense mechanism is commonly seen in obsessive-compulsive disorder and anxiety disorders.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Undoing is performing an act to undo a previous unacceptable act or thought.

- A man who is sexually aroused by a woman he meets immediately leaves and buys his wife flowers.
- Can include superstitions such as throwing salt over your shoulder to avoid bad luck.
- A man repeatedly checks to make sure the burners on the stove are turned off before leaving the house because he is fearful the house will burn down.
- This defense mechanism is seen in Obsessive-compulsive disorder.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Passive-aggression is when hostility is expressed covertly.

- A patient angry with her physician shows up late for appointments.
- A student agrees to share class notes with classmates but goes home without sharing them after they upset her in class.
- A communications director does not take questions from people who challenge his views.
- The feelings of hostility are unconscious, and the person using the defense is generally unaware of them. If you consciously set someone up, it is not a defense, but simply being mean. This defense mechanism is seen in borderline personality disorders and young children.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Dissociation separates the self from one's experience.

- A woman who was raped reports that she felt “as if she was floating on the ceiling” watching it happen.
- The survivor of an automobile accident tells of the feeling that everything happened in slow motion.
- A child who was sexually abused recalls only the “bad man who came to her in her dreams.”
- This is the primary defense mechanism in Dissociative disorders.

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DEFENCE MECHANISM

Mature Defenses

Humour permits the overt expression of feelings and thoughts without personal discomfort.

- A student smiles when he realizes that a particularly intimidating professor looks like a penguin.
- An overweight comedian makes jokes about being fat.
- Laughter covers the pain and anxiety.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Sublimation is when impulse gratification is achieved by channelling the unacceptable or unattainable impulse into a socially acceptable direction.

- Jack the Ripper becomes a surgeon.
- A patient with exhibitionist fantasies becomes a stripper.
- Many forms of art and literature spring from sublimation, considered by some to be the most mature defense mechanism.

DEFENCE MECHANISM

Suppression is the conscious decision to forget or ignore.

- A student with a pending exam decides to forget about it and go out for the evening.
- A woman who is afraid of heights ignores the drop of a steep cliff to appreciate the beautiful view.
- A terminally-ill cancer patient puts aside his anxiety and enjoys a family gathering.

Suppression is the **only conscious defense mechanism**.

Q1

A 78-year-old man with end-stage oesophageal cancer is admitted to the hospital with severe malnutrition and failure to thrive. The patient's caretaker says that he has not been able to eat or drink for the last 3 weeks. His weight dropped from 72.6 kg (160 lb) to 63.5 kg (140 lb) during that time. The cancer has spread to his lungs and liver. The patient does not wish to receive any further treatment for the cancer and specifies that he wants no heroic measures or interventions to keep him alive. His physician considers referral to hospice care. Which of the following is a requirement for referring a patient for hospice care?

1. Diagnosis of end stage cancer
2. Patient has don not resuscitate order
3. Patient have decision making capacity
4. Patient has prognosis of 6 month
5. Patient has prognosis of 12 months
6. Patients has prognosis of 3 months

An 8-year-old boy is brought to the pediatrician for school refusal. He has not gone to school for a few days, saying that he has a stomachache. However, when it comes time for soccer practice, he has no physical symptoms. When the pediatrician asks how things are going at school, the patient says, "Kids laughed at me when the teacher said she could not read my homework." His mother says, "He is doing well in reading and math, but when it comes to writing practice, he fidgets a lot. He stares out the window and last week threw his writing book on the floor and began to cry. Because he doesn't pay attention, his writing is unclear and disorganized and he is way behind the other kids in his class." Vital signs and physical examination, including abdominal examination, are normal. Which of the following is the most likely explanation for this patient's school refusal?

Q2

1. Attention deficit hyperactive disorder
2. Intellectual disability
3. Learning disorder
4. Oppositional defiant disorder
5. Separation anxiety disorder
6. Social anxiety disorder

A 52-year-old woman comes to an urgent care clinic due to episodic chest pain. The physician introduces himself and confirms that the patient is comfortable and not experiencing any current pain. Which of the following sentences should the physician begin with when taking the history of present illness?

Q3

1. Do you any history of heart or lungs problems
2. Have you ever felt the pain like this before
3. Is more like crushing pain or sharp pain
4. Is associate with nausea or vomiting
5. Where exactly is th pain located?
6. Sounds like you are in great difficulty

Q4

A 6-year-old girl and her mother are admitted to a trauma center after sustaining blunt abdominal injury in a motor vehicle accident. Diagnostic peritoneal lavage is positive for blood in both patients. They have a clouded sensorium and neither responds appropriately to questions. The physician contacts the woman's husband (the child's biological father), who informs the physician that they are Jehovah's witnesses and that he is on his way to the hospital. Before the physician can relay any specifics about the family's condition, the father hangs up the phone, and repeated attempts to contact him are unsuccessful. The woman and her daughter carry no documentation to confirm their religious beliefs and remain unresponsive to questions. If both patients require blood products emergently, which of the following is the most appropriate course of action?

1. Administer blood products to both the patients
2. Administer blood product to the girl but not to the mother
3. Do not administer blood product until husband arrives
4. Seek ethical committee order of do blood transfusion.

Q5

HUMOR, Suppression, Sublimation they are example of

1. Mature defense
2. Immature defense
3. Narcissistic Defense
4. Anxiety Defense

Q6

A patient with a bone protruding from his leg focuses on the physics that allow such an event to occur.

Q7

A medical student speaks excessively about medical details in order to avoid the emotional content of a bad diagnosis.

Q8

A murderer saying, "Yes, I believe killing is wrong, but I killed him because he really deserved it."

Q9

A teenage girl who makes a vow of chastity until marriage tells herself that oral sex is not really sex, and can give a string of reasons.

Q10

Two co-workers fight all the time because they are actually very attracted to each other

Q11

A man who is sexually aroused by a woman he meets immediately leaves and buys his wife flowers.

Q12

A man repeatedly checks to make sure the burners on the stove are turned off before leaving the house because he is fearful the house will burn down.

Q13

A student agrees to share class notes with classmates but goes home without sharing them after they upset her in class.

Q15

Substance users are often claiming that they are not addicted and do not have a problem in the face of clearly dysfunctional or dangerous behavior.

Is it Lying
Or denial?

Q15

Projection and Displacement
Explain with an example.

Q16

Explain, Regress, repress and suppress

Which among these is conscious defense?