

### Type of Defense Mechanisms

Type	Description	Example	Potential Diagnosis
Conversion	The development of physical symptoms that cannot be explained by pathophysiology or physical injury	John's arm becomes suddenly paralyzed after he was threatening to hit someone	Conversion Disorder
Splitting	Failing to reconcile both positive and negative attributes into a whole understanding of a person or situation, resulting in all-or-none thinking	Jane says that all the male nurses are cold and insensitive, but the female doctors are warm and friendly	Borderline Disorder
Pathological idealization and devaluation	Idealization and devaluation are natural results of a splitting defense	Idealization and devaluation are natural results of a splitting defense	Borderline Personality Disorder
Repression	Unconsciously pushing threatening or unacceptable thoughts, feelings, or memories out of awareness	A young child is bitten by a dog. They later develop a severe phobia of dogs but have no memory of when or how this fear originated. They have repressed the painful memory of the fearful experience with the dog, so they are unaware of exactly where their fear came from.	
Projection	Attributing one's own unacceptable feelings, impulses, or thoughts to others	A wife is attracted to a male co-worker but can't admit her feelings, so when her husband talks about a female co-worker, she becomes jealous and accuses him of being attracted to the other woman.	



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### Type of Defense Mechanisms (cont)

Denial	Refusing to acknowledge or accept the reality of a stressful or threatening situation	After the unexpected death of a loved one, a person might refuse to accept the reality of the death and deny that anything has happened
Sublimation	Channeling socially unacceptable impulses or desires into socially acceptable activities or outlets	A woman who recently went through a breakup may channel her emotions into a home improvement project
Displacement	Redirecting emotions or impulses from their original source to a less threatening or more acceptable target	Manager screams at an employee, the employee doesn't scream back—but he yelled at his spouse later that night.
Regression	Reverting to an earlier stage of development in the face of stress or anxiety	A driver stuck in traffic may get angry and throw a tantrum, even though he doesn't usually behave that way
Rationalization	Creating logical or reasonable explanations to justify or explain away threatening or unacceptable behavior or feelings	A student who is rejected from her dream college may explain that she's happy to be attending a school that's less competitive and more welcoming
Intellectualization	Dealing with emotional conflicts or stressors by focusing on abstract or intellectual aspects, rather than the emotional or personal significance	Someone endlessly researches the details of a significant illness to avoid the anxiety, fear, and sadness of receiving a diagnosis
Undoing	Engaging in behavior to counteract or undo a previous unacceptable thought, feeling, or action	After thinking about being violent with someone, one would then be overly nice or accommodating to them

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### Type of Defense Mechanisms (cont)

Isolation	Separating disturbing or threatening thoughts or feelings from the rest of one's thoughts or emotions, often by compartmentalizing them	Someone describes the day their house burnt down in a factual way without displaying any emotion
Identification/Introjection	Adopting the characteristics, behaviors, or values of someone else, often perceived as stronger or more powerful, to cope with feelings of inadequacy or anxiety	A child developing the behavior of his or her parents without conscious realization of this process
Compensation	Overemphasizing or exaggerating a trait or behavior to make up for perceived deficiencies or to cope with feelings of inferiority	People with difficult family lives may direct their energy toward excelling at work
Acting out	The development of detrimental behaviors that distract attention and energy away from other stressors	someone who has intrusive thoughts about a traumatic event but pushes these thoughts out of their mind
Avoidance	Dismissing thoughts or feelings that are uncomfortable or keeping away from people, places, or situations associated with uncomfortable thoughts or feelings	One avoids the location of a traumatic motor vehicle accident or avoids driving completely
Schizoid Fantasy	Creating an internal retreat into one's imagination to avoid uncomfortable situations	A victim of physical abuse got lost in thought thinking of her good days upon hearing that she'll meet the abuser
Anticipation	The devotion of one's effort to solving problems before they arise	Someone prepares for an important job interview by practicing their answers to the toughest questions

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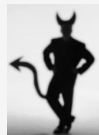
### Type of Defense Mechanisms (cont)

Humor	Decreasing or combating the negative emotions associated with a situation by using comedy	Telling a funny story about someone during a eulogy
Reaction Formation	Replacing one's initial impulse toward a situation or idea with the opposite impulse	A young boy who bullies a young girl because, on a subconscious level, he's attracted to her
Sexual-ization	Associating sexual aspects to one's experience of certain people, places, objects, or ideas	Adrift during her mother's death, Jane began to flirt with her male trainer to avoid thinking about her mother
Suppression	Consciously choosing to block ideas or impulses that are undesirable, as opposed to repression, a subconscious process	Someone who has intrusive thoughts about a traumatic event but pushes these thoughts out of their mind

### Psychoanalysis

Definition	Freud's therapeutic technique and theory of personality organization
Key Components	Unconscious motives, childhood experiences, and unresolved conflicts shaping behavior
Objective	To bring unconscious thoughts and emotions into conscious awareness, leading to self-insight and resolution of inner conflicts

### Structural Model of Personality



**Id:**  
Instincts



**Ego:**  
Reality



**Superego:**  
Morality

### Structural Model of Personality and Function

Id	operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification of basic needs and desires
Ego	the rational, conscious part of personality that mediates between the impulsive demands of the id, the moral constraints of the superego, and the demands of reality
Superego	represents internalized societal norms, values, and moral standards. It acts as a moral conscience, striving for perfection and adherence to social rules

### Defense Mechanism

Defense mechanisms are unconscious strategies that protect the ego from anxiety by distorting reality or preventing threatening thoughts and feelings from reaching consciousness



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