

MES COLLEGE OF NURSING,

LOTE

SUB- PSYCHOLOGY

EGO DEFENSE MECHANISM

Mrs.Meghana Gokhale

Clinical Instructor

Psychiatry Dept.

Ego defense mechanism:

As our physical body protects our self against the physical danger with the help of WBC which checks the invading organism and destroying them. Similarly, the individual has devices for protecting themselves from psychological dangers and distress. These protective devices known as ego defense mechanism.

It is also known as mental or adjustment mechanisms.

Def:

A defense mechanism is a strategy, unconsciously utilized that serves to protect the ego from anxiety.

-Davison and Neale- 1978

These are reactions which protects an individual from psychological distress and protects his feelings of self worth and are generally unconscious.

Characteristics:

- ✓ They protect person from anxiety.
- ✓ They protect person from insult by boosting self esteem or self enhancement.
- ✓ They reduce the distress caused by frustration and conflicts.
- ✓ They enable individual to adapt to distressing experience.
- ✓ Defense mechanism operates when we face some adjustment problem and we are trying to discover some way to solve our problem and to relieve our tension.

Types of Defense Mechanism:

1. Repression:

It is involuntary forgetting of painful memory, thoughts and feelings. Person unconsciously pushes the information out of conscious mind and become unaware of its.

E.g. forgetting a loved one's birthday after a fight.

2. Suppression:

Voluntary forgetting of painful memory, thoughts and feelings. Person consciously pushes the information out of conscious mind and became unaware of its.

E.g. A student who fails in exam, says that he is not ready to talk about his marks.

3. Reaction Formation:

Replacing unacceptable feelings with their exact opposite reaction.

E.g. A jealous boy who hates his elder brother may show him exaggerated (more) respect and love towards him.

4. Rationalization:

It is process in which an individual proves his failure and socially unacceptable behavior by giving socially approved reason.

E.g. A student who fails in exam may complain that the hostel environment is not favorable and has resulted in his failure.

5. Regression:

Return to a less mature way of handling stresses and feelings.

E.g. a person throws a temper tantrum when he does not get his own way.

6. Denial:

It means refuse to accept reality.

E.g. A wife is in denial, who cannot cope with that her husband has left.

7. Displacement:

It means taking out our frustration, feelings and impulses on people or object that are less threatening.

E.g. A husband comes home after a bad day at work and shouting at his wife.

8.Dissociation:

It means people feels disconnected from their sensory experience, sense of self or personal history. Person suddenly loss their sense of where they are, who they are, what they are doing.

E.g. Amnesia that prevents recall of previous memory. Adult remembers nothing of childhood abuse.

9.Sublimation:

It is process in which negative urges, drives and behavior are channelized into socially acceptable behavior.

E.g. aggressiveness might be transformed into competitiveness in business or sports.

10.Substitution:

It is process in which unattainable goals, objectives or emotions is replaced by another that is more attainable.

E.g. A student nurse who decides to work in a teaching side because she is unable to master in clinical side.

11.Compensation:

It means people overachieve in one area to compensate for failures in another area.

E.g. A student who fails in his studies may compensate by becoming the college champion in athletics.

12.Projection:

Unconsciously or consciously blaming someone else for one's difficulty. A person who blames another for his own mistake.

E.g. A surgeon whose patient does not respond, may tend to blame the theater nurse who helped that surgeon at time of operation.

13.Conversion:

It occurs where cognitive tensions manifest themselves in physical symptoms.

E.g. A students awake with a migraine headache the morning of a final exam and feels too ill to take the exam.

14.Isolation:

Attempt to avoid a painful thought or feeling by emotionally detaching ourselves from the feeling.

E.g. Acting alone towards someone when you really dislike that person.

Implications:

- Defense mechanism helps the person to resolve conflicts. They are essential to maintain normal equilibrium or balance.
- When these mechanism use moderately they are harmless and help to face conflicts and frustration easily.
- It protects ego and relieve stress and tension feel comfortable.
- Excessive and persistent use of this may harmful. They do not solve problem but only relieve anxiety.
e.g. if a student is unable to face exam and withdraw from taking it, he may experience greater difficulty in the next attempt. Hence it is better to learn to face the problems.
- Many times more than one mechanism may operate in the process of adjusting to the situation.