

Research Topic

In the last class when we were discussing possible research topics, I mentioned that I was interested in how trauma affects an individual in the long run. However, I was reminded of a topic that was briefly touched upon in a previous psychology class, specifically defense mechanisms, or how a person protects their self from past anxiety and trauma. Thus, I would be interested in using my research paper to explore links between the different types of defense mechanisms and what specific types of trauma could possibly coincide with the distinct mechanisms.

Displacement	Emotion or drive shifted to another person "My dad was angry with my mother, and started yelling my baby sister"
Repression	Bad idea or feeling eliminated from consciousness. Forget & forget. "The child was abused by his father, but he doesn't recall any of that"
Isolation of affect	Reality accepted w/o emotional response "The father of the victim identified his body. He didn't show any kind of emotion"
Intellectualization	Use of intellectual process to avoid affective expression "All the methods used to get to this dx (end stage cancer) are really interesting"
Acting out	Emotional outburst. Covers up reality "Temper tantrums"
Rationalization	Excuses, excuses. Rational explanations to justify ones behavior "I didn't pass the exam cause it was way more difficult than other years"
Reaction formation	Unacceptable impulse transformed in its opposite "Pyromaniac becomes a firefighter"
Undoing	The action of "reaction formation". Acting out the reverse of the unacceptable beh. "Pyromaniac putting down fire"
Passive-aggressive	Unconscious passive hostility "She agreed to share her notes with me, but after class she went straight home"
Dissociation	Separates from ones experience, like outer body experience "When woman was being raped, she felt like she was watching it from above"
Humor	Expression of feelings/thoughts w/o discomfort "I'm gonna die forever alone hahaha"
Sublimation	Unacceptable impulse into acceptable channel. Healthiest of mechanisms "Pyromaniac starts working in a special effect company in Hollywood, where he can blow things up"
Suppression	Conscious forgetting (the only conscious mechanism). Forget & Remember "I'd rather forget that my dog was ran over by a car"
Projection	Attribute feelings/thoughts onto someone else I don't like a boy named Mike, and I say "I know that dude hates me, I know it"
Denial	Avoid becoming aware of painful reality Dr: "Mrs. V. you have cancer" Mrs. V: "No way, Jose"
Splitting	All good or all bad. Black or white, no grays "The nurses from the day shift are terrific. The ones from the night shift suck"
Blocking	Temporary inability to remember "I don't remember his name! It's on the tip of my tongue!"
Regression	Return to earlier stage of development "My 7 year old is wetting the bed again, since he found out he's having a sister"
Somatization	Psych problems become physical "I had a terrible headache during the exam"
Introjection	Unconscious imitation "The resident acts & dresses like the attending he admires the most"