

LISTENING 3 "PSYCHOLOGY CLASS"



Professor: Okay, we know from our earlier study of Freud that defense mechanisms protect us from bringing painful thoughts or feelings to the surface of our consciousness. We do this because our minds simply can't tolerate these thoughts. So, defense mechanisms help us to express these painful thoughts or feelings in another way, while we repress the real problem. The function of defense mechanisms is to keep from being overwhelmed. Of course, the avoidance of problems can result in additional emotional issues. And there's a huge distinction between repression and suppression. Anybody want to explain the difference?

برای شنیدن فایل صوتی، کد بالا را
توسط موبایل خود اسکن کنید.

Student 1: I'll try it. I think repression is an unconscious response to serious events or images but suppression more conscious and deals with something unpleasant but not usually, well, terrible experiences.

Professor: I couldn't have said it better. Now remember that the thoughts or feelings that we're trying to repress may include, just to mention a few, anger, depression, competition, fear, envy, hate, and so on. For instance, let's suppose that you're very angry with your professor. Not me, of course. I'm referring to another professor. So, you're very angry because he's treated you unfairly in some way that ... that could cause you to lose your scholarship. Maybe he failed you on an examination that didn't really cover the material that he'd gone over in class, and an F grade in the course is going to be unacceptable to your sponsors. So, this would be very painful, as I'm sure you'd agree. And I'd say it would qualify as a serious event.

So let's take a look at several different types of defense mechanisms that you might employ to repress the feelings of disappointment, rage perhaps, and ... and even violence that you'd feel toward the professor. Most of them are named so the mechanism is fairly obvious and one of the most common mechanisms is denial, which is

Student 2: If I want to deny something, I'll just say I'm not angry with the professor.

Professor: Exactly. You may even extend the denial to include the sponsors, and you could tell your friends that they'd never revoke your scholarship. And this mechanism would allow you to deny the problem, even in the face of direct evidence to the contrary. Let's say, a letter from the sponsor indicating that you won't receive a scholarship for the next term ... Okay on that one? Okay. How about rationalization?

Student 2: Well, in rationalization, you come up with some reasons why the professor might have given an unfair test.

Professor: And how would you do that?

Student 2: Well, you might defend him. You could say that he gave the test to encourage students to learn information on their own. Is that what you mean?

Professor: Sure. Because you'd be rationalizing ... providing a reason that justifies an otherwise mentally intolerable situation. Okay, another example of rationalizing is to excuse the sponsor for refusing to hear your side of the situation. You might say that sponsors are too busy to investigate why students are having problems in their classes. And you might do that while you deny your true feelings that sponsors really should be more open to hearing you out.

Student 3: So when you deny something, I mean when you use denial, you're refusing to acknowledge a situation, but ... when you use rationalization, you're excusing the behavior?

Professor: Excellent summary. So, now let me give you another option. If you use a reaction formation as a defense mechanism, you'll proclaim the opposite of your feelings. In this case, what would you say about the professor?

Student 4: I'd say that I like the professor when, in fact, I hate him for depriving me of my opportunity.

Professor: And you might insist that you have no hard feelings and even go so far as to tell your friends that he's an excellent teacher. You see, a reaction formation turns the expression of your feelings into the opposite reaction, that is, on the surface.

And that brings us to projection, which is a defense mechanism that tricks your mind into believing that someone else is guilty of the negative thought or feeling that you have.

Student 1: Can you give us an example of that one?

Professor: Okay. Feelings of hate for the professor might be expressed by telling classmates about another student who hates the professor, or, uh, ... or even suggesting that the professor has strong feelings of hate for you but you really like the professor yourself. So you would project, um, ... attribute your feel to someone else. Get it?

Student 1: So if I hate someone, I'd believe that another person hates him or that he hates me.

Professor: But you wouldn't admit that you hate him yourself.

Student 1: Okay. That's projection.

Professor: Now displacement serves as a defense mechanism when a less threatening person or object is substituted for the person or object that's really the cause of your anxiety. So, instead of confronting the professor about the unfair test, well, you might direct your anger toward the friend who studied for the test with you, and you could blame him for wasting your time on the material that was in the book and notes.

Of course, there are several other defense mechanisms like fantasy, which includes daydreaming or watching television maybe to escape the problems at school. Or regression, which includes immature behaviors that are no longer appropriate, like maybe expressing temper in the same way that a preschooler might respond to having a toy snatched away. And your textbook contains a few more that we haven't touched on in class.

Just one more thing, it's good to understand that the notion of unconscious thoughts and the mechanisms that allow us to manage them, that this is a concept that goes in and out of fashion. Many psychologists rejected defense mechanisms altogether during the 70s and 80s, and then in the 90s, cognitive psychologists showed a renewed interest in research in this area. But I must warn you, that although they found similar responses, they tended to give them different names, For instance,

denial might appear in a more recent study as positive illusion, or scapegoating might be referred to instead of displacement. But when you get right down to it, the same categories of behavior for defense mechanisms still exist in the research even if they're labeled differently. And, uh, in my view, if you compare Freud's traditional defense mechanisms with those that are being presented by more modern researchers, you'll find that Freud is easier to understand and gives us a broader perspective. And, if you understand Freud's categories, well, you'll certainly be able to get a handle on the newer terms. What is exciting about the modern studies is the focus on coping skills and what's being referred to as healthy defenses. So next time, we'll take a look at some of these processes.

Audio What is the discussion mainly about?

Answer C Some of the more common types of defense mechanisms

Audio How does the student explain the term repression?

Answer A He contrasts it with suppression.

Audio Listen again to part of the discussion and then answer the following question.

Replay "For instance, let's suppose that you're very angry with your professor. Not me, of course. I'm referring to another professor. So, you're very angry because he's treated you unfairly in some way that ... that could cause you to lose your scholarship."

Audio Why does the professor say this:

Replay "Not me, of course. I'm referring to another professor."

Answer B The professor's tone is not serious. She is joking.

Audio Which of the following is an example of displacement that was used in the discussion?

Answer C Blaming someone in your study group instead of blaming the professor

Audio According to the professor, what happened in the 1990s?

Answer C New terms were introduced for the same mechanisms.

Audio How does the professor organize the discussion?

Answer She uses a scenario that students can relate to. She talks about the way that a student might respond to a professor by using defense mechanisms.

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