

LESSON 48: DEFENSE MECHANISMS

UNIT: CRITICISM AND ATTITUDES

OBJECTIVE: To help students identify and evaluate defense mechanisms and recognize which defense mechanisms they use.

Group Activity:

1. Define the term *defense mechanism*. Defense mechanisms are tools we use to cope and protect ourselves from the anxiety caused in various situations.
2. Discuss the defense mechanisms on the next page and be sure students understand each. Give examples when necessary.

ACTIVITY: Complete “Defense Mechanisms: Friend or Foe?” activity and review when finished.

HOMEWORK: Which defense mechanisms do you use most often? Explain why you think these are the ones you use.



DEFENSE MECHANISMS

1. **Making Excuses:** Fooling yourself into believing that something isn't as bad as it seems. Rationalizing. Making an excuse to make something seem right.
2. **Concealing:** Purposely forgetting something that is hard to cope with. Repressing a hurtful thought or memory.
3. **Ignoring the Truth:** Denying that something is happening. Believing that something is not true and not admitting to the truth.
4. **Opposite Reaction:** Acting in a way that is the opposite of your real feelings because the real feelings are too painful.
5. **Relapsing:** Acting immature. Not acting your age in order to get attention or to try to get out of dealing with the pain. Acting like a baby.
6. **Fantasy:** Imagining that things will be better than they possibly could be. Escaping from coping with a situation by daydreaming.
7. **Casting:** Blaming others for unacceptable or painful feelings. Accusing others for making us feel the way we do.
8. **Substituting:** Taking our feelings out on others when they did not cause the feelings in the first place. Displacing the pain or anger.
9. **Changing the Subject:** Talking about something other than how we feel in order to avoid dealing with the pain.