

HANDOUT 15–4

Defense Mechanisms

Next to each of the statements below indicate with the appropriate letter the defense mechanism that is illustrated. Use the following code.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| A. Repression | E. Displacement |
| B. Regression | F. Sublimation |
| C. Reaction Formation | G. Projection |
| D. Rationalization | |

- ___ 1. Even a top baseball player will sometimes strike out on an easy pitch. When this happens, his next action may be to throw his bat or kick the water cooler with all his might.
- ___ 2. Soldiers exposed to traumatic experiences in concentration camps during wartime sometimes had amnesia and were unable to recall any part of their ordeal.
- ___ 3. The mother of an unwanted child may feel guilty about not welcoming her child. As a result, she may try to prove her love by becoming overindulgent and overprotective of the child.
- ___ 4. Mrs. Brown often accuses other women of talking too much and spreading rumors. It is rather obvious to those who know her that she is revealing her own inclinations in that area.
- ___ 5. Paul, an aggressive child, had problems in elementary school, as he would frequently fight with other children. Paul found when he entered high school that he could channel this hostility into sports such as football and soccer.
- ___ 6. The habitual drinker may insist that he really doesn't care much for the taste of alcohol but feels that he is obliged to drink with friends "just to be sociable."
- ___ 7. Mrs. James can't understand why her husband has been so grumpy and irritable for the past week. It certainly isn't her fault that he didn't receive the anticipated promotion at the factory.
- ___ 8. Parents might be reassured to know that children who pull wings off flies and jab pins in the dog may eventually find their niche in the areas of dentistry or surgery.
- ___ 9. Mike is always trying to impress his pals with how strong and independent he has become. However, when Mike has social or emotional problems, he still wants his dad to figure out the solution.
- ___ 10. A student forgot that his dreaded final exam in geometry was scheduled for Friday. This seemed unusual as the date of the exam had been marked on his calendar for several weeks.
- ___ 11. A boy will sometimes react against the strong sexual attraction that he feels toward girls by becoming a confirmed "woman hater."
- ___ 12. The majority group of a culture may blame all the various ills of society on a small minority group. This is a process termed "scapegoating" and is a factor in racial and religious prejudice.
- ___ 13. The individual who actually likes to have others do things for him may be quick to criticize other people for being dependent and lazy.
- ___ 14. James Riley has suffered heavy financial losses recently while playing the stock market. Upon trading his big luxury car for an old small car, Jim informed his associates that he bought the cheaper car to do his part in the battle against air pollution.
- ___ 15. David Walters recently lost his executive position in a large corporation. Rather than seek a new job, David finds comfort and escape through drinking, as alcohol helps him forget the details of being fired.
- ___ 16. Tory is apt to become annoyed when he recalls his earlier conviction as a Peeping Tom. Tory has left his sordid past behind and now is a busy photographer for *Playboy* magazine.
- ___ 17. Joan has discovered an amazing coincidence in relation to her attendance at school. Every time a test in Spanish is scheduled, she oversleeps and arrives at school too late for the class.
- ___ 18. Reformers may conduct campaigns against pornographic literature in order to fight their own erotic interest in such material. They campaign to convince others of their own purity and goodness.

HANDOUT 15–4 (*continued*)

- 19. Margaret is convinced that she received a “C” in her chemistry class instead of an “A” because of widespread cheating by her fellow students. She is sure that she must be as capable in the chemistry course as in her other subjects.
- 20. The young wife, after a bitter conflict with her husband, gives up her marriage as a failure and returns to the home of her parents. She again takes on the role of the dependent child who expects unlimited love and indulgence.
- 21. The high school teacher was criticized by the principal for having a disruptive class. When the teacher got home that night, he argued with his wife and kicked the dog.
- 22. Adults who were sexually molested during childhood often report that all the details of the painful episode have been forgotten.
- 23. It is possible that smokers have graduated from earlier stages of thumb-sucking and pencil-chewing, neither of which would be acceptable behavior in adult society. Smoking is a socially acceptable outlet for the oral need.
- 24. The woman with a strong sexual drive may feel that most other women exhibit flirtatious behavior or wear revealing clothes.
- 25. After John was rejected by the admissions office at Yale, he claimed that he wouldn’t enjoy attending such a large school anyway. Besides, he might receive higher grades at a smaller local college.
- 26. Mary has secretly disliked her mother since she was a young child. As these feelings arouse anxiety, Mary usually tells friends that she loves her mother very much.
- 27. Roger is a heavy drinker but has managed to keep this behavior a secret from his friends. He is sure that most people actually drink as much as he does.
- 28. One psychological theory holds that the desire for sexual gratification, if frustrated or blocked, may eventually find expression in painting or the writing of poetry.
- 29. A number of psychologists believe that social crusaders who advocate various forms of social control may in reality be struggling with their own unconscious desires.
- 30. A 6-year-old child, who gave up bed-wetting at the age of 3, moves with his parents to a new neighborhood. During the stressful period of adjusting to his new home, he again wets the bed for several nights.
- 31. The girl who was not invited to the school dance told her friends that she would not have attended if asked. She said that her teachers had assigned more homework than usual and that she was simply too busy for any unimportant social functions.
- 32. It is typical for the person who is most difficult to convince in an argument to say that everyone else is stubborn.
- 33. When a new baby arrives in the family, the older child will sometimes cry more than usual and be more insistent about receiving caresses from the parents.
- 34. Billy always teases and annoys his younger brother after he himself is disciplined by his parents.
- 35. Mr. Martin carried around a letter in his coat pocket for weeks. The note, which he somehow neglected mailing, was an invitation to his mother-in-law to visit the family for several months.

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Defense Mechanism Answer Sheet

1. Displacement (E)
2. Repression (A)
3. Reaction Formation (C)
4. Projection (G)
5. Sublimation (F)
6. Rationalization (D)
7. Displacement (E)
8. Sublimation (F)
9. Regression (B)
10. Repression (A)
11. Reaction Formation (C)
12. Displacement (E)
13. Projection (G)
14. Rationalization (D)
15. Regression (B)
16. Sublimation (F)
17. Repression (A)
18. Reaction Formation (C)
19. Rationalization (D)
20. Regression (B)
21. Displacement (E)
22. Repression (A)
23. Sublimation (F)
24. Projection (G)
25. Rationalization (D)
26. Reaction Formation (C)
27. Projection (G)
28. Sublimation (F)
29. Reaction Formation (C)
30. Regression (B)
31. Rationalization (D)
32. Projection (G)
33. Regression (B)
34. Displacement (E)
35. Repression (A)