Psychological Defense
Freud identified unconscious impulses to protect the psyche from harmful situations. So the Ego
Defense Mechanisms deflect (avoid) anxiety or guilt because of ID impulses, or socially unacceptable impulses.
They affect ID Ego and Superego interactions…
So really the Ego is subconsciously pushes harmful ideas out of consciousnous by using defense mechanisms.
Unconscious aspects of personality are at work.

Anxiety- comes with threatening situations
Tense, uneasy, apprehension, worried, vulnerable…
Emotion-focused coping = defense mechanism helps us reduce anxiety

Defense Mechanism (definition)
Any mental process used to avoid, deny, or distort sources of threat or anxiety
Help us keep from being overwhelmed by immediate threats

Freud said the Ego's primary function is to prevent the anxiety or guilt we would feel if we became aware of our socially unacceptable ID impulses or if we thought about violating the **Superego's rules.**
Ego might use **unconscious** tactics that protect against anxiety and guilt by either preventing threatening material from surfacing or disguising it when it does.

Denial:

(basic) protecting oneself from unpleasant reality by refusing to accept it or believe it
Simply discounting the existence of threatening impulses
Example: A person may vehemently deny the reality of a situation.

Repression:

Holding memories away from unpleasant reality by refusing to accept it or believe it.
Unconsciously pushing threatening memories, urges, or ideas from conscious awareness;
Example: a person may experience loss of memory, for unpleasant events.

Reaction Formation:

Impulses held in check by exaggerating opposite behavior –
Example: I hate you- but act over protective
"I like you so I pull your hair and make you cry"
Defending against unacceptable impulses by acting opposite to them
Example: Sexual interest in a married co-worker might appear as a strong dislike instead.

Regression:

Returning to earlier less demanding situations Child-like behaviors-

Projection:

Unconscious process- protects us from anxiety to see our own faults in others
Example: Exaggerates negative traits in others
Directs attention away from personal failings
Unconsciously attributing one's own unacceptable thoughts or impulses to another person
Example: Instead of recognizing that "I hate him," a person may feel that "He hates me."

Rationalization:

Making excuses
Justifying behavior by giving rational but false reasons
Can be reasonable and convincing but false
Attempt to make actions or mistakes seem reasonable
Example: The reason or excuses given (e.g. "I spank my children because it is good for them.") sound rational, but they are not the real reason for the behavior."

Compensation:

Over achieving in one area to compensate for failures in another area
Defense against feelings of inferiority
Example: Overcoming a weakness
Going to great lengths to do so

Sublimation:

Working off frustrated desires (especially sexual desires) through socially acceptable activities
Example: Rechanneling sexual energy into productive behavior
Converting unacceptable impulses into socially acceptable actions, and perhaps symbolically expressing them.
Example: Sexual or aggressive desires may appear as artistic creativity or devotion to athletic excellence.

Displacement:

Deflecting an impulse from its original target to a less threatening one
Example: Anger at one's boss may be expressed through hostility toward a clerk, a family member, or even a pet.

Learned helplessness:

An acquired- learned inability to overcome obstacles and avoid aversive stimuli
Major element of depression
Learning to passively endure
Example: Occurs when events seem to be uncontrollable especially after repeated failures
Unpredictable and unavoidable punishment

Leads to depression with feelings of learned helplessness, feelings of powerlessness, lowered aggression, decreased activity, loss of appetite, loss of sex drive, despondency, hopelessness… no-Self-Efficacy

Other Defense Mechanisms

Since Freud first described the original defense mechanisms, other researchers have continued to describe other methods of reducing anxiety. Some of these defense mechanisms include:

Acting out –The individual copes with stress by engaging in attention-seeking behavior to try and get notice that they crave. (School children trying to be class clown)

Affiliation – Involves turning to other people for support. (co-dependent behavior when one feels he/she can't cope by self)

Passive-aggression – Indirectly expressing anger. (teen silently resents chores; puts dishes in washer, but does sloppy job and bangs plates around—easier for parent to take charge of chore)

Avoidance – Refusing to deal with or encounter unpleasant objects or situations. (dislike certain people at school and doesn't join a club they're in order to avoid contact with them)

Altruism – Satisfying internal needs through helping others.

Humor – Pointing out the funny or ironic aspects of a situation.

Identifying Defense Mechanisms:
Create a skit about one of these defense mechanism, (one will be assigned to you)
Act out the skit so kids can evaluate which mechanism is represented.

1. Acting out –
2. Affiliation
3. Altruism
4. Approach-Approach,
5. Approach-Avoidance
6. Avoidance
7. Avoidance-Avoidance,
8. Compensation
9. Conflicts-
10. Denial
11. Displaced Aggression
12. Humor
13. Learned Helplessness
14. Multiple Conflicts
15. Passive-aggression
16. Projection
17. Rationalization
18. Reaction Formation
19. Regression
20. Sublimation