

Psychodynamic therapy

Retrieved from <http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/psychodynamic-therapy.html>

Psychodynamic therapy - or psychodynamic counselling as it is also known - is a therapeutic approach that embraces the work of all analytic therapies. Its roots lie predominantly in Freud's psychoanalysis approach, but Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Otto Rank and Melanie Klein are all widely recognised for further developing the concept and application of psychodynamics.

Like psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy, the aim of psychodynamic therapy is to bring the unconscious mind into consciousness - helping individuals to unravel, experience and understand their true, deep-rooted feelings in order to resolve them. It takes the view that our unconscious holds onto painful feelings and memories, which are too difficult for the conscious mind to process. In order to ensure these memories and experiences do not surface, many people will develop defences, such as denial and projections. According to psychodynamic therapy, these defences will often do more harm than good.

Whilst it shares the same core principles of psychoanalysis, psychodynamic counselling is typically far less intensive - focusing primarily on immediate problems and attempting to find a quicker solution. It does however tend to provide the same benefits - helping people with a range of psychological disorders to make significant changes to how they make decisions and interact with others.

How does psychodynamic therapy work?

As briefly aforementioned, the psychodynamic approach is guided by the core principle that the unconscious mind harbours deep-rooted feelings and memories that can affect our behaviour. Psychodynamic therapists will work according to this, in context-specific ways, catering their techniques and therapy style to the individual. They maintain an equal relationship with their client, adopting the attitude of unconditional acceptance and aiming to develop a trusting relationship. This encourages the client to open up and explore unresolved issues and conflict hidden in their unconscious that are affecting their mood and behaviour.

In order to help the client understand what their unconscious disturbances are and how their mind works, psychodynamic therapists will draw on similar techniques used in psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic therapy. These are listed below:

Free association

This technique involves the client talking freely to the therapist - saying the first things that come to mind. There is no attempt to shape ideas before they are said, nor do clients tell things in a linear story structure. The spontaneity allows for true thoughts and feelings to emerge without any concern for how painful, illogical or silly they may sound to the therapist.

Therapeutic transference

This is the redirection of feelings for a significant person - especially those unconsciously retained from childhood - onto the therapist. Clients will often feel an erotic attraction towards their therapist, but this transference can manifest in many other forms such as hatred, mistrust, extreme dependence and rage. Through recognition and exploration of this relationship, the client can begin to understand their feelings and resolve any conflicts with figures from their childhood.

Interpretation

The therapist is likely to stay relatively quiet throughout therapy, but will occasionally interject with thoughts or interpretations of the topics the client chooses to discuss. The application of these interpretations will depend on

the therapists awareness of the client's mental state and capacity to integrate material that they are not aware of.

Ultimately, it is up to the therapist to help clients learn new patterns of behaviour and ways of thinking that promote personal development and growth - helping them to overcome any limitations caused by unconscious feelings. Generally this process tends to be quick and solution-focused, and sessions will take place once a week, lasting for around 50 minutes. Psychodynamic therapy seeks to resolve more immediate problems.

Short-term psychodynamic therapy

Since the 1950s a shorter, more intense type of psychodynamic therapy has emerged. Following its introduction in a series of workshops, the method of short-term psychodynamic therapy (also known as intensive short-term dynamic psychotherapy - ISTDP) was eventually developed in the 1960s and 1970s by psychiatrist Habib Davanloo. Davanloo's aim was to enhance the efficacy of psychoanalysis and minimise the length of treatment.

While the primary goal of short-term psychodynamic therapy is very similar to psychoanalysis (and thus psychodynamic therapy), rather than acting as a neutral observer of a client's personal development, a short-term psychodynamic therapist will be an active advocate of change. They will guide the client through the process by applying non-interpretative techniques including encouragement to feel. This method was essentially founded on Davanloo's discovery that the dynamic unconscious has many layers. His specific interventions allow the therapist to access those layers, and when applied in a specific style and at specific times in the therapeutic process, help the client to overcome unconscious blocks and resistance as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Who can benefit from psychodynamic therapy?

The psychodynamic approach is designed to help individuals with a wide range of problems, but tends to be most effective in treating more specific issues such as anxiety disorders (i.e. phobias and obsessive compulsive disorders). There does however tend to be a certain type of individual who responds particularly well to psychodynamic therapy.

These individuals are genuinely interested in exploring themselves, and seek self-knowledge in addition to symptom relief. They will have the capacity for self-reflection and a natural curiosity for their internal life and why they behave the way they do. For example, someone who keeps choosing abusive partners may want to learn how to break that pattern by exploring their unconscious conflicts through free association. If a client is willing to commit themselves wholly to psychodynamic therapy, they should see the benefits within the first few months of sessions.

Or fall prey to the hypnotic suggestions of a 'Professional' — who for instance may have their own Marxist ideations, and choose to seize the opportunity to implant some type of 2nd Amendment massacre. All therapists? No! World history indicates Zionist merchants of chaos profit most in the harvest of fear though. And no one even suspects the "Therapist".

Table of Defense Mechanisms

Retrieved from <http://quotesgram.com/defense-mechanisms-freud-quotes-on/#OdMHyq6PWT>

Table 8.1 Some of Freud's Defense Mechanisms

Defense Mechanism	Description	Example
Repression	Unknowingly placing an unpleasant memory or thought in the unconscious	Not remembering a traumatic incident in which you witnessed a crime
Regression	Reverting back to immature behavior from an earlier stage of development	Throwing temper tantrums as an adult when you don't get your way
Displacement	Redirecting unacceptable feelings from the original source to a safer, substitute target	Taking your anger toward your boss out on your spouse or children by yelling at them and not your boss
Sublimation	Replacing socially unacceptable impulses with socially acceptable behavior	Channeling aggressive drives into playing football or inappropriate sexual desires into art
Reaction formation	Acting in exactly the opposite way to one's unacceptable impulses	Being overprotective of and lavishing attention on an unwanted child
Projection	Attributing one's own unacceptable feelings and thoughts to others and not yourself	Accusing your boyfriend of cheating on you because you have felt like cheating on him
Rationalization	Creating false excuses for one's unacceptable feelings, thoughts, or behavior	Justifying cheating on an exam by saying that everyone else cheats

Intellectualization tends to occur over the short run, but sublimation develops over a long period of time, perhaps even throughout the course of a person's career. A classic example is that of a surgeon who takes hostile impulses and converts them into "cutting" other people in a way that is perfectly acceptable in society. This is perhaps putting things in terms that are too extreme. More realistically, sublimation occurs when people transform their conflicted emotions into productive outlets. They do say that psychologists are inherently nosy (not true!!), but it's possible that people who go into human services fields to help others are trying to "pay forward" to compensate for difficulties they experienced in their early lives.

In short, defense mechanisms are one of our commonest ways to cope with unpleasant emotions. Although Freud and many of his followers believed that we use them to combat sexual or aggressive feelings, defense mechanisms apply to a wide range of reactions from anxiety to insecurity.

Which defense mechanism is most adaptive? In general, the more "mature" defense mechanisms include intellectualization, sublimation, and rationalization. According to research by George Vaillant, people who use these defense mechanisms more often than the others tend to experience better family relationships and work lives. You may never rid yourself of all your defense mechanisms, but at least you can grow from understanding what they can, and cannot, do for you.

If you are interested in reading general references about defense mechanisms, you can check out these interesting and recent sources:

Kramer, U. (2010). Coping and defence mechanisms: What's the difference? Second act. *Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice*, 83(2), 207-221. doi:10.1348/147608309X475989

Larsen, A., Bøggild, H., Mortensen, J., Foldager, L., Hansen, J., Christensen, A., & ... Munk-Jørgensen, P. (2010). Psychopathology, defence mechanisms, and the psychosocial work environment. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry*, 56(6), 563-577. doi:10.1177/0020764008099555

Olson, T. R., Perry, J., Janzen, J. I., Petraglia, J., & Presniak, M. D. (2011). Addressing and interpreting defense mechanisms in psychotherapy: General considerations. *Psychiatry: Interpersonal and Biological Processes*, 74(2), 142-165. doi:10.1521/psyc.2011.74.2.142

That's not very nice imagery, but you get the picture. Any time you shift your true feelings from their original, anxiety-

provoking, source to one you perceive as less likely to cause you harm, you're quite possibly using displacement. Unfortunately, displacement may protect you from being fired or failing a class, but it won't protect your hand if you decide to displace your anger from the true target to a window or wall.

5. Projection. The first four defense mechanisms were relatively easy to understand. I think. Projection is more challenging. First, you have to start with the assumption that to recognize a particular quality in yourself would cause you psychic pain. Let's take a kind of silly example. For instance, you feel that an outfit you spent too much on looks really bad on you. Wearing this outfit, you walk into the room where your friends stare at you perhaps for a moment too long (in your opinion). They say nothing and do nothing that in reality could be construed as critical. However, your insecurity about the outfit (and distress at having paid too much for it) leads you to "project" your feelings onto your friends, and you blurt out "Why are you looking at me like that? Don't you like this outfit?" See how silly that was? In a less silly case, you might project your more general feelings of guilt or insecurity onto friends—or worse—people who don't know and love you with all your projected flaws. Let's say you're worried that you're not really very smart. You make a dumb mistake that no one says anything about at all, and accuse others of saying that you're dumb, inferior, or just plain stupid. The point is that no one said anything that in reality could be construed as critical. You are "projecting" your insecurities onto others and in the process, alienating them (and probably looking somewhat foolish as well).

6. Reaction formation. Now we're getting into advanced defense mechanism territory. Most people have difficulty understanding reaction formation, but it's really quite straightforward. Let's say that you secretly harbor lustful feelings toward someone you should probably stay away from. You don't want to admit to these feelings, so you instead express the very opposite of those feelings. This object of your lust now becomes the object of your bitter hatred. This defense mechanism could be subtitled the "lady doth protest too much," that wonderful quote from Hamlet. A less highbrow example is "Church Lady," the old Dana Carvey character from Saturday Night Live. Her secret obsession with pornography became reversed into her extreme scorn for all things sexual. In short, reaction formation means expressing the opposite of your inner feelings in your outward behavior.

7. Intellectualization. You might also neutralize your feelings of anxiety, anger, or insecurity in a way that is less likely to lead to embarrassing moments than some of the above defense mechanisms. In intellectualization, you think away an emotion or reaction that you don't enjoy feeling. For instance, rather than confront the intense distress and rejection you feel after your roommate suddenly decides to move out, you conduct a detailed financial analysis of how much you can afford to spend now that you're on your own. Although you aren't denying that the event occurred, you're not thinking about its emotional consequences.

8. Rationalization. When you rationalize something, you try to explain it away. As a defense mechanism, rationalization is somewhat like intellectualization, but it involves dealing with a piece of bad behavior on your part rather than converting a painful or negative emotion into a more neutral set of thoughts. People often use rationalization to shore up their insecurities or remorse after doing something they regret such as an "oops" moment. It's easier to blame someone else than to take the heat yourself, particularly if you would otherwise feel shame or embarrassment. For example, let's say you lose your temper in front of people you want to like and respect you. Now, to help make yourself feel better, you mentally attribute your outburst to a situation outside your control, and twist things so that you can blame someone else for provoking you.

9. Sublimation. We've just seen that people can use their emotions to fire up a cognitively-oriented response.

The Essential Guide to Defense Mechanisms

Can you spot your favorite form of self-deception?

Posted Oct 22, 2011

Defense mechanisms are a part of our everyday life. Even if you're not a Freudian by philosophy or training, you've got to admit that there's something to be said for the idea that everyone engages in some form of self-deception at least some of the time. The question is—can you detect the form of deception that you, your friends, colleagues, and family are using at any given moment?

We'll take a look at the 9 most common defense mechanisms but first, let's set the record straight on two counts. First, it was a Freud, but not Sigmund, who defined the defense mechanisms. Anna Freud defined in detail the defense mechanisms sketched out by her father in her book, "The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense." Second, defense mechanisms aren't just an unconscious protective measure to prevent you from connecting with your ravenous instinctual desires. They also protect you from the anxiety of confronting your weaknesses and foibles. You can now add these two points to the 25 surprising facts about psychology I wrote about in an [earlier post](#).

1. Denial. You can consider this the "generic" defense mechanism because it underlies many of the others. When you use denial, you simply refuse to accept the truth or reality of a fact or experience. "No, I'm just a social smoker," is a good example; similarly people can apply this to any bad habit they wish to distance themselves from including excessive alcohol or substance use, compulsive shopping or gambling, and the like. "Just say no," in this case means that you protect your self-esteem by failing to acknowledge your own behavior. Denial may also be used by victims of trauma or disasters and may even be a beneficial initial protective response. In the long run, however, denial can prevent you from incorporating unpleasant information about yourself and your life and have potentially destructive consequences.

2. Repression. One step above denial in the generic classification scheme, repression involves simply forgetting something bad. You might forget an unpleasant experience, in the past, such as a car accident at which you were found to be at fault. You might also use repression when you "forget" to do something unpleasant such as seeing the dentist or meeting with an acquaintance you don't really like. Repression, like denial, can be temporarily beneficial, particularly if you've forgotten something bad that happened to you, but as with denial, if you don't come to grips with the experience it may come back to haunt you.

3. Regression. From repression to regression—one little "g" makes all the difference. In regression, you revert back to a childlike emotional state in which your unconscious fears, anxieties, and general "angst" reappear. In Freud's theory of "psychosexual" development, people develop through stages such as the oral, anal, and phallic so that by the time they're five or six, the basic structures of personality are laid down. However, every once in a while, a person either reverts back to a childlike state of development, particularly under conditions of stress. That road rage you see when drivers are stuck in traffic is a great example of regression. People may also show regression when they return to a child-like state of dependency. Retreating under the blankets when you've had a bad day is one possible instance. The problem with regression is that you may regret letting your childish self show in a self-destructive way. Driving badly or refusing to talk to people who've made you feel bad, mad, or sad can eventually get you in worse trouble than what you had when you began.

4. Displacement. In displacement you transfer your original feelings that would get you in trouble (usually anger) away from the person who is the target of your rage to a more hapless and harmless victim. Here's the classic example: You've had a very unpleasant interaction with your boss or teacher, but you can't show your anger toward him or her. Instead, you come home and, so to speak, "kick the cat" (or dog).

Name- Goehler

Read: Psychodynamic therapy

1. In what ways is psychodynamic theory similar to psychoanalytic theory? The aim is to bring the unconscious mind into consciousness, helping to unravel, experience and understand their true, deep rooted feelings in order to understand them.
2. In what ways is psychodynamic theory different than psychoanalytic theory? Psychodynamic counselling is typically far less intensive - focusing primarily on immediate problems and attempting to find a quicker solution.
3. Describe the relationship between the psychodynamic helper and helpee. They maintain an equal relationship, adopting the attitude of unconditional acceptance to develop a trusting relationship. This encourages the client to open up and explore unresolved issues. In order to help the helpee understand what their unconscious disturbances are and how their minds work, the helper will draw upon the following tech.
4. Describe the following techniques used in the psychodynamic approach to helping
 - A. Free association Talking freely to the therapist - saying the first thing that comes to mind. The spontaneity allows true thoughts & feelings to emerge.
 - B. Therapeutic transference Redirection of feelings - especially those unconsciously retained from childhood - onto the therapist: (erotic attraction, hatred, mistrust, extreme dependence, rage). Through recognition & exploration, the client begins to understand their feelings and resolve any conflicts with figures from their childhood.
 - C. Interpretation The therapist stays relatively quiet but occasionally interjects with thoughts or interpretations of the topics the client chooses to discuss. The application of these interpretations will depend on the suggestibility of the client's mental state.
5. Explain the types of helpees or helpee concerns that can be helped with psychodynamic approaches. Individuals who are genuinely interested in exploring themselves, and seek self-knowledge in addition to symptom relief.

Do not leave this blank. If you understand everything you read, you should still have questions you are wondering about as it relates to the reading. What 1-2 questions do you have for clarification or extension of the reading you completed in this reading guide? If you do not have any questions, feel free to make comments about your thoughts or opinions regarding the reading and how it applies to your life.

It's laughable, isn't it? The problems people have is literally "all in their head" - that dreadful place below the surface equipped with defensive mechanisms discouraging discovery and resolution - until exposed to the light of scrutiny. Aberrated Thoughts, Feelings and Behavior are kinda like Vampires in that way, aren't they? eg. They spread their dis-ease until they are exposed to the light. This class is awesome!

Defense Mechanism	Definition/Description	A time you used or observed someone using this defense mechanism
Reaction formation	Acting in exactly the opposite way to one's unacceptable impulses.	In a traffic jam where my road rage impulse threatens to make me go postal, I feign humor at slowing down for others to cut me off, much the same as expressed in DISPLACEMENT.
Intellectualization	To give rational form or content to neutralize feelings of anxiety, anger or insecurity. To think away an emotion or reaction that you don't enjoy feeling.	The indignity of existing in a penal colony with bestial forces outnumbering the few virtuous individuals, prompts the hero to raise the standard of Noblesse Oblige, and set an example, rather than succumb to status quo.
Rationalization	Creating false excuses for the unacceptable Thoughts, Feelings or Behavior. "Everyone else does it!"	Much like the above Intellectualism, when rather the hero succumbs to bestial attitudes and tries to fit-in the social matrix because ... any number of justifications apply.
Sublimation	Replacing socially unacceptable impulses with socially acceptable behavior. 2: to divert the expression of (an instinctual impulse) from its primitive form to one that is considered more socially or culturally acceptable.	Noblesse Oblige [F. lit. Nobility Obligates] : the obligation of honorable, generous, and responsible behavior associated with high rank or birth Resisting rationalization prompted me to pioneer a Scientology study group as my own expression of Self-Actualization.

Defense Mechanism	Definition/Description	A time you used or observed someone using this defense mechanism
Denial	Not believing reality. Negation in logic. Avoidance	I make believe, TO BE on a profoundly ennobling quest toward atonement, unable to bear the indignity of this exile to penal colonies the rest of <u>this</u> life.
Repression	One step above denial (?) simply "forgets" - an unpleasant experience. Unknowingly placing unpleasant memory or thought in the unconscious.	To this day I resent the Jewish doctor who circumcised my flesh, along with the Jewish scribes who circumcised my Soul - and I couldn't understand that resentment for the longest time because A.D. era repression.
Regression	Reverting back to immature behavior, where the unconscious fears, anxieties, and general angst reappear, under conditions of stress. Road Rage, for example.	Much in line with the two above, I'm inclined to identify the demagogic ideation I'd acquired at Folsom Prison in Repress, CA, ironically: replacing the indignity of exile with a Purpose to avenge.
Displacement	Redirecting unacceptable feelings from the original source to a safer, substitute target.	The glee of insanity, comes to mind. Resenting suppressive sources, I rather demonstrate a feigned surrender. A sort of preemptive self-humiliation effort to disarm agencies of humiliation.
Projection	Attributing one's own unacceptable feelings and thoughts to others	The herd mentality of group-think, repulses me! My insecurity in relation to 'socialization' aberrations has been dramatized as antagonism to the status-quo culture of personality.

Name- Goehler

Reading Guide #5 for 2nd third of the semester

Interpersonal communication: theories of helping (psychoanalytic/psychodynamic)

THIS AND READING GUIDE #6 ARE DUE ON THE SAME DAY

Read: *The essential guide to defense mechanisms: Can you spot your favorite form of self-deception?*

1. What is a defense mechanism? In order to answer this question, combine your knowledge of the unconscious, id, ego, and superego and information in this reading. In short, defense mechanisms are one of our ways to cope with unpleasant emotions stemming from personality disorders developed in early childhood relationships and imprinted upon the unconscious mind.
2. Although Sigmund Freud wrote about repression, it was actually another person who defined the defense mechanisms. What was the name of that person? Anna Freud
3. What are the 2 purposes of defense mechanisms? 1- To protect you from the anxiety of confronting your weaknesses and foibles. 2- An unconscious protective measure to prevent you from connecting with your ravenous instinctual desires.

Read the descriptions of defense mechanisms in this article as well as those in Table 8.1.

1. Complete the chart on the following pages. I recommend that you use examples from your own life because this will help you when you write your next reflection paper. Okay, but this introduction to Psychology really is feeling an awful lot like THERAPY to me, aiming to achieve a sort of CATHARSIS, while developing a cursory education of this Theoretical approach.
2. What are your thoughts about the completed defense mechanisms chart? Its impossibly concise!
The "Example" column: "A time you used or observed someone using this defense mechanism", is a beautifully intimate challenge to expose the EGO's health i.e. Mental Health. e.g. A healthy ego is able to balance the super-ego and id. Vis-a-vis; An unhealthy super-ego or id controls ^{MIS-}behavior. This class is awesome! Imagine that.