

GMT 409 Psy MD Year 4 2019/2020

Defense & Coping Mechanism

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What You will learn

***We Come To
Understand Ourselves***

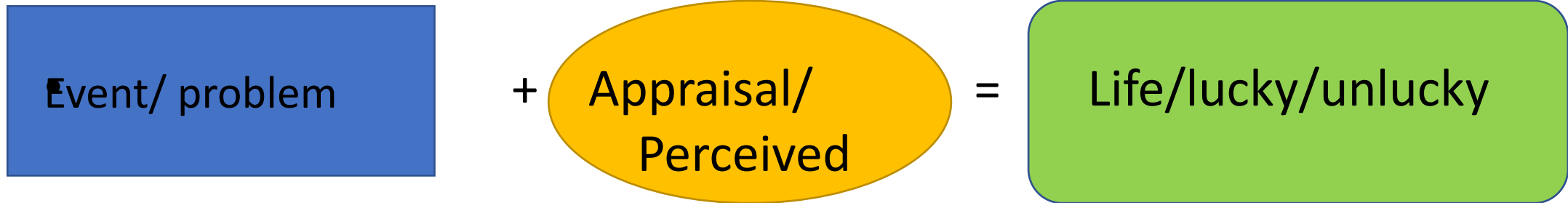


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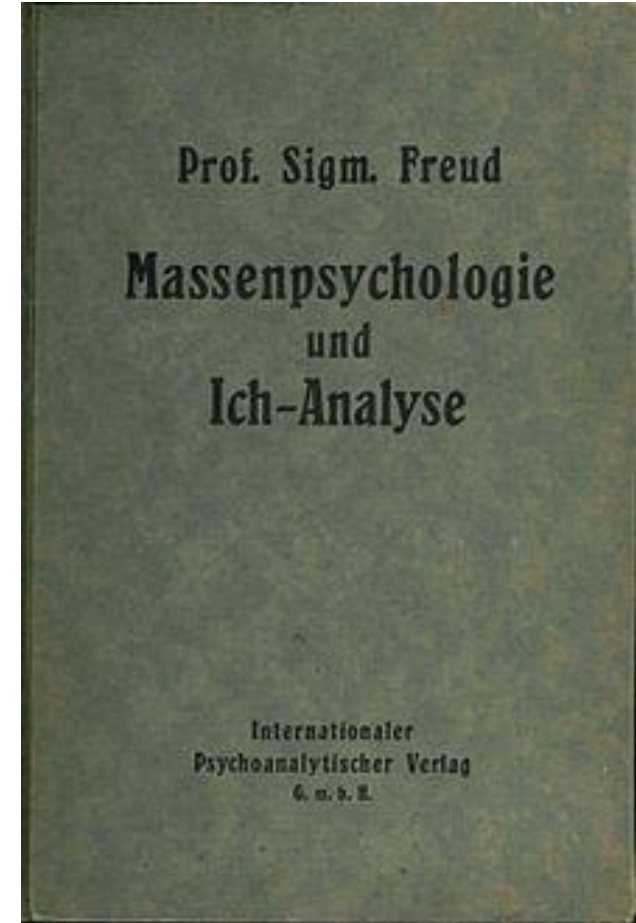
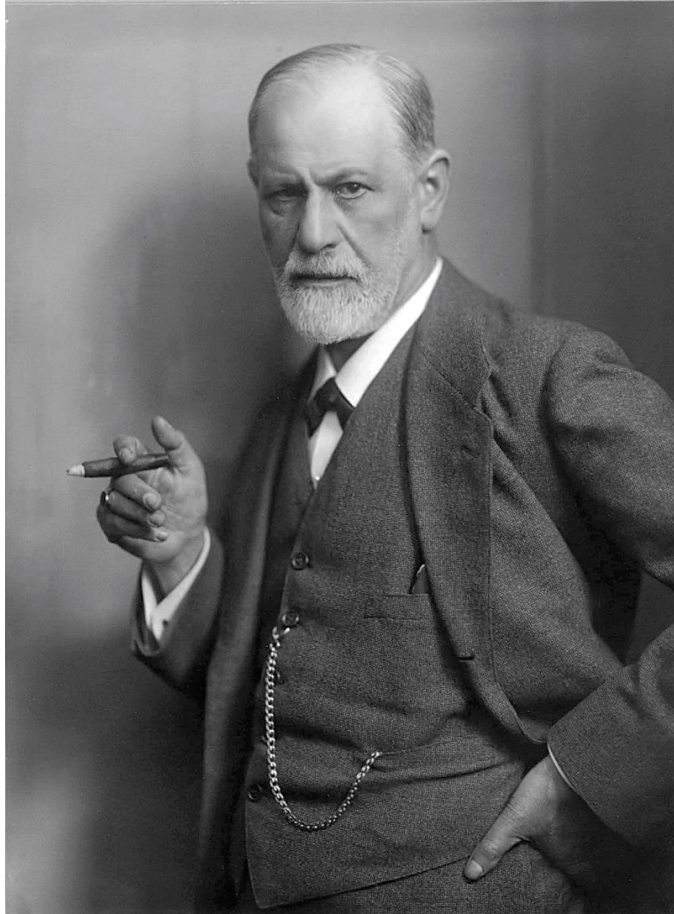
Law of life



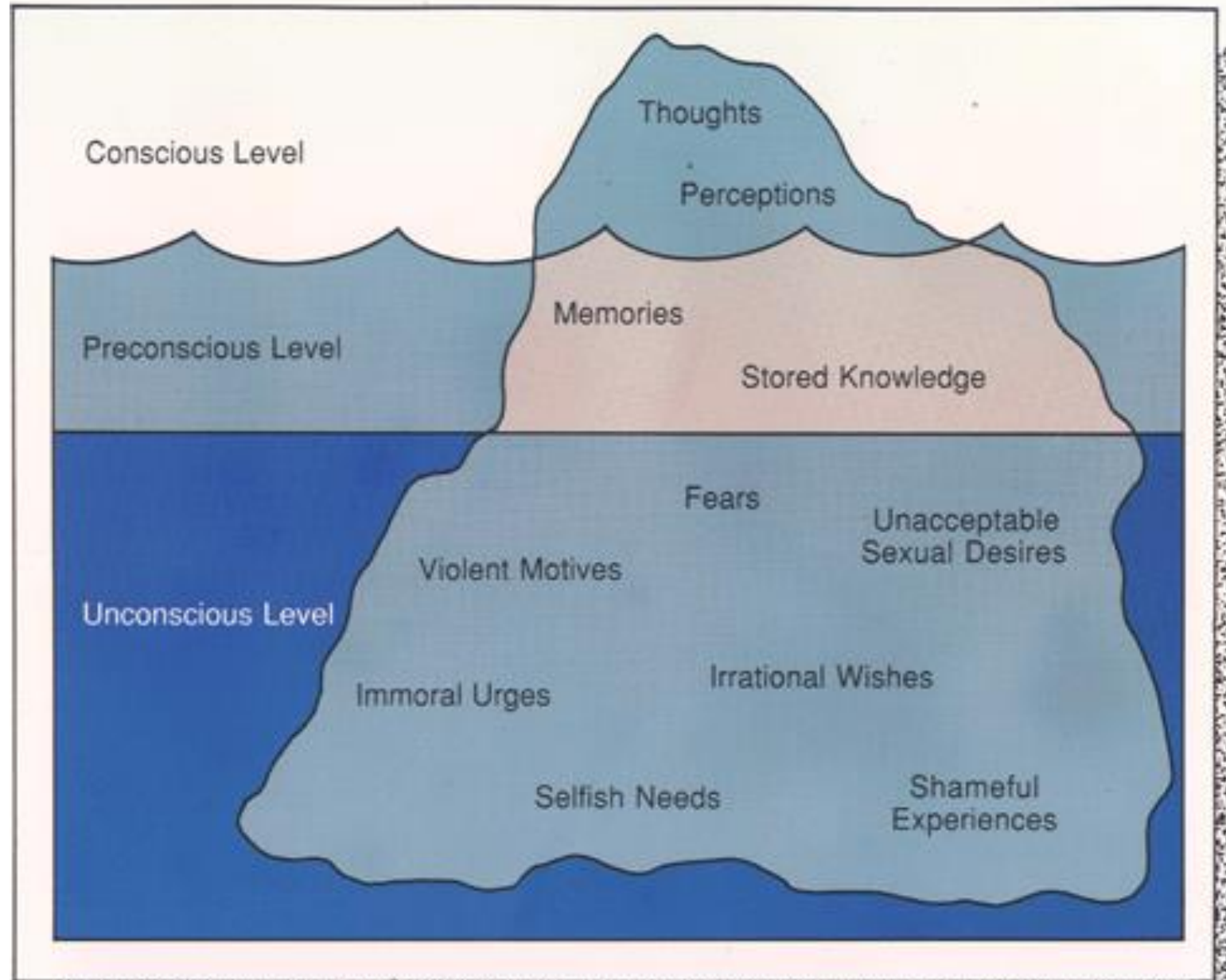
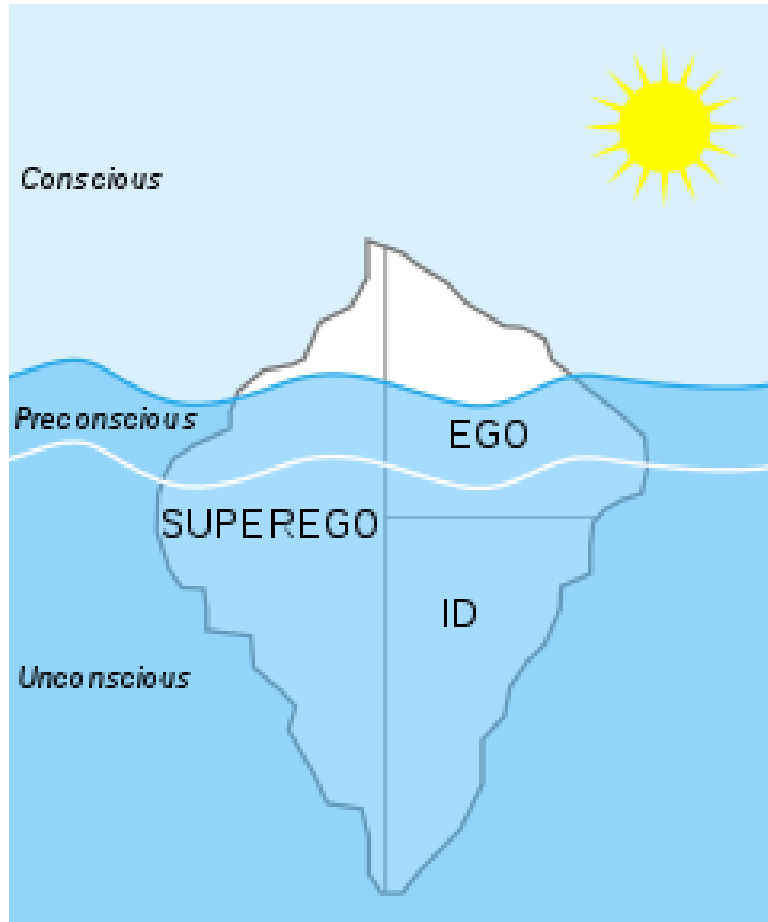
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Psychoanalysis



Theory of the mind





Id:

Instincts



Ego:

Reality



Superego:

Morality

ID

- is the part of one's nature that reflects basic or innate desires such as *pleasure-seeking behavior, aggression and sexual impulses.*
- seeks instant gratification, causes impulsive unthinking behavior and has no regard for rules or social convention.
- Irrational and not based on reality.

I'm ID !!! I operate on the PLEASURE PRINCIPLE and I always demand for the immediate gratification of my needs.



EGO

- is the balancing or mediating force between the ID and SUPEREGO.
- Represents mature and adaptive behavior that allows a person to function successfully in the world.
- Adaptation to reality; modulation of anxiety; reality testing; store of experiences in memory, uses defense mechanisms to protect self.

I'm the **EGO!**
My role is to **balance** the ID and the Super- Ego.
I operate based on **REALITY PRINCIPLE.**
I individualizes a person.



SUPEREGO

- Is the part of a person's nature that reflects moral and ethical concepts, values and parental and social expectations.
- Is in Direct opposition to the ID.
- Moral, ethical, values, Parental

I'm **SUPEREGO!** I am stubborn and as blind and ruthless as the ID. I am based on what's **IDEAL** rather than **REAL**.



The Ego deals with Id, Superego, and Reality by:

Defense mechanisms

- The best anyone can do.
- But can be used maladaptively

Symptoms (neurotic)

- Last resort, things are bad when you have to use these

Definition

Unconscious **intra-psychic process** protective in nature, it is used **to relieve anxiety** and **conflict** arising from one's impulses and drives.

Unconscious process that **defend** a person **against anxiety** by distorting reality in some way

Purposes include:

Self security protection

Anxiety (or fear) reduction

Mental conflict resolution

Esteem (self) protection

Defense mechanism

- Does not alter the objective conditions of danger
- Simply change the way the person perceives or think about it.
- Function: to minimize anxiety.
- Usually unconscious but many do have conscious analogs.
- Everyone uses them daily, not always pathological.
- Becomes a problem only if they interfere with a person's ability to function or if they disturb inter-personal relationships.

Following precaution should be in mind

- Defense mechanisms are hypothetical constructs inferred from observations of the way people behave.
 - useful ways of summarizing **the psychological processes** that we hypothesize are occurring in order to explain some observed behaviour.
- Labeling a person's behaviour (eg: projection, displacement or reaction formation) may provide useful descriptions but labels **do not explain behaviour**.
 - An explanation requires understanding **what causes** the person to rely on defense mechanism when confronted with problems

- Used in **moderation**; defense mechanisms help to overcome the impact of stress before a direct deals with the stressful situation.
 - The normal person may use a variety of coping and defensive strategies, depending on the situation.
 - The abnormal individual tends to be less flexible using the same defense mechanism regardless of the situation → **defense mechanisms become the dominant → personality adjustment.**

Examples of defense mechanism

NEGATIVE DEFENCE MECHANISMS:-

1. Suppression
2. Displacement
3. Projection
4. Regression
5. Fixation
6. Fantasy
7. Reaction formation
8. Conversion
9. Dissociation
10. Denial

SUCCESSFUL

- ▶ Repression
- ▶ Rationalization
- ▶ Intellectualization
- ▶ Compensation
- ▶ Substitution
- ▶ Sublimation



Vaillant's classification of defense mechanism (according to hierarchy of maturity)

1. Pathological – denial, delusional projection, distortion

2. Immature – Acting out, introjections, identification, regression, fantasy, projection, passive aggression

3. Neurotic – Dissociation, displacement, intellectualization, rationalization, reaction formation, repression

4. Mature – Sublimation, suppression, humor, altruism, anticipation

Defense mechanism

At each phase of libidinal development, specific drive components evoke characteristic ego defenses.

Defenses can be grouped hierarchically according to the degree of maturity associated with them.

Narcissistic defenses are the most primitive and appear in children and people who are psychotically disturbed.

Immature defenses are seen in adolescents and some non-psychotic patients.

Neurotic defenses are encountered in obsessive compulsive and hysterical patients as well as in adult under stress.



Pathological @ Narcissistic defenses

- When predominant, the mechanisms on this level are almost always severely pathological.
- frequently appear irrational, common in overt psychosis.
- E.g Denial, distortion, delusional projection

Denial

- consciously avoiding anxiety provoking thoughts by NOT ACCEPTING REALITY
- common early response to bad news (grief)

Example:

A lady refuse to accept a cancer diagnosis

Distortion

- Reshaping external reality to suits inner needs (incl. hallucination, wish fulfilling delusion) to sustain superiority/entitlement

Example:

A woman tells a story about she was abandoned by family when she was actually run away from home

Delusional projection

- Attributing one's undesired feelings/ thoughts to another person in delusional significance
- Includes paranoid delusions and acting on the perceptions
- @ Delusions about external reality, usually of a persecutory nature

Example:

A man believed that his wife is cheating on him, while he himself feels attracted to other woman



Immature defenses

- Excessive use of such defences is seen as socially undesirable, in that they are immature, difficult to deal with and seriously out of touch with reality.
- overuse almost always leads to serious problems in a person's ability to cope effectively.
- often seen in major depression and personality disorders
- E.g. – Acting out, introjections, identification, regression, fantasy, projection, passive aggression, conversion, splitting

Acting out

- Expressing an unacceptable or extreme unconscious wish/impulse in action/behaviour to avoid anxiety, associated with suppressing the action
- (without conscious awareness of the emotion that drives the expressive behavior)
- Associated with borderline and antisocial PD

Example:

a person throw a temper tantrum when he/she does not get their way

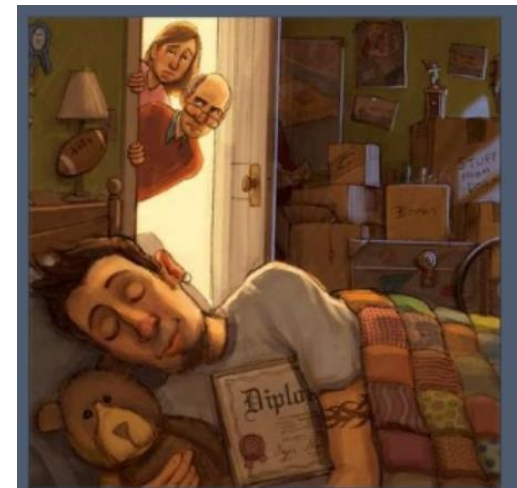
Regression

- Attempting to return to a child-like state to avoid the tension evoked at the present level of development
- Common in individuals who are feeling ill, tired or uncomfortable

Example:

A student stressed up in college starts sucking his thumb.

A man bringing a teddy bear to the hospital for an overnight admission



Fixation

- Only partially adopting a child-like level of development

Example:

an adult who is fixated on reading comic books or playing video games

Idealization

- Imposing more positive qualities on an external object or person than they actually have

Example:

A woman believing that her new boyfriend is absolutely flawless

Blocking

- Temporarily or transiently inhibited thinking while feeling increased levels of tension.
- Maybe associated with embarrassment

Example:

an individual being unable to answer a question during the exam, but immediately recalls it once the exam is over

Introjection

- An **unconscious** assimilation of an external object, which may be loved or hated, into oneself in a symbolic fashion
- Different with *identification* in terms of intensity of assimilation (Introjection more intense)

Example:

A child absorb the values, preferences and attitudes of his parents and thus becomes very much like them

Identification

- An unconscious modeling of oneself after another person or an unconscious conforming to the values or attitudes of a group
- less intense than introjections

Example

A student respects and admires a professor who has a moustache and smokes a pipe. He then grows a moustache and begins smoking a pipe



Somatization

- Representation of emotional conflict by physical symptoms.
- The part of the body that is involved is under **involuntary control** (autonomic nervous system)

Example:

An employee who has repeatedly been denied promotion in his company becomes severely angry, an emotion which he feels he cannot express. He develops hypertension, and complete medical workup fails to reveal any physiological etiology.

Conversion

- Representation of emotional conflict by physical symptoms.
- The portion of the body that is affected is under **voluntary control** of individual (motor sensory system)
- The purpose of a conversion is to avoid and alleviate anxiety.

Example:

A father who has strong impulses to injure his child suddenly develops a paralysis of one of his upper extremities.

Hypochondriasis

- Exaggerating or overemphasizing an illness to avoid responsibility or guilt associated with loneliness, bereavement, or aggressive impulses
- @ An excessive preoccupation or worry about having a serious illness

Example:

claiming to be bed-ridden when suffering from mild abdominal cramps when actually trying to avoid going to work following the death of a loved one

Passive aggression

- Expressing aggression toward others indirectly through passivity, failures, or illness that affects others more than self
- @ Indirect expression of hostility
- Common in borderline PD and children

Example:

avoiding answering direct questions because of feeling of annoyance towards the other person

Projection

- Misattribution of a person's undesired thought, feeling, or impulse onto another person.
- @ A primitive form of [paranoia](#).

Example:

A man who consistently late for work has been suggested by his boss for an earlier start. Instead of doing this, he decides to drive faster and is subsequently given a citation for speeding. He refuses to accept the blame for his actions, **stating that his boss was responsible** for his having to exceed the speed limit.

Example:- spouse cheats on wife and says that she is also a cheater .



Splitting

- An all-or-nothing view about a subject or person, without a middle ground (no room for ambiguity and ambivalence)
- They are unable to integrate the good and bad images of both self and others into a cohesive whole
- Both harmful and helpful impulses are split off and unintegrated, frequently projected onto someone else.
- Associated with Borderline PD

Example:

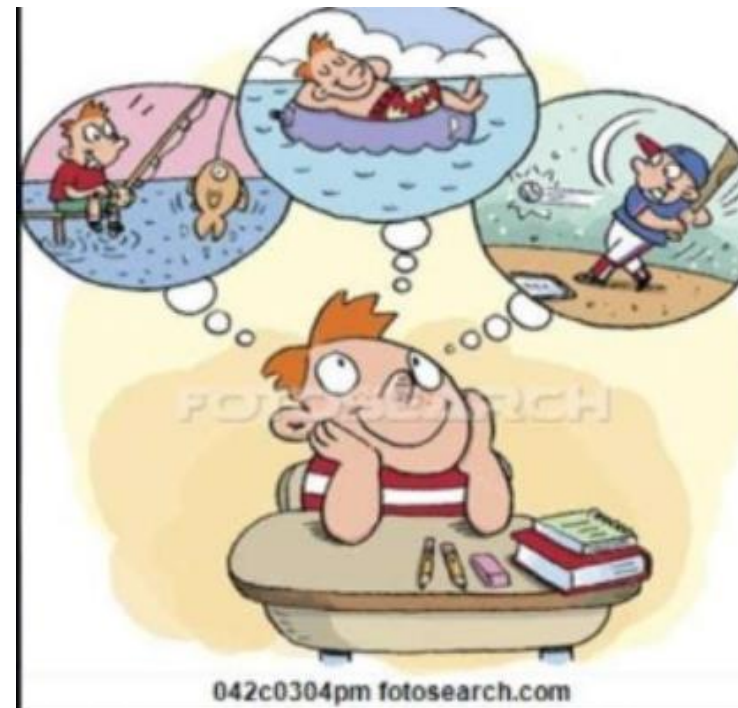
Disliking all teachers, finding that all student counsellors are all good people based on their choice of profession alone

Fantasy

- Withdrawal into fantasy to resolve inner and outer conflicts
- A.k.a *schizoid fantasy*

Example:

an elderly man who fantasize that he is youthful and virile





Neurotic defenses

- short-term advantages in coping, but can often cause long-term problems in relationships, work and in enjoying life when used as one's primary style of coping with the world
- Seen in anxious person or those obsessive compulsive
- E.g. – Dissociation, displacement, intellectualization, rationalization, reaction formation, repression

Displacement

- Shifting or transfer an emotion to a less threatening object or person
- Individuals may become a scapegoat for others and develop phobias

Example:

- punching a wall after an argument with a colleague rather than telling the colleague your true feelings
- A mom showing her feelings of anger towards the child instead of the actual problem, her husband

Repression = motivated forgetting

- Involuntary (unconsciously) exclusion of thoughts, impulses or memories (often painful/ conflictual to the person) from conscious awareness
- Individuals themselves are **unaware** of whatever it is that is repressed
- The facts may have been known and accepted at some point in life, but are now absent from memory

Example:

A man cannot remember all traumatic events during his time in war

Reaction Formation

- Transforming an unacceptable impulse into its polar opposite behaviour to avoid anxiety-provoking thought
- Associated with anxiety disorders

Example:

- A man who has strong impulses to steal becomes a police officer who specializes in theft cases.
- Being extremely nice to foreigners although the person is xenophobic (intolerant/racist)

Undoing

- trying to undo a situation by engaging in a new behaviour
- @ negation of one behaviour by another behaviour.

Example:

- after a man think about harming another person, he becomes overly accommodating to them
- After a fight, a husband bring his wife to a romantic candlelight dinner

Rationalization

- Offering excuses or rational explanations in an attempt to justify behaviours, attitudes or beliefs to avoid self-blame
- Common in OCD

Example:

An adolescent blames his poor school performance @ failed a test because the teacher dislikes him, instead of admitting that he didn't study

Dissociation

- Detachment of intolerable thoughts or activities, so that the individual may postpone or defer the emotional impact of the situation.
- @ Temporarily modifying personal identity or another person's character to avoid emotional distress

Example:

A man driving on a city street accidentally strikes a child who darted out in front of him. When the police arrived to investigate, they find the man **wandering around in a dazed condition and unable to remember the event.**

Isolation of affect

- Separating or repressing an idea from the associated affect (usually painful or unacceptable)
- Accepting reality without the accompanying emotional response

A child who was physically abused/beaten recalling the traumatic experience without any display of emotions.

Controlling

- Excessively attempting to manage or regulate the environment (e.g. object or people) to minimize or avoid anxiety

Example:

A mother will not let her child attend a friend's birthday party unless she can regulate who else will attend

Intellectualization

Using abstract, rational and logical reasoning to avoid affective expression

Example:

Excessively investigating the pathophysiology of a terminal illness, instead of reacting to the anxiety related to an early death

Externalization

- Perceiving one's own personality in the external world and in external objects elements
- Including instinctual impulses, conflicts, moods, attitudes and styles of thinking

Example:

Perceiving someone else as aggressive and oneself as peaceful, although oneself is the aggressor

Sexualization

Endowing an object or function with sexual significance

Example:

Evaluating a person based on their sexual significance only, excluding other characteristics

Inhibition

Consciously limiting ego functions, alone or in combination, to avoid anxiety arising out of conflict

Example:

not laughing out loud in reaction to a friend falling on their face to avoid conflict

Mature defense

- commonly found among emotionally healthy adults
- considered mature, even though many have their origins in an immature stage of development.
- The use of these defences enhances pleasure and feelings of control.
- help to integrate conflicting emotions and thoughts, whilst still remaining effective
- E.g. Sublimation, suppression, humor, altruism, anticipation

Altruism

- Serving others constructively to experience a personal vicarious experience
- Resolves guilty feelings by meeting the need of others

Example:

Giving the homeless man your lunch instead of eating it yourself

Anticipation

- Realistic planning or premature worrying about future discomforts
- Associated with goal-directed behaviour

Example:

Going over course notes in preparation for a lecture the following morning

Humor

Using comedy to express feelings and thoughts to lessen personal discomfort, but without producing an unpleasant effect on others

Example:

Expressing a serious situation in the form of a joke to reduce anxiety

Sublimation

- Shifting focus of unacceptable or unattainable impulses towards goal-directed activities
- Typically moving towards a socially-acceptable direction



Example :-

Sport is an example of putting our emotions into something constructive .

Example:

- A secretary who feels very angry at her boss vigorously scrubs her floor, thereby getting rid of her anger and ending up with clean and shining floors.
- Using feeling of anger (to spite someone) to motivate studying for an exam

Compensation

- Psychologically counterbalancing perceived weakness by emphasizing strength in other areas.
- It may be positive or negatives.

Example:

A man who has been paralyzed from the waist down in an accident becomes a champion trap-shooter from his wheelchair

Ex:- when a person says, “I may not know how to cook but i can sure do the dishes”.

or

“OK, maybe I’ll never be able to pass the class, but I’ll have fun and that teacher will be sorry”



Suppression

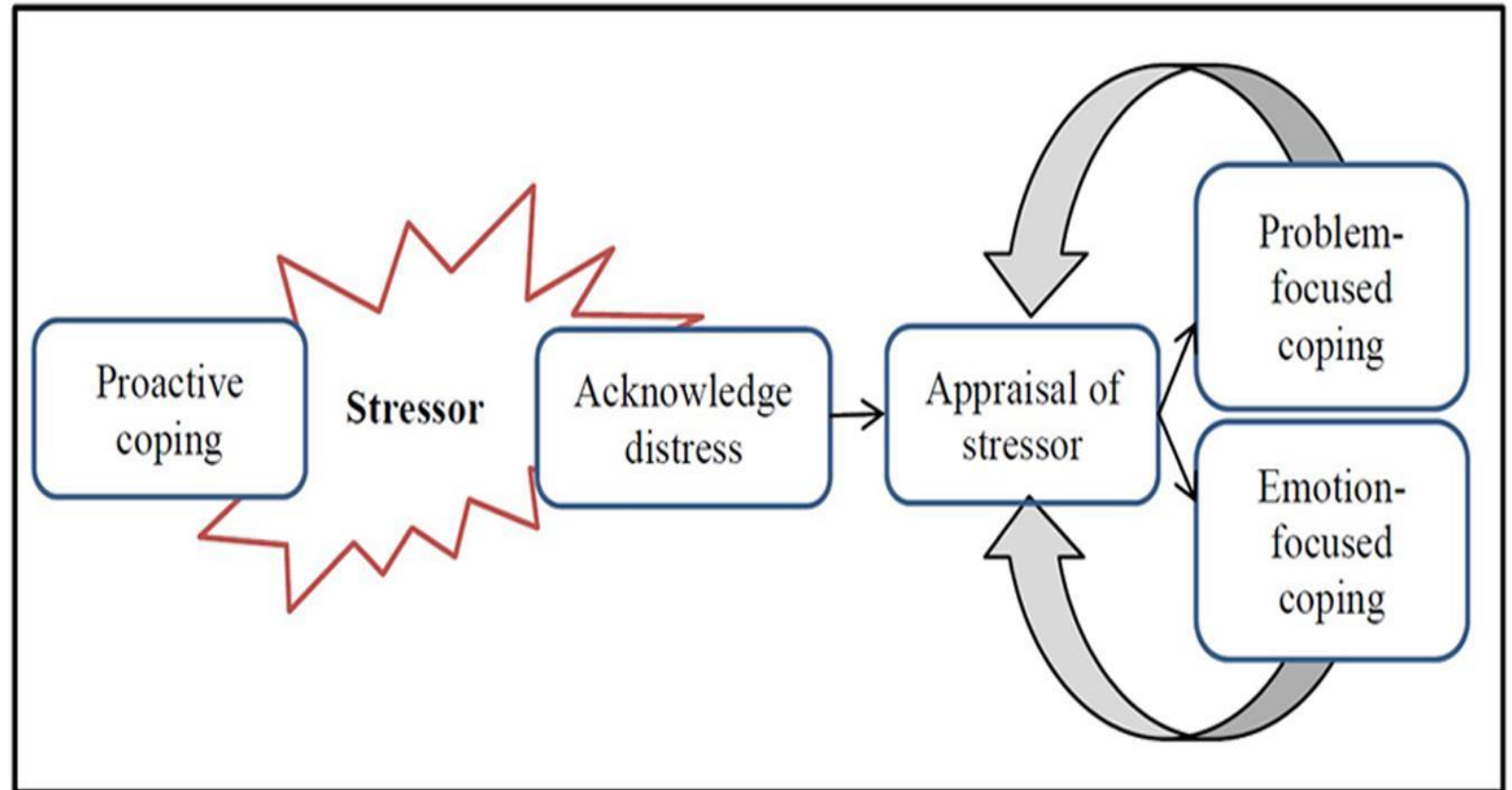
- Consciously (intentionally) postponing attention to an anxiety-provoking thought, easily recalled with the right stimulus
- Individuals are **aware** of suppressed impulses (vs *repression*)

Example:

Suppressing feeling of fear associated with the sight of blood during surgery to provide necessary patient care

Coping mechanism

“Constantly **changing cognitive and behavioral** efforts to manage **specific external and/or internal demands** that are appraised as taxing” (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980)



Coping Mechanism

- Operating at conscious level
- Classification varies
 - Adaptive vs Maladaptive
 - Problem-focussed vs emotional focussed
 - Engagement vs disengagement
 - Behaviour vs Cognitive
- Overlapping with defense mechanisms (Lazarus, 1984)

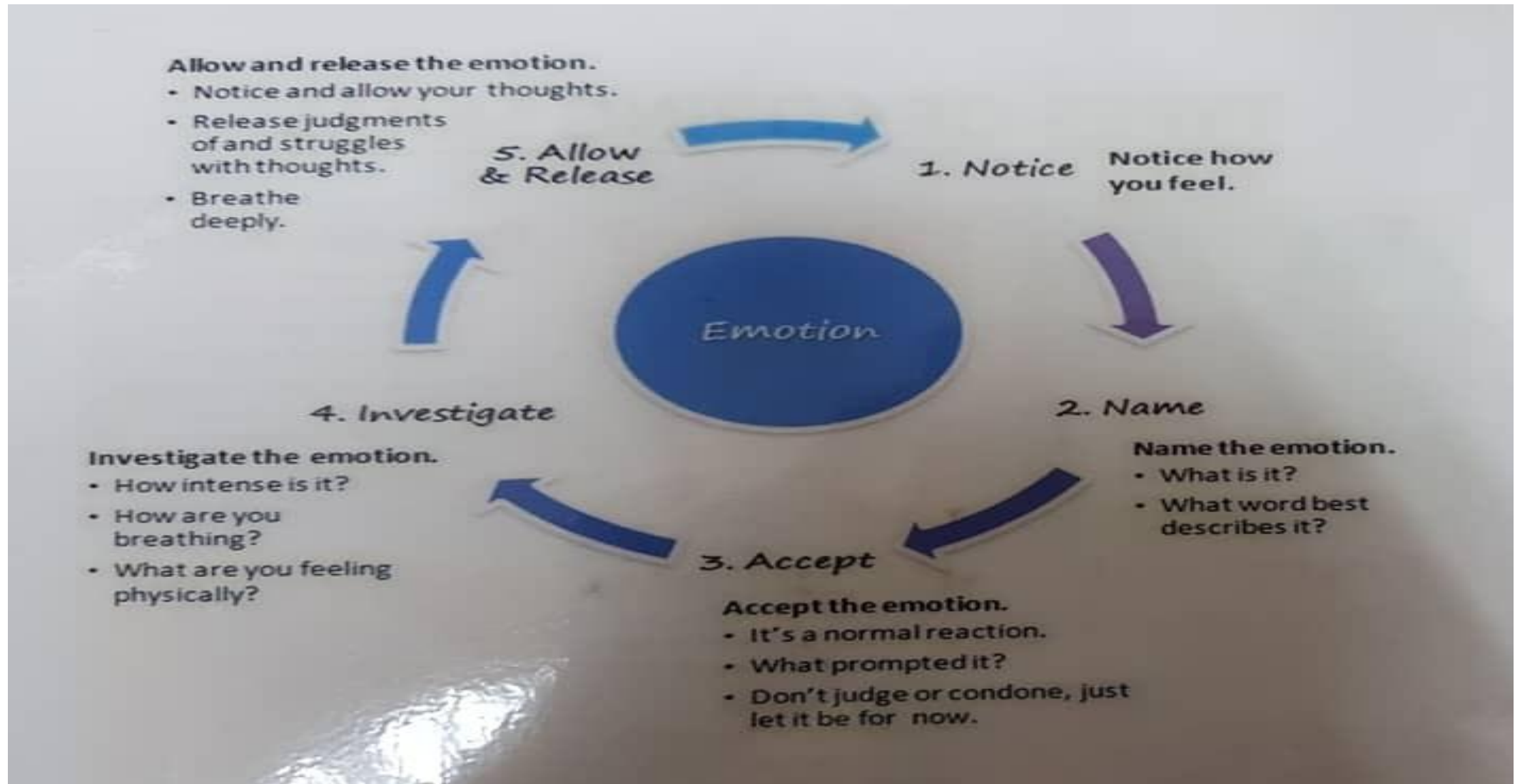
Folkman and Lazarus (1980,1985)

- Problem focussed
 - Taking control
 - Information seeking
 - Evaluation the pro and cons
- Emotional focussed
 - Disclaiming
 - Escape-avoidance
 - Accepting responsibility or blame
 - Exercising self control
 - Positive reappraisal

Types of Coping Skills

- **Self-soothing** - comforting yourself through 5 senses (perfumes, massage)
- **Distraction** – taking your mind off the problem for a while (puzzle, games, music, movie)
- **Opposite Action** - doing something the opposite of your impulse that is consistent with your positive emotion (inspiration, funny)
- **Emotional awareness** – tools for identifying and expressing your feelings (emotional validation)
- **Mindfulness** - tools for centering and grounding yourself in the present moment (yoga, breathing exercise, eating)
- **Crisis plan** - contact info of supports and recourses, for when coping skills aren't enough

Emotional validation



Clinical relevance

- Defense mechanism

- In psychodynamic psychotherapy, involved:
 - identifying defense mechanism used by patient
 - helping them to become aware of what defense mechanism they are using
 - appreciating how effective they are
 - to use less primitive but more mature defense when face with conflict in future.

- Coping mechanism

- In various psychotherapies
 - Counselling
 - Interpersonal therapy
 - Dialectic behavioural therapy
 - IPSRT
 - Stress reduction therapy
 - Mindfulness
 - Part of Psychological First Aid (PFA)



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Thank you



#letstalk

#suicideawareness

#worldmentalhealthday

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