**All. 1.** *Perrotta Human* *Defence Mechanisms* *Model (PDM-M, v.2): Schematic list of defense mechanisms and their functioning*. [2].

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| ***(1) CONDENSATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 1) Normative condensation | | 2) Psychogenic condensation | |
| ***(2) INIBITION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 3) Normative inhibition | | 4) Neurotic inhibition  5) Psychotic inhibition | |
| ***(3) FIXATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 6) Normative fixation | | 7)Circular psychogenic fixation  (anticipatory type)  8) Circular psychogenic fixation  (obsessive type)  9) Circular psychogenic fixation  (relational type)  10) Circular psychogenic fixation  (psychotic type) | |
| ***(4) AVOIDATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 11) Normative avoidation | | 12) Neurotic avoidation  13) Psychotic avoidation | |
| ***(5) IDENTIFICATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 14) Affiliative (or empathic) identification  15) Introjective (or internal) identification | | 16) Projective (or external) identification  17) Adhesive identification  18) Psychogenic fusion | |
| ***(6) ISOLATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 19) Normative (or reflexive) isolation | | 20) Psychogenic isolation | |
| ***(7) NEGATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 21) Normative (or reflexive) negation | | 22) Aversive negation  23) Oppositional negation  24) Binomial negation  (or Compartmentalization)  25) Victimizing complacency | |
| ***(8) REGRESSIVE CONNECTION***  ***(or REGRESSION)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 26) Normative (or regressive) effective  bonding | | 27) Psychogenic behavioral regression  28) Psychogenic dimensional regression | |
| ***(9) SOMATIZATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 29) Normative somatization | | 30) Psychogenic somatization | |
| ***(10) RETROACTIVE ANNULMENT*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 31) Normative (or reparitive) annulment | | 32) Psychogenic (or fictitious) annulment | |
| ***(11) DENIAL*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 33) Normative (or reactive) denial | | 34) Psychogenic denial | |
| ***(12) REACTIVE FORMATION (or REACTIVE OPPOSITION)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 35) Normative sublimation  36) Normative translation  37) Lucid fantasies  38) Normative Displacement | | 39) Degenerative sublimation  (Self-inflicted type)  40) Degenerative sublimation  (Translational type)  41) Degenerative sublimation  (Indirect type or Displacement)  42) Reactive opposition  43) Emotional dissociation  (or Emotional Splitting)  44) Psychogenic dissociation  (daydreaming, dissociation accesses,  identity dissociation) | |
| ***(13) OMNIPOTENT DISTORTION***  ***(or OMNIPOTENCE)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 45) Normative (or egoistic) distortion | | 46) Omnipotent distortion (neurotic type)  47) Omnipotent distortion (dominant type)  48) Omnipotent distortion (submissive type)  49) Omnipotent distortion (borderline type)  50) Omnipotent distortion (psychotic type) | |
| ***(14) PROJECTIVE DISTORTION***  ***(or PROJECTION)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 51) Libidinal projection | | 52) Resistant projection  53) Delusional projection | |
| ***(15) REMOVAL***  ***(and RESISTANCE)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 54) Normative (or absolute) removal | | 55) Relative removal | |
| ***(16) RETREAT*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 56) Affective retreat  57) Emotional retreat | | 58) Psychogenic retreat  59) Ascetic retreat  60) Psychotic freezing  61) Encapsulation  62) Psychotic retreat | |
| ***(17) INSTINCTIVE ACCESS***  ***(or INSTINCT)*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 63) Instinctive access (or Instinctiveness) | | 64) Passive-aggressive access  65) Active-aggressive access  66) Impulsivity  67) Neurotic acting-out  68) Psychotic acting-out | |
| ***(18) REPRESSION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 69) Normative repression | | 70) Psychogenic repression | |
| ***(19) DEVALUATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 71) Normative devaluation | | 72) Reactive devaluation  73) Psychogenic devaluation (direct type)  74) Psychogenic devaluation (indirect type) | |
| ***(20) AFFILIATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 75) Normative affiliation | | 76) Psychogenic affiliation | |
| ***(21) ALTRUISM*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 77) Normative altruism | | 78) Psychogenic altruism | |
| ***(22) IDEALIZATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 79) Normative idealization | | 80) Reactive idealization  81) Psychogenic idealization  (direct type)  82) Psychogenic idealization  (indirect type) | |
| ***(23) MENTALIZATION*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 83) Normative rationalization  84) Normative intellectualization | | 85) Psychogenic intellectualization  86) Psychogenic rationalization  87) Justificatory rationalization | |
| ***(24) HUMORISM*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 88) Normative (or vital) humorist | | 89) Atrophic humor  90) Inefficient Humor | |
| ***(25) CREATIVITY*** | |  | | --- | | *Functional Hypothesis* | | *Dysfunctional Hypothesis* | | |  | | --- | | 91) Normative (or vital) creativity | | 92) Psychogenic creativity | |

**All. 2.** *Perrotta Human* *Defence Mechanisms* *Model (PDM-M, v. 2)*: *Detail of individual functioning* [2].

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| **DEFENCE MECHANISM** | **SCOPE OF OPERATIONS AND REGULATIONS** | |  |
| ***CONDENSATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject takes the constituent elements of two representations (images and/or words and/or sounds) and produces a third that condenses the selected features into itself. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: During the dream state, the person reprocesses conscious and unconscious content in the form of dreams. This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative condensation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Phobic episodes, where the person embodies in the phobic object two or more mental representations related to previous traumatic events even not directly related to the phobic object itself (fear of sexual violence and drowning caused by a childhood episode of violence suffered at the beach). This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic condensation**. | | |  |
| ***INIBITION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject avoids points of contact with people, objects, or situations that may generate fear. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The person avoids a source of danger that from experience he or she recognizes as such (touching fire with the hands or driving while in an altered state of consciousness). This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative inhibition**, as it neutralizes the object of danger. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The person fears stuttering in public and avoids circumstances that expose him or her to such social engagement. This defensive hypothesis is called **Neurotic inhibition**.  Example: The person fears emotional confrontation and the trespassing of personal boundaries, in an emotional relationship, and avoids situations and circumstances that might expose him or her to these dynamics. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Psychotic inhibition**. | | |  |
| ***FIXATION***  ***AVOIDATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject focuses their mental energy on a specific object or circumstance. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Despite recent failures, the person continues to take that college exam with the intent of passing it. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Normative fixation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The distressing object becomes a repetitive fixed thought that anticipates the fear itself in the absence of the material object (phobia, obsession). This defensive hypothesis is called **Circular psychogenic fixation of anticipatory type**.  Example: Use of ritual and compulsion (obsession). This defensive hypothesis is called the **Psychogenic** **Circular fixation of the obsessive type**.  Example: Despite realizing that his partner is a source of relational toxicity he continues to allocate energy, expectations, and hopes. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Relational psychogenic circular fixation**.  Example: Fantasies in delusions. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic circular fixation of the psychotic type**. | | *Definition* | The subject acts by avoidance, concerning the phobic object, even in circumstances that are not immediately dangerous or imminent. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The presence of the phobic object generates negative states of mind that cause one to avoid it, under current and imminent circumstances and while waiting to find the appropriate strategy to deal with it. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Normative avoidance**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The presence of the phobic object generates negative states of mind that cause one to avoid it, in circumstances that are neither current nor imminent, without a precise strategy that may be suitable for overcoming one's phobia. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Neurotic avoidance**.  Example: The presence of the phobic object generates negative states of mind that cause one to avoid it, in circumstances that are neither current nor imminent, without a definite strategy that may be suitable for overcoming one's phobia, and with the production of psychotic thoughts attached as the phobia is experienced as untenable and too dangerous. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Psychotic avoidance**. | | |  |
| ***IDENTIFICATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject identifies with one or more parts of another subject because he fears it and to exorcise the fear tends to possess it. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Feeling esteem for a teacher you consider excellent, and identifying with his or her thinking or way of teaching. This first defensive hypothesis is called **Affiliative (or empathic) identification**.  Example: Identifying with an attitude of a person who represents a symbol (public figure) to us. This defensive hypothesis is called **Introjective (or internal) identification**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Identifying with an external object that generates anguish, to possess it and overcome the danger (identifying with one's aggressor during a robbery or familiarizing oneself with the perpetrator after a sexual assault by trying to justify him). Different is the concept of projection: in this case, the victim feels innocent, and projects himself on the perpetrator to dominate the anguish arising from the situation; in projective identification, the victim feels guilty of being such (it is right that I am the victim) and the identification has the purpose to relieve the sense of guilt towards themselves, trying to dominate unconsciously always the perpetrator. This defensive hypothesis therefore is called **Projective (or external) identification**.  Example: In delusions or dependent relationships, the person identifies so much that he tries to incorporate parts of the ego of the other person, whom he considers a symbol (public figure or partner). Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Adhesive identification**.  Example: The child implements a symbiotic mode with the other person's ego representations. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic fusion**, which in the adult gives rise to the dependent or morbid relationship. | | |  |
| ***ISOLATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject detaches from the source of the fear, which causes suffering (presumed, anticipated, or real). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Mentally detaching oneself from the object that causes fear to find a mental dimension of greater tranquillity, overcoming the fear. This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative or reflexive isolation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Mentally detaching oneself from the object causing fear to stop feeling that feeling, yet not confronting it. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic isolation**. | | |  |
| ***NEGATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject recognizes the existence of the denied object but denies to himself a related drive because it is considered non-existent or impossible (negation concerning what he feels). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Mentally detaching oneself from the object that causes fear to find a mental dimension of greater tranquillity, overcoming the fear. This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative (or reflexive) negation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to accept his homosexual urges, he vigorously denies the hypothesis, believing it to be impossible. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Aversive negation**.  Example: In an attempt to confront and overcome a fear (fear of heights) he puts in place compulsive behaviors that transform and deform the fear, to challenge it; in essence, he puts in place counterphobic reactions to be able to dominate it, turning into a reckless and provocative subject (becoming a parachutist). This defensive hypothesis is called **Oppositional negation**.  Example: Two conflicting conditions are placed in a condition that does not create distress on the conscious plane (the subject embraces two dualities but does not grasp their contradiction, such as being helpful in public and violent in private). Such a defensive assumption is called **Binomial negation** or **Compartmentalization**.  Example: The person tends very much to complain to get attention but refuses advice, suggestions, and the help that he asked for, without acting concretely to encourage change (in the absence of resistance that can concretely prevent change). This defensive hypothesis is called **Victimizing complacency**. | | |  |
| ***REGRESSIVE CONNECTION***  ***(or REGRESSION)*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject, in attempting to overcome a traumatic event related to a person or circumstance, retains a direct link to it with one or more of the following elements. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: In an attempt to overcome a loss, the person keeps an object that reminds them of a bond or event related to the trauma (a ring from the deceased). This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative (or regressive) affective bonding**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: In an attempt to overcome a traumatic episode, the person retains a behavior belonging to a lower developmental stage of his or her development (sucking his or her finger or stroking his or her hair during current stressful episodes or maintaining childish attitudes in adulthood and maturity, however incompatible with the expected developmental stage). This first defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic regression**, which can be **behavioral** (if it concerns an attitude or behavior) or **dimensional** (if it concerns a set of behaviors that describe a regressive fixation on a maturational level lower than what would be expected -infantilism-). | | |  |
| ***SOMATIZATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject undergoes the symbolic representation of psychic distress in physical terms. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The physical symptomatology encountered, without confirmatory medical indications, is a wake-up call for the person to understand that a change is needed (muscle tension after several hours of work, not otherwise explained by a physical disorder). This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative somatization**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The physical symptomatology encountered, without confirmatory medical indications, is not felt by the person as somatization but as a manifestation of a pathological physical condition, effectively denying the psychological hypothesis, thus triggering a mechanism of continuous search to find the medical resolution or feeding the hypochondriac scheme. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic somatization**. | | |  |
| ***RETROACTIVE ANNULMENT*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject feels the need to enact one or more restorative behaviors concerning the harmful event he or she has produced. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The feeling of guilt or shame produces in him the need to remedy the damage suffered, implementing one or more reparative behaviors. This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative (or reparative) annulment**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: After causing harm, he focuses not on repairing or compensating but on carrying out one or more behaviors designed to conceal his involvement so as not to take responsibility (lying, concealing evidence, willfully denying knowing the truth). This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic (or fictitious) annulment**. | | |  |
| ***DENIAL*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject denies the existence of a traumatic event that happened, denying the event itself (denial concerning the existence of the event). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Denying (in the imminence of the event) the existence of a painful and traumatic fact that happened. Such first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative or reactive denial**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Denial after the maturation of grief of the existence of a painful and traumatic fact that happened. Such first defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic denial**. | | |  |
| ***REACTIVE FORMATION***  ***or REACTIVE OPPOSITION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject, unable to accept certain desires, vigorously opposes them to convince himself otherwise.  It differs from "negation" in that:   1. in the "*denial*", the person opposes the idea that what he/she feels can be true (I give it a different meaning from the real one: even if I love you I say that I love you, justifying affection and not love); 2. in the "*reactive formation/opposition*", the hypothesis is not even under discussion because it would be intolerable for me to accept it (I am not aware of it and, if you point it out, I deny it by opposing it), so:  * I sublimate it (I transform it) positively into something else (e.g. not being able to love you, I take care of you as a friend or an affectionate relative); * I degenerate it (I sublimate it negatively) in other (e.g. I turn the anger that I feel toward A toward me, putting in action self-harming gestures); * I move it (I divert it) in favor of something else or someone else (e.g. loving more pets after a deep love disappointment); * I reject it (disown it) in favor of overt aggressive and violent opposition (e.g., I do not accept my homosexual nature and behave as a manly man opposed to homosexual people); * I separate it (e.g. I ignore it in favor of other elements) or I dissociate it (e.g. I suffocate it to the point of not perceiving it, causing an impairment of the reality plane and psychotic symptomatology). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to accept feeling sexual desire toward a relative (deeming it unacceptable), he devotes himself completely to the well-being of that person by helping him in every way possible, effectively shifting the drive energy into activities that are socially acceptable to the person as well. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative sublimation**. If this inversion concerns an affection towards a person and this is disappointed or betrayed (betrayal of the partner, bereavement of a child, sexual sterility), the person could turn what he feels towards an animal, without depriving himself of the future of other affections; this mechanism is called **Normative translation**.  Example: The subject fantasizes during the day about circumstances or events that make him or her feel better, without this dedicated time negatively affecting his or her decision-making or otherwise normal life events. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Lucid fantasies**.  Example: The subject emotionally shifts an element that causes suffering to another emotional direction, but addressing and metabolizing it. This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative** **Displacement**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Not being able to accept to feel an intense sexual desire he sublimates such drive with an inversion, turning to himself the unconscious energy, and consequently all the negative effects determined by the anguish, and therefore by anger and fear; such defensive hypothesis is called **Degenerative sublimation**. And again:   1. If this inversion concerns an unconscious desire to hurt the object that is the cause of the suffering (as happens in wanting to hurt one's executioner), precisely because of the intolerability of this desire, the person will turn that energy on himself, causing injuries that can be both emotional and physical; this defensive hypothesis is called **Degenerative sublimation of a revolting or Self-inflicted type**. 2. If this inversion concerns an affection towards a person and this is disappointed or betrayed (betrayal of the partner, bereavement of a child, sexual sterility that prevents procreation), the person could turn what he feels towards an animal, depriving himself of other affections (find a new partner or procreate other offspring); this mechanism is called **Degenerative sublimation of translational type**. 3. If this inversion concerns the turning towards a third party (A argues with B but not being able or not able to express anger or frustration towards the latter, turns it towards C); this mechanism is called **Degenerative sublimation of indirect type or Displacement**.   Example: Unable to accept his homosexual drives he implements moralistic, masculine, sexist, and homophobic behaviors. This defensive hypothesis is called **Reactive Opposition**, which can be neurotic or psychotic depending on the impairment of the patient's reality plane and the severity of his aggressive and violent behaviors.  Example: Unable to accept a personality characteristic of the partner, he denies it to himself by dissociating it from the general context (the partner is a polygamist while she is monogamous but to be with him she dissociates this characteristic, temporarily not taking it into account or giving it a value of less importance or at least tolerable -different from the concept of devaluation, which intervenes as a result of disappointment or Projective Identification-). Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Emotional Dissociation or Emotional Splitting**.  Example: Following a traumatic event, the traumatic object is not reprocessed and accepted, and being deeply distressing and destabilizing for the person (not avoidable even by applying the mechanism of event removal) triggers a dissociative mechanism called **Psychogenic dissociation**. This generates a process that can involve:   1. "*Dissociative fantasies*" ("autistic fantasy" or "daydreaming" during the daily conscious state to fantasize and regain pleasure or to avoid facing reality, or the severe form of animative/ de animative hallucinations) 2. "*Dissociative accesses*" (the person involuntarily detaches himself from the plane of reality to find a more intimate, safe, and less stressful dimension of his own, the so-called episodes of derealization and depersonalization). In this hypothesis, there is fragmentation of the Ego. 3. "*Identity dissociation*" (in which there is the formation of one or more personalities in a context of multiplicity and independence between them). In this hypothesis, there is fragmentation or disintegration of the Ego. | | |  |
| ***OMNIPOTENT DISTORTION***  ***(or OMNIPOTENCE)*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject is unable to accept the anguish arising from the fact that there are limits and boundaries between himself and others, between his rights and the rights of others, and to alleviate this frustration he convinces himself that it is enough to "want" and "desire" to obtain and modify reality to his liking. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to bear the emotional loss of a person, due to the breakup of a feeling, the person convinces himself that it is better to maintain civil relations anyway, even friendly ones, in order not to lose it, hoping perhaps a return in the future or new opportunities with the same person. This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative or egoistic distortion**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to bear the emotional loss of a person, due to the breakup of a feeling, the person convinces himself that his will is enough to impose his needs and requirements on him, manipulating him with tricks, deceptions, and lies, which often become real self-deceptions. Here the selfish part takes over and the person's only interest is to satisfy his selfish need. Such a defensive assumption is called **Omnipotent Distortion**, and can be:  a) *neurotic type*, if the person feels it necessary to satisfy the need to control his actions, those of others, or even external situations and circumstances (control mania, fixations, excessive search for the accurate, the beautiful, and the aesthetic);  b) *dominant type*, if the person tends to dominate with the active action, both in terms of dominance (narcissism overt) in terms of submission-humiliation (sadomasochism);  c) *submissive type*, if the person makes use of passive conduct and instigation of the feeling of guilt (covert narcissism);  d) *borderline type*, if the person uses his or her body to attract attention and is eccentric and/or theatrical.  e) *psychotic type*, if the person adduces the use of paranormal powers or special forces under his/her control. | | |  |
| ***PROJECTIVE DISTORTION***  ***(or PROJECTION)*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject projects his desires outward, seeing in others non-existent attitude and/or behavior, according to him unequivocal, to relieve his emotions and feelings that make him feel vulnerable and emotionally exposed. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The interest in a person is so important to the person that he sees in the behavior of others favorable elements in his favor (he feels interest in A and I see in his kindness the interest that I would like to be real and reciprocated), but without having given feedback to this assumption. This defensive hypothesis is called **Libidinal projection**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Interest in a person is so important to the person that he sees in the behavior of others favorable elements in his favor (he feels interest in A and I see in his kindness the interest that I wish was real and reciprocated), despite having received from the person opposite or disconfirming signals. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Resistant projection**.  Example: The interest in a person is so important to the person that he sees in the behavior of others favorable elements in his favor (he feels interest in A and I see in his kindness the interest that I would like to be real and reciprocated), despite having received from the person the clear and certain confirmation of his error of judgment. This defensive hypothesis is called **Delusional projection**. | | |  |
| ***REMOVAL (and RESISTANCE)*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The traumatic event is so destabilizing that it is removed at the conscious level and moved into the unconscious.  It is a defense mechanism that acts as a protection system for the entire personality structure. The Ego, through the Self, believes that this event is so destabilizing for the general balance that it cannot use other defense mechanisms that weaken the negative impact and decides to completely remove the event and its structural and functional impact.  The **Removal** is in itself an extreme but necessary action, not otherwise replaceable, and can be absolute (does not remember anything) or relative (one or more features resurface to the conscious mind in the form of signs, symbols, or actual memories), depending on the intervention of the therapist and any **Resistance** placed in defense of the removed memory, to completely hide the memory or replace it with a false memory, a sort of mnemonic distortion of the experience that in whole or in part replaces the object removed. This defense mechanism should not be confused with "*resistance to change*" (or *opposition to change*) which is a behavioral tendency to oppose change, during psychotherapy, because the patient has an advantage (primary or secondary) from maintaining that dysfunctional behavior, totally unconscious and therefore not known or conscious.  Example: Removal completely prevents the resurfacing of constituent elements of the removed object and has no direct or indirect effect on the person, either on the conscious or unconscious level. This defensive hypothesis is called **Absolute or normative removal**.  Example: Despite the removal, the person manages to remember certain passages and details, without suffering excessive destabilization, thus promoting his ability to adapt and accept the traumatic event, reworking, albeit gradually, the trapped unconscious energy. This defensive hypothesis is called **Relative removal**.  In itself, therefore, it does not have an adaptive or maladaptive profile, but it is simply an extreme action of the ego to protect the entire structure and functional profiles of personality. However, it may happen that this extreme measure is not perfectly adherent, giving rise to dysfunctional expressions that can destabilize both the physical and the mental levels. | | |  |
| ***RETREAT*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject, not being able to bear the anguish caused by the presence of other people, decides to detach himself from them. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The presence of a toxic person or connection causes suffering and is severed as a solution to resolve (ending an emotional relationship or a romantic relationship that no longer satisfies the person for reasons known to him). This defensive hypothesis is called **Affective retreat**.  Example: A factual circumstance causes suffering, for reasons known to the person and clear in his mind, and therefore it is decided to move away from it to find a solution resolution. This defensive hypothesis is called **Emotional retreat**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The presence of a person or bond causes seemingly unwarranted emotional tension, but instead of taking time or detaching to find a solution the person withdraws to avoid dealing with the distress resulting from maintaining the bond. This defensive assumption is called **Psychogenic retreat**.  Example: Most of the external ties cause suffering, for reasons not perfectly known to the person, and to avoid facing the anguish avoid creating lasting or stable ties by giving religious or animistic justifications. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Ascetic retreat**.  Example: Following a traumatic event, the person isolates himself to such an extent that he enters into an unconscious withdrawal, catatonia. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Psychotic freezing**.  Example: In autistic individuals, the need to defend against the fear of annihilation is called **Encapsulation**, in which there is no actual freezing or withdrawal but more of a circumscription of emotions, perceptions, and affects associated with relationships and relations.  Example: A large part of external ties cause suffering, for reasons not perfectly known to the person, and to avoid facing the anguish regardless of creating lasting or stable ties or avoid putting himself in the condition of having to open and trust someone. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychotic retreat**. | | |  |
| ***INSTINCTIVE ACCESS***  ***(or INSTINCT)*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject, to lower the tension resulting from uncontrolled anger, implements a series of instinctive attitudes and behaviors, in the absence of projections and dissociation. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: During a car trip, the person decides to perform a dangerous maneuver, but taking into account the risk and calculating the unexpected, to satisfy pleasure. This defensive hypothesis is called **Instinctive access** or **Instinctiveness**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: During an emotionally charged argument or discussion with a partner, the former engages in passive conduct by which he tries to make the interlocutor feel guilty and get his attention. Such defensive posturing is called **Passive-Aggressive access**.  Example: During an emotionally strong argument or discussion with his partner, he fails to restrain the flow of thoughts and shares them vehemently and aggressively, omitting to himself that such conduct could expose him to harm or danger or even emotionally hurt the interlocutor. This defensive hypothesis is called **Active-Aggressive access**.  Example: Tendency to behave hastily and vehemently, without adequately and appropriately weighing the risks and consequences. Typical in addictions and personality clusters B. This defensive assumption is called **Impulsivity**.  Example: During an argument or an emotionally strong discussion with his partner, he fails to restrain the flow of thoughts and shares them vehemently and aggressively, omitting to himself that such conduct could expose him to harm or danger or even emotionally hurt the interlocutor, failing to stop due to lack of recognition of the factual circumstance. This defensive hypothesis is called **Neurotic acting out**. If this manifestation does not end even after reaching the recognition of fact, continuing to remain detached from reality, we will speak of **Psychotic acting-out**. | | |  |
| ***REPRESSION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject realizes that his desire is not realizable because it is negative causes pain or otherwise socially unacceptable and opposes himself, not satisfying it. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to satisfy his desire, he represses it by prioritizing other desires, but without experiencing the deprivation as negative or a cause of dissatisfaction or otherwise frustrating and limiting. This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative repression**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to satisfy his desire, he represses it by prioritizing other desires; however, he experiences the deprivation as negative or it causes him dissatisfaction and he is unable to replace or sublimate it otherwise. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic repression**. | | |  |
| ***DEVALUATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject not being able to satisfy his need or not being able to have what he wants devalues it, to vent anger and better accept the state of affairs. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Her feelings are not reciprocated, so she devalues what she feels by claiming it was just an "infatuation." This defensive assumption is also called **Normative devaluation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The person is disappointed by some behavior that he did not expect and to defend himself from this, even in the absence of blame and objective evidence against the other person, he implements a devaluing policy to convince himself that after all the mistake is not his. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Reactive devaluation**.  Example: The person is easily disappointed regardless of the actual behavior of the other person and, to defend against this, even in the absence of blame and objective evidence against the other person, implements a devaluing policy to convince himself that after all the mistake is not his. The devaluation can evolve into a full-blown destructive manifestation. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic devaluation**, and it can be **direct** (if directed toward third parties) or **indirect** (if directed toward oneself). | | |  |
| ***AFFILIATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject places himself in relationships with other people to satisfy his need to belong and share. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The person joins aggregation groups to share ideas, thoughts, and initiatives. This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative affiliation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The person joins aggregation groups in response to the anxiety of loneliness, fear, and anger, and to find an outlet for their destructive urges. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic affiliation**. | | |  |
| ***ALTRUISM*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject places himself in relationships with other people to satisfy his need for esteem, directed toward himself or others.  It differs from sublimation in that:  a) in *sublimation*, the person satisfies a need caused by the anguish of not being able to satisfy something else.  b) in *altruism*, the person satisfies a need for esteem coming from pleasure, directed toward self or others based on its dysfunctionality or functionality. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: The person performs acts of altruism out of a spirit of generosity and to feel better about themselves (positive selfishness). This defensive hypothesis is called **Normative altruism**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: The person performs acts of altruism to get noticed and to break down certain resistance, selfishness, and guilt (negative selfishness) that if not satisfied would make the person frustrated and dissatisfied. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Psychogenic altruism**. | | |  |
| ***IDEALIZATION*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject, to capture the attention of the desired object, tries to incorporate it into him/herself by overestimating its positive aspects. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: During the stage of falling in love. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative idealization**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: During hyperealization experiences (following intense empathy or shared positive experiential events). This defensive hypothesis is also called **Reactive idealization**.  Example: In manic, bipolar, and borderline disorder. Such a defensive hypothesis is also called **Psychogenic idealization** and can be **direct** (if directed toward third parties) or **indirect** (if directed toward self, but without realizing narcissistic omnipotence). | | |  |
| ***MENTALIZATION*** | | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject amplifies his intellectual talents through exercise and study, to expand his potential, simplify the unconscious reality and irrational psychic processes, to control adequately his external manifestations.  It differs from rationalization in that:  a) in *rationalization*, the person uses logical processes to manipulate other people in order not to face their responsibilities or to demonstrate the logical error of others (uses pleasure to stifle the anguish of discovering that he is not superior to others). Anticipation is a form of rational mentalization.  b) In *intellectualization*, the person uses logical processes to elevate themselves from other people and feel better (uses pleasure to stifle the anxiety of feeling inferior or not up to the situation).  c) In *reflection*, the person uses logical processes to reflect on their own or others' behaviors, finding solutions.  d) In *self-affirmation*, the person uses logical processes to evolve his or her human, personal, or social condition functionally and progressively. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: School or work engagement, with goals and objectives. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative intellectualization**.  Example: Rationalizing a dangerous action before doing it. Such a defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative rationalization**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: During manic, bipolar, borderline, and narcissistic states, intellectualization becomes a tool to feed the Ego. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Psychogenic intellectualization**.  Example: Excessive self-deception and interpretive distortions to continuously favor his point of view and find the logical error in the other's thinking, regardless of the empirical evidence sought or provided to him by the interlocutor. This defensive assumption is also called **Justificatory Rationalization**.  Example: Excessive use of interpretation, philosophizing, and verbal architecture to willfully astonish the interlocutor or avoid a certain discourse or personal exposure/responsibility. Typical in obsessive-type neurotic conditions, narcissism, and psychotic conditions. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Psychogenic Rationalization**. | |  |
| ***HUMORISM*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject reinforces his ability to detect and represent the ridiculousness of things, with wit and sympathy, to arouse hilarity, reflection, and comedy. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Irony and Satire. Such a defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative or vital humorism**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Sarcasm. This defensive assumption is also called **Atrophic Humor**.  Example: Use of normative humor in circumstances where seriousness and focus are needed. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Inefficient Humor**. | | |  |
| ***CREATIVITY*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject reinforces his ability to adapt to his surroundings by devising imaginative, problem-solving strategies. | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Flair, genius. This defensive hypothesis is also called **Normative or vital creativity**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Creativity used to foster pathological dynamics (manipulation and distortion). This defensive hypothesis is also called **Psychogenic creativity**. | | |  |

**All. 3.** *PDM-Q: tendency/items*

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| ITEM **1**:  *Condensation* | Tendency to take 2 or more constituent elements from 2 or more representations (sounds, images, or words) to create a third that satisfies one's representation of reality ("*representational tendency*") |
| ITEM **2**:  *Inhibition* | Tendency to avoid or inhibit behavior in order not to address the source of anguish ("*avoidant and inhibition tendency*") |
| ITEM **3**:  *Fixation* | Tendency to focus predominantly or absolutely on a physical or psychic representation ("*fixative tendency*") |
| ITEM **4**:  *Avoidation* | Tendency to avoid the phobic object, regardless of the degree of dangerousness and imminence ("*avoidant tendency*") |
| ITEM **5**:  *Identification* | Tendency to identify with one or more parts of another's physical or psychic representation, introjecting (internally) or projecting (externally) oneself ("*identification tendency*") |
| ITEM **6**:  *Isolation* | Tendency to isolate oneself from the distressing source to manage the emotional plane in a more lucid manner ("*isolative tendency*") |
| ITEM **7**:  *Negation* | Tendency to refuse the consequences of one or more distress-generating physical or psychic representations ("*negationist tendency*") |
| ITEM **8**:  *Regression* | Tendency to encapsulate oneself in a lower developmental level so as not to risk having to confront the source of distress ("*regressive tendency*") |
| ITEM **9**:  *Somatization* | Tendency to represent one's psychic distress in the form of physical discomfort ("*somatizing tendency*") |
| ITEM **10**:  *Retroactive annulment* | Tendency to actively remedy one or more behaviors that have caused damage or danger, or that have generated distress ("*restorative tendency*"). |
| ITEM **11**:  *Denial* | Tendency to deny the very existence of one or more physical or psychic representations generating distress ("*denying tendency*") |
| ITEM **12**:  *Reactive formation* | Tendency to sublimate one's emotions and feelings as a result of one or more physical or psychic representations generating distress, reacting vigorously to convince oneself otherwise ("*oppositional tendency*") |
| ITEM **13**:  *Omnipotence* | Tendency to deny the presence of one's limitation or failure, reacting in its opposite to relieve the frustration arising from the anguish of one's potential failure ("*omnipotent tendency*") |
| ITEM **14**:  *Projection* | Tendency to externally project one's own emotional experience to alleviate the anguish arising from the representation ("projective tendency") |
| ITEM **15**:  *Removal* | Tendency to remove the internal distressing representation from memories and the conscious plane ("*removing tendency*") |
| ITEM **16**:  *Retreat* | Tendency to isolate oneself from the distressing representation to prevent any contact or interaction with the source itself ("*retreating tendency*") |
| ITEM **17**:  *Instinct* | Tendency to react instinctively, in the absence of projections and dissociation, but remaining alert on the conscious plane ("*instinctive tendency*") |
| ITEM **18**:  *Repression* | Tendency to repress distressing representation and the resulting emotional consequences ("*repressive tendency*") |
| ITEM **19**:  *Devaluation* | Tendency to devalue the representation that generates distress, to manage and dominate it to the best of one's emotional potential ("*hypovalutative tendency*") |
| ITEM **20**:  *Affiliation* | Tendency to create relationships with people or situations to satisfy one's need to belong and share ("*affiliative tendency*") |
| ITEM **21**:  *Altruism* | Tendency to put others' needs and expectations ahead of one's own needs ("*altruistic tendency*") |
| ITEM **22**:  *Idealization* | Tendency to overestimate the representation that generates distress, to manage and dominate it to the best of one's emotional potential ("*hyper-evaluative tendency*") |
| ITEM **23**:  *Mentalization* | Tendency to mentalize, intellectualize, and/or rationalize facts, events, and circumstances, one's own and/or others ("*mentalizing tendency*") |
| ITEM **24**:  *Humorism* | Tendency to use humor, irony, and sarcasm to lessen the emotional impact of the distressing depiction ("*humorous tendency*") |
| ITEM **25**:  *Creativity* | Tendency to use creativity to lessen the emotional impact of distressing representation ("*creative tendency*") |

**All. 4.** *PDM-Q-v2 (items)*

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| --- | --- |
| **EPISODIC NARRATIVES** | **POSSIBLE ANSWERS**  (*Choose one correct*) |
| 1. You are a young adult and have been reporting specific phobias of drowning and physical violence for a few years. These are disturbing thoughts that occur daily and you can no longer tolerate this. You see a therapist and discover that these phobias are related to an event from your youth when you helplessly witnessed your younger brother, who was a child at the time, being drowned by another person his age during a day at the beach with your family. **How do you feel about learning about this interpretation of your phobias?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | Well-being and sense of freedom. | |  | 1 = | I realize the dynamic and feel relief for understanding the source of the problem. | |  | 2 = | Even though the dynamic is clear to me, I find it difficult to get rid of my phobias. | |  | 3 = | I'm not entirely convinced by the explanation and feel there is much more to it than that. | |  | 4 = | My fears have, in my opinion, a different origin and this explanation is not enough for me. | |  | 5 = | My fears will never go away. | |
| 1. You are a 35-year-old man, single, and not aesthetically pleasing. You have been rejected in the past 2 years by more than 10 women who had attracted your attention. You meet a girl at a party who is talking to you and seems interested in your stories and speeches, but you are afraid that trying might ruin the opportunity to convince her to go out for dinner. **In your place, how would you act?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | Regardless of my possible chances of success, I still want to try to invite her to dinner, politely and courteously, without pretension! | |  | 1 = | I know the source of my fears and I know how to deal with them. I can face them and accept failure peacefully, in the worst case. | |  | 2 = | I don't know whether to risk it, I fear rejection again, and I am not able to accept it yet. | |  | 3 = | Risking it again can make me feel insecure about myself, maybe I'd better wait for her. If she wants to, she will invite me! | |  | 4 = | I am not up to the situation, I am not handsome enough, and she will surely reject me! | |  | 5 = | I avoid it regardless. It is yet another NO that I will receive! | |
| 1. You are a young woman who has just ended a very painful love affair that lasted several years because it was toxic and lacked pleasure. By now you are convinced that he is not the right person for you and you know that it is better for you if the closure remains definitive. However, you are not able to maintain this decision and cyclically, also an accomplice to his compliant behavior, you contact him again and continue to have an effective and carnal relationship, even though officially no one knows and you know you do not love him anymore. You call yourself an "emotional addict" and in therapy, you have dealt with this issue, so you are aware of your emotional processes what you feel, and how harmful he is to you. It has been two weeks since you contacted him again, but the thought of him does not leave you, even though he too has understood the situation and has stopped looking for you. **How do you feel about your therapist's prescription to continue not contacting him and avoiding meeting with him?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | It's time for him to love me and put me first. He is not right for me and cannot make me happy. I deserve more! | |  | 1 = | I know I deserve more and I know I have to be stronger than my affection for him and the toxic bond that has been created. I will continue to fight because I know he is not my happiness. | |  | 2 = | I try to resist even if it is very difficult. | |  | 3 = | I miss him a lot and feel I still care; every day is a pain and the temptation is strong. | |  | 4 = | I can't go on and I know I will give in sooner or later. | |  | 5 = | He will always be a part of never life; I can't imagine my life without him. | |
| 1. You are a 40-year-old woman, mother and wife. You have suffered from avoidant personality disorder for several years and, in particular, you fear meeting publicly with people you know because they would force you by their questions to provide personal information. In recent months you have been followed by a therapist who has been working on your avoidance. Today you have the opportunity to go out for the first time with your family, to the back streets of the city in the afternoon. **In your place, how would you behave?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | I will succeed! | |  | 1 = | I know the source of my fears and I know how to deal with them. I can do it! | |  | 2 = | It will be complicated but I will try. | |  | 3 = | It's very difficult and I'm afraid I won't make it. | |  | 4 = | I am not up to the task, and I already know that if I meet someone, and panic. | |  | 5 = | I avoid it regardless. I will never be ready! | |
| 1. You get involved in a robbery. There are several hostages and some are even injured during the fighting. During the release operations, the robber confides in one of the hostages and reveals that his life has been very difficult and complicated and that he cannot help but lead the criminal life to feed his family. **What do you think about this point of view of his?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He is completely wrong! He's self-justifying so he can selfishly pursue his desires. | |  | 1 = | Your suffering does not justify the actions you take; you should not endanger others. There is always a dignified choice. | |  | 2 = | Your point is shareable in part because you are endangering the lives of other people. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, even if you are doing something wrong. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can understand that. If I were him, I would have felt the same way, and maybe I would have done worse. | |  | 5 = | What a hard life he has! He has all my sympathy and I hope nothing bad happens to him. | |
| 1. Human contact causes me discomfort; I have a disjointed dysfunctional, deeply maladaptive family that has fueled my suspiciousness and paranoia about people. I don't trust anyone and those very few friends I have know that my boundaries are sacred and inviolable, as are my times and my participation in group activities. I avoid crowded places and feel uncomfortable if someone knows me and stops to greet me. Even in my feelings, I avoid opening up for fear of being disappointed and hurt. If it were up to me I would live alone in a hermitage. **What do you think of the main character in this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He is completely wrong! Doing so will leave him alone and without deep affection. | |  | 1 = | His suffering does not justify his need to isolate himself to avoid something that has not yet been realized. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering makes one shut down for fear of reliving unpleasant moments again. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully shareable because people are selfish and tend to make others suffer if it is convenient for them. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can understand that. I, too, tend very much to shut down and become easily suspicious of people I don't know (and even with those I do know, I get doubts from time to time). | |  | 5 = | You have my sympathy; people disappoint and are selfish. It's better to isolate yourself than to risk suffering again because it's bound to happen again. | |
| 1. You are a businessman and philanthropist. You make frequent donations and your standard of living allows you to maintain the luxuries you desire for you and your wonderful family of a wife and three children. You are involved in preventive health care and frequently campaign against alcohol abuse, cigarette and cigar smoking, and drug abuse. In your private life, however, you have dissolute conduct: you smoke at least twenty cigarettes a day, now and then you abuse alcohol with your friends in the evening, and now and then you use cocaine "to cheer yourself up a little bit" and during the fights with your wife and your children it is not uncommon to witness your use of psychological and physical violence, justified, according to you, by your father's strict family upbringing that was often violent with you, by the daily stress of the many work commitments and by a sexual life not perfectly satisfactory with your wife (not very passionate). **What do you think of the protagonist of this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He has a lot to be forgiven for and doesn't recognize that he is the cause of the suffering of the people he claims to love. | |  | 1 = | His painful past and stressful present are not justifications for the violent and aggressive actions he takes against the people he loves. He should come to his senses before he loses everyone, instead of continuing to self-deceive by blaming others. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering conditions you and can lead you to make mistakes. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, although your actions are not to be excused. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine what you are feeling. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand him more instead of picking on him and making him feel wrong. | |
| 1. You are a young adult. You had a very difficult childhood, with a criminal father who was addicted to vices (drugs, sex, and alcohol) and a passive-aggressive and overprotective mother. Your father left when you were six years old and started a new life elsewhere, rarely showing up; you grew up with a narcissistic, hyper-controlling, and violent stepfather. During your adolescence, you live rabidly, seeking your independence by breaking social and legal rules without legal consequences. You try alcohol, drugs, and cigarette smoking but you prefer to express yourself using your body: you want to appear and have everyone tell you that you are beautiful. Very often you are emotionally attached to immature, unstable, or unprotective people and you show your anger, boredom, and frustration with angry and aggressive attitudes when things do not go as you hoped. You are capricious and use childish attitudes to get attention, in the name of your deep pain and feelings of abandonment and loneliness that you feel, even though you are wanted and wanted by your circle of friends and peers. **What do you think of the main character in this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | Her pain is eating her up. If she does not stop to reflect on herself she will find herself increasingly alone and her conduct will realize her worst fears. | |  | 1 = | His painful past cannot be a justification for the childish, selfish, and aggressive actions he continues to exhibit. She should come to her senses before she loses everyone, instead of continuing to self-deceive by blaming others and her past. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering affects you and can lead you to make mistakes. It is unconscious. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, although your actions are not to be excused. | |  | 4 = | You must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine how you feel. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand her more instead of piling on and making her feel even more alone and wrong. | |
| 1. You are a 40-year-old woman who is overweight. You are married but have an unhappy and frustrating life. You have almost no intimate relationships with your husband and little affection, which he has never shown particularly over the years. You have two teenage children who don't have an open dialogue with you. At work, things are not going as they should and you may be in danger of losing your job and money is starting to run out at home. For a couple of years, you have been complaining of various physical symptoms (headaches, neck pain, gastrointestinal and joint pains, generalized itching, and irregular heartbeats) but medical examinations have never detected clinical problems that can be traced to a well-identified pathological physical condition. In psychotherapy, your therapist emphasizes the hypothesis that this symptomatology could be related to a psychosomatic condition but you disagree and think that all doctors have been wrong, even though among them there are international experts. **What do you think about the protagonist of this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | You must take note that your mental illness is generating your somatic condition. | |  | 1 = | His frustration is probably at the root of much of his physical problems. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because emotional suffering can aggravate physical symptomatology that may already be present for other reasons. | |  | 3 = | Your point is fully supportable, although you might still try working on your mind to alleviate somatic symptoms. | |  | 4 = | You must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine how you feel. I too would have many doubts. | |  | 5 = | You have my sympathy and there are medical conditions that are not detected by doctors due to their inability or lack of dedication to the mission. You have a physical illness that is not understood and mental suffering is a consequence of the physical illness (not the other way around). | |
| 1. You are a fifty-year-old man who grew up in a disruptive family and a lying, selfish, cheating father. Today, however, you are married with children, although your intimate life is monotonous but still comfortable. You meet a girl twenty years younger than you and the spark between you bursts. It's not love: it's just sex. But then again, you are used to this, being a serial cheater and polygamist, in secret from your wife. This time, however, you have been discovered and she wants you to confess; just before starting the conversation, however, you delete all the evidence on your cell phone, although she has already seen it. **What do you think of the main character in this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He has a lot to make up for and not acknowledging his guilt is a serious sign of selfishness and unlove. | |  | 1 = | He has no justification, even though he never had a healthy family role model. | |  | 2 = | His point is shareable in part because his lack of a family role model did not allow him to mature consciously. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, although your actions are not to be excused. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine what you are feeling. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand him more instead of picking on him and making him feel wrong. After all, it's his way of loving: his wife should be less oppressive and understand him more if she loves him. | |
| 1. You are a forty-five-year-old woman with two children. You love your husband deeply and your life is perfectly in order before today. This morning, a police patrol knocks on your door to bring you the news: your lifelong partner and father of your children has suddenly passed away on his way to work, causing an accident where several people were seriously injured. He had been complaining of headaches for a few weeks but you joked about it because you knew he was a person who hated hospitals and doctors. After all, he felt all the diseases in the world! The autopsy ruled out that the illness was caused by drug use but showed that the cause was a brain aneurysm that if diagnosed in time, given the symptoms suffered, would have prevented the event. You sink into a very intense acute depressive state and feel that your life has been forever destroyed. **How would you react if you were the protagonist of the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | It is a tragedy that will change my life forever, but I have no responsibility for what happened to my beloved husband. | |  | 1 = | The tragedy that happened could perhaps have been avoided with accurate medical controls but I could not foresee it and the commitments of life and family made me underestimate the symptomatology. If I had known I would have intervened immediately as I had already done other times in the past. | |  | 2 = | If I had been more careful and diligent maybe this tragedy could have been avoided. I know it is not my fault but I feel tremendously guilty and complicit in the consequences of the accident to the other people involved. | |  | 3 = | Something like this couldn't have happened to me. I can't have lost him forever like that, and it's my fault too because I should have known that headache was something serious. I was light and superficial. | |  | 4 = | It's not true. It can't be true. My husband is alive and none of this is happening. I don't accept it and I never will. | |  | 5 = | No, he's not dead. And even if it were true, I'm sure he would find a way to get in touch with me. I'm sure I'll feel him close to me soon because we'll never be separated. | |
| 1. You are a man in your thirties, married for two years, with a woman your age. You have bought a new house and are happy. However, for some years you have felt a secret sexual attraction towards your sister-in-law (your wife's sister, six years younger), with whom you have a goliardic and open relationship. At times, she seems almost complicit when you try to tease her with a few jokes, but she has never exposed herself or declared herself openly. It's just her open and familiar way of joking with her brother-in-law, her sister's husband. You love your wife and so to avoid problems you have decided to reduce compromising situations with your sister-in-law, even though there are times you would like to give in and kiss her, and devote yourself to her as an older brother would. **How would you react if you were the protagonist of the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | That's good! It's an urge that could lead to a lot of trouble and his wife doesn't deserve to suffer through something like this. She needs to try to get this out of her mind by staying away from him or focusing more on who she says she loves. | |  | 1 = | Even if the sister-in-law is a beautiful girl or feels this urge it is not fair to his wife. He must learn to see her as a "sister" and avoid ambiguous situations, even if now and then the thought may return to that sexual fantasy. | |  | 2 = | It can be, especially if the sister-in-law is beautiful and also has a winking attitude. It's not fair to his wife, but it's also true that he's not doing anything wrong if he occasionally fantasizes and masturbates. He doesn't take anything away from his wife. | |  | 3 = | The best marriages are based on lies. If the sister-in-law is favourable no one suffers and everyone is happy. What's wrong with that? Sooner or later she will betray me and then this doesn't mean that I don't love my woman; it is not betrayal but a simple physical vent, because I love my wife, but my sister-in-law is too beautiful and sensual. | |  | 4 = | It's an incredible effort. I think about it often and would like to get some "pebbles" off my shoe, otherwise, I risk getting frustrated and irritated and venting to my wife. | |  | 5 = | I love my wife but I can't resist my sister-in-law. Sooner or later I will take the step because I feel too strong this urge for her and I think I have a feeling too. Maybe I love both. | |
| 1. I am a twenty-five-year-old girl. I am pretty and very sought after by guys, even younger guys. I like sex and am very physical. I have a disjointed and fragmented family: my father died of a brain aneurysm when I was two; my mother blames me for an unspecified reason (she says I made him angry just before the inauspicious event), and she is an undiagnosed narcissistic, cynical and careerist woman, on the fringes of society and fat, who has a critical and conflicting relationship with me; I have a bipolar sister and a borderline brother and for the latter I feel a secret sexual attraction that is never declared. I have had many partners and almost all of them are pathological: narcissistic, psychotic, borderline, and bipolar. I changed my major at the age of twenty-two for various reasons and I often quarrel with professors and fellow students; I don't work, except occasionally, and I have impulsive, childish, provocative, arrogant and narcissistic attitudes: I believe that I am worth more than others, I am often not understood and misunderstood, others are often stupid, insignificant and how much I think they want to manipulate me I do everything to make them believe it to manipulate them in turn because it makes me feel better and I do not want them to believe that they can fool me. I am kinky and often have violent fantasies of domination and submission. I get angry easily and lose control over trivial things, they also come to generalized anxiety attacks that I often mistake for panic. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | She is a girl who is in a lot of pain and needs help; her past in no way justifies not working in psychotherapy. | |  | 1 = | His narcissism is a product of his family and personal life but he must act immediately before he permanently loses control of his actions and behaviors. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering affects you and can lead you to make mistakes, although it is difficult to change after all that has happened to him. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully supportable, although his actions are not to be dismissed. He deserves more understanding. | |  | 4 = | People don't understand other people's suffering unless they have a convenience. Her past justifies who she is today, and she's probably not understood out of envy as well, because she's a beautiful girl just trying to get by in a mean, selfish world. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand her more instead of picking on him and making her feel wrong. People envy those who are better than them and she is just defending herself. She's right about getting respect and not getting walked all over, even by her family. | |
| 1. You are a 50-year-old married man with two children. You are not aesthetically pleasing and have a few extra pounds of obesity. Your life is perhaps monotonous but still serene and linear. You have not always been faithful but you almost always avoid uncomfortable and complicated situations. You have been frequenting the same bar for years and recently a new bartender has been hired: very young, attractive, very provocative, easy-going, friendly, and with strong communication skills. With you she is very available, She says that you remind her of a dear uncle, and unlike other customers with you she has more "special" attention; however, she has never exposed herself sexually and has never hinted that she would like something similar. On a couple of occasions, sure of the contrary, you have tried to seduce her but she has not been willing, labeling your attitude as "mischievous", but always with a smile. You are convinced that she wants to provoke you and look for sex. You try again but she confirms her point of view: you are too old and she has no intention of accepting sexual proposals or clandestine meetings, nor extramarital affairs and/or romantic relationships. You have over thirty years of experience and you are not her type, even though she treats you with kindness and availability. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | The man is a misunderstanding because he desires her and would like to have a sexual experience with her because she is young and attractive. | |  | 1 = | Although she shows willingness she has no sexual intentions and he is just projecting his desires towards her. | |  | 2 = | She is probably playing with him aware of his charm taking advantage, feeding the desires of the man who is justified in part by this not-transparent conduct of the girl. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully shareable: she says no in words but with facts, she asks him to insist. He is right to continue: sooner or later he will give in! | |  | 4 = | She doesn't dare to dare because there are too many years of difference but in reality, she wants and would like it. It is clear. | |  | 5 = | She has all my solidarity; girls like her should be more sincere and honest: It is obvious that she feels physical attraction otherwise she would not behave like this. He has to insist, it's a matter of time; Maybe she is also in love but she is ashamed to declare it because he is married. | |
| 1. You are a fourteen-year-old girl with a broken and dysfunctional family. You have few friends, you tend to lock yourself in the house all day and you are afraid to meet new people. You study but your performance is not good and you are often distracted. You have several problems with your sexuality and you don't enjoy physical relationships. Your father was violent and is now in prison; your mother has always been weak and compliant; your older brother, a little older than you, has always had a father-master attitude towards you. A few months ago some memories resurfaced in your mind, after some dreams you had, where you saw in front of you your brother in intimate and doubtful attitude but without complete sexual acts. You turn to a therapist and you are convinced that those are just fantasies self-produced by conditioning or movie scenes seen on TV or the internet. During the psychotherapy, details emerge that would suggest that your brother committed sexual acts when you were a six/seven-year-old girl, without the complicity of someone else (and further investigations have also proved this thesis). **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | I need to investigate and see more clearly! | |  | 1 = | I can't believe it's true but I want to find out. | |  | 2 = | What if it was someone else but for some reason, I connect it back to my brother? | |  | 3 = | It's all so absurd that it seems surreal to me. It's a figment of my imagination. | |  | 4 = | It's a figment of my imagination, my brother couldn't have been. | |  | 5 = | I categorically rule out that it was my brother. | |
| 1. You are a young man of twenty-five and live with your family, with your father and mother; your older sister lives with her boyfriend. You have a second brother, the eldest of all, who you don't like to talk about. He has a borderline personality disorder and has caused a lot of trouble in the family. You are nerdy, very sensitive, have few friends, and tend to shut yourself off from seeking affection and friends beyond those you already have. You fear human contact and are very suspicious and cynical, although you would not hurt anyone. The family encourages him to open up but he avoids and closes himself off even more. In therapy, your therapist advises you to open up more and experiment with new forms of knowledge, but you have a lot of resistance to this. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He has to open himself up to new experiences, he's young and can't continue like this. | |  | 1 = | Even if it is not easy must try to experiment with new forms of knowledge and communication. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because fear conditions you and can lead you to suffering. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully shareable, although it is wrong to close yourself off. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with his story and can imagine how he feels. You have a point. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand him more instead of picking on him and making him feel wrong. | |
| 1. You are a middle-aged man. Married with children. Lately, you've been experiencing a level of uncontrolled anger and aggression that erupts frequently. You are unusually argumentative and tend to "turn on" a lot during discussions. You have a monotonous and flat, but rather serene family life. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He has a lot to make up for and doesn't recognize that he is the cause of the issue. | |  | 1 = | He must seek out the root causes of his frustration before his actions can cause irreparable damage. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because lately, people are all argumentative, nervous, and aggressive. Yours is only a defense. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully supportable, although his actions could expose him to criticism, judgment, and legal issues. | |  | 4 = | I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine how you feel. People don't always understand when someone is stressed and nervous. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand him more instead of picking on him and making him feel wrong. | |
| 1. You are a middle-aged, fat woman who is judicially separated from your ex-husband. You do not have a satisfying life, neither sexually nor emotionally, and you are angry with your ex because he left you for a girl twenty years younger, after you forgave him dozens of betrayals. To put up with this situation you are abusing food and alcohol, gaining thirty kilos in less than six months; your family of origin tries to help you but you are blocking the wall and you only feel judged and alone. **How would you feel if you were the protagonist of the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | He needs to take charge of his life and stop self-destructing. | |  | 1 = | She must address the real causes of her suffering before her conduct destroys her permanently. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering conditions you and can lead you to make mistakes. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, although your actions are not to be excused. | |  | 4 = | You must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with her story and can imagine how she feels. It's your way of responding to pain. | |  | 5 = | She has my sympathy; the people around her should help her and understand her more, instead of picking on her and making her feel wrong. | |
| 1. You are a young woman of twenty-two. Single, looking for love. You study and support yourself with small occasional jobs. You meet a boy a little older than you and you start dating him for a few weeks, due to his dissatisfaction with you, who defines you as "too controversial, punctilious, and judgmental". In truth, you realize that you are always focused on his weak points, on his faults, often becoming nagging, even though you liked him and rationally you wanted to continue dating him, deepening your knowledge. You feel bad about learning of his decision and you feel nervous, irritated, and frustrated. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | The girl was too devaluing and contradictory: If he was so full of flaws, how come I wanted to continue dating? | |  | 1 = | The girl focused too much on flaws instead of asking herself how she felt and what she was looking for from that person or in general from relationships. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because focusing only on the flaws prevents the person from deepening the merits. | |  | 3 = | Her point is fully supported, although she may have been too focused on the flaws. | |  | 4 = | He probably didn't like her and was looking for an excuse to end the date. | |  | 5 = | It's not the girl's fault: he has a lot of flaws and there is little compatibility. | |
| 1. You are a young woman in your thirties and you have just ended an important relationship. You are feeling lonely and need companionship. You are not looking for sex or other relationships but simply for someone to help you not to think and make you feel in that state. Your ex-boyfriend's mother, an avid supporter of a religious current of oriental thought, suggests for the umpteenth time that you meet young affiliates in your area; a circumstance repeated throughout the relationship but never developed because both you and your ex-boyfriend were convinced of the sectarian and fanatical nature of the religious group (convictions reinforced by academic studies of both of you that confirmed this point of view). In a state of loneliness, you decided to join this initiative, justifying yourself with the fact that there was nothing wrong with it, and even if you didn't believe in their dogmas, you would still join just for the company since they were all young and close to your age. Thus begins a journey of affiliation where you confirm your past doubts but decide to join anyway to avoid loneliness, becoming a true follower (without however continuing to disagree with the philosophical and religious ideals of the religious group). **What do you think about the decision of the main character in this narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | She is being selfish and hypocritical. He cannot mute his pain, his fear of loneliness, and his discomfort by falling into contradiction and selfishly using others. | |  | 1 = | Her pain is not a good enough reason to come down to her principles and not work on her real needs. She's just running away and procrastinating on work on herself, which she should have been doing a long time ago. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because his action masks a much deeper discomfort and loneliness. | |  | 3 = | Her point of view is fully supported, even if she is selfishly using the group to not feel alone. | |  | 4 = | He must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with his story and can imagine how he feels. It doesn't matter if you don't share the principles and philosophy of the religious group, what matters is that you are better off now. | |  | 5 = | He has all my solidarity; loneliness must be defeated as possible and if affiliating with this group has served to tame his need he has done well. | |
| 1. You are a woman in her 60s. Widowed and without children or grandchildren. Helping others and those most in need has always been your prerogative, but after the death of your husband, it has become almost a compelling need, to the point that you take out of your "mouth" what you need to help others, even in terms of food and wellness. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | She is not dealing with her real pain and is masking a lot of her real emotions and sentiments. | |  | 1 = | His way of silencing his pain is not enough and he cannot self-destruct to help others. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because suffering affects you and can lead you to make mistakes, although in this case, it doesn't hurt anyone. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully supportable, although your actions may expose you negatively. | |  | 4 = | You must be in a lot of pain and I can relate. I have a lot in common with your story and can imagine how you feel. At the end of the day, it only helps others instead of focusing on your emotional losses. | |  | 5 = | It's the only thing that makes her feel good and doesn't hurt anyone. It's good, you have my sympathy. | |
| 1. You are a young man of twenty-six. Single, looking for love. You study and support yourself with small occasional jobs. You meet a girl a little younger than you and start dating her for a few weeks, due to her dissatisfaction with you, who defines you as "too oppressive, insistent and over the top". In truth, you realize that you idealize her for everything and that her faults, also represented by her, do not represent a problem for you, even if they have always been in the past (e.g. she smokes, loves discos, listens to metal music, has many male friends). You are hurt to learn of her decision and feel disappointed and angry as if she has abandoned you. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | The boy has idealized her too much and she has been frightened by his being inconsistent with what she has narrated (in fact he, since the first date, has stated that he is against smokers and the vice of drugs, discos, and music too noisy). | |  | 1 = | The boy focused too much on the merits and things he liked without giving proper attention and importance to the absence of character compatibility. | |  | 2 = | Her point of view is shareable in part because it is not her problem if certain flaws could have been overcome. | |  | 3 = | Your point of view is fully shareable, also because you could have waited and given him more chances. | |  | 4 = | She probably didn't like him and was looking for an excuse to end the date. | |  | 5 = | It's not the boy's fault: he had fallen in love, even if it had been a short time, and with love, all flaws fade away and become bearable. | |
| 1. You are a self-confident eighteen-year-old teenager, You have an excellent academic performance and aspire to achieve great things: a prestigious university, a well-paid job, and a secure financial future. Concerning feelings, you don't ask questions: it's simply not your priority. During conversations with friends and relatives, you are argumentative, punctilious, and always ready to prove others wrong. **How would you feel if you were the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | His ability to mentalize should not become an excuse to dysfunctionally feed himself. | | laa | 1 = | In doing so, he neuroses himself unnecessarily. He can also become someone in life by leaving room for feelings and leisure time. | |  | 2 = | His point of view is shareable in part because life is also made up of other things, perhaps more playful. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully agreeable, commitment and dedication make people important and famous. | |  | 4 = | Human relationships are often distracting and distressing. He does well to think of himself first. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should understand him more instead of picking on him and making him feel wrong. He then reacts like this to defend himself. | |
| 1. You are a young adult, the clown of your group of friends. You are nice, witty, funny, you are successful with girls but you don't take yourself very seriously, and even people who know you have a too "light" idea of you, because of your way of doing things that plays down but also exceeds in sarcasm. That's why he gets hurt sometimes when people label him unfairly. **What do you think of the protagonist of the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | Must learn to use humor appropriately, based on contexts, so as not to be misinterpreted. | |  | 1 = | Humor is an excellent gift if it does not exceed sarcasm. | |  | 2 = | His point is shareable in part because people tend to judge and misunderstand too easily. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully supportable, although his excesses may be misunderstood. | |  | 4 = | His being ironic, biting, and funny is a way to exorcise the excessive seriousness of many people who think only of being heavy and rigid to give themselves a tone. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should relax more and take themselves less seriously because a laugh never hurts anyone. | |
| 1. You're a 40-something, career-minded man. You are involved in creativity. Sometimes, however, your ability to come up with solutions to every problem exposes you in the eyes of others, getting you labeled as know-it-all and arrogant, just because you are confident and know what you are saying. This annoys and frustrates you. **What do you think of the main character in the narrative?** | |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | 0 = | Must learn to recognize their own and others' limits, based on contexts, so as not to be misinterpreted. | |  | 1 = | People don't always appreciate the help of others, even if it's directed in good faith. Especially if not requested. | |  | 2 = | His point is shareable in part because people tend too much to judge and misunderstand easily. | |  | 3 = | His point of view is fully shareable because people should not immediately misunderstand, especially if he is right and does not speak out of turn. | |  | 4 = | His creative being is envied by people who label him to justify their shortcomings to themselves. | |  | 5 = | He has all my sympathy; the people around him should be more humble and recognize in him a certain competence and quality; and even if he is proved wrong he is still a person full of gifts and knowledge. He can fit in! | |