Appendix no. 1: *Individual human defense mechanisms and how they function*

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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* | 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*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *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 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**. | | |  |
| ***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, in order 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 in order 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 to himself 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 in order to find a mental dimension of greater tranquility, 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 in order 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 with respect to what he feels). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Mentally detaching oneself from the object that causes fear in order to find a mental dimension of greater tranquility, overcoming the fear. This first defensive hypothesis is called **Normative (or reflexive) negation**. | | *Maladaptive (or dysfunctional) hypothesis* | Example: Unable to accept his own homosexual urges, he vigorously denies the hypothesis, believing it to be impossible. Such a defensive hypothesis is called **Aversive denial**.  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, with the intention of challenging 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 denial**.  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 denial** or **Compartmentalization**.  Example: The person tends very much to complain in order to get attention but refuses advice, suggestions, and the help that he apparently 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 a 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 with respect to 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 really happened, denying the event itself (denial with respect to the existence in itself of the event). | | *Adaptive (or functional) hypothesis* | Example: Denying (in the imminence of the event) the existence of a painful and traumatic fact that really 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 really 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 in order 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 (es. I turn the anger that I feel toward A toward me put, putting in action gestures autolesionistici); * I move it (I divert it) in favor of something else or someone else (ex. 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 a 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 however depriving himself in the future of other affections; this mechanism is called **Normative translation**. | | *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 being 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 in order 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*" ("daydreaming" during the daily conscious state to fantasize and regain pleasure or to avoid facing reality, or the severe form of animative/ deanimative 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 own 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 own 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 positive and 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 positive and 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 positive and 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 of any **Resistance** placed in defense of the removed memory, in order 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 have 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: In spite of 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, in fact 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 level. | | |  |
| ***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 avoids creating lasting or stable ties 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, a 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 avoids regardless of creating lasting or stable ties or avoids 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, in order to satisfy a 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 in a hasty and vehement manner, 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 totally 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 or 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, in order 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 relationship 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, anger, and to find an outlet for their destructive urges. This defensive hypothesis is called **Psychogenic affiliation**. | | |  |
| ***ALTRUISM*** | |  |  | | --- | --- | | *Definition* | The subject places himself in relationship 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, in order 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, in order to 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 own 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). | | *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, where 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 in order 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, in order 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**. | | |  |