

SELF-PRESERVATION TECHNIQUES - PAGE 1

PERSONAL REFLECTIVE EXERCISE:

Identify the defense mechanisms you have used in your lifetime as well as the lie that laid behind it. Describe a situation in which you might have used this defense mechanism.

ALIENATING - Pushing other people away to avoid being confronted with reality.

ANGER - A secondary feeling that is used to cover the primary (or true) feeling.

ATTACKING - This is usually a form of anger and the act of putting onto someone else or something else what actually belongs to you.

BEING OBNOXIOUS - A method used to push others away or to manipulate them in order to avoid dealing with reality.

BEING RECKLESS - A form of endangering self and/or others to avoid dealing with the true problem.

BLAMING - Not accepting responsibility or not putting responsibility where it belongs.

CHANGING SUBJECT - A method of changing the focus to avoid the problem.

CHEATING - Avoiding work, pain, and/or responsibility; the act of "looking for an easier and/or softer way" of obtaining something.

CRYING - Using tears to avoid dealing with the true problem or conflict. Also can be used to get someone to back off.

CUSSING - Foul language used to avoid the true issue.

DENIAL - Telling oneself it has not happened.

DESTRUCTION - Harmful tactics or methods used against an object, an animal or another person as an outlet for the true problem; a negative, angry way of acting out.

EXCUSING - Providing an alibi or a reason for behavior even when aware of the truth.

EXPLAINING - The act of giving reasons for behavior to avoid self-responsibility. Behavior is irrational (justifying inappropriate behavior).

FLATTERY - Over-complimenting a person to get something in return.

GENERALIZING - Skirting the issue to avoid addressing specific aspects of a problem.

GETTING HIGH - Using alcohol or drugs to avoid or reject reality.

HIDING - A form of self-imposed isolation used to avoid self-responsibility by escaping the true situation, problem, or conflict.

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HITTING - A physical attack used to avoid self-responsibility for, or to divert attention from the true problem, conflict, or situation.

HOSTILITY - A self-defense mode of anger/aggression used to protect oneself against a perceived threat.

HUMOR - Making light of or making a joke of something that is serious.

IGNORING - The refusal to recognize or acknowledge an existence or reality in order to avoid a problem, a situation, or responsibility.

INTELLECTUALIZING - The use of scientific reasoning to justify behavior and to avoid responsibility. Use of lengthy argument or a small detail to distract from the task at hand. Attending to an issue or problem on a cognitive level to avoid "feeling" and emotional discomfort.

ISOLATING - The act of sealing off the outside world to avoid dealing with the truth, a problem, or conflict.

JUSTIFYING - The act of giving reasons to make a "wrong" a "right" and to avoid self-responsibility.

LYING - Rejection of the whole truth or part of the truth in order to avoid self-responsibility.

MANIPULATING - Using coercion to have one's needs met instead of making a direct request.

MAXIMIZING - The act of making something bigger or more important than it is. "Blowing it out of proportion" to gain sympathy or attention.

MINIMIZING - The act of making something smaller or less important than it is, usually to avoid embarrassment or punishment.

NOT LISTENING - Tuning out by not acknowledging another person's message. Rejecting or avoiding the whole truth or part of the truth.

PASSIVENESS - Withdrawal used to avoid self-responsibility in a situation or a conflict.

PEOPLE PLEASING - The act of saying or doing what you think others want to hear or see. The goal in people-pleasing is to get others to like you and to avoid self-responsibility.

PUT DOWNS - Derogatory comments to degrade another person so that you may avoid attending to what they are saying.

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RATIONALIZING- Making the assumption that because “A” is true, and “B” is true, then “C” must also be true.

RESENTMENT - The act of holding grudges avoiding responsibility for the true problem or feeling.

RUNNING AWAY - Physically removing oneself from a conflict or problem to avoid confrontation or responsibility in dealing with the issue; used as a “geographical” cure.

SARCASM - Saying the opposite of what you really mean either with anger or humor.

SELF-DEPRECIATION - The act of putting yourself down to avoid taking responsibility.

SELF-DESTRUCTION - Threatening to, or endangering self in order to avoid the true problem.

SELF-PITY - The act of feeling sorry for oneself avoiding self-responsibility and/or self-treatment, i.e., “If I’m hurt, sick, tired, busy, etc., then you can’t expect me to do _____”.

SEX - Sexual interaction as a defense to avoid reality, or change the way you are feeling.

SILENT TREATMENT - Passive/aggressive behavior, used to avoid self-responsibility and to punish the other person in an effort to convince them to take responsibility.

SMILING - A physical response used to cover the true feeling or response.

SQUEALING - Telling something about someone else in order to take the focus off yourself and put it onto someone else.

STEALING - An “easier, softer way” of getting what you want without taking the self-responsibility for the work needed to obtain it, or to avoid confrontation.

STORYTELLING - A form of explaining that hides the important facts of a situation or problem by using irrelevant information or statements.

SULKING - Form of withdrawal avoiding self-responsibility to draw attention to oneself.

THREATENING - Attacking to get someone to back off a sensitive issue.

VANDALISM - Destructive acts used to avoid dealing with the real situation or conflict.

WITHDRAWAL - Removing oneself physically, mentally, or emotionally from a situation, problem, or conflict in order to avoid self-responsibility.

YELLING - Loud, aggressive, verbal attacking used to avoid dealing with the true problem or conflict; may be used to get someone to back away.