

Freudian Defence Mechanisms

These are basically how your unconscious decides to avoid your “issues” like they were an ex without boundaries. In other words, a this is a light-hearted way to find out why you didn't get that report in on time and why you avoided it. It is also how your psyche quietly panics while pretending to be fine... which manifests itself as “The Many Flavours Of It's Not Me, It's LITERALLY ANYTHING ELSE”.

1. Repression

“I'm fine. I've totally moved on.”
(Narrator: They had not moved on.)

This is the OG sweep-it-under-the-rug. You bury it so deep it gets its own zip code in your unconscious. One day you forget. Then years later you smell a candle and some incense and spiral down the rabbit hole of your own making, which you started when you were little, before you were able to understand you were starting, but after you were able to manifest your contempt for the trigger.

2. Denial

“This isn't be happening.” Basic refusal which turns out is not so basic.

Used mostly for breakups, grief, bank balances, and climate change.

You don't see the problem - because if you did, you'd have to *feel* something about it. Emotional resonance folks, and the thin line / enormous vacuum between your reality and what everyone else can see like they're in a front row seat of your Truman Show. And who has time for that when you're knee deep in your own games?

3. Projection

“You're being super judgmental right now.”
(...you said, with your entire forehead furrowed, your eyes slightly squinted, your tone more aggressive than 'normal', in pure judgment, and in complete certainty).

Whatever is hard to admit in yourself? Well, you throw it at someone else like psychological hot potato – you didn't drop it like its hot as the song suggested, so you burned your hands, you just don't know it yet. Your own wild Truman Show as mentioned above? That's you beaming all your emotions on to your buddies, family, and the random guy in the supermarket who didn't ask for it.

4. Reaction Formation

Outer voice: "OMG, I'm so happy for you!"

Inner voice: "I want to key your car."

You feel one thing, but act out the exact opposite. Emotional cosplay, essentially. The real feeling? Too dangerous to feel. So, you wrap it in its opposite and call it personal growth.

It's meant to be dangerous, but dangerous for **who**? You? Society? More than likely, your ego, man. And it is taking a bruising. And that same ego teamed up with your id in a late-night panic to build a house-of-cards immune system against your colleague's promotion... Next stop? Home... via the office car park.

5. Rationalisation

Your avoidance mechanism dressed as your inner high priest of logic. "It's not that I'm scared of intimacy, it's just... energetically misaligned to where I am in my life right now" (even though you haven't the slightest clue where you are in your life right now).

In the wild, you build your entire TED Talks in your mind at 3am (and probably 3pm) to justify your choices. Logical? Yes. Objective reality? Unlikely, but you sure do use your logic to avoid emotional truths with academic finesse, or in a way that mixes your pre-emptive 3-year-old rationality with your best drunk self. Raise your glass to avoidance people! Cheers!

6. Conversion Reaction

"It's not anxiety - my leg just stops working when I think about commitment."

Psychic distress that skips the conscious mind and shows up in your **body**. Unspoken emotion becomes a migraine, a stomach cramp, or a mysterious limp... or your bad-ass walk. You've heard of psychosomatic trauma, now you're about to play Twister, alone, which you think you're doing voluntarily, and with a leg which would move separately to your awareness of motor skills. Autonomic movement within autonomic movement... your own wild version of Inception.

7. Phobic Avoidance

"I just can't go to that street because my ex's cousin's barista lives nearby."

Not just avoiding something. Avoiding it like your sympathetic nervous system (fight, flight or freeze) said your life depends on it and you are like "yeah man, you're right", whilst you're both blissfully reinforcing yourselves into the same behavioural loop.

This is your fear in the form of your own personal restraining orders. It can manifest as avoiding **failure** so hard you never start the thing you love (a sly wink to Carl Rogers and intrinsic motivations), or not asking that person out on a date because your nervous system already wrote a novel of worst-case scenarios.

8. Displacement

"I'm not mad at my boss" (but I'm for sure gonna slam the s**t out of that cupboard door).

You take your big feelings and redirect them at a safer target. Usually someone soft, innocent, or just at the wrong cupboard at the wrong time. Unfortunately, its often taken out on the people at home who had nothing to do with it, so work on your compassion man! Compassion is a great antidote to displacement (heart emoji).

9. Regression

"I'm not dealing with this. I've now resigned from adulting. I'm five now. Hand me a juice box and a lollipop."

Stress hits, and suddenly you're throwing a tantrum, pouting, or binge-watching childhood cartoons. The inner is now child running the show, the only thing is **you are the show**, and the rest of the world is binge-watching your childhood because you're forcing them to watch your decent.

11. Undoing

"I did something bad, so let me do something good to un-curse myself emotionally... If I do three nice things, it cancels out the one toxic thing I did... right?"

Its only that you cursed yourself, so guilt showed up at the door and said hi, and you slammed the door on its face. Guilt is still outside wondering what's up while you send that text to your friend who you've also avoided, apologising for why you've been so busy lately and if they want that drink together... all after lighting the incense and putting on the 386hz healing frequency for your root chakra.

A little ritual to clean up the mess of your mind while "undoing" guilt with good gestures. But oh yeah, you're still avoiding confrontation with the original act like illusion depends on it, lolz.

12. Sublimation (Anna Freud's personal favourite)

"I wanted to punch someone, so I created an award-winning ceramic installation about loss."



The art of turning chaos into creation. The **actual** most mature defence: turning unacceptable impulses into socially adored masterpieces. You've probably seen this at poetry nights, martial arts studios, and emotionally intense pottery classes... and likely half your music collection... in an alphabetically ordered system which, if someone touches, you will create an award-winning ceramic installation about loss.

And if you overuse these? Congratulations! Your prize is neurosis!

Cheers!

George