

Human Adjustment Process
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Module - 4
Lecture - 7
Human adjustment process II

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Defense Mechanisms

But too easy or moderate in nature in terms of difficulty level, moderate should it be little more difficult or should be moderate or should be made very easy do not put the third option. The first four questions were basically you know more of thought driven type of thing, because scenario was there, the fifth question was also like that and the remaining five were direct question. So, I thought that let me have a balance between that direct questions and the indirect ones. Second quiz also we will have on the similar pattern, but after the mid sem not before that.

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Denial of reality	Refusal to face unpleasant reality
Fantasy	Gratification through imaginary achievements
Repression	Preventing painful thoughts to enter consciousness
Rationalization	Proving one's behaviour as justified
Projection	Blaming others
Reaction formation	Expressing opposite attitude and behaviour
Displacement	Emancipation of pent-up feelings
Emotional insulation	Withdrawing into passivity

We have already discussed denial of reality, fantasy, repression, rationalization and projection is differences.

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Intellectualization	Logic-tight explanations
Undoing	Agreement for immoral desires
Regression	Moving back to earlier developmental level
Identification	Identifying with famous person or institution
Introjection	Incorporating external values
Compensation	Over gratification in another area

Today we would continue with the other defensive mechanisms and the next defense mechanism that we are going to discuss today is reaction formation. This is an interesting type of a defense mechanism, where what happens? You remember in the case of repression also we had discussed this, that all you try in repression is that some painful experiences, some dangerous desires should not be allowed to come to the conscious

level, that was the whole exercise in a repression and we discuss that fine, if it is of a mild or a moderate nature. We do suppresses desires, but then there desires, which you consider to be extremely dangerous, they are just repressed and the repression would be a unconscious mechanism whereas, suppression would be a conscious mechanism.

In reaction formation also there is a tendency to prevent the dangerous thoughts to come to conscious awareness, but then unlike repression where you just know put it in black box and then hide it and it is never known to you. In the case of reaction formation different pattern takes place in the behavior, there is a thought that thought itself is dangerous, it does not have a approval of the stake holders regarding whom you have the thought and then you just know prevent this type of a behavior, this type of a thoughts, this type of an attitude to you merge and therefore, you reflect a diametrically opposite pattern of behavior.

Now, assume a situation where you have a passionate liking for somebody and that passionate liking does not have the social sanction it floats the excepted social protocol. Might be little odd to hear, but we are taking all types of examples say, imagine a situation you happen to see a boy or a girl while coming to your house and you just have this feeling [fl] very handsome you know, or very beautiful. You have that type of know and sudden infatuation type of feeling within you, you come home to realize that the same boy or the same girl has now come to your house and now your mother introduces meet your cousin you have never met in the past, imagine situations like that.

In our religious literature also there is whole lot of discussion on issues like this, in clinical literature also you would find know description of issues like insist and other forms of behavior. Behavior, which are does not have the social approval, behavior that does not have the legal approval. Now, in the case of reaction formation all you do is that once you realize that this is this type of an attitude or this type of a thought, this type of a desire is bizarre in nature, you cannot ever think of having it. The best way of handling it could be using reaction formation is just steer turn it upside down. So, passionate love for somebody, converts into hitrate. So, just do not like that person, overtly, outwardly you would never ever feel interacting with the person, you would never ever feel know going out with that person, you have great sense of discomfort, but inwardly the truth is that you have deep sense of liking for that very person ok.

What is very interesting is that, unless there is a need for knowing the root cause of this type of behavior, which would be done by an expert, you would never ever come to know that my hitrate was basically love for the person. And it could be opposite also know, somebody who loves you, it could be that he or she hates you actually and cannot afford to do that and hence reaction formation is used. And interesting clinical case I would like to share with you of a girl who was in her perhaps late adolescent, if I remember correctly. And she had know some trouble with movement of her wrist, this is how first the problem was diagnosed by the family members, she reported certain type of a problem in terms of moving the wrist and she was know very fond of her father. The father daughter relationship was fantastic, the entire story was on earth when know this girl was brought to the clinic, orthopedic clinic for realizing what is the problem with the wrist. Now, usually we do not have frozen wrist know, unless there is some problem.

So, doctors went ahead with that medical diagnosis, perhaps there is extra calcification here and therefore you cannot move your know wrist, nothing was there MRI was conducted no problem was identified. And then know this doctor became suspicious and referred this girl to the psychiatric ward, where the psychiatric o p d, where doctors started know identifying the case and it was then on earth by in the physiological sessions that, the girl had extreme hatred for her father and because of some ill relationship that the father had with somebody according to the girl and she just wanted to slap her father, there was a deep blizzard in the daughter to slap her father. Now, you cannot afford to slap your father and hence one way of his stopping your slap behavior is that you have a frozen wrist. So, you cannot make a move, if you cannot make a move a know in the wrist area this means you cannot slap somebody, because some degree of movement will you be needed and to the hatred was converted into love and affiliation with the father, which actually was a reaction formation, this is a true clinical story ok.

We are not going into the details of the case study, but this is what reaction formation is. What type of know services provides to us, the benefited provides to us, is simply that know you contain the negative or the undesirable thoughts and attitudes and you live with or you reflect the desired attitudes and behavior, which will allow you to gel properly with the family, in the society, in your environment.

Then comes the other defense mechanism that is displacement, displacement is no actually like moving object from one place to the other. So, this is discharging pent

filings, which is usually for hostile nature on objects which are less dangerous, because again you cannot afford to know react to the actual source of such threats. Good example of a displacement could be that say studies examples know, that somebody who comes late by certain minute and he is asked to leave the class. Now, you go out of the class, you are angry, but you cannot afford to express your anger here in t two zero one. So, what you do is it you go out and then you find dog know some were in the trail here and you just you know hit the dog with the stone, there was no need for you to hit the dog or you shout at the boy, whose is serving know breakfast to you in your hall, there was no legitimate reason for you to be angry there, this is displacement of anger. So, you have a hostile feeling usually this is a pent up emotion you were boiling within you could not know eject it out on the source which was responsible for no making you feel this type of an emotion. Therefore now, you are displacing it and reflecting it on somebody else, who according to your calculation is a weaker object compare to the original source of anger for you, the original source of hostility for you.

And this is quite common quite common right from very, very young child; you can see it in know very, very elderly people that this walks like anything I will like to share very interesting example with you. Several years back, my son happen to be too young at that time one and half years probably one, one and half something around that age and another colleague of mine, whose son was I think one or two years elder to him. So, whenever the two families use to meet these two boys would play together and the elder boy the son of my colleague would usually know slap him on his chick repeatedly and he used to do it in such a fashion that none of the elderly members are there. So, we are playing we are going to that area and the moment you are out of sight he will just slap one two three four it use to happen.

We thought that know perhaps this will gradually die down in my son, when after several months another friend of mine came from outside and he had an elderly son and a very young daughter, the daughter must have been seven eight months old, she was still crawling. And now my son has started slapping her know, whenever she would he would find her in a isolation, where know elderly members are not there he would exactly do the same thing and we had really hard time making ham und him understand that fine this is not a doable act. Even though somebody did this with you, you cannot do it to others know, this is not a desirable behavior. Right from younger kids know you see one

and a half year old child to I am sure all of you do that, you get scolded at one place and you go and scold somebody else at the other place, you get know scolded in office you go back home you shout at your wife, wife cannot afford to shout at you, nowadays probably wives can afford to do that. So, she will start know shouting at the children, children they cannot afford to shout at anybody. So, will shout at the mates and then you will realize that the whole cycle gets completed this way know. So, this is know displacement as a defense mechanism.

But the beauty of displacement once again is that it safeguards you against source of threat, which could otherwise have been very detrimental for you. Now, remember our situation your boss shouts at you, your boss has the power invested in him or her to fire you, you were at fault or you were not at fault the boss shouts at you, if you revert back to the boss, if you also know start replying back to your boss. Imagine how know difficult this complicated the situation could turn, it could turn very ugly were your boss issues and a memo to you, memo is an official know letter, which seeks clarification for a behavior that you have performed in the office. And the next step would be that you are suspended and inquiry and then terminated.

You cannot afford to do that know, you have a say very powerful source of that sense of hostility for you, you cannot afford to express it and therefore, this defense helps you that fine do not explode here, find the weaker object and then explode at him or her. Usually in the office setup you will find, all offices uniformly government, nongovernment, India or anywhere, where the subordinates among themselves they will always talk something negative about their superior. It is common, because once you are know directed something in a harsh fashion or the boss interacts with you in particular way, which you considered know not justified enough that trigger some type of an emotion in you. Of course, negative emotion in you usually anger hostility then you decide to revert back to your colleagues and say I do not know what type of person he is and you keep on keep on you know saying this, because you share this immediately there is a sense of relief, if you do not express it, if you do not displace your hostility, your anger, then you would keep exploding within know and that type of word used for a that is implosion know. Explosion would be when you show your anger outwardly, but when you do not do that, but you carry your anger within and inwardly you are extremely restless this is the state of implosion.

And if you keep imploding, you pay the other price for it know you will have certain type of, you might have certain type of psychological problems, because you are not expressing the sense of anger and hostility that you are caring. So, this defense mechanism is successful helping you at just in your involvement, because you are able to know take care of the strong forces and you are able to strike a balance in terms of not going towards the other types of a psychological problem or adjustment related problem.

Then we come to the other defense mechanism, it is called emotional insulation. Emotional insulation is a technique; it is something like say you have an electric wire. So, you have a copper cable and then you have a plastic coat on the top. So, that when you touch it, you do not receive the electric shock, emotional insulation exactly is that type of a process. What happens is that you reduce your ego involvement, remember entire damaged repair mechanism, task oriented reaction patterns and defense mechanism everything has to do with the ego system. So, you reduce the involvement of your ego by withdrawing yourself into passivity, because you do not want yourself to be hurt in that process.

Now, this is a very interesting type of a pattern, something that really irritates you, but you are helpless, you cannot reform it, you cannot know change the situation, you cannot make any modification. So, finally, you decide that, if I withdraw myself, I have to be there in the situation means; I cannot withdraw myself completely back from the involvement, I have to be present in that involvement, but even though I am physically present, I do not get involved in any activity that takes place there. And hence, because I am not at all participating in the process that is taking place in my involvement, therefore my ego is not at threat, because my ego is not at threat therefore irrespective of whatever happens, I am safe, my ego structure is safe, I do not have to defend myself, that is the state of emotional insulation.

I can give, I have seen many, many cases of emotional insulation, the best example that comes to my mind right now is, somebody working in office situation where some time was there I do not exactly remember now, perhaps eleven o'clock, eleven thirty, ten thirty, something something. So, I guess perhaps two or two and a half hours after the onset of the work hour, that office use to have tea time and it was mandatory for a all employees to sit at one place and have tea together. Some people use to know keep walking and there would be repeated reminders from the top quarters that you have to

come for the tea during this time. And very interestingly that was the time, when the top boss use too utilize for giving his sermons to others know and it was usually of a very irritating type most of the time. Staffs that do not want to listen know, say you have worked for two and half hours after coming back from your home, you have worked here now, you are sitting with a cup of tea and then the person starts talking about something in Scotland there is a firm, which works on the exactly the same thing that we work, how they work and you do not want to listen to such stuffs know. Boss is not giving you any other facility that you want, but then he keep gives you all this beautiful stories, which irritates you within. Now, you cannot tell boss, boss I can also narrate fifteen such stories, if we reverse our chairs, let us exchange it, you become a subordinate make me the boss, I would not tell you what happens in Scotland, I will tell you what happens in your office, but you cannot afford to do that, he is your boss.

And then I found you know a very interesting pattern there, somebody would come occupy the chair and then newspapers is also used to kept there know. So, he take up a newspaper and keep on reading news, if the news are exhausted he will read advertisements there know. He will know look at where it was printed, what date know everything he will read, but would not look at the boss at all, this is a beautiful example of emotional insulation. Many a time it happens that you just try to withdraw yourself you turn into passivity, it is like say know you withdraw yourself under a kakoon and say its fine, sorry I am not interacting with this environment.

Have heard it from many family members, were one of the family member usually it is the male members in few families even it is the female member also, who have that tendency of know shouting the regular form of a speeches that you tou, that you keep talking and then the moments something is not up to your expectation suddenly you are the pitch of your voice increases. And then know you keep shouting on trivial issues and rest of your family members decide ignore.

So, I am sure you must have seen families like that, where say usually it is the father who would shout like anything, for see if you shout on something rational it makes a sense know the person concern would feel it know now this was the error that was committed and it is really disturbing and hence this male member of the family is shouting. But if you shout on trivial issues know, where is the key, where is the pen, where is the comb, where is the moisturizer, where is the iale, where are my socks, if you start shouting on

trivial issues, after some time family members will give up. And they will withdraw into passivity that fine we will stay in the family, but you keep shouting and we will ignore you and know think of something else be busy with something else.

In few families it happens when you have no family, a female family member who is equivalent to the situation that we were describing right now. Where a family members even the children they are tend to ignore you know they turn into passivity when you turn into this mode. Otherwise they are know very well involved with you, but the moment you turn into this mode, they turn into passivity they do not engage yourself a themselves with you in this scenario. And hence they reframe from getting there ego hurt in that process, because you have turned into passivity your ego is not at stake, your ego is not at stake than whatever you talk, whatever you say is your problem not my problem, that is emotional insulation.

We are not touching that issue, we would not talk about it at all in this course, but if you are interested in clinical literature, we will also find description of something called dissociative reaction or dissociation. Dissociation is also a similar type of a phenomena were, when you find yourself stuck in the situation, where you have to perform the job something that its extremely painful for you, but still you have to do it there could be a possibility of dissociating yourself from the activity that you are performing. Couple of years back, we had done a study that was on the relief workers, who were sent to Nagapattinam after the tsunami that we had several years back, the reason for studying this was initially we were studying know the child in the adolescent survivors, we realize that many n g o s had deputed one or the other relief worker from there agency, who were not trained. So, they were not into disaster management, disaster training not at all into you know handling trauma, disasters they were just know graduated post graduates you join the job in a n g o and n g o wants their presence to be felt in the field. So, that they can take photographs ask for grants. Therefore, they these people will they were all of a sudden sent to the location that now you go there put this banner and start giving some type of service do take photograph ok.

And we realize that know many of this relief workers had really tough time there in the field know, you have know still bodies are floating you have all types of sufferings that you see around you, you do not know what to do, but you are in job, you have been deputed there, somebody is keeping an eye on you and therefore you cannot leave it

halfway. And that was the time when we decided that we will know study started dynamics know how these relief workers adjust in this situation and one of the parameters that we had chosen at that time was dissociative reaction know. Are you involved in, are you internally involved in the activity that you are performing and the answer was no for a large majority. So, know, I am giving advice to you, but I am not involved in that process, I am suggesting you know where to do what to get from where you can get what, but I am not at all involved into this process. So, you completely dissociate yourself. But dissociation and emotional insulations are different phenomenon know dissociative reaction would be no more to what is know the clinical side whereas, emotional insulation is something that all normal human beings can adopt.

Another defense mechanism that is intellectualization. This is once again know very closer to what we had discussed as rationalization, start day we had talked about rationalization, were you justify the act that you perform, you also justify what you, why you did not gets something. Intellectualization is little difficult, little different intellectualization basically is a process where you cut of effective charges, effective is emotional. So, you have a situation, a hurtful situation from the situation you take out the emotional component out of it. So, it is like say surgical removing of emotion from a given situation, which is hurtful to you, or you separate incompatible attitudes and the gap that you have there you now compensate that with logic tight compartments.

So, imagine a situation it is like a train different know bogies of a train and then you have anchors which joints the train. Now, you anchor it together, so that the body the bogies are not delinked and you ensure that all bogies there remain integrated they move along with the engine in the train. So, if I can see that this life to be like this, you have know a situation were finally, the outcome was such that it did hurt you a lot ok, or because it is a defense mechanism therefore, you were not hurt, but you expect that it can finally, lead to this, it can be hurtful.

And hence what you do in anticipation, you know take out the emotional components out of it. So, it is all now, only the scenarios, the situations emotions are taken care of. And these know compartments would be isolated compartments know, one spot here, one event here, one event here, one event here and then what you do is that you link all of them with logic tight compartments know. So, you have in case of rationalization what was happening, there was one single a event you were providing justification for that. In

intellectualization you do not have one single event know, you have a major event, which you have broken into several several units and then this several units are now being zip together, using sudden logic. So, say for example, start day we took the example that know rationalization is equal into sour grape proverb, you did not achieve something in life and therefore you justify and you say that it is a know good that I remind child days in my life. Intellectualization would be different, intellectualization would be that would say that you know, people get married they have children and I understand that this is one of the important biological task, but you know the way, the population of the whole world is increasing, the way this population impression is now creating disturbance to the environment, ecological disturbance is all type of know big big big things right from micro to macro.

All beautiful arguments, you just drag from different sources pack them together and different events are now provided with the gaps between different points are plugged with these logic tight compartment, you intellectualize the whole things. And you say marriage is fine, childrens are fine, but those who are know people usually say that you are blessed with child, I would say that you are blessed, because you do not have child. You take know you intellectualize the whole episode as if those who are childless they are also happy with your version, those who have children they are also happy with your version and overall you are able to intellectually you know say that finally, you need to look at life from this point of view, where different events put by know put together by extremely logical type of derivations, that is intellectualization.

You got the difference between rationalization and intellectualization. In rationalization there is one event, where you try to provide justification, intellectualization you will have several pieces and you will put them together and intellectualize the whole thing. So, rationalization that way would be a smaller event intellectually speaking whereas, intellectualization would be a much broader type of a process.

Undoing is another type of a defense mechanism, where you go for no atoning and therefore counteracting amoral desires or acts. You had a feeling or you were engaged in certain things out of your personal choice or out of certain life compulsions and you now want to undue it, because know it could become or it is no triggering certain type of a sense of guilt within you. A very interesting example, true example; a man who joined I do not know I do not remember now, which office perhaps, if I remember correctly he

joined some bank and this story was known, because he wrote a letter to the Indian railways saying that a right from my student days I always use to commute from station x to station y for my education, because my collage was there. So, all those years I commuted without ticket. So, he gave the point station know, station x to station y how many days? He calculated everything know how many Sundays, how many holidays, minus, so total how many days in a year all together how many days in that duration and he said that, I was from an economically weaker family, I could not afford this and therefore I did so.

Now, I am in a job, where I can pay back the money kindly let me know what would be the total amount that I need to pay including know interest and whatever the bank rates. And railways was at fix, because a there is no such provision, the rule does not allow them, say there is a process in the railways a where you can be caught by a the travel ticket examiner in the train or the ticket examiner can catch hold of you on the platform, but if you move out of the platform and then you say you know nineteen eighty six twice, I commuted without ticket, so charge me whatever you want to.

So, now, it would be something like what was the ticket cost at that time between this two stations, what was the bank interest rate should it be at that years relate or should it be at the present rate and then were know said that fine, we do not have such rules and he said no no no no please, please, tell me, I want to pay it back, this is undoing. You know that this was not worth doing an act, you did it and now, you would not want to do it that I am sorry, that I did it, I want simply to know do the completely opposite side of it. So, that it is a counteracting type of a behavior. So, that I get rid of the immoral act according to me, which hurts me.

Then comes the other defense mechanism that is rigration. Rigration is very interesting type of a defense mechanism here what happens? This defense mechanism will be used when you realize that you are in a very difficult situation now and life is not as pleasurable as it use to be for you. So, you reflect back you look back at your earlier experiences of life to realize what was the face, that was most pleasant for me and you realize that early adolescent or say late childhood. And what you do is that you revert back to that stage the chronologically you are wherever you are in that age, but physiologically. You revert back to the earlier face, which according to you was the most pleasant part of your life. Therefore it says that you retreat your earlier developmental

level, which requires less matured responses from you and therefore, the total aspiration level is also lower down. So, say an adult member who is not able to a know support his family is not able to perform according to the family expectations according to the acceptations of the people around him in his involvement. And decides to know that you know when I was eighteen years old, eighteen nineteen that was the face that was most beautiful, because I use to get pocket money, I use to grow the way I wanted, I had no responsibilities.

So, even though he might be thirty five chronologically speaking psychologically he starts going back to the sixteen, eighteen years age period, he grows like that, behaves like that. And he derives pleasure out of the fact that, fine there is no expectation from me, there is no obligation. And hence, because I am still eighteen therefore my aspiration did not be that of a thirty five year old man, who has certain responsibilities. So, regress would simply means that you revert back and when you revert back, it is your choice the person who uses it. It is his or her choice to select a that face of earlier face of your life, which you consider to be most pleasant and pleasant is defined in terms of there should not be too much of demand on you, there should not be too much expectation from you. So, chronologically you are something else psychologically you start behaving like somebody who is still much less matured. So, that is about a regression three four defense mechanism are still left.