

Defence Mechanisms

Psychology

The ego's strategies for managing anxiety.

The classic mechanisms.

Mechanism	Means
Repression	Pushing threatening material out of awareness
Denial	Refusing to accept reality
Projection	Attributing your own impulses to others
Displacement	Redirecting an impulse to a safer target
Rationalisation	Constructing acceptable reasons
Sublimation	Channelling into socially valued activity
Reaction formation	Behaving as the opposite of the impulse
Regression	Reverting to earlier behaviour

Sublimation is the only one Freud considered adaptive. Modern coping research reaches broadly similar conclusions about it.