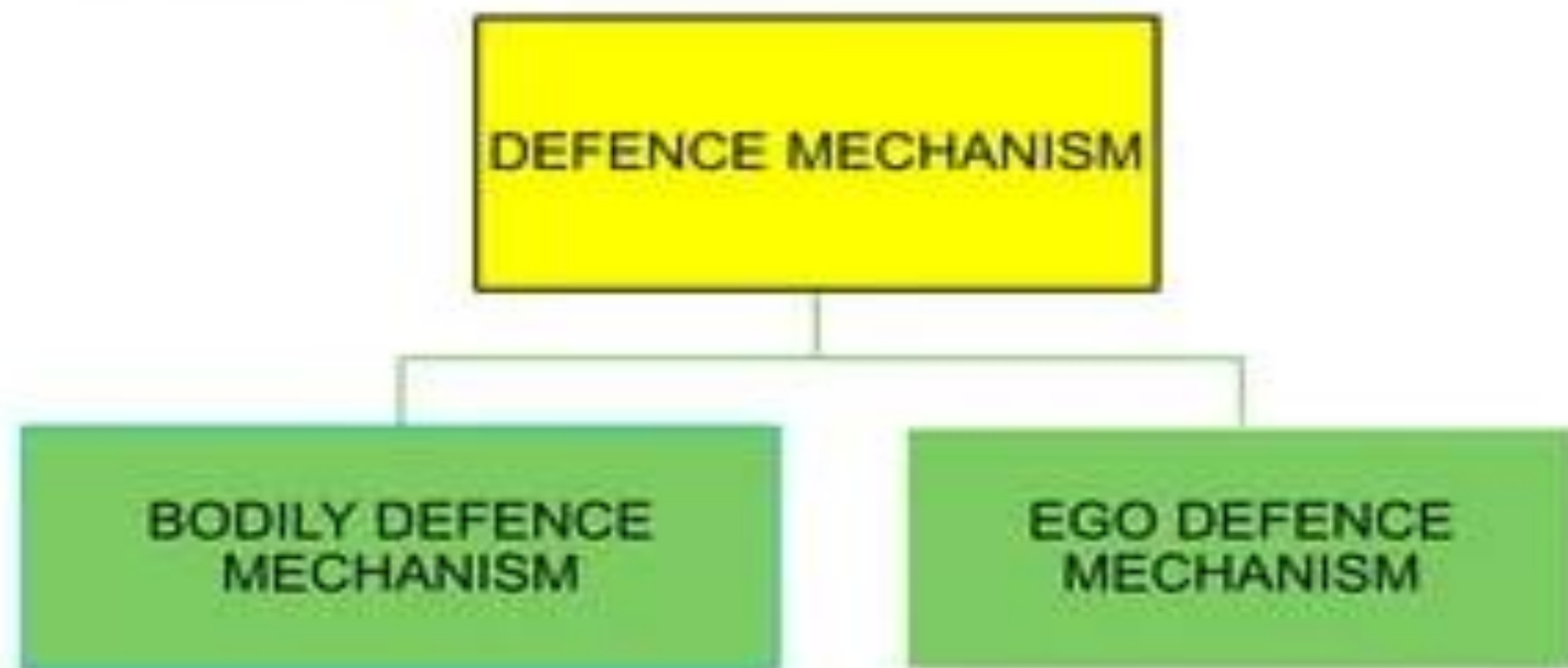


# Defense Mechanisms



# INTRODUCTION



## Definition

- It is the mental capacity of an individual to protect against conflicts and frustration thus to safeguard from distress and maintain harmony.



# Defense Mechanisms



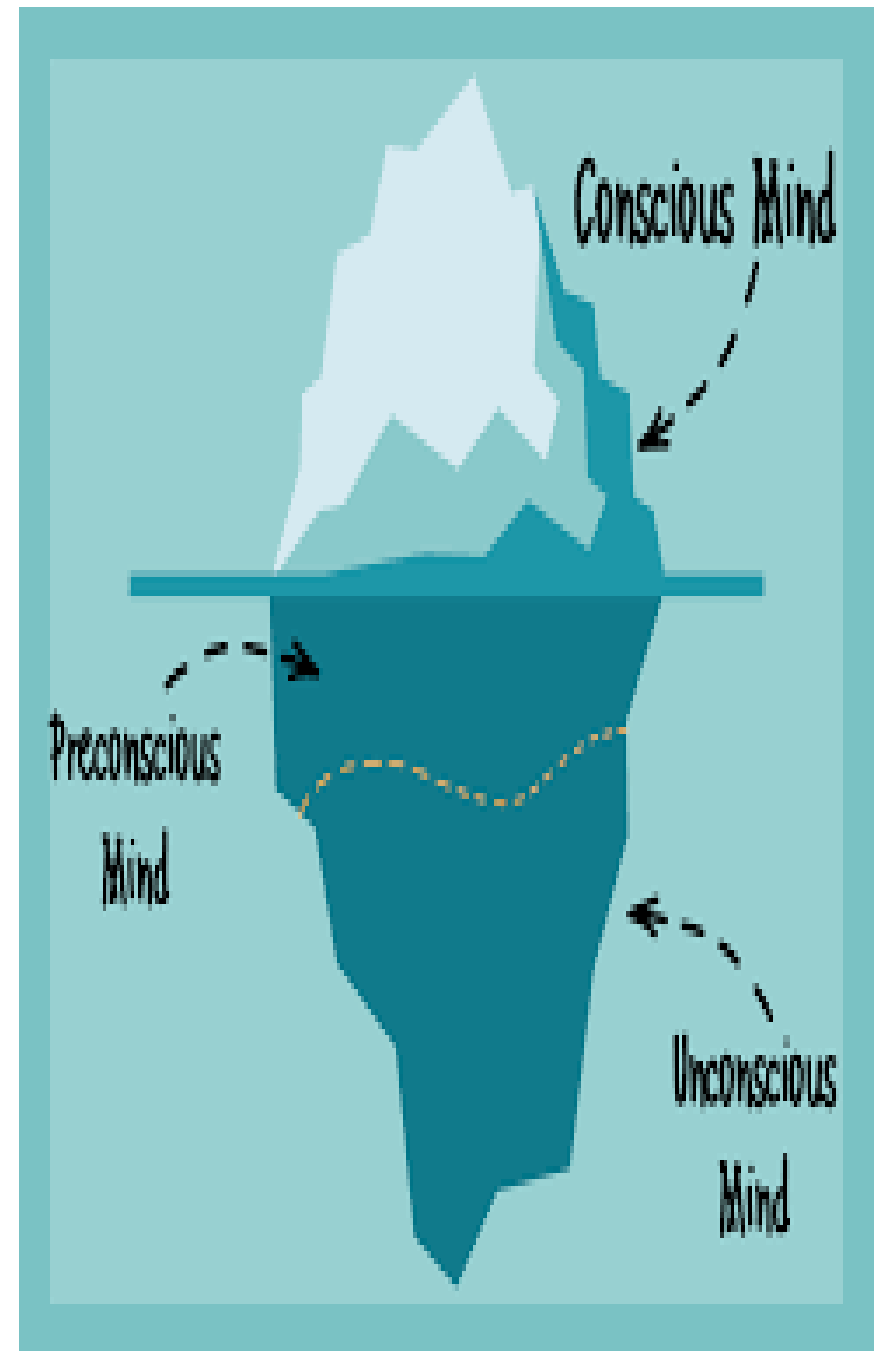
- Definition: A mental maneuver that one consciously or unconsciously chooses to use to distort or falsify the truth of one's experience in order to protect oneself from feeling painful emotions like shame, guilt, or anxiety.

# Freud's Three Levels of Mind

The Conscious Mind

The Preconscious Mind

The Unconscious Mind



# Introduction :-

- The term 'Defence Mechanism' was first used by Sigmund Freud in his paper "The Neuro-Psychoses of defence" (1894).
- Anna (1937) developed the ideas given by Freud and elaborated them, adding 5 other own.
- In his psychoanalytical theory, Freud explained a defence mechanism is a tactic developed by ego to protect against anxiety.



## Freud's theory of the personality



# INTRODUCTION

Defense mechanism is an automatic reaction of the body and mental process initiated unconsciously to avoid experiencing conflict or anxiety. The first comprehensive study of defense mechanisms was reported by Freud's daughter **Anna Freud** in his landmark work,

**THE EGO AND THE MECHANISMS OF DEFENSE(1937)**

Anna Freud expanded her father's work by providing detailed descriptions of a number of individual defense mechanisms.



- Anxiety is triggered by an expected or foreseen increase in tension or displeasure, it can be developed in any situation (real or imagined) when the threat to some part of the body or psyche is too great .

Events with a potential to cause anxiety include (not limited to the following)

- Loss of desired object- eg- child deprived of a parent
- Loss of love--rejection
- Loss of identity- loss of self respect
- Loss of love- act that results in guilt or self-hate.

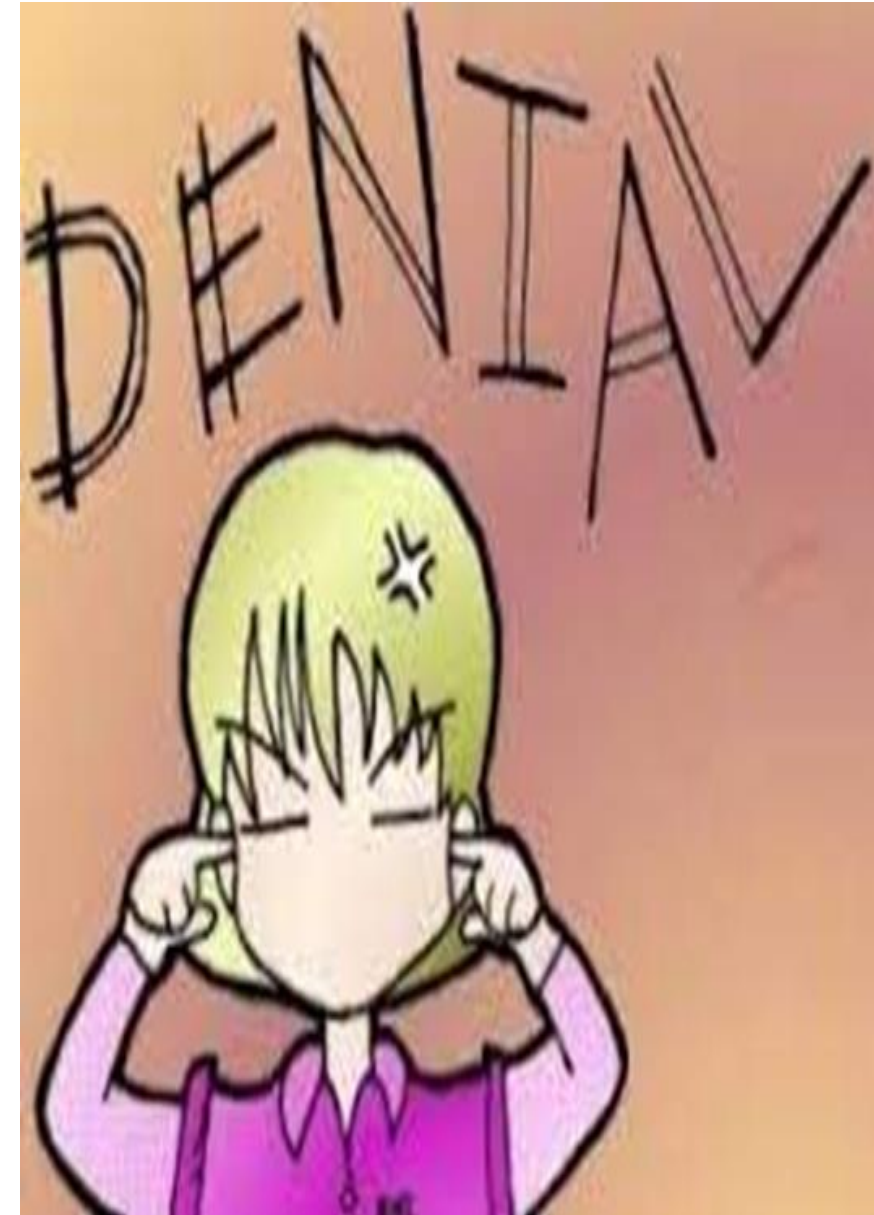


## **Humans decrease anxiety in two ways:**

1. Deal the situation directly- work to eliminate difficulties, lower the chances of their reoccurrence, & also decrease the prospects of additional anxiety in future.
  2. Defend against the anxiety by distorting or denying the situation itself. The way in which we accomplish distortions are called **defence mechanisms**.
- Each of us wards off anxieties with a combination of strategies that arise from our genetic predisposition , external difficulties, & the micro culture of our family & community.
  - Defences used with awareness & self-understanding make life more endurable & more successful. However , when defences obscure reality & impede our ability to function, they become neurotic, & their effects are damaging.

## Denial:

- It is the unwillingness to accept an event that disturbs the ego
  - Adults have a tendency to day dream that certain events are not so, that they didn't really happen.
- 
- A boy who was expecting to pass and if he fails , he may say that there could be a mistake in the announcement
  - People think that they won't get sick and die from smoking because they are in denial.



# Rationalization:

- It is the process of finding acceptable reasons for unacceptable thoughts or actions.
- A person presents an explanation that is either ethically acceptable to others or logically consistent with an attitude, action or idea or feeling that arises from other motivating source.
- We use rationalization to justify our behaviour when in fact the reasons for our actions are not commendable nor do we even understand them.
- As an obstacle to growth it prevents the person who is rationalizing from working with , observing & understanding the genuine , less commendable motivating force.

# RATIONALIZATION



## RATIONALIZATION

- ♦ Involves explaining an unacceptable behavior or feeling in a rational or logical manner, avoiding the true reasons for the behavior.
- ♦ Example: Ian goes out of drinking the night before a big test rationalize his behavior by saying "the test isn't all that important"



## RATIONALIZATION

It's an ego defense mechanism. Making excuses for behaviours that are considered unacceptable.



**Try Stress Management**

WISDOM TO BEAT WITH STRESS



# Projection

- The act of attributing to another person , animal or object the qualities, feelings or intentions that originate in oneself is called projection.

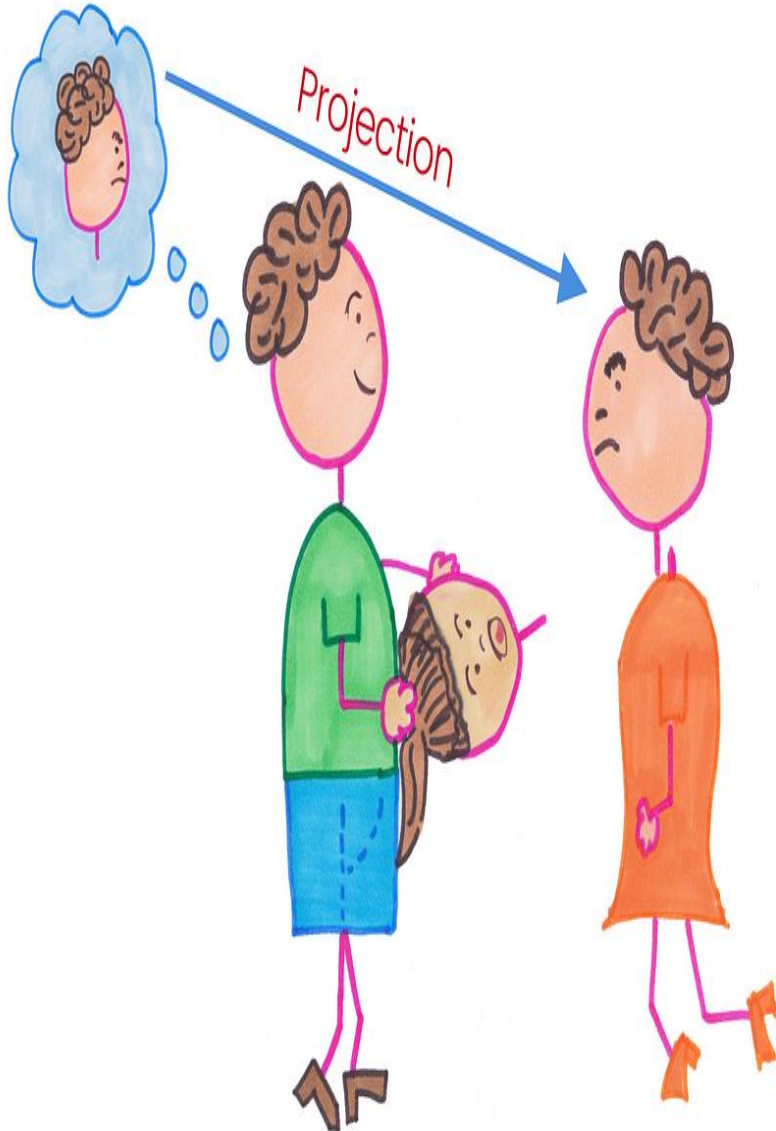
## Personality

### Defense Mechanism: **Projection**



- Taking our own unacceptable qualities or feelings and ascribing them to other people.
- Avoids taking responsibility for own shortcomings and failures

For example, if you have a strong dislike for someone, you might instead believe that he or she does not like you.

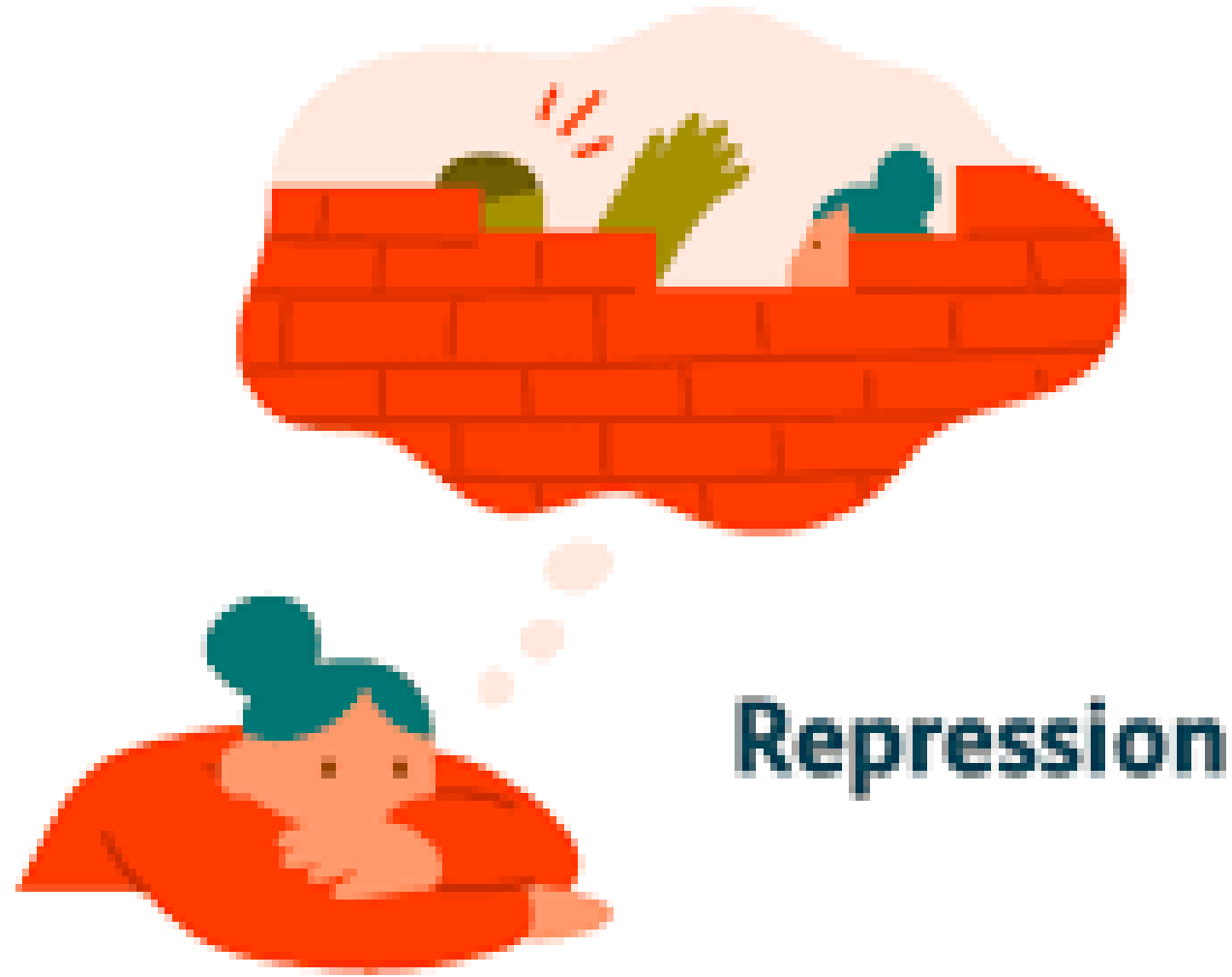


# Projection

- Placing unacceptable impulses in yourself onto someone else.
- They see **their own** faults in **other people**.



<http://stanleybronstein.com/blog/blame.jpg>



Repression

# Repression

What you do:

- Keep painful thoughts and feelings away from consciousness.
- Don't think about it!

Examples:

- Early abuse
- Lies you have told
- Painful memories

Problems:

- Diverts needed energy
- Blocks out stressful situations that could be worked out





# Reaction formation

- It substitutes behaviours or feelings diametrically opposed to the actual wish  
the side effects of reaction formation may cripple social relationships.
- **The principle identifying characteristics of reaction formation are its excessiveness, its rigidity & its extravagance.**
- It may be evident in any excessive behaviour.
- It masks parts of personality & restricts a person's capacity to respond to events, the personality may become relatively inflexible

# REACTION FORMATION:

- The unacceptable real feelings are repressed & acceptable opposite feelings are expressed.



# Reaction Formation

- Behaving in a manner opposite to way you are feeling



You should have heard me tell her off..,



I feel bad for yelling at my friend...



Psychology Fascatic

## Defense Mechanism: Displacement

- redirecting of thoughts feelings and impulses directed at one person or object, but taken out upon another person or object

Ex. → (Negative Displacement) You are upset with your boss. You go home and kick the dog, punching the wall, or argue with your spouse.



**Why?**

# Displacement

The transfer of negative emotion from one person or thing to an unrelated person or thing

Office

Boss shouts at Ankita



Home

Ankita shouts at husband





# Isolation

- It separates the anxiety arousing parts of a situation from the rest of the psyche.
- It is the act of partitioning off, so that little or no emotional reaction remains connected to the event.
- The person may withdraw more & more into ideas, having less & less contact with his or her own feelings.
- The normal prototype of isolation is logical thinking, which also tries to detach the content from the emotional situation in which it is found.





# Regression

- It is a reversion to an earlier level of development or to a simpler & more child like mode of expression.
- It is a way of alleviating anxiety by withdrawing from realistic thinking into behaviour that have reduced anxiety in the past.



## Regression

- Regression is a defence mechanism involving the individual going back to ways of behaving that are associated with a safer, more carefree or happier time of life. For a young child it means going back to an earlier stage of development.



## Regression:

Slipping to an earlier stage of development when faced with stress.

### Example:

Due to the pressure of college, Tom starts sucking his thumb.



## Regression (primitive)

- Reversion to an earlier stage of development when faced with unacceptable, fearful, threatening thoughts or impulses.
- Ex. An adult curling up in fetal position when feeling threatened or afraid.





## Sublimation

- It is the process by whereby energy originally directed toward aggressive goals is redirected toward new aims- often artistic, intellectual or cultural .
- Sublimation is called **the ‘successful defence’**.
- The original energy as a river that periodically floods, destroying homes & property, sublimation is the building of dams & diversionary channels. These in turn can be used to generate electric power, irrigate lands....
- The original energy of the river is successfully diverted into socially acceptable or culturally sanctioned channels.
- Sublimation actually resolves & eliminate the tension.

# Sublimation (mature)



- Channeling of unacceptable and potentially disruptive impulses, thoughts or emotions into socially acceptable behavior.
- Dealing with emotional stressors by using the energy in other, usually constructive activities.
- *Ex: punching bag to channel angry impulses. Sports.*





## Pain Unexplained

Up to two-thirds of all symptoms have no medical diagnosis, one study says. Some of the most common problems:



Headaches



Back Pain



Dizziness

# Somatization

- The person expresses his desires through bodily symptoms like aches, and pains and weakness
- There will not be any pathology behind but exhibit all the symptoms

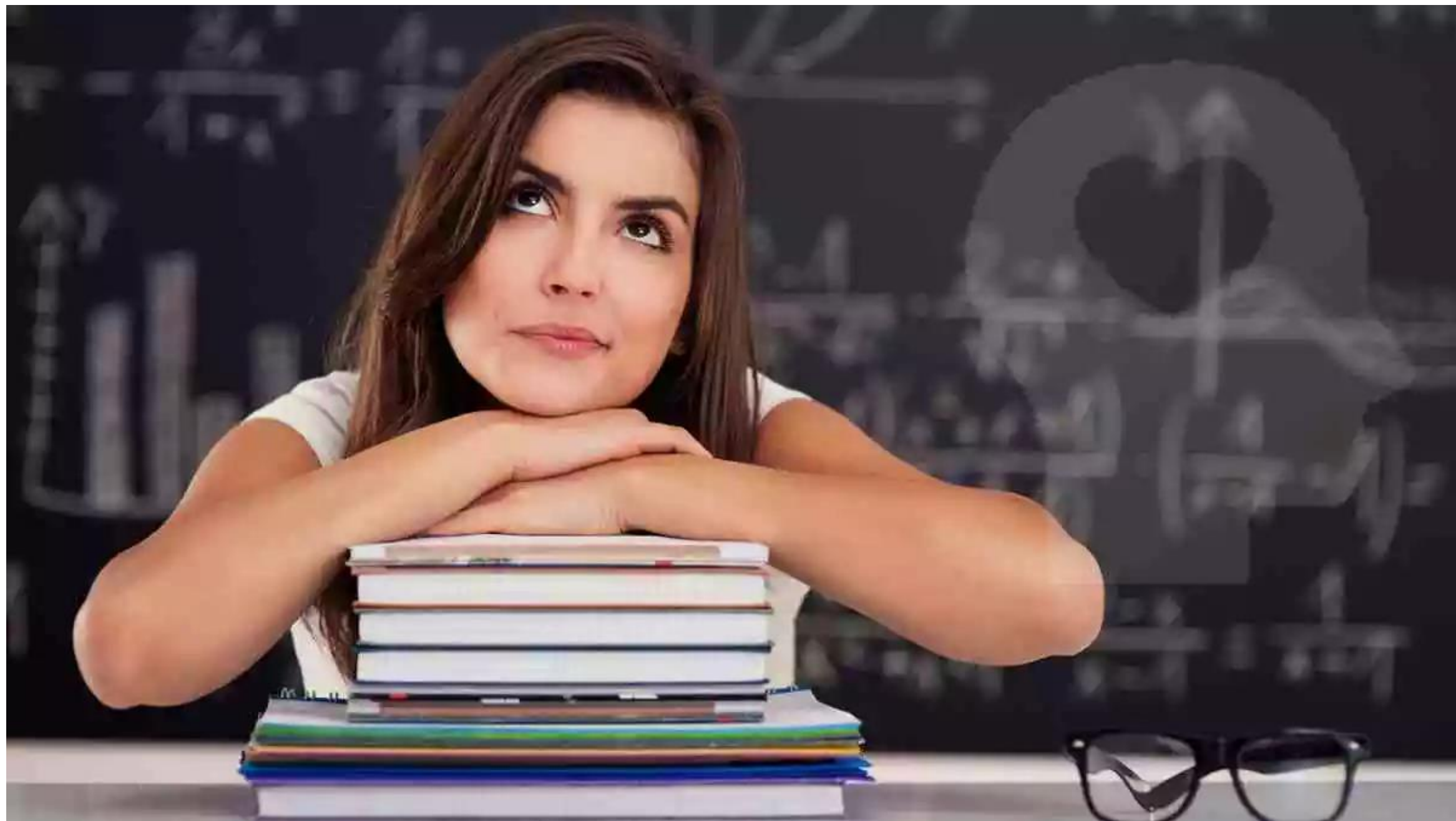
## Somatization

- The transformation of negative feelings towards others into negative feelings toward self, pain, illness, and anxiety.



# 125th Doctor's Visit





## Fantasy

- When one cannot achieve , what one cannot ger, what one is not, the person may slip into a fantasy life, where he can imagine anything and everything
- He/ she starts day dreaming

### Fantasy

- It is a sort of Imagination which can provide an escape from frustration by giving us imaginary satisfaction
- Fantasy is a mechanism of wishful thinking and important for creative thinking



### Personality

#### Defense Mechanism:

### Fantasy



- An imagined sequence of events or mental images used to gratify unconscious wishes
- A temporary "escape" from the real world
- Example → daydreaming

# Fantasy

What you do:

- Dreaming, imagining instead of living in the present world, because you don't feel competent to achieve.
- Pretending

Examples:

- Wanting to look good and pretending to yourself that you are one of the movie stars you read about.
- Making up stories about how successful you are, rather than working on your success.

Problems:

- You get stuck in the fantasy rather than using your talents to become successful.



# Compensation



Making up for weakness in one area by excelling in another area.

# Compensation

- A person who did not attend to his father when he was sick, may start disturbing fruits to the sick and old people periodically. He may donate money to the poor.

## Compensation

➤ People overachieve in one area to **compensate** for failures in another.

### Examples :

- A student who fails in his studies may compensate by becoming the college champion in athletics.
- Girl who is not beautiful may compensate her weakness by doing very good on her study.




THE JOY OF

Wh(y)



# Altruism

- The person may start doing gratifying service to others. He may sacrifice his pleasure or benefits for the sake of others.



## Altruism

- Dealing with stressors by dedicating yourself to meeting the needs of others.
- Through altruistic endeavors, a person receives satisfaction vicariously or from the response of others.