

| Mechanism | Description | Example |
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| Repression | Repression is an unconscious mechanism employed by the ego to keep disturbing or threatening thoughts from becoming conscious. | During the Oedipus complex aggressive thoughts about the same sex parents are repressed |
| Denial | Denial involves blocking external events from awareness. If some situation is just too much to handle, the person just refuses to experience it. | For example, smokers may refuse to admit to themselves that smoking is bad for their health. |
| Projection | This involves individuals attributing their own unacceptable thoughts, feeling and motives to another person. | You might hate someone, but your superego tells you that such hatred is unacceptable. You can 'solve' the problem by believing that they hate you. |
| Displacement | Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object. | Someone who is frustrated by his or her boss at work may go home and kick the dog, |
| Regression | This is a movement back in psychological time when one is faced with stress. | A child may begin to suck their thumb again or wet the bed when they need to spend some time in the hospital. |
| Sublimation | Satisfying an impulse (e.g. aggression) with a substitute object. In a socially acceptable way. | Sport is an example of putting our emotions (e.g. aggression) into something constructive. |