The Defense Mechanisms Worksheet

By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.

Using the descriptions of defense mechanisms given in the <u>Defense Mechanism in Alcoholism/Addiction</u> PDF, give examples of how you used these defenses to avoid dealing with the reality of your circumstances and to persist in your unhealthy behavior. Use separate paper so that you will have enough room to write out all the examples that you can think of.

l. Projection:

Example: "I think you have a problem with alcohol", while being concerned about one's own problem with drugs.

My Examples:

2. Rationalization:

Example: "I work hard. I deserve some down time to do what I want to do."

My Examples:

3. Intellectualization:

Example: "We have a drinking culture. Statistically speaking, it would be unusual for people like me NOT to drink." or "The only reason that more people don't do drugs is because they are legal. When pot is legalized, I won't have a problem."

My Examples:

4. Minimization:

Example: "I only drink when everyone else is in bed asleep. I don't get drunk every time I drink. I still have a job." or the classic example -- "I only had two beers."

My Examples:

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www.stillwatermarriagecounselor.com

https://sites.google.com/site/honeyjarcouplescommunication/

www.howtoovercomeholidaystressanddepression.wordpress.com

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5. Denial:

Example: "I don't have a problem. My husband overreacts. My drinking/using is not hurting anyone but myself."

My Examples:

6. Suppression:

Example: "I made a decision to quit. My drinking is not really an issue anymore. There is nothing I can do about the past."

My Examples:

7. Avoidance:

Example: "Let's talk about the relationship problems that we have instead of beating this dead horse. I told you that I am done with the driving drunk. Let's move on to something else."

My Examples:

8. Deflection:

Example: "You can't talk about my using drugs when drink." "You are hardly one to talk. Your own kids won't talk to you." "You're just as bad; you never get anything done that you say you will."

My Examples:

9. Manipulation:

Example: Picking a fight with your spouse so that you can leave the house in an angry fit and go to the bar.

My Examples:

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10. Hostility:

Example: Getting angry, glaring, and exhibiting behavior that the other person would find threatening. Used as a tactic to shut down discussion of the drinking/using.

My Examples:

11. Lying:

Example: "I got rid of all the alcohol/drugs". Instead, you kept a stash. "I have not been drinking". "I have not relapsed". "I am not high".

My Examples:

12. Blaming:

Example: "Anybody married to you would drink like I do." If you would just leave me alone I wouldn't get mad and get drunk because you are nagging me." "I stayed out all night because I knew you would chew my butt."

My Examples:



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