



Defense Mechanisms

INTRODUCTION:

In this task, clients are to draw their defense mechanisms. Defense mechanisms are the behaviours we use to protect ourselves from emotional pain. An explanation to provide to clients is included in the art directive from the book:

"A simple explanation of defenses such as "the way(s) you protect yourself from emotional pain in the world and in relationships" is probably necessary. You may give an example like, "do you defend yourself by being smooth and absorbent like a sponge, hard and prickly like a cactus, or something else?" Patients need to understand that they do something to protect themselves (that everyone does to some extent) and that a complex set of behaviors can be symbolized in a picture.

ART EXERCISE:

Patients can close their eyes and take a moment to imagine what their defenses look like: their colour, size, and shape.

When the image is in mind, patients then can represent their defenses on paper

