

WORK GROUP DYNAMICS AND DIVERSITY



STUDY UNIT 2

Individual Psychodynamics

Conscious and Unconscious Behaviour

- The Iceberg model (Freud):
 - The conscious is all the information that we are aware of.
 - The unconscious is filled with anxieties and other feelings we are not aware of.
 - The preconscious is the bridge between the conscious and the unconscious mind. Here we find information that is accessible, but not always available.
 - Consciousness is made up certain structure, the id, the ego and the superego.
 - The id operates mostly on the unconscious level in accordance with the pleasure principle (example: I want, I want, I want).

Diversity Concepts

- Iceberg model (continues):
 - The superego operates on the unconscious, preconscious and conscious level in accordance with the principle
 - The ego operates mainly on the preconscious and conscious level in accordance with the reality the principle.
 - According to Freud human behaviour is motivated by instincts, namely life instincts and death instincts which are major driving forces of our behaviour
 - The unconscious contains anxieties which are the major driving power behind people's behaviour and is the basis for explaining behaviour
 - These anxieties always threaten to come into consciousness.
 - The ego, as referee, ensures that these anxieties stay in the unconscious and thus in the id by using defence mechanisms to keep it in the unconscious.

Defence Mechanisms

- Splitting:
 - Splitting is a process of dividing feelings in order to deal with internal conflicts and anxieties and occurs throughout the individual's entire life.
 - It allows the individual to organize his/her intra psychic reality
 - Through splitting we can divide our intrapsychic reality and external reality into good and bad. By doing this we separate feelings such as love and hate, acceptable and unacceptable
 - Splitting, based on the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity, enables us to divide the world into good and bad, black and white
 - It is an inherent need in the person to split self from others because it provides the opportunity to dump the bad into another person or group in order to maintain the good within the oneself Self

Defence Mechanisms

- **Introjection:**

- It involves primarily attributing positive aspects to one, while refusing to deal with negative aspects within oneself – thus externalising the negative aspects of oneself.
- In this way a person can hold onto good aspects such as feelings of competence.
- In introjecting the positive feelings a person and his/her group produces and maintains "illusory goodness and self-idealisation."
- The other person or group then becomes the denigrated one the, i.e., the container for the unacceptable and rejected parts of the person that idealises him or herself.
- See example in study guide

Defence Mechanisms

- **Projection:**

- Involves primarily attributing negative aspects to others in an attitude of prejudice, rejection and externalisation of negative aspects of oneself.
- In this way a person can get rid of bad aspects such as feelings of incompetence, discomfort, suffering etc.
- In projecting the negative feelings a person produces and maintains "illusory goodness and self-idealisation."
- The other person or group then becomes the denigrated one the, i.e., the container for the unacceptable and rejected parts of the person that idealises him or herself.

Defence Mechanisms

- **Introjection Identification:**
 - Introjective identification refers to an unconscious interpersonal interaction in which the individual seems to identify with a feeling that was projected onto him/herself
 - The recipient of the projection then chooses to swallow or introject all or part of the projection.
 - Thus, the adult's behaviour does not only come from him/herself, but from the introjected aspect of the projection.
 - It is proposed that the recipient reacts to an introjection in such a way that his/her own feelings are affected, i.e. he/she unconsciously identifies with the introjected feelings.

Defence Mechanisms

- **Projective Identification:**

- It refers to an unconscious interpersonal interaction in which the individual splits off and puts or project part of his/her unacceptable feelings into another person or group – a willing recipient.
- The recipient of a projection may react to it in such a way that his/her own feelings are affected, i.e. he/she unconsciously identifies with the projected feelings.
- The projector gets rid of the anxiety-provoking feeling onto the recipient (of the projection), but also attempts to control the recipient in such a way that the recipient reacts and behaves in accordance with the projection.
- Projective identification requires unconscious collusion between the projector and the recipient, i.e. willingness on the part of the recipient to accept and behave in accordance with the projections.