

# Solutions:

## Support for Emotional and Binge Eating

### Session 4: Defense Mechanisms

# Check-In

- What is a success and a challenge from the past week? How did you support yourself through those experiences?
- Did you hear your critical parent or rebellious child voices this past week? What was the situation and how did you respond with your adult voice?
- How can the group support you this week?

# Quote of the Week

Self-defense is not just a set of techniques; it's a state of mind, and it begins with the belief that you are worth defending.

*-Rorion Gracie*

# Session 4: Defense Mechanisms

We all use certain defense mechanisms at times to protect and keep ourselves well. This intention of taking care of ourself includes wanting to minimize or avoid discomfort that could potentially be harmful. How we execute that intention may come with an impact that creates more discomfort and potentially more harm in the future.

Let's define some commonly used defense mechanisms for managing discomfort. Learning which defenses you employ and understanding how they help or hinder your physical and psychological wellness can help you begin to find new ways of taking care of yourself and keep defective practices to a minimum.

# Types of Defense Mechanisms

## **Acting out**

- Taking action (usually impulsively and/or without regard to consequence) rather than using reflection and effective problem-solving to reduce internal distress.

## **Denial**

- Refusing to acknowledge an aspect of external or internal reality that's apparent to others.

## **Devaluation**

- Putting down or thinking less of yourself or others to avoid emotional discomfort.

# Types of Defense Mechanisms

## **Displacement**

- Transferring (generally unpleasant) feelings about a situation onto a less-threatening substitute.

## **Help-Rejecting Complaining**

- Repeatedly griping and asking for assistance, then rejecting the support or advice you're given.

## **Humor**

- Making light or joking about things that seriously concern you or cause you discomfort.

# Types of Defense Mechanisms

## **Intellectualization**

- Making generalizations and being theoretical to cover hurt feelings.

## **Minimization**

- Making less of something to decrease emotional discomfort.

## **Passive Aggression**

- Not expressing your negative feelings directly but letting them be known in such a way that you can avoid taking responsibility for them.

# Types of Defense Mechanisms

## Projection

- Disowning an unacceptable, uncomfortable thought, feeling, or behavior and attributing it to someone else.

## Rationalization

- Finding a justifiable excuse, which puts a positive spin on a negative situation.

## Repression

- Unconsciously *forgetting* about something because it's too painful to take in or hold in awareness.



# Discussion Questions

- What are your most commonly used defense mechanisms?
- What situations/events trigger your use of those defense mechanisms?
- What emotions are you protecting yourself from by using these defense mechanisms?

# Discussion Questions

- How does using your defense mechanisms hinder your emotional tolerance and resiliency?
- What are different strategies or techniques you can use to support yourself through uncomfortable experiences?

Any last thoughts or questions?