

Acting Out



PLAY PICMONIC

Mechanism

Subconscious

Sub Con-Shoes

Acting out is a type of immature defense mechanism in which the patient is subconsciously coping with stressors using actions rather than reflections or feelings.

Type of defense

Immature Ego Defense Mechanism

Ego On Immature Lego

Acting out is a type of immature defense mechanism. Other important immature defense mechanisms are projection, splitting, rationalization, denial, passive-aggressiveness, and displacement. Immature psychological defense mechanisms are psychological processes that play an important role in suppressing emotional awareness and increase the risk of various medical conditions, as these patients are more likely to lead unhealthy lifestyles and use food and drugs to cope with external stressors.

Result

Actions Rather Than Reflections

Misbehaving Child

Acting out entails a strong display of emotions through behavior in order to hide the unacceptable underlying feelings. The displayed outburst of action may be socially inappropriate. Example 1: patient skips therapy appointment with a psychiatrist after discomfort from dealing with his past becoming unbearable.

Example 2: A 7-year-old boy overreacts and throws toys at his mother to cover up the underlying feelings of neglect.