Rationalization

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Definition

Justifying Unacceptable Behavior Using Seemingly Logical Explanation

Judge giving thumbs up

Rationalization is defined as asserting seemingly plausible or logical reasoning to justify behaviors or feelings that may be unacceptable or uncomfortable. This can be done consciously or unconsciously and allow an individual to avoid dealing with criticism or feelings of guilt.

Immature Ego Defense

Immature-baby-lego

Rationalization is classified as an immature ego defense. Recall that immature defense mechanisms are often seen in adults and consist of methods, both conscious and unconscious, to avoid uncomfortable realities. Immature defense mechanisms specifically consist of methods that are counterproductive to an individual's ability to cope long-term and are often out of touch with reality, as opposed to mature defense mechanisms which are considered productive.

Example

Breaking Diet Because It's The Weekend

Baby eating cupcake saying "weekend calories don't count"

An example of rationalization would be an individual on a strict diet eating junk food because it's the weekend, using the adage "weekend calories don't count" to justify or rationalize the behavior.

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