

Regression

Regression is one of the immature ego defenses that is best characterized as a reversion to a younger state. This is involuntary and often stress-induced. Regression is the opposite of another immature ego defense, fixation.



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Characteristics

Reversion to a Younger State

[Reverse Time Machine](#)

Regression is a form of ego defense described as a reversion to a younger state, aiming to go back to the past when a person felt safer than in the current situation. This ego defense occurs due to a stressful event that most likely happened in early life.

Immature Ego Defense

[Immature-baby with Ego-Lego Getting Defensive](#)

Regression is an immature ego defense. Immature ego defenses help to reduce anxiety and distress from uncomfortable situations but are detrimental over the long-term in psychosocial development. This leads to the inability of a person to cope effectively.

Involuntary

[No-sign Volunteer](#)

Regression happens in an involuntary way. The person does not necessarily want to bring about this immature ego defense but he/she does not have a better way to cope with the stress.

Stress-Induced

[Stressed-guy](#)

Regression usually occurs due to a stressful situation. An example of regression is when a child is bedwetting again after successfully being toilet-trained. Another example is when a child sucks his/her finger again after seemingly growing past it. New stressors in life can cause regression.

Opposite of Fixation

[Opposite of Fixing \(Worker Making Damage\)](#)

Regression is the opposite of another immature ego defense, fixation. Fixation can be described as someone being "stuck" in development. An example of fixation is a physician that throws a tantrum because a patient is late.