DEFENSE MECHANISMS WORKSHEET

For each of the following situations, choose the defense mechanism that best fits the explanation. Choices: repression, reaction formation, regression, displacement, sublimation, denial, rationalization, or compensation.

1. Sally is 18 years old and unexpectedly pregnant. She had big plans to go to college, but now tells everyone how much she is looking forward to being a mother.

2. Juan recently broke up with his fiancée. Now he is telling all of his friends that he was bored with the relationship.

3. Frankie is always trying to keep up with his older brother when playing sports, but he can’t. He takes great delight in bringing home a good report card instead.

4. LaVonne was broken hearted when her dream-date stood her up for the prom. Now, one year later, she is having trouble remembering what his last name was.

5. Harry and his sister Louise are twins who do everything together. They capture bugs and do nasty experiments on them, sometimes resulting in the bugs dying. When they grow up, Harry goes to work for an animal rights organization, and Louise becomes a veterinarian. Which defense mechanism is each one using?

6. Ali is 6-years-old. After the new baby arrives, he becomes jealous and clings to his parents for attention.

7. Tess hates her new boss. One night, her racquetball partner notices that Tess’ game has become much more competitive lately. She also notices that she is hitting the ball much harder than she used to.

8. Sarah’s children know that whenever Sarah has a fight with her husband, the kids get assigned more chores.

9. Morgan just lost a promotion at work and now wonders whether he will be able to advance in the company at all. He starts going to bars and drinking with his friends more often than he used to. He tells people that he has decided that there is more to life than just money.

10. Jeremy was caught by his mother trying to peek into the girls’ locker room. Now that Jeremy has grown up, he has become active in anti-pornography political activities.