

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DEFENSES AND EXPERIENCES OF DEPRESSION

An Exploratory Study

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This study examined the relationships between defenses and depressive experiences. Two questionnaires, in counterbalanced order, were administered to a community sample of 205 adults: the Depressive Experiences Questionnaire (DEQ; S. Blatt, J. D’Afflitti, & D. Quinlan 1976, 1979) and the Defense Mechanisms Inventory (DMI; D. Ihlevich & G. C. Gleser, 1986). Although *turning against self* related significantly to both depressive experiences of dependency, especially the less mature neediness in comparison with the more mature connectedness, and self-criticism, other types of defenses, as measured by the DMI, differentiated between interpersonal and self-critical experiences of depression. Results are discussed from psychodynamic and developmental perspectives.

Keywords: defense mechanism, depressive experiences, dependency, self-criticism, neediness

Blatt (2008) characterized personality development as the result of the sequential integration of self-definition and interpersonal relatedness. Self-definition relates to the

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