Unconscious Dynamics

This note was prepared for OOL Fest

Written by Payal Gupta- OD Consultant and Coach, with guidance from Bhanumathy Vasudevan

Unconscious is the part of the mind that is inaccessible to the conscious mind but that affects behaviour and emotions. It is impossible for us to remember all our experiences and feelings associated with them from the time of our birth in our conscious mind. Only some remain in our awareness and the rest is repressed. What we have repressed remain within us as 'unconscious'. These materials in the mind have a life of their own, though they remain apparently within us. The five psychological constructs that dominate our world of relationships are Projection, Introjection, Transference, Valence, Setup, these are called Unconscious Dynamics.

Projection: is a mechanism in which a person attributes his or her own characteristics to another person. For example, a hostile husband might attribute hostility to his wife and argue that she has an anger management problem. A classic example is when the feeling, "I hate her" is translated into, "She hates me." In some cases projection can result in false accusations. For example, a spouse with adulterous feelings might accuse her spouse of infidelity. Projection is a way of avoiding uncomfortable repressed feelings. The act of projecting one's own unconscious feelings onto another. For example, a wife might insist that her husband seems angry when she is actually the one who is angry.

Introjection: is the opposite of projection. While projection occurs when a person projects her feelings onto another person—for example, when a person believes other people perceive him or her as fat, because he or she feels that way—introjections occurs when a person internalizes the beliefs of other people. It is common among children and parents. For example, a child might take on elements of his or her parents' personalities or beliefs by adopting their political ideology, concept of right and wrong, or ideas about sex. When people introject, they identify with a person or object so strongly that they cannot separate that person or object from themselves. While everyone learns from the external world and takes on elements of other people's beliefs and ideas, introjection occurs with minimal thought. A woman who adopts her friends' views, after they have been carefully explained and considered, is not introjecting, but a child who reflexively adopts his parents' views without thought is introjecting.

Transference: is the unconscious redirection of feelings from one person to another. It is redirecting ones feelings about some significant person of the past to a person currently available. For example if the a person feels anger towards one of her parents the person may transfer the parental role on to his boss and respond in a manner like he would as a the child. This process occurs unconsciously

Valence: each one of us has a valence/propensity/tendency to attract a particular emotion or a set of emotions from the environment, when we absorb particular feelings besides our own. It becomes an emotion that we experience very often. We may take in the emotion from a group, family system we belong to and act out We then own that emotion and behave in a manner disproportionate to the real cause. It can become a burden to us and make us unhappy. Many of us become convenient vessels for those emotions in the environment, wherever we are. When we do so we begin to carry the emotion on behalf of the other person and they become free, being no longer burdened by that emotion.

Setup: an extension of Valence is being "Set-up". As we saw in the process of Valence, each one of us often has a valence to carry emotions on behalf of others around us. In a set-up, others around us would unconsciously push us, or encourage us to act out emotions on their behalf. They may feel the emotion and may not be able to voice it, or may not wish to voice it, so they will push it on to a more willing vessel (person ready to take it unconsciously) without their awareness.

To know more about the author Click [here](#)…