DEFENSE MECHANISMS

Defense Mechanisms, especially DENIAL that there is a problem at all, are all too common in addiction. In your notebook, describe how you have used the following defenses and give THREE detailed and thorough examples of each:

1. DENYING: We act as if there is no problem at all; the problem lies outside of our conscious awareness. ("What drugs? I have no idea what you're talking about!"")

2. LYING: We distort the truth, leave out or “forget” important details.

3. ACCUSING: Attacking a person and pointing out their problems to take the focus off of our own.

4. THREATENING: Using threats to make someone comply with our demands; keep them on the offense.

5. JUDGING: Pointing out someone else’s faults/character defects to minimize our own guilt/shame.

6. PROJECTING: Finding things that we don’t like in other people that we are not aware of or recognize as being a character defect in ourselves. “Projection is reflection.”

7. BLAMING: Making others responsible for our drinking/using.

8. HUMOR: Making light of a dark situation and turning it into a joke.

9. INTELLECTUALIZING: Using logic to convince ourselves and others that there isn’t a problem; demonstrate that we haven’t done things that could possibly make us an addict/alcoholic.

10. RATIONALIZING: Making up excuses and plausible explanations as to why we use/drink.

11. SILENCE: We are quiet and withdrawn as a means of manipulation/attention seeking.

12. COMPLIANT: We are outwardly agreeable while being inwardly rebellious.

13. MINIMIZING: We agree that while there may be a slight problem, it is much less than others are making it out to be.

14. COCKINESS: Making it appear that we are completely in control of the situation and could never allow ourselves to fall into despair. ("I GOT this, I don’t need any help!")

15. JUSTIFYING: We defend our actions with false logic and irrational reasoning.

16. DEFIANCE: Using verbal force to create a wall of defensive resistance.