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Student Personality Adaptations, Part III[*]

Abstract

Across three consecutive articles, examples of student personality adaptations have been presented. Drawing upon the concepts of transactional analysis and knowledge from the field of personality disorders, a range of typical traits and behaviours, dominant needs, and selected AT parameters are discussed. Practical guidelines are also offered to assist teachers and educators in understanding their relationships with students whose difficulties stem from characterological problems. Furthermore, compensatory actions and interventions in the form of affirmations are proposed to help prevent manifestations of dysfunctional personality development.

In the final article of this series, further examples of dysfunctional personality adaptations observable in some students are presented.

Keywords: student, personality adaptations, borderline, histrionic disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, optimal adaptation

I Experience Extreme Emotions

The *borderline adaptation*—which will be discussed here—is, like the symbiotic personality, entangled in family attachment issues. The term *disorganised*

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attachment is often used in this context. Nevertheless, in such cases we move alarmingly close not merely to a particular characterological style but to the borderland of deeper mental disorders (*BPD – borderline personality disorder*). The destructiveness of this personality type also brings it closer to narcissistic and psychopathic adaptations.

A personality with borderline features (also referred to as a *borderline personality*) is most often characterised by marked instability of self-image, which affects various domains of life such as thinking, emotions, and behaviour, as well as—most importantly for our considerations—interpersonal relationships. A very characteristic ambivalence can be observed here, expressed through contradictory statements such as *"I hate you!" – "Don't leave me!"* or *"I want to be independent!" – "I can't manage without you!"*

Some authors describe this type of adaptation in terms of four simultaneously co-occurring states, corresponding to S. Karpman's Drama Triangle: the helpless Victim, the guilty Persecutor, the furious Victim, and the omnipotent Persecutor (Gregory, 2007, pp. 131–147).

However, describing this personality type poses considerable challenges for researchers, which is why numerous slightly differing characterisations can be found in the literature.

Table 1

The Impulsive Child – Borderline Adaptation in Transactional Analysis

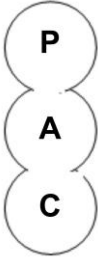| The Acting-Out Child	Borderline Adaptation
Central problem	Stability.
Primary unmet need	A stable bond, support, and certainty in relationships.
Dominant emotions	Capricious and unstable moods; a mixture of fear, rage, and despair; intense, uncontrolled anger; a sense of emptiness and boredom; feelings of helplessness, insecurity, and injustice; despair; the impression of living on the edge.
Parental behaviours toward the child	Parents showed a lack of sensitivity to the child's needs and failed to soothe its frustration. Frequent divorces or separations occurred. Inconsistency in upbringing was common. At times the child was excessively praised and placed at the centre of attention, at others excessively punished and treated with severity. Parents, preoccupied with their own problems, often failed to notice the child's difficulties. They were dissatisfied with the child's feelings and needs when these differed from their own. The child's autonomy and signs of independence were regarded as bad or threatening. After a satisfactory stage of symbiosis and attachment, growing individuation and separation were not tolerated. Excessive dependency and sharing of difficult family issues were rewarded. The child was sometimes left without support when facing, for instance, the sudden loss of a caregiver (through death or divorce) or when their emotions (e.g., after the birth of another child) went unnoticed. Some individuals with borderline traits were sexually abused or physically or emotionally mistreated in childhood.

Table 1
The Impulsive Child… (cont.)

The Acting-Out Child	Borderline Adaptation
Attachment style	Disorganised, ambivalent, and insecure.
Selected injunctions	*Don't grow up. Don't be yourself. Don't be important. Don't be close. Don't feel joy. Don't succeed in your relationships. Don't be normal or mentally healthy.*
Script drivers	*Be strong. Please others.*
Probable ego states	P / A / C
Selected traits and behaviours	Panic fear of abandonment and loneliness. Ambivalences and counter-tendencies expressed through opposing emotional states, thoughts, and behaviours. Identity disturbances characterised by an unstable self-image oscillating between high and extremely low self-esteem. Instability in many life domains. Difficulties in formulating personal plans. Mood swings, capriciousness, and emotional lability. Dichotomous thinking. High sensitivity to criticism. Emotional vulnerability. Impulsivity and uncontrolled outbursts of anger. Excessive efforts to please others. Problems with concentration. Difficulty in understanding and reflecting on one's own behaviour. Shifts from idealisation to devaluation in interpersonal relationships. A tendency to be quarrelsome, provoke conflicts, and display sarcasm and irritability. Inability to compromise. Involvement in emotionally intense relationships marked by stormy breakups and reconciliations. Expectation of immediate gratification. Acting without considering possible negative consequences. Inability to tolerate routine and order. Frequent lateness and procrastination. Perceiving oneself, others, and the world in extreme black-and-white terms, with no middle ground between euphoria and breakdown (*binary value attributions*). Identity deficits. Unrealistically high standards or expectations of oneself (*self-invalidation*). A sense of inner emptiness. Lack of capacity for unconditional love. Difficulty understanding what is happening in the present moment. Conflicts concerning giving and receiving care, and closeness versus distance (*counter-dependence*). Suicidal thoughts, threats, or attempts. Susceptibility to depression, anorexia, and bulimia. Self-harming tendencies. Engagement in risky sexual behaviour. A liking for daring acts and dangerous extreme sports. Suicidal threats. Use of psychoactive substances. Experiences resembling delusions or hallucinations. Primitive defence mechanisms such as denial, omnipotent control, and projective identification.

Table 1
The Impulsive Child… (cont.)

Typical beliefs	"I am a helpless person." "I live in a hostile world." "My unpleasant feelings or thoughts may get out of control." "I don't manage as well as other people." "If I get close to others, they will probably reject me." "Everything counts or nothing counts." "Someone close to me will be disloyal or unfaithful." "I must be alert." "I should end the relationship before the other person does." "I must subordinate my needs and desires to others, or they will abandon or hurt me." "When I'm alone, I'm helpless." "I must attack first before others attack me." "I am bad and deserve punishment."
Life position	*I'm not OK – You're OK (I–, U+).*
Favourite interpersonal games	"What will you do if you catch me?", "Row", "Fight", "Cops and robbers."
Examples of real, film, literary, or fairy-tale characters	Female protagonists of films such as *Margot at the Wedding* (2007, dir. N. Baumbach) and *Girl, Interrupted* (1999, dir. J. Mangold). It is said that both Marilyn Monroe and Princess Diana suffered from this condition. Readers are encouraged to look for further examples.
Positive traits	It is difficult to indicate clear positive features of this adaptation. Nevertheless, such individuals manage to cope with life to a greater or lesser degree. They can be found in all professions and tend to change jobs frequently, often being in conflict with their employers and close surroundings. They cope poorly in occupations requiring solitary work. Typically, they achieve low professional outcomes despite their talents and skills. A person with this type of adaptation could be described as an *Unpredictable Antagonist.*
Desired strokes	Conditional positive strokes.
Teacher's affirmations	"Between your anger and polite acceptance there is a whole range of things to acknowledge." "We must agree on something and both stick to that agreement." "By hurting others with your anger, you also hurt yourself." "My criticism of your behaviour is not always a sign that I dislike you." "It's possible to disagree with someone and still be friends." "Sometimes you have to wait to get what you like." "The order and rules in the classroom serve us all, including you."

Source: own research

Teachers and educators should be aware that "the term borderline often means different things to different authors, and a review of the literature shows considerable inconsistency in the use of this label" (Johnson, 1993, p. 12). Therefore, extreme caution must be exercised when formulating unambiguous and unequivocal recommendations for managing individuals exhibiting these characteristics.

Specific Recommendations for Teachers and Educators

Nevertheless, it is worth attempting to provide some guidelines:

— Providing a sense of constancy and availability ("If you ever need to meet and talk with me, we can always arrange such a meeting beforehand").

— Communicating according to the SET model (Support, Empathy, Truth) recommended for these types of personality issues (see Footnote 1):

  – S (Support) – "I'm concerned about your behaviour and well-being today."

  – E (Empathy) – "You must be feeling awful."

  – T (Truth about the situation) – "However, I will not tolerate such rude behaviour from you any further."

— Applying another communication model from transactional analysis, referred to as the 'Bull's Eye' (Geetha, 2015, p. 27). Messages directed at the interlocutor should target the three structural ego states:

  – Parent Ego State – "Let's stick to these rules."

  – Child Ego State – "I understand that this is difficult for you right now."

  – Adult Ego State – "It's worth considering how to get out of this situation."

— Patience as a key strategy for relationship-building ("I'm repeating this again: I am not angry with you, although I find the way you sometimes behave difficult to accept").

— Setting clear and firm boundaries for specific concerning behaviours ("Your anger hurts others; you should be aware of that").

— Establishing relational boundaries ("I would like to define the mode of our mutual meetings together with you/your parents"). There is, however, a paradox in setting boundaries with individuals exhibiting borderline characteristics. In typical situations, those most dissatisfied with the establishment of any boundary are those who benefit from its absence. In the case of the individuals discussed here—internally volatile and psychologically unstable—defining boundaries is often met with distinct relief and acceptance.

— Utilising metacommunicative transactions (see Footnote 2) ("You are talking to me about what was, or what will be. I would like you to tell me what you understand 'here and now' by the statement that others will take advantage of you").

— Being prepared for various counterattacks ("We agreed that you would report your lack of preparation for class each time. Do not try to convince me I did not say that. Today, you did not do your homework again. I will not allow that").

— Maintaining a stable and balanced self-image in the face of frequent blaming and unjustified accusations ("I believe that your accusations against me are

unwarranted. I think differently of myself and do not deserve to be treated badly").
— Preparing for tense or confrontational conversations in advance ("I suggest that you/your parents come to see me again next week to discuss the details").
— Respecting personal boundaries during rage attacks ("Please step back a few paces from me").
— Skillfully giving praise and encouragement ("I can see that you are trying to control yourself – that makes me very happy").
— Instilling hope and mobilising self-work ("I see an improvement in your behaviour, and I hope it continues").
— Pointing out the consequences of destructive behaviours ("I find it difficult to accept your behaviour today, which provokes anger in others").
— Being authentic in the relationship ("As you can see, I am not pretending anything with you/your parents").
— Attempting to understand and accept subjective views and experiences, even when they do not align with one's own perception of reality ("I understand that this is how you/your parents may assess this situation").

Individuals characterised by borderline adaptations exhibit considerable chaos in relationships and often sabotage any form of help. They experience intense emotions, display extreme behaviours, and struggle to control their actions, creating persistent interpersonal problems. An aware teacher or educator should therefore take special care to establish distinct "bridgeheads" of stability, transparency, and clarity of rules governing mutual relations.

Moreover, as many authors confirm, the number of individuals with these characterological and personality disorders is steadily increasing. The prevalence is estimated at 5.9%, with approximately 10% committing suicide; two-thirds of those affected are women (Talarowska et al., 2021, pp. 59–60). These statistics apply not only to adults but increasingly to younger generations. Some authors, however, argue that personality is not fully formed in childhood and remains subject to continuous development. "Other clinicians dispute this view. They believe that emotional and behavioural problems related to personality development are distinctly present early in life and can often be observed a year or two before such a person seeks help. This, they believe, proves the persistence and entrenchment of the behaviour" (Mason & Kreger, 2013, p. 248).

We have termed the internal child state of individuals exhibiting borderline personality traits the **Acting-Out Child**. This is deliberate: "Acting out, or re-experiencing childhood, is the most destructive way the wounded inner child disrupts our lives" (Bradshaw, 2008, p. 39). Such acting out may be directed externally or inwardly, punishing oneself as one was once punished. This dynamic hinders or even prevents the development of healthy interpersonal relation-

ships. Consequently, in cases of serious borderline-type disorders, relational therapy based on transactional analysis proves to be the most effective form of intervention (Rodríguez & Cabrero, 2015, pp. 587–606).

I Must Be Liked and Attract Attention

The personality adaptations discussed previously were often shaped during the earliest developmental periods. Representatives of the psychodynamic approach refer to this as the pre-Oedipal stage. The following adaptation and subsequent personality characteristics relate to a later period, termed the Oedipal stage. This period spans roughly between the ages of three and seven, although clear and unambiguous chronological boundaries are difficult to establish.

While earlier adaptations (schizoid and oral) signify the relationship: Self – bond/attachment, and the ones that followed them (borderline) signify Self – others, the present adaptation will express the configuration: Self – within the surrounding system. This is the assertion of representatives of the psychoanalytic-developmental stream. The inherent ambivalence here is expressed by the motto: "My great attractiveness will draw you in – but it may also destroy you."

Table 2

The Seduced Child – Characteristics of the Histrionic Adaptation

The Seduced Child	Histrionic Adaptation
Central Issue	**Attractiveness.**
Core Unmet Need	Being noticed, appreciated, and admired.
Dominant Feelings	Experiencing intense, yet often variable and shallow, emotions and moods: sadness and shame, confusion and anxiety, anger and submissiveness, etc. These feelings are, however, superficial and occur almost in an "as-if" convention. Concealed sadness. Impatience in seeking attention, and a feeling of helplessness. Fear covering genuinely experienced anger.
Parental Behaviour Towards the Child	Upbringing in an atmosphere where only external attractiveness to others ensures a sense of success. Exploiting the child's natural sexuality for the parents' own purposes. A family with a high degree of control and low cohesion. A family constellation where one parent is emotionally cold and distant, and the other is charming and seductive. The conviction that the most important thing in the family is that everyone is happy and satisfied. Sometimes sexual abuse occurs in such families, but this is not a rule, and seduction then takes more hidden and indirect forms.
Attachment Style	Disorganised and ambivalent.
Selected Injunctions	Don't be yourself. Don't be a child. Don't grow up. Don't be important. Don't be close. Don't think. Don't feel angry.

Table 2
The Seduced Child… (cont.)

The Seduced Child	Histrionic Adaptation
Script Drivers	Please others. Be perfect. Try hard.
Probable Ego States	P A C
Selected Traits and Behaviours	A continuous desire to draw attention to oneself in search of acceptance. The need to constantly remain at the centre of attention. Egocentrism. Capriciousness. Effusiveness. Seductiveness in relationships. Exaltation. Constant search for stimulation. Dramatising ordinary daily events. Lack of interest from others is experienced as rejection. Easily influenced by suggestions and moods. Lack of self-criticism. Manipulating the environment to receive attention, support, and approval. Imprecise thinking and an inability to focus attention on one task for a longer period. Low persistence in pursuing goals. Vague and imprecise speech full of generalisations or containing an excess of unnecessary details. Speaking loudly, expressively, and emotionally. Overuse of words signifying excess (e.g., enormous, huge, very great, etc.). Excessive tendency towards gesticulation and suggestive behaviour. Loud laughter. Competing with others for one's attractiveness. Excessive sensitivity to unfavourable evaluations. Vanity. Intellectual emptiness. Emotional shallowness. Immaturity. Lack of rationality. Pretentiousness. High reactivity in interpersonal relationships. Shortening interpersonal distance, e.g., by unwarranted use of first names (known as ingratiation). Exhibitionism. The desire to keep "dangerous thoughts" out of consciousness. Lack of respect for the opposite sex. Sexualising many relationships and engaging in erotic provocations while simultaneously denying them. Frequent loss of acquaintances and friends as a consequence of violently experienced emotions. Frequent perception of betrayal and disloyalty from the environment. Behaviours characterised by a specific melodramatic and "operatic" quality. Clothing intended to attract attention, being extravagant or unconventional, and inappropriate for specific circumstances (e.g., parties, funerals, ceremonies, etc.).
Typical Beliefs	"My attractiveness and seductiveness will ensure my success." "I must impress others," "I must be adored always and by everyone." "All gratification comes from people of the opposite sex." "In reality, I am incompetent and won't cope with life." "Because I am exceptional, I deserve special rights."
Life Position	I am not OK – You (They) are OK. (I-, U+).

Table 2
The Seduced Child… (cont.)

The Seduced Child	Histrionic Adaptation
Favourite Interpersonal Games	"Rape," "If it weren't for you," "Gotcha, you SOB," "Stupid," "Toy Pistol," "No, actually," "Let's Get Joe," "Let's Make Mum Mad."
Selected Real, Film, Literary, and Fairy-Tale Figures	Characters such as: Scarlett O'Hara from Gone with the Wind (1939), dir. S. Howard; Carolyn Burnham from American Beauty (1999), dir. S. Mendes; Holly Golightly in Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961), dir. B. Edwards; and Blanche DuBois in the film A Streetcar Named Desire (1951), dir. E. Kazan, are pointed to. Important themes are also present in films like: Anything Else (2003), dir. W. Allen; Hysterical Blindness (2002), dir. M. Nair; and Secrets & Lies (1971), dir. M. Leigh. The text omits mentioning people from the so-called front pages of newspapers, media, or social portals who unashamedly disclose their intimate private lives. It is important to remember that individuals with such personality traits often choose professions that provide them with popularity, acceptance, and the opportunity to remain the centre of attention: e.g., actors, presenters, singers, dancers, journalists, etc. They are now referred to as celebrities. Why are they celebrities? – "because they are popular" and that is why they are celebrities. The Rose in A. Saint-Exupéry's The Little Prince, which "charmed with beauty and fragrance." It is worthwhile to look for similar examples oneself.
Positive Qualities	Ability to adapt to the environment when accepted. Attending to one's image and success. Capacity to care for others. Being compassionate and caring. Such a person could be termed an: Expressive Enthusiast.
Desired Strokes (Signs of Recognition)	Positive unconditional (authentic!).
Affirmations for the Teacher	"Be yourself." "Good relationships with others are built not on being attractive, but on being real." "You don't have to be liked by people, and you don't have to worry about it." "Being in the centre doesn't always mean we are the most important." "When on a mood swing, it's sometimes worth standing on the ground and walking for a while." "The colours of our statements fade over time." "Criticism towards us doesn't always mean a complete lack of acceptance."

Source: own research

Teachers and educators may focus on the following elements in their work, knowing that these do not exhaust all possible courses of action.

Recommendations for Teachers and Educators

Here are some useful guidelines:
— Rewarding behaviours that express authenticity, sincerity, and genuine feelings ("I see that you said that in an open and natural way; I really like that").
— The skill of teaching boundary setting in mutual relationships ("You don't have to agree to everything others expect of you").

— Distancing oneself from a student's attempts to break certain boundaries ("I do not give my private phone number to everyone").
— Applying praise for small things that the student has done independently or with great effort ("I really liked your drawing because I can see you worked very hard on it").
— When expressing criticism, explaining the reason ("I don't like what you did because you acted disrespectfully towards a classmate who might have felt upset because of it").
— Treating the student equally with others ("Everyone in the class is treated on equal terms").
— Raising the issue of gender with parents ("I observe excessive coyness in your daughter; perhaps it would be worthwhile to discuss this with her?").
— Encouraging the child to choose their own goals and preferences ("It is not good to excessively yield to the opinions of others").
— Developing the ability to express critical judgments ("I would now like to hear your assessment and how you justify it?").
— Fostering precision in thinking and speaking ("Try to say that once more, but precisely and concretely").
— Teaching concentration on one issue at a time ("Now focus only on this one fragment of the text and tell me your thoughts").
— Conducting an in-depth analysis of specific facts ("You tell me you are hesitant about choosing one university course over another. Tell me what speaks in favour of each decision? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?").
— Highlighting the appropriateness of clothing choices for the situation, teaching dress code principles ("Let's talk about various life situations, e.g., going to a prom, school, graduation, a funeral, the beach, a name day party, etc., and let's consider together how one should dress then, and when our outfit is inappropriate?").

When discussing the Seduced Child, it is important to be aware, as mentioned, that this does not always imply literal incest, molestation, or sexual exploitation. Seduction is often indirect, symbolically expressed, and hidden, rather than incestuous. From my own therapeutic practice, I recall the case of a father who did not live with the family. For his daughter's eleventh birthday (she was often referred to as a "little woman," "my princess," "Daddy's girl," etc.), he gave her a gift of 11 crimson roses and a thong (sic!). It is, therefore, not surprising that the girl clearly exhibited histrionic traits, and the father—despite my observations—saw nothing inappropriate in his behaviour. Stephen M. Johnson noted:

> Every time I have had the opportunity to see an example of hysterical personality, clearly distinguishable from oral, narcissistic, and symbiotic tendencies, it was always a woman,

having had a past of special, sexually-toned relations with a seductive father (Johnson, 1998, p. 249).

This is an aspect of the discussed adaptation that should also draw the attention of teachers and educators.

It is also worth noting that histrionic behaviours appear to be somewhat rewarded in recent times. This is evidenced by the fact that they were previously estimated at 2-3% in the general population, whereas they are currently diagnosed in only about one percent of cases (Talarowska et al., 2021, p. 68).

Order is Most Important to Me

The next personality adaptation presented is labelled the Disciplined Child. John Bradshaw writes about this as follows:

> Children need parents who will model self-discipline, not just preach it. They learn what their parents actually *do*, not what they say they are going to do. If parents fail to generate discipline, the child becomes undisciplined. If, however, parents use discipline but do not follow through on what they preach—the child becomes over-disciplined (Bradshaw, 2008, p. 47).

The ambivalent attitude is expressed in the conviction: "I must watch myself, be perfect, and not make any mistakes – or I will not deserve love and recognition." The characteristics discussed below are presented in this way.

Table 3

The Disciplined Child – Characteristics of the Anankastic (Obsessive-Compulsive) Adaptation

The Disciplined Child	Anankastic (Obsessive-Compulsive) Adaptation
Central Issue	Discipline and control.
Core Unmet Need	Being loved and accepted regardless of what one does or who one is.
Dominant Feelings	Anxiety, for which the defence mechanisms are the occasional obsessive thoughts and compulsive behaviours. Fear of losing self-control. Guilt combined with internal anxiety. Anger and irritation towards others. Repression or denial of emotions.
Parental Behaviour Towards the Child	Extremely demanding, controlling parents who place great emphasis on achievement, though they do not always meet these requirements themselves. Establishing strict, rigorous, and inviolable parental rules. Recognising that the most important values in life are work, effort, and achievement. Expecting the child to keep impulsivity, emotionality, and spontaneity under constant control.
Attachment Style	Avoidant, insecure, and ambivalent.
Selected Injunctions	Don't be a child. Don't play. Don't feel. Don't be close. Don't feel grief.
Script Drivers	Be perfect. Try hard. Be strong.

Table 3
The Disciplined Child… (cont.)

The Disciplined Child	Anankastic (Obsessive-Compulsive) Adaptation
Probable Ego States	
Selected Traits and Behaviours	The student is often perceived as well-behaved, reserved, respectful of the teacher, and meticulous and accurate in performing tasks. Excessive focus on achievements (e.g., school, professional, etc.). Workism – the belief that work is the sole meaning and centre of one's life. Lack of ability to separate private from school/professional spheres. Internal pressure to do things perfectly. High tendency to conform to the demands of the environment and authorities, and a search for experts. Living under the pressure of constant duties and tasks. Perfectionism in many areas of activity, which may, however, hinder the completion of started tasks. Any failure or mistake is an unforgivable defeat worthy of punishment or stigma. Limited capacity for spontaneous play and joy. Poor ability to relax and enjoy recreation. A lack of feeling comfortable in a group, hence individual relationships with others or loneliness. Rigidity, schematism, and routine in action. Dissatisfaction with already achieved results. Simultaneous involvement in an excessive number of activities. Being without obligations causes anxiety and discomfort. Excessive, obsessive preoccupation with certain thoughts and problems. Rigorousness and dogmatism of beliefs and views. Tendency to issue strict moral judgements. Strong attachment to one's beliefs, values, or principles. Focusing on secondary details while failing to notice essential, fundamental issues. Lack of understanding of interpersonal relationships and intolerance for ambiguity in them. Seeking authorities and significant people. Performing intrusive activities (e.g., tics, frequent hand washing, repeated checking of certain things, etc.). Low creativity and development of imagination. Difficulties in making important decisions. Repression of the emotional sphere. Often the eldest child among siblings, though this is not a rule. Excessive concern for order, neatness, and precision in action. Creating problems for oneself that one wishes to avoid. Lack of understanding of ambiguous communications. Striving to achieve goals unattainable for others. Difficulties in building close and warm relationships with others. Stubbornness where firmness should be, submissiveness where flexibility should be shown. Stinginess and preparing for unfavourable circumstances. Susceptibility to numerous addictions (e.g., alcoholism, drug addiction, compulsive shopping, gambling, bulimia, etc.). Rigidity expressed in posture and body movements.

Table 3
The Disciplined Child… (cont.)

The Disciplined Child	Anankastic (Obsessive-Compulsive) Adaptation
Typical Beliefs	"I must not make mistakes." "Thanks to my diligence and conscientiousness, I will avoid feelings of shame and critical remarks." "This is quite good, but it could be much better." "I have to control myself, or I will lose control and then explode." "There's something wrong with me." "I will never make a similar mistake in my life." "Details are always extremely important because the devil is in the details." "Others should act as I do." "To do something well, strict rules and order are necessary." "If there is no specific structure and framework, everything will fall apart." "There is too much randomness in the actions of others." "No matter what I do, it will still be unacceptable." "Showing emotions is a sign of weakness."
Life Position	I am not OK – You (They) are OK. (I-, U+)
Favourite Interpersonal Games	"See How Hard I Tried," "Harried," "If It Weren't for You."
Selected Real, Film, Literary, and Fairy-Tale Figures	Films: *Day of the Wacko* (2002), dir. M. Koterski; *Black Swan* (2010), dir. D. Aronofsky. Hercule Poirot, the detective character created by Agatha Christie in crime novels and TV series. The fanatic Saeed in the film *The Pilot's Wife* (2021), dir. A. Z. Berrached. The Rabbit in A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*, who is impatient and hardworking in caring for his garden. The Banker in A. Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*, focused on constant counting and described as a "serious man." It is worthwhile to look for similar examples oneself.
Positive Qualities	A high level of professional achievement. The ability for logical thinking and fact analysis. A responsible person who can be entrusted with the most difficult tasks and can hold responsible positions. An excellent, though strict, organiser of others' work. Often quickly promoted in company and organisational structures. As a subordinate, they are an asset to any superior, but as a boss, they can be dictatorial towards employees, expecting them to subordinate their entire lives to tasks just as they do. This is a common trait among many military personnel and generals—especially one who will likely remain in our memories for a long time. The person with an anankastic adaptation deserves the title of: Responsible Workaholic.
Desired Strokes (Signs of Recognition)	Positive conditional.
Affirmations for the Teacher	"Effort alone does not always bring results." "Everything is fine, you don't need to worry." "See that your mistakes also teach you something." "Smart people make mistakes – foolish people cannot even see them." "Feelings are just as important as thinking." "I accept you as you are." "Try to look at certain things from a different perspective as well."

Source: own research

Teachers and educators are perhaps most likely to encounter the characteristics of the above adaptation. When setting specific requirements for students in various situations, they may notice this type of reaction but also fall into a certain trap. The trap is this: teachers tend to like and value students with anankastic personality traits, simultaneously failing to notice the underlying psychological problems.

Guidelines for Teachers and Educators

Therefore, it is worthwhile to undertake certain sensible actions towards this group of students.

— Assistance in understanding ambiguous communications (To a reprimand directed at a late student, such as: "What time is it!?", a student with anankastic traits would most likely reply, without malice and according to the factual state: "It is currently 8:15." The teacher should then say: "I am pointing out that you are late for the first lesson").
— Acceptance of the student's mistakes and experienced failures ("Making mistakes is OK, as long as we can draw appropriate conclusions for ourselves").
— Awareness of the student's particular need for control ("Don't worry about it!").
— Improving group relationships ("For this task, pair up with the person you know least in the class").
— Acknowledging and accepting ambiguity ("Give me an example from the novel we are discussing where things could have been different than the author described – how?").
— Reducing internal pressure ("Who can tell me about a time when something wasn't working out for them, but they succeeded in the end?").
— Assistance in making various decisions ("What needs to be done to make a good choice?").
— Identifying unaccepted emotions ("What feelings do we dislike and prefer not to experience?").
— Pointing out methods of constructive rest and recreation ("Which ways of playing and relaxing do you think are better and which are worse—why?").
— Encouraging flexibility ("Who among you has changed their mind on a subject and found it beneficial?").
— Agreeing on a conscious mistake ("This will be our secret agreement: after every lesson with me, you will leave me a small note on my desk with information: what deliberate mistake you recently made?").
— Weakening excessive compulsive and overly orderly behaviours ("Your artwork must depict an interesting or intriguing mess").

— Reducing physical tension ("We are getting out of our desks now and performing relaxation exercises for individual body parts according to the pattern I will show. We start by relaxing the muscles of the face – neck – shoulders…").

Let us again recall the narratives of adults participating in scientific research. A 38-year-old man recounted his childhood experience:

> I come from a large family where my parents always believed that authority and discipline were the best educational tools. We did not experience parental closeness, excessive effusiveness or tenderness; perhaps I, as the eldest, am the least familiar with closeness and tenderness… The man recalls memories of his father, who was a professional soldier. Consequently, 'iron discipline' reigned at home. In his childhood memories, he describes his father as a strict individual who abused his authority, was dominant and despotic, and for whom the use of humiliating physical punishment was the rule: '…He transferred the military unit into the home, and it was a real training ground. My father abused his authority and professional position. Hard military rules prevailed at home; physical punishment was, in his father's opinion, a natural element of upbringing…' At 21, I didn't know how to live; I was withdrawn, constantly feeling wronged, with fears and anxieties about making major decisions. As an adult man, I didn't know how to build relationships, I didn't know what it meant to have friends or a social life; I constantly felt I wasn't entitled to it. I felt I had no right to my own space, to make my own decisions, to decide for myself. What was worse, I hurt all close relationships because I didn't respect the boundaries of others, I was intrusive, I was afraid I constantly didn't know something about the other person, I was suspicious if I didn't know everything…

Let us now clarify the area of problems we are discussing, which might be difficult for someone encountering knowledge about this type of adaptation for the first time. There are people who could be described as well-mannered, attentive to detail, disciplined, emotionally reserved, persistent and reliable in work, and demanding of themselves and others. At the same time, they may excessively accumulate unnecessary items, be frugal with money, repeatedly check if they have locked the door or turned off the iron before leaving the house, have a somewhat stiff bsorbe (the so-called "ramrod man"), and sometimes be slightly dogmatic in their views, etc. We then speak of having to deal with obsessive-compulsive behaviours (OCB). Such behaviours occur in many people and generally do not impair social functioning. The second group consists of individuals overwhelmed by intrusive and obsessive thoughts and ritualistic actions, living under various compulsions, revealing beliefs that we would be inclined to call outright fanatical. We are then dealing with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). Such people defend themselves against their own traits and bothersome actions but act under their pressure and internal compulsion due to anxiety. They are, therefore, accompanied by suffering and discomfort. The third group—which we highlighted in the above-discussed characteristics—is obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD), where the mentioned traits are embraced as one's own, proper, and considered beneficial by the individual, regardless of the fact that this damages their relationships with others. However, some authors draw attention to the existing differences:

The main difference between OCD and OCPD is the degree of functional impairment in life. People struggling with OCD suffer greatly because of their problem and strongly want to get rid of it. In contrast, for people with OCPD, the disorder is only sporadically troublesome; such individuals rarely feel they would benefit from therapeutic help. Essentially, they are often completely unaware that their behaviour causes trouble for colleagues and family members until the people affected by the consequences of such behaviour draw it to their attention (Hyman & Pedrick, 2013, p. 41).

Some representatives of Transactional Analysis apply rather strict—though it is difficult to determine if justifiably so—screening criteria for this type of adaptation. The mere observation that someone simply washes their hands more often than others or drinks excessively, checks certain things repeatedly, is overly bsorber by their thoughts, takes up too much time with daily activities, or exhibits a concern for order and accuracy, is enough to preliminarily qualify this as an anankastic personality. This indicates that the differences between the mentioned categories are not always sharp and tend to blur within the complexity of the human psyche.

I Focus on Development

To visually distinguish the next adaptation from those discussed earlier, we have changed the placement in the first field of the table. Where the state of the wounded Inner Child appeared, we now find the adaptation itself, which—it must be admitted—does not occur in a full and pure form. We are dealing, therefore, with a certain kind of idealisation and the expectation of precisely this kind of fulfilment in the human personality. However, this rarely happens; one might even say it never fully occurs. Only individual characteristics may manifest in the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours of some individuals. Hopefully, this happens as often as possible. The adaptation that will be presented here signifies optimal personality development and the fullness of physical and psychological health. There are no characteristic ambivalences here, as in the previous cases, because the described personality is integrated, unambiguous, and devoid of opposing tendencies.

It can be considered that, in a sense, it summarises everything that has been presented earlier by showing the opposite and an alternative. Simply put: this is how it *could* be, but is generally not, in the context of the previous personality adaptations.

Table 4
The Developing Child – Characteristics of the Optimal Adaptation

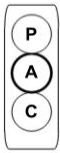| The Developing Child	Optimal Adaptation
Central Issue	Development.
Core Need	The ability to grow, belong, and build bonds.
Dominant Feelings	All emotions that arise are allowed to exist and are acknowledged.

Table 4
The Developing Child… (cont.)

The Developing Child	Optimal Adaptation
Parental Behaviour Towards the Child	Providing presence, support, and security. Meeting the child's basic needs. Accepting the child as they are, in their uniqueness and distinctiveness. The ability to see through the child's eyes and evaluate one's own intuitions regarding them. Behaviours that create possibilities, space, and freedom for development, but also capable of setting sensible boundaries. Conduct that expresses firmness and decisiveness, but also understanding of the child's feelings and empathy. Providing praise, noticing the child's efforts. Initiating new experiences and shaping the ability to learn through experiencing inevitable setbacks and failures. Teaching respect for oneself and others. Being a role model and suggesting constructive patterns for social relationships and examples of fair competition and cooperation. Caring for psychological and physical development. Showing the values within the family and their significance. Parents embodying the "Jolly Giant" (as a positive metaphor for the father in TA) and the "Fairy Godmother" (as a positive metaphor for the mother in TA).
Attachment Style	Secure and engaged.
Injunctions	Rational prohibitions resulting from external and justified limits of reality.
Script Driver	"Be Yourself". Grow and develop healthily.
Probable Ego States	
Selected Traits and Behaviours	Attachment to others. The desire to play and enjoy life. Curiosity about the world and people. Sensitivity to the presence of others. Building trust to the degree appropriate for the given situation. Ability to recognise one's needs and ask for help. Striving for realistic goals. Patience, self-control, and calmness. Subordination to the actual demands of the environment. Acceptance of one's own possibilities and limitations. Coping with one's emotions, which consequently allows focus on established goals. The capacity for love and work (Z. Freud) and building constructive collaboration with others. Recognition of the inevitable turns of fate, failures, and life losses. Focus on the present, accepting the past, and building hope for the future. Responsibility for oneself and one's loved ones. Tolerance and understanding towards people with differing views, values, or lifestyles. Sovereign decision-making. Realistic thinking and developed cognitive skills. Striving for satisfaction and a sober sense of self-worth. Self-confidence and responsibility. The ability to achieve life satisfaction. Emotional and material independence from one's parents in adult life. The ability to plan and set realistic goals. Readiness to take measured risks. Lack of excessive perfectionism and utopian views. Possessing competence and professional commitment. Developing a coherent system of closely held values. Flexibility and creativity. Attention to health and psychological well-being. Sense of humour and self-distance. Cheerful disposition and optimism. Openness to the spiritual realm and transcendence.

Table 4
The Developing Child… (cont.)

The Developing Child	Optimal Adaptation
Typical Beliefs	"Life is worth living." "Not every failure is a disaster." "It is better to face difficulties than to avoid them." "Not everyone has to like, love, and accept me, which does not mean I am worthless." "I take the environment into account, but ultimately I set the standards by which I want to live." "I primarily seek support within myself and my closest family/friends." "I live mainly in the present, not the past or the future." "The bad things that happened to me in the past do not ultimately determine my life and choices." "I have control over my emotions, thoughts, and behaviours." "I achieve happiness through my own effort and commitment." "I like to see how smart you've become" (mother sometimes says this to her son). "Grow into a beautiful woman" (father sometimes says this to his daughter).
Life Position	I am OK – You (They) are OK. (I+, U+).
Stance on Interpersonal Games	Consciously choosing honest, direct, and open communication with others instead of engaging in interpersonal games.
Selected Real, Film, Literary, and Fairy-Tale Figures	Films: *Zorba the Greek* (1964), dir. M. Kakogiannis; *The Glass Castle*, dir. D. D. Cretton; *The Structure of Crystal* (1969), dir. K. Kieślowski; *Anything Can Happen* (1995), dir. M. Łoziński; *Time to Die* (2007), dir. D. Kędzierzawska; *Gods* (2014), dir. Ł. Palkowski; and many other films with characters affirming life through various twists of fate. It is worthwhile to look for similar examples oneself.
Positive Qualities	A satisfying life in accordance with oneself and one's environment. Experiencing the fullness of life and caring for physical and mental health. A person exhibiting these traits could be termed an: Mindfull Realist*
Desired Strokes (Signs of Recognition)	Positive unconditional and conditional.
Affirmations for the Teacher	"You have a wonderful child" (a teacher to the parents).

* Mindfulness is a specific type of attention directed to the present moment. In the context of relationships, according to one possible definition, this is the practice and cultivation of mindfulness within the relational context connecting the individuals involved (Germer et al., 2015, p. 125).

Source: own research

    I would like to convey to **teachers and educators** that writing these three successive articles concerning personality adaptations caused me considerable doubt and concern. Primarily, I feared they might provide overly simplistic material leading to excessively easy diagnoses and objectifying labelling of others. I hope this has not been the case. Finally, I questioned whether the content presented here would genuinely contribute to deepening the knowledge teachers and educators need to build satisfying relationships with students and their parents. Grasping this subject matter can be difficult, which is why it is worthwhile to consult further

literature in this area. I decided that it is nonetheless worthwhile to understand human characters, if only to avoid getting lost in the thicket of meanings and words, and the confusion of orders and values in the world we live in.

Although psychiatrists and clinical psychologists are the professionals formally authorised to diagnose personality disorders or treat such problems, this does not mean that educators should fail to notice the early manifestations of similar anomalies in the personality development of their students. They should not only notice them but also feel a responsibility to react appropriately. This often does not require excessively high qualifications but may come down to building an appropriate relationship between themselves and the student, or undertaking the simplest interventions. I am not encouraging the undertaking of psychotherapy, which is beyond teachers' competence, but rather the provision of corrective experiences for various maladaptive behaviours. The influence of teachers is possible, and although it will not replace necessary professional help and treatment, it can nonetheless prove to be extremely valuable.

A teacher aware of the content presented in these chapters will avoid certain personal pitfalls or mistakes. For example, they will not appoint a student with pronounced psychopathic traits to a leadership role or entrust them with control functions. Nor will they frequently emphasise the exceptionality of a narcissistic student or ward. They can, however, try to gradually and skilfully include the student who is schizoidally or autistically isolating themselves from everyone in class life. They can consciously build a sense of security in the case of observed mistrust, initiate creativity in the case of a student's rigidity and dogmatism, and develop qualities in the histrionic student other than just the conviction of the value of their own beauty and attractiveness. While all classifications state that the diagnosis of personality disorders can only take place in so-called young adults, practical and common observation allows one to notice the existence of certain abnormal personality adaptations much earlier. I am convinced of this. Examples abound.

A research report on teachers' perceptions of students reveals a statistically significant parameter indicating that in assessing students, the teacher pays equal attention to the student's knowledge and skills as to who the student is and the personality traits and behaviours that characterise them (Wołodkowicz, 2013, p. 2003). Therefore, if these behaviours significantly deviate from the norms and standards accepted in the class and social environment, this must obviously also affect the student's relationship with the teacher. This perception, however, depends on the teachers' psychological competencies, even if only elementary and practical ones. Yet, the state of knowledge and skills acquired through academic education is not always sufficient. Teachers themselves often speak of this self-critically during various training sessions and informal conversations. I, therefore, wish to believe that the topics presented in these articles offer an undeniable and hard-to-overestimate opportunity for teachers and educators. The chance to pro-

vide real and most-needed "first aid" to certain students requiring attention, so that they can build healthy relationships in their lives and develop as best as possible in various situations.

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Uczniowskie adaptacje osobowości, cz. III[**]

Streszczenie

W trzech kolejnych artykułach ukazano przykłady uczniowskich adaptacji osobowości. Odwołując się do koncepcji analizy transakcyjnej oraz wiedzy z zakresu zaburzeń osobowości, przedstawiono szereg typowych cech i zachowań, dominujących potrzeb oraz wybranych parametrów AT, a także podano praktyczne wskazówki mogące pomóc nauczycielom i wychowawcom w rozumieniu swoich relacji z uczniami sprawiającymi kłopoty wynikające z problemów charakterologicznych. Wskazano też sposoby działań kompensacyjnych oraz interwencji w postaci afirmacji służące zapobieganiu ujawniających się przejawów dysfunkcjonalnego rozwoju osobowości.

Słowa kluczowe: uczeń, adaptacje osobowości, borderline, zaburzenia histrioniczne, zaburzenia obsesyjno-kompulsywne, adaptacja optymalna.

[**] Artykuł w jakieś części jest fragmentem jednego z rozdziałów w książce; J. Jagieła (2023). *Psychopedagogika relacji. Analiza transakcyjna dla nauczycieli i wychowawców*, Wydawnictwo Difin.