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Analogies between pathologies of personality

ABSTRACT. This article aims to discuss personality disorders with particular emphasis on anankastic (obsessive-compulsive) and antisocial personalities, analyzing them from medical, psychological and dialogical perspectives. By seeking analogies between these personality types and indicating similarities and differences in their aetiologies, their pathomechanisms and clinical pictures, the author tries to find the common ground that might become a starting point for reflections on the diagnostic and above all therapeutic perspectives. From these reflections a space emerges for the philosophy of dialogue and possibilities of applying its premises to effective therapeutic work with patients in whom personality disorder causes suffering or impairs or even paralyzes their effective functioning.

KEY WORDS: analogy, anankastic, obsessive-compulsive, antisocial, personality disorder, philosophy of dialogue,

1. Introduction

“Better is the enemy of good” – this common saying may be a motto to describe the day to day functioning of an individual with a compulsive-obsessive disorder. This motto determines the standards for their actions and tasks undertaken, at the same time being a specific type of curse that makes functioning in interpersonal relationships difficult by contributing to a considerable level of distress, or even suffering, which they frequently attempt to shut out by taking up a multitude of activities that may overcome this suffering. Thus, a self-perpetuating obsessive vicious circle seems impossible to be broken unless long-term therapy and systematic work on self-development are initiated. However, the one element that seems indispensable is self-control – and what can be done if it is this very

self-control, albeit excessively developed and covering nearly all spheres of functioning, that is the curse for anankastic individuals?

Control and perfectionism – two key words that open doors to a specific universe of meanings, standards and ideals particularly contrast with another personality trait, which is also the breeding ground for a serious psychopathology, namely, an antisocial personality. An individual whose set of personality traits and behaviours fits into a prototype image of an antisocial personality may be prone to dismiss social obligations and to ignore his/her duties and requirements [WHO, 2010]. It might seem that such a functioning model significantly distinguishes an anankastic person from someone who is obsessive-compulsive; nevertheless, some analogies between them may be observed.

The aim of this paper is to identify the key analogies between the obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personality. It is assumed that in the case of an antisocial personality a strongly narcissistic figure is not present, which necessarily should be considered in the case of the personality traits of someone who is highly psychopathic. An attempt will be based on a critical analysis of numerous scientific articles focusing on personality psychopathology, with the classification criteria indicated by the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems ICD 10 [WHO, 2010] and the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders DSM V [APA, 2015], as well as on conclusions made in the course of my own research studies carried out for my master's dissertation under the guidance of Professor Lidia Cierpiałkowska (*Obsessive-compulsive personality and functioning in social relationships*). I will also try to point out how conclusions on personality disorders resonate on the grounds of philosophy – in particular in the dialogical tradition – and numerous questions arising from it.

Obsessive-compulsive personality disorder is one of most prevalent personality pathologies in the general population: with 2.1 – 7.9% [APA, 2015] suffering from it; however, it is speculated that these estimates are excessive as too many diagnoses are made for patients asking for psychological assistance [private data: L. Cierpiałkowska]. Nevertheless, anankastic personality disorder presents itself in a wide range of spectrums, even

more so if we depart from a rigid diagnostic framework, instead concentrating (which I will attempt to do in this paper) on the characterization of personality underlying it, and not on the meticulous checking of the requirements of the psychiatric classification, nor on attaching diagnostic labels.

2. Anankastic personality – basic questions

An anankastic personality may be analyzed in terms of superstructure and development on the anal triad: orderliness, meanness and obstinacy, which Freud considered fundamental in an anankastic personality, also pointing out the role played in its formation by the parents in early childhood [Freud, 1955]. Sigmund Freud was the first to signal that such a specific set of character traits may be a source of many psychological problems of an individual, both in terms of individual psychophysical welfare and efficient functioning in the realm of interpersonal relationships. A thinker who made use of Freud's scientific work, at the same time disputing it, was Erich Fromm, who enriched the portrait of an anankastic with the trait of 'being separated from the world', which is not usually mentioned in the analysis of obsessive-compulsive personality, and which in my opinion is a starting point for understanding the difficulties that anankastic individuals struggle with in social interaction and relationships.

The temptation to ask: why? is difficult to resist since this isolation from the environment is a source of psychological suffering of an anankastic individual, impairing his/her functioning in social aspects of life, when turning away from other people is his/her conscious decision. Conscious – yes, but is it fully volitional, in line with suppressed and marginalized needs and desires? I believe that in the case of an obsessive compulsive individual we deal with not only the anal triad but also with a 'fear triad', which may be analyzed parallel to the cognitive triad of depression as propounded by the forerunner of the cognitive-behavioural approach to psychological disturbances – Aaron Beck [Beck, 1987]. Such might comprise fear of oneself, fear of others and fear of the future – where the fear is understood wider than the negative affective tone – as a state of chronic ten-

sion and psychological discomfort, strengthened by a conviction that the world and people are threatening, which in turn necessitates distrust and continual control. Moreover, an anankastic individual carries out such incessant supervision also on him/herself.

What exactly is such self-control? This single word covers an elaborate, complicated mechanism that tracks not only actions undertaken but also thoughts appearing, which are almost instantaneously classified into two categories, built on the principle of opposition: 'correct-incorrect', 'valuable-worthless'. Such a dichotomist cognitive distortion significantly narrows the perspectives of experiencing the world by obsessive-compulsive individuals as it prevents them from seeing a whole gamut of shades of grey; neither does it allow tolerating any ambiguity or indefiniteness in oneself. Anankastics seem to believe that their own mind should function like a perfectly designed faultless system, working without stopping, similar to an indestructible machine that needs not even a minute of regeneration. Any attempts to apply such prohibitive mechanistic standards to processes occurring in their mind or psyche are bound to end in failure, the more spectacular and painful, the longer the list of expectations and demands has been set by the individual him/herself. 'Nobody is perfect' – another commonsense truth in everyday discourse is completely foreign to obsessive-compulsive individuals. The compulsion to be perfect in nearly every activity undertaken hinders their execution to a lesser or higher degree as the individual focuses on persevering in their contemplation of what might go wrong, at which point of their minutely described plan an imprecision may creep in, or more importantly, how such 'faulty performance' may affect the judgment passed by people of importance and by the individuals themselves. And just as in the case of the former decisive body the evaluation is frequently positive to anankastic's genuine (?) surprise, (obsessive-compulsive individuals often focus their professional or scientific interests on areas at which they are talented and good), in the case of judge number two – it is unequivocally negative. An anankastic is the most ruthless judge of him/herself, with an incredible ability of nit-picking, at finding minute shortcomings that may serve as a starting point for extensive criticism of his/her ego, sometimes verging on self-devaluation or

self-abasement. Thus, this ‘chief justice’ accompanies an anankastic day by day, following his/her every step, sabotaging any attempt that might bring relief to their restless mind, which gradually but inevitably burns in the blaze of subjectively imposed standards and expectations. All this sounds terribly depressing, but in my view it is adequate to the volume of psychological suffering that an anankastic has to deal with.

Observed from outside, an obsessive-compulsive individual may be doing quite well in life, both in their professional life and in family roles, or even in the field of hobbies. However, how far this ‘fulfillment’ gives him/her genuine profound satisfaction and is a source of positive emotions such as joy, excitement, satisfaction, and to what extent is it just checking items on the “to do” list? Is open to question and I tend to think that the latter is true. Obsessive-compulsive individuals are so much lost in getting tasks done, plans carried out and standards required, that they lose sight of the essence of activities that are supposed to be relaxing and entertaining, forgetting the experience of pleasure. Their satisfaction is temporary, promptly giving way to a new goal to be set, a new challenge to overcome. In a broader perspective – the perspective of the philosophical problem of the selection and implementation of the strategy of life – we should consider the following question: how is it possible to live like this? The answer to this question is: yes, it is possible. Moreover, obsessive-compulsive individuals tend to think that their lifestyle is the only model possible and they would like to make it a standard for other people. Hence, anankastics have no difficulty in giving others a quick, unsparing evaluation, running along the lines of the aforementioned black-and-white scenario: you are either (at least) as good as I am, or you are nothing. I may present this evaluation in a slightly idealized form, but, nevertheless, such extreme elements of the cognitive system are numerous when we delve deeper and deeper into the hierarchy of the convictions and scheme of things in the minds of obsessive-compulsive individuals. According to theorists of cognitive-behavioural psychology [Beck, Freeman, Davis, 2015] in the mind of an anankastic an elaborate system of precepts, bans and attitudes compensates for a deeply hidden, yet continually present, key conviction about his/her helplessness, vulnerability, incompetence and

unworthiness of love. Such a set of convictions shapes what may be perceived as the peremptory unquestionable automatic thoughts of an obsessive-compulsive individual that serve as guidelines for their behaviours and actions as well as those expected from others. Characteristic strategies are the strategies of responsibility and systematicity; on the other hand, spontaneity and playfulness are severely underdeveloped [Purdon, Clark, 1999].

3. Anankastic personality: an alternative approach

Not willing to limit myself only to a single research tradition in psychology in the description of an obsessive-compulsive personality, I will use observations made by major psychological theories.

It was the aforementioned Sigmund Freud who laid foundations for the psychodynamic analysis of obsessive-compulsive personality, where the role of defence mechanisms in the course of the formation and upholding of this psychopathology is emphasized. In anankastic personalities the most frequently voiced mechanisms are: intellectualization, reaction formation, displacement and isolation of affect. Their common feature is that they are to protect an individual from emotions causing distress and suffering, to provide apparently rational justification of their behaviour towards others and towards themselves, and also to channel in any way their needs and impulses that are meticulously displaced from their consciousness.

A psychodynamic approach that I would like to debate is the theory of levels of personality organization by Otto Kernberg [Kernberg, Caligor, 1996]. According to its premises the author situates personality disorders on the continuum of levels of personality organizations, assigning each of them a definite spot, along with a whole range of traits typical to it. An obsessive-compulsive personality is located at the top of this hierarchy, identical with functioning at the neurotic level, or the only slightly disturbed one. I hope that in the light of conclusions made so far in this article an observation is inevitable that the functioning of an anankastic is distant from what might be called 'undisturbed'. It is obvious that an obsessive-

compulsive individual copes well in everyday struggles with the world, and distress accompanying that person does not necessarily have to be significantly intensified. One must not forget, however, that there are situations when an anankastic's psychological suffering is so pronounced that not only are they paralyzed in daily routines or in interpersonal relationships, but also the need to deal with themselves becomes a source of severe emotional pain. Therefore, I can relate better to the views of Nancy McWilliams [McWilliams, Milska-Wrzosińska, Pałynyczko-Ćwiklińska, 2015] who opts for an opinion that each personality disorder should be analyzed across the entire spectrum of personality organization levels. Then it would be possible to characterize an obsessive-compulsive individual who does not perform well in life, in keeping with the premises of this theory, by means of, say, low borderline organization. "The distance between extreme obsession and delusion is not great" – I believe that these words by McWilliams aptly justify adapting such a non-determinist approach to the theory of levels of personality organization.

A sphere of particular interest and that still remains largely unexplored is the sphere of interpersonal relationships. A starting point for deliberations in this area might be to outline another psychological theory, i.e. interpersonal approach, and to map out an image of an anankastic individual in line with its premises. It clearly distinguishes two separate areas of interpersonal relations: the dimension of task performance and the dimension of proximity. And it is right here that problems start for an obsessive-compulsive individual – by entering into interpersonal relations they confuse both areas, which must not be regarded as an attempt at reconciling them and creating a relationship on a multidimensional platform, but rather as a failure at distinguishing between them due to their proximity and due to the fact that everyone is seen through the lens of task performance. Why does it happen that an anankastic individual is not able to suspend his/her desire to execute omnipotent control even in the face of the partnership and intimacy that constitute the essence of close interpersonal relations? In the analysis of this issue theorists of the interpersonal approach trace back this relational disorder that anankastic individuals face to parental attitudes in early childhood, characterized by excessive control over the child on the

one hand, and on the other – by lack of appreciation of its achievements and successes. Such a combination of effects leads directly to the creation in the child of a conviction that only by a relentless pursuit of perfection, by moving closer to an unattainable ideal, by completing most accurately any tasks or expectations may that child prove their worth, and deserve interest, approval and love. Such a distorted vision of oneself and of one's own place in the world becomes more pronounced as the child develops, leading to an 'adult' obsessive-compulsive personality, enclosed in the casing of precepts, bans and demands [Millon, Davis, 2015].

In the search for the origins of the development of obsessive-compulsive traits in an individual one may refer, after Millon and Davis, to attachment theory, which first and foremost attempts to find sense in the compulsive behaviours of obsessive individuals on relational grounds. By his/her actions an anankastic tries to earn the interest and approval of people around them, which stems from his/her conviction that he/she, as a worthless person, does not deserve them. Followers of attachment theory are convinced that obsessive-compulsive individuals may represent each of the four classical attachment patterns (secure, anxious-resistant ambivalent, anxious-avoidant, disorganized); this in a way supports my view about the necessity to analyze the characteristics and functioning of obsessive-compulsive individuals across the entire continuum of personality organization. Through such a perspective on anankastics it is possible to perceive a number of identities that cannot be simply ascribed to only one category of psychological constructs (defined organization level, single attachment pattern). A trait that most certainly can be identified as common for a number of obsessive-compulsive personality 'varieties' is an instrumental approach to other people, treating them like minute cogs in a machine designed to put their ambitious plans and goals into action.

I focused on such instrumental attitude towards other people in the course of work on my master's dissertation – I wondered (and still do) where such a strong aversion to being with other people originates, especially in situations when the interaction is to be of a character completely different, not instrumental nor professional. I will leave this question unanswered for now, returning to it later on in the article.

It is worth referring again to the work of Millon, this time in the biopsychosocial and evolutionary context that may shed a different light on the specificity of the obsessive-compulsive personality. In the process of constructing his vision of anankastics, he makes the word “contradictions” a notion that may be regarded as central to the dilemmas obsessive-compulsive individuals are caught in [Davis, 1999]. It is particularly manifest in the domain of proximity and dominance – an anankastic individual oscillates between getting closer to people and engaging in close relations with them, and complete isolation and avoidance of any interpersonal involvement; frequently this conflict is branded with a tendency to obedience on the one hand, and the desire for rebellion on the other. In order to control the frustration stemming from the conflict of the two opposing tendencies, an obsessive-compulsive individual engages in the execution of duties and standards, thus pushing aside and stifling the emotions wracking within.

I have already mentioned the manner in which family and environment factors may contribute to the formation of the traits that determine a person’s obsessive-compulsive functioning. In order to present a complete multidimensional picture of possible influences, biological conditioning must also be mentioned. Cloninger [Cloninger, Svrakic, Przybeck, 1993] points this out very accurately in his neurobiological concept of the temperament and personality. By linking temperamental factors with the activity of certain defined neurotransmitters, he distinguishes their specific triad, unique for various personality types, which for the obsessive-compulsive personality is as follows: pronounced harm avoidance, limited reward dependence and limited novelty seeking.

So far, very few researchers have been willing to study an anankastic personality, and I can only speculate why this is so. However, a premise that removes some of the mystery of the obsessive-compulsive personality, making it quite common, is the conviction that an anankastic individual does well in the world, efficiently working in their chosen area, conscientiously executing tasks and duties imposed on them. Indeed, this may often seem to be the case; however, this adaptability to functioning in a given environment does not preclude the considerable psychological suffering

that obsessive-compulsive individuals grapple with, and which remains unseen to the outside world, enchanted with their intellectual efficiency, good organization and conscientiousness. If, from the perspective of a neutral observer it is difficult to notice any abnormalities, any departures from the norm in the lifestyles and behaviour of an obsessive-compulsive person, where should one seek the origin of the fear, tension and discomfort that invariably accompany an obsessive-compulsive individual? Scant attempts at finding an answer to this intriguing question can be organized into two trends: one concentrating on cognitive deficits, and the other focusing on social deficits. The former area was studied by Aycicegi-Dinn, Dinn and Caldwell-Harris [2009]. The results they obtained from studies on tasks involving working memory, and perceptive and executive processes, made the researchers propose a hypothesis about a compensating role that a whole range of strategies play towards executive deficits in obsessive-compulsive individuals: perfectionism, pedantry, systematic nature, meticulous planning. Their results demonstrate again that a specific anankastic behaviour may play a variety of roles, far more distant from the mere execution of everyday tasks and duties. From a psychodynamic perspective they were analyzed as defence mechanisms protecting from undesired emotions; from a cognitive viewpoint they were thoughts and behaviour schemata formed on the basis of conditioning convictions; and finally, from a neurobiological perspective they were compensations for disorganized cognitive processes.

Studying such a tight network of defence mechanisms, and compensation and remedial strategies that an obsessive-compulsive individual has built, evokes an inevitable thought: is it all really necessary? As it is impossible to step into an anankastic individual's shoes, the answer will always be incomplete, yet it is sufficient to firmly conclude: "yes, they are indispensable". Gallagher et al. [2013] showed in their studies how intolerable for obsessive-compulsive individuals are situations that carry any amount of unpredictability and indefiniteness, how much fear and distress they bring. An anankastic persistently seeks information to fill even a minimal gap in knowledge to make a situation ahead as clear and straightforward as possible. A particular type of appeasement is felt when

this information comes from a person they admire and respect, who is a role model for them, and an authority. However, even in such a situation, not everything is as simple – on the one hand appeasement, on the other, however, a challenge to come even closer to the master and face up to the challenge of his very presence. Analyzing the functioning of obsessive-compulsive individuals in a multitude of spheres, I cannot overcome the impression that they possess a specific knack of getting entangled in various vicious circles in their minds, and thoughts and ideas formulated in them interact with the environment instead of being corrected and directed onto a more adaptive path and thus become self-perpetuating.

In light of the proposal of Skodol et al. [2002], an obsessive-compulsive personality may be analyzed on two planes: domination – submission, and affiliation – separation. This perspective becomes more significant if we undertake to understand the specifics of the functioning of anankastic individuals in social relations that as part of a professional task involve the creation of social bonds. A prospect of collaboration, delegating tasks, or considering other people's opinions is quite a challenge and brings with it a large amount of discomfort that may result in chronic stress, tension and anxiety, but may also diminish the efficiency and quality of tasks executed. Obsessive-compulsive individuals feel best in situations in which they are 'lord and master' for themselves, and the many actions they are to perform can be carried out at their own speed, according to their reformulated guidelines by putting their meticulously prepared plans into action. Any departures from them, obstacles or difficulties, may give rise to interpersonal conflicts with individuals marked as 'distractors' and may result in negative affective states. What is important, the greatest difficulty lies not in the fear of an inadequate execution of a task by a potential co-worker, but in the very fact of delegating tasks to him/her, as well as the risk that he/she may want to carry them out in a manner different from the one chosen by the anankastic, and which he deems to be the only proper and right way in a given situation. Thus, we arrive at the heart of the dilemma that anankastic individuals face in nearly every situation in which they have to consider many perspectives – take into account opinions that are different from theirs – as for obsessive-compulsive individuals

this a major flaw imposed on their methodically built, subjective vision of the world, impossible to tolerate and at least intensely dysphoric. A key conviction that surfaces then is not: “I would do it better” but “you ruined the perfect harmony of my ideally constructed world” (though the former may also be prevalent).

In light of the considerations above, what is puzzling is the efficient functioning of obsessive-compulsive individuals when they are given tasks along with a set of requirements and standards they should meet. Why should they comply with rules that are not their own rules? The most likely explanation is that anankastic individuals manoeuvre their own guidelines, incorporating those rules in their subjective system, identifying with them and taking them as their own. Such an explanation sheds light on a phenomenal ability of obsessive-compulsive individuals to maximally plan the meticulous and punctilious execution of professional duties, making them ideal candidates for the title of ‘employee of the month’ or ‘leading researcher’. Additionally, a cognitive dichotomy may be observed in professional spheres of obsessive-compulsive individuals – in contacts with persons deemed by them as authorities, they behave in a meek, consensual, even humble manner, whereas people who in their opinion are lower in professional hierarchy are treated in an indulgent, dismissive or even disparaging way. To justify such polarized attitudes towards other persons and their indisputable adequacy, both in terms of flattery towards authorities and devaluation towards subordinates, obsessive-compulsive individuals can give a series of rationalizing arguments.

What happens in the world of obsessive-compulsive individuals when they leave the office, finish the last sentence in a report, or complete their daily professional duties? Here the drama starts – how to fill the pervasive void when they run out of opportunities of filling it with tight meshes of professional duties and self-development demands? Becoming lost in professional duties, designating their life almost entirely to them, necessarily limits the time obsessive-compulsive individuals may devote to other spheres of life. Even if, by coincidence or by means of more socially directed measures, they have somehow managed to make a circle of acquaintances with whom they have kept moderately systematic, mutually

satisfying contact, then as a result of the solidification of obsessive-compulsive elements of their personality they gradually lose them. Very often they only notice that the space around them becomes more and more empty when they have nobody around to share their concerns and joys with. And those joys also gradually dwindle as separating themselves from other people anankastic individuals lose one of the most crucial sources of joy and fulfilment – sincere, close relations with other human beings. When the feeling of loneliness finally forces its way into their conscience, it attacks with a tremendous force, causing acute suffering as well as feverish attempts at stifling it. They try to restore calm to their mind by the only subjectively available means: even more rapid involvement in professional duties, or turn to substances. Anything, as long as they do not think, as long as their restless mind gets a moment of rest, because they cannot just turn away from it saying: ‘I don’t feel like talking to you anymore’. An anankastic individual in decompensation is an inmate in the strictest of prisons – their own psyche.

The above reflections depict a rich if somewhat sombre palette of colours. And that is my intention – to show the entire spectrum of concerns of obsessive-compulsive individuals, and primarily emphasise the importance of administering proper therapeutic care. This care does not have to be synonymous with psychotherapy as such effective therapeutic effect can be obtained by means of warm relations with another person, well-wishing, patient, intent on listening and being there even if the anankastic individual may react with aversion to such social/friendly endeavours. An ambivalent or even hostile reaction should not be surprising if we realize the intensity of fear present in obsessive-compulsive individuals in situations demanding interpersonal involvement. In contacts with another human being, a whole range of anankastic concerns and fears comes to the surface – fear of maladjustment, incompetence, inadequacy, of being not good enough. This situation becomes even more unbearable as the interpersonal sphere comprises a huge dose of unpredictability, forcing the obsessive-compulsive individual to tolerate its indefiniteness and undertake the risk of relying not only on him/herself. To the anankastic, this risk becomes too big and so it is very infrequently, if ever, taken. And the longer the separa-

tion from people, the longer the escape to their small private world, the deeper the fear of becoming involved in a relation up to the moment when the obsessive-compulsive individual concludes that he/she is fed up with being with him/herself. If, however, an anankastic individual, despite their internal fears, takes the risk of interaction that results in a rejection by the potential partner, then this will confirm and strengthen their negative conviction about themselves in relation to the world and its rules, leaving no space for any spontaneous changes in subsequent experiences and relations.

Research studies conducted in the area of personality unequivocally characterize the obsessive-compulsive personality as one of the most fixated thought patterns and action models which, when activated, frequently gives rise to results opposite to those planned – instead of improving functioning it considerably hinders it. Moreover, obsessive-compulsive individuals are convinced that their own system of schemata should be the only one commonly in force, and any individuals whose behaviour departs in any way from it, especially when it may conflict with the interests of the anankastic himself, irritate them. He/she will also be the first one to criticize, giving admonishments and instructions, pointing out any shortcomings or errors. Such a peremptory attitude of putting oneself on the pedestal of infallible authority and expertise makes all contacts with the obsessive-compulsive individual burdensome, and discourages interaction from a partner, effectively limiting the perspective of engaging in a closer relation. Such social reluctance does not surprise – who would think (even if they had sufficient perseverance to penetrate it) that behind this know-all façade hides a fragile, insecure person, craving proximity and acceptance? [Hopwood, Thomas, Markon, Wright, Krueger, 2012].

Thus, we slowly approach the focus of my research interests, namely, a motivational system of obsessive-compulsive individuals with emphasis on their motives in the interpersonal sphere. The explanation why it happens that obsessive-compulsive individuals, seemingly knowingly and voluntarily, renounce any attempts at establishing close interpersonal relations hopefully emerges clearly enough against the backdrop of the analysis of fear overflowing them in contacts with others, as analyzed above.

What remains to be determined is the sphere of their needs, as frustration is an inevitable consequence of the rejection of interpersonal relations. A profound desire to be with other human beings accompanies obsessive-compulsive individuals incessantly, the only difference being in the thickness and composition of the mask with which they try to cover it. Hence, while observing anankastic behaviour, we are prone to conclude that, to put it colloquially, they do not need relations with other people to be happy, and that professional contacts and professional activities are a sufficient substitute for social and private life. And this is by no means so. Affiliation needs are an inherent element of obsessive-compulsive personality, however strongly such individuals would protest. Here, we can pinpoint the fundamental difference that might serve as a demarcation line to separate the anankastic from the antisocial personality, which will be characterized below – in the anankastic affiliation needs are powerfully present, if stifled, whereas in an antisocial individual we may venture to state that such needs are originally nonexistent. This motivational discrepancy is a key aspect that distinguishes planned therapeutic procedures for both types of personalities – the basic problems that constitute them are emphatically different, despite some superficial functional similarities.

If antisocial individuals do not display the need for contacts with others, is it then necessary, or even to go a step further, does the therapist have the right, to take any measures to create such a motivation in them?

4. Models of antisocial personality

Let us first analyze in closer detail the specificity of antisocial personality, both in terms of the character traits they possess, and the method of functioning in their environment and within their own psyche.

The term ‘antisocial personality’ is frequently (and erroneously) used interchangeably with the notion of ‘psychopath’ – however, they are not identical, even if their defining elements overlap in some aspects, as they are type-specific. It may also happen that a person displays character traits that describe him/her as both antisocial and psychopathic. It is also possi-

ble that an individual displays beside common traits decidedly more antisocial, or more psychopathic traits, then one dominant personality pattern is analyzed. This distinction is crucial for the idea behind this paper – I would like to outline key analogies between obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personalities, assuming that the antisocial model does not possess a heavily narcissist trait that would have to be taken into account while analyzing heavily psychopathic personalities (which would complicate further a comparison and indication of differences and similarities to the anankastic personality).

The first idea that surfaces while considering the antisocial individual is a conclusion that ‘he/she disregards everyone and everything’. This commonplace social conviction is not distant from the actual image of an antisocial individual, and certainly may serve as a starting point for a closer look at his/her functioning. There is no doubt that the last thing they care about are the feelings and needs of other people. An antisocial individual not only dismisses and disrespects them, they appear to be unaware of their existence. If we were to ask them: ‘Has it ever occurred to you that s/he might have felt humiliated and saddened by your behaviour?’, with all likelihood we can expect answers along these lines: ‘being humiliated, sadness – do such emotions exist?’. This example may sound slightly trivial, yet it illustrates well what disturbances we have to deal with in antisocial individuals. However, we have to exercise caution and scientific alertness to avoid falling into the trap of analyzing the behaviour of antisocial individuals only in terms of illegal deeds or clearly infringing another person’s good (both material and psychological). It sometimes happens that antisocial individuals commit criminal acts, clearly trespassing the moral-legal order, yet just as frequently, they carry out their egocentric-manipulative acts ‘in white gloves’, sometimes leaving their victim unaware of being used and cheated. Similarly, one should not expect an antisocial individual to feel any remorse, guilt or shame as a result of their wickedness – these emotions are totally inaccessible to them; the belief that their deed was improper may be only activated by means of instrumental conditioning (mechanism punishment – reward), that will surprisingly quickly be obliterated (regardless of the severity of the punishment). Situa-

tions that are expected to release 'self-critical' emotions in antisocial individuals unleash intense aggression and hostility that frequently give rise to attacks, either verbal, emotional or physical towards a person seen as the source of frustration. Another human being is perceived as a perfect target on which to place the causes of all negative incidents, undesired affective states and thoughts – 'guilt is in everyone else but not in me'. Such a viewpoint makes an antisocial individual unable to learn from his/her experiences, or peacefully finalize conflicts or modify their attitude in consequence of reflections made in contacts with other people. The word 'reflection' seems to be another word absent in the vocabulary of antisocial individuals – every event in their life is included in their personal autobiography without drawing conclusions or analysis of possible mistakes or pondering on what would be worth changing in their acts. Planning as such, however, is not entirely foreign to them; on the contrary, they are masters of intrigue and conspiracies, yet it is purely mechanical, not touching on the sphere of meaning and sense that we would like to find in human actions.

Studying the image of antisocial individuals against the criteria set forth in ICD 10, of particular interest is the point which directly mentions the manner in which they function in interpersonal relations – it focuses not only on the inability of upholding permanent bonds with other people, but also (and presumably above all) on the lack of difficulties in establishing them. What is it that makes antisocial individuals gain the trust of another person, establish a close relation with them and then quickly lose it? It is worth quoting here the psychopathy concept described by Robert Hare [2008]. It distinguishes two factors that constitute the psychopathic personality: the first one concerns interpersonal and emotional attitudes towards the world and style of verbal communication, the other characterizes behaviours marked by impulsiveness, ruthlessness and antisocial traits. The first factor comprises a set of features that are prerequisite for the superficial 'interpersonal attractiveness' of an antisocial individual – personal charm, eloquence supported by excessive self-esteem and readiness to use manipulation and lies – they all serve to build an image of a perfect companion of fun and conversation that no one would suspect of being devoid

of any moral principles, a ruthless exploiter and manipulator (and such labels are frequently justified when the extent of social harm an antisocial individual inflicts is taken into account). Seduced by a friendly aura displayed by the antisocial person, an interaction partner begins only later to notice flaws in this beautiful, yet profoundly false, portrait of his/her antisocial companion; this often happens after he/she has fallen prey to their cunning egotistic actions.

A feature that may cause considerable anxiety in interaction with an antisocial individual is a penetrating emotional cold that emanates from them. The emotions they appear to display are only ineptly placed masks, yet alluring and promoting contacts due to their expressiveness and effectiveness. Anger has a privileged role in the affective system of an antisocial individual, and it is displayed across the entire spectrum of intensity – from subtle vexation and irritation to spectacular outbursts of uncontrolled fury.

In order to illustrate in a most complex way the multiplicity of masks an antisocial personality may put on towards an individual, and any additional typical characteristics, it is worth referring to the typology presented by Millon and Davis [2005]. They singled out five types of antisocial personality in view of traits characteristic for other personality disorders. A 'greedy' type is a 'pure' antisocial model, whose representative holds a belief of being victimised by the world, and that justifies and obliges him/her to show predatory, envious and greedy behaviours. A type that 'protects his own reputation' seeks recognition in other people's eyes, in which he/she wants to admire himself very much like the mythical Narcissus (and therefore this type is considered to be a combination of antisocial and narcissist personalities), watchful for any signals of danger and ready to engage in violent actions to defend him/herself (or rather the image he/she is trying to create). Another type, enriched with 'histrionic' traits, is a 'risk-taking' type, who gets involved in dangerous situations with consequences that are difficult to predict or control. An admixture of schizoid and avoidant personality defines a 'nomadic' type – like the 'greedy' type, this type puts himself in the position of a victim, this time by a fate that has damned him/her and made him/her a social outcast.

Finally, there is the 'hostile' type with a sadistic-paranoid trait – filled with obstinacy, malice and cruelty. It is puzzling that researchers did not try to single out a type that would compile antisocial and obsessive-compulsive traits. It is apparent that such a combination is not rare, which is also evident in my studies.

Before moving on to collating and comparing the image of obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personalities I will attempt to demonstrate, similarly to characterizing an anankastic personality, possible causes of the formation of this personality pathology. Current psychological knowledge usually sees the causes for the development of antisocial personality in a number of biological determinants, especially damage of the brain in specific locations [after Pastwa-Wojciechowska, 2014]. Researchers are primarily interested in abnormalities in the frontal lobe, prefrontal cortex, temporal lobes and amygdaloid body – dysfunctions in any of these areas may contribute to the appearance of psychopathological symptoms as presented by antisocials, especially in their behaviour. Worth mentioning here is also a psychodynamic concept, as it is close to the common understanding of antisocial behaviours – as a result of an incomplete education and impaired superego functioning (which here may be understood as conscience), and excessive development of the aggressive self (here identical with an egotistic, self-centred personality).

5. Analogies between types of personality

Obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personalities. A perfectionist committed to control and observation of rules, and a manipulator absorbed in the chaos of his own unpredictability and impulsiveness, with no moral principles or self-reflection. Is it worth the effort of trying to find any common denominators in these two, apparently completely different personalities? I believe that it is, and will try to prove it.

The first difference between compulsive-obsessives and antisocials is apparent in their first contacts. Both the former and the latter treat a partner with whom they are in a relationship with in a cold, mistrustful, sometimes

patronizing manner, with a considerable amount of reserve and aloofness. The interlocutor may have an impression that the anankastic treats him/her with indulgence and levity, as if by definition what he has to say does have any significance or value. Obviously, this information is not conveyed directly – not to respect the well-being of the interlocutor, but to protect his/her own image, which might become tarnished if he/she allowed himself an action that might be deemed impolite. An open message is not indispensable, though – his entire posture conveys this attitude and judgement of the other person. And since this judgement in most cases is decidedly negative, in this relation an obsessive's partner feels inferior, incompetent, briefly – stupid. It is worth noting that this situation may look diametrically opposite in interaction with a person considered to be an authority to the anankastic/antisocial, or someone who may in a way contribute to the anankastic's well-being – then a whole range of ingratiating, flattering or self-presenting behaviours appears, all with the intention of presenting himself/herself in the best possible light and to improve the chances for the approval of this 'important person'. This characteristic may seem somewhat extreme, the more so that the anankastic/antisocial possesses an amazing skill of subtly manipulating his interlocutor in an almost undetected way; however, the intention of such interpersonal behaviour is clearly visible.

Another analogy that can be observed between obsessive-compulsives and antisocials is in the sphere of oneself, which is a belief in their unusual competencies and abilities that they should develop to reach perfection, at the same time expecting those around themselves to confirm that they are noticed and admired. Inner satisfaction of a job well done is only a transient gratification, which rapidly disappears in the cascade of new requirements and exorbitant standards – hence the importance of external confirmation signals, even if they bear little resemblance to true assessment and criticism. Both anankastics and antisocials are extremely sensitive to any signs of unfavourable opinion about them or their actions. Any word of criticism is perceived as an attack aiming to humiliate them and renounce their distinguishing qualities and competences. This inability of cognitive and emotional reworking of bitter messages makes obsessive-

compulsives/antisocials similar to paranoid individuals; however, the latter are more distant from the realm of such suspicion-filled predictions, and their disturbed reality check is more intensified. This confluence of the three apparently extremely different personality types allows us to presume that the underlying causes of all personality disturbances are two key beliefs: of helplessness and of not deserving to be loved [Beck, Freeman, Davis, 2005]. Inbuilt in early childhood into the foundations of a developing personality, they give direction to beliefs formulated through their lives, and serve as guidelines for incorporating and interpreting new experiences – none of these processes have the power to transform these two key beliefs; on the contrary, they strengthen them, confirming the individuals in their opinion that reality is exactly the way they say.

The pessimist undertone to these reflections inevitably questions the effectiveness of all therapeutic measures taken against such profound and persistent abnormalities as personality disorders. Here, the starting point is certainly the clear formulation of therapeutic goals that are both important to the patient and realistic to achieve under the guidance of the therapist, whose involvement in the entire process is equally important. At this point, the common path towards understanding obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personalities somewhat diverges. The anankastic, as someone whose functioning is focused on compensational strategies aiming at concealing deeply hidden convictions about his own incompetence, worthlessness and generally being not good enough, now stands a chance in therapy to reach and eradicate them as there is every likelihood that he will allow these features to surface, acknowledge their existence and confront them. With the antisocial individual, however, the chance that he will acknowledge a potential presence of negative convictions about himself in his belief system is negligible. While speaking of therapeutic work with such individuals (which incidentally happens quite rarely as antisocial's functioning inflicts pain on their environment rather than on themselves, and it is not them who are in need of psychological support), it is decidedly more realistic to focus on introducing changes in their behaviour and social functioning, and not on fundamental restricting of their personality. A question remains: to what extent the changes thus obtained will remain permanent,

and how soon after termination of therapy a return to old pathological patterns will take place? An obsessive-compulsive individual keeps having something hanging over their head – in the course of therapy we aim to develop a skill and give permission to ignore it, even for a short while. With antisocial individuals the situation is exactly opposite – we aim to create a conviction in them that the thing hanging over their head is simply indispensable to function in society without ruining moral order and infringing on other people's well-being. So, here we deal with two opposing ends of the control continuum – on the one hand excessive incessant control in anankastics, and on the other – its complete absence in antisocials.

The issues of conscience, responsibility and obligation present themselves differently in anankastic and antisocial individuals. Similarly to the issue of control, they can be analyzed on some continuum. Inadequate, excessive self-attribution of responsibility for all negative incidents, locating causes of failures only in their own competence will be typical for obsessive-compulsive individuals. The tendency for seeking those guilty of a negative state of affairs around them and not in themselves, and thus getting out of taking responsibility for one's own words and deeds will characterize antisocial individuals.

Similarly, it is difficult to mistake an obsessive-compulsive for an antisocial when we compare their social life and typical daily schedule. An anankastic has a detailed 'to do' list planned to the smallest detail, filled with various obligations and tasks from which no departure is possible (the very perspective is a potent stressor). The antisocial, however, engages in activities connected with risk (substances, fast driving, casual sex); activities that are impulsive, hasty, frequently devoid of any rationale beside getting a thrill of emotion, are his 'daily bread', and without them life would be bland and boring. An obsessive-compulsive individual does not even think that he/she might postpone some activities for later, engaging in pleasure or pure entertainment instead; for the antisocial it is inconceivable that work can absorb so much of one's time and energy when days can be spent in a much nicer and less tiring way. Here an analogy comes to mind of 'master and slave' – an anankastic fulfilling all, even the most absurd

whims of the master – the antisocial, who spends his time devising ways of finding entertainment without any personal work or effort.

A totally different attitude of the two personality types is also worth noting in terms of social norms, moral principles and legal codes, since this is something that can be first noticed by an external observer looking for abnormality symptoms. An obsessive-compulsive individual feels obligated to follow and observe all norms and regulations, even if this maybe difficult or burdensome. An antisocial individual will deem such behaviour to be extremely non adaptive and meaningless – rules are to be broken, and respecting them only makes sense if there is severe punishment when you are caught. This way of thinking somewhat resembles the thinking of a young child, whose motivation for complying with parental guidelines is solely the fear of being caught and punished. What if such a fear, so primitive in ontological development, is absent? Here we can capture the underlying difference in the emotional functioning of anankastic and antisocial individuals, which is a guideline for the formation of more visible differences both in terms of mentality, experience and behaviour. An obsessive-compulsive individual might be called ‘one big walking fear’, whereas an antisocial individual is not familiar with the phrase ‘to be afraid’ – he has never experienced such an affective state, it is incomprehensible to him, although he can recognize it in other people [after Pastwa-Wojciechowska, 2014]. Any affect that surfaces in an antisocial is recognised by him as anger – the emotion inaccessible to an anankastic, and difficult to voice in public towards an object different from himself. These differences in their emotional system are basic not only for any attempts at understanding obsessive-compulsive and antisocial personalities, but above all they constitute a central component of any planned assistance.

6. Research findings and further research perspectives

So as not to be content with only theoretical considerations, in the course of studies for my master’s dissertation on the interpersonal functioning of obsessive-compulsive individuals, I examined 165 individuals,

out of whom 115 showed characteristics that allowed me to include them in one of the three personality groups: obsessive-compulsive, antisocial and 'double' (with high scores on both obsessive-compulsive and antisocial scales). In the first group, there were 61 patients, in the second 20, and in the third – 34. This last group appears to be particularly interesting – anankastic-antisocial – as its appearance in such large numbers was unexpected in research preparations.

The main premise of my paper, based on theoretical and research publications on personality and all pathologies within, was to demonstrate that both obsessive-compulsive and antisocial individuals treat other persons instrumentally, not engaging in emotional interpersonal relations, regarding other people as tools that can be used in the execution of tasks and duties. I was hoping, however, that this superficial mask conceals a different type of motivation prompting anankastics and antisocials to abandon the task of forming and developing close interpersonal relations.

Not wishing this to become a report of an empirical study, I will just present the selected and most relevant conclusions (those interested in the issue are requested to read my master's dissertation, where the results of my investigations are discussed in detail).

A statistical analysis of the collected empirical material did not permit to reject a zero hypothesis about the lack of differences in social orientation adapted by obsessive-compulsive and antisocial individuals, thus not allowing to accept an alternative hypothesis about such differences being present. However, a closer glance at the justifications formulated by the individuals to instructions, which asked them to divide between them and their imaginary interaction partner, in three cases, jobs to do, in another three – a randomly obtained sum of money (the situations differed in the extent of their proximity to the imaginary partner that the studied patient had to define; in the task consisting in job division the difference was in the competences of the imaginary partner), demonstrated subtle differences between the groups. Obsessive-compulsive individuals more frequently referred in their argumentation to the need to control the situation, and that precluded the delegation of a large portion of duties to the partner. They also expressed their mistrust in the potential partner's competences as well

as a fear that only a singlehandedly executed job could bring the desired results. Antisocial individuals did not use this type of justification, although they seldom delegated totality of jobs to their collaborator. For antisocials, a major argument that induced them to participate in the job was a belief that the partner could do something against their will, or that the transfer of all duties to the partner might somehow turn against them. There were also statements in which antisocials openly declared that they 'did not feel like overworking'. It is then clear that subtle differences in motivation, elusive in questionnaires, are visible in situations when patients were given some room to present their own way of thinking. I am convinced that to capture such an enigmatic psychological construct as human motivation it is necessary to conduct an extended interview, and that also emphasizes how important for studying the psyche is meeting another person, in the dialogical perspective, and that no scientific theory will/could ever take its place.

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