

Young, J. E. (2005). Schema-focused cognitive therapy and the case of Ms. S. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 15(1), 115-126.

From a schema therapy perspective, Ms. S almost perfectly fits the model for conceptualizing BPD. According to schema theory, BPD is characterized by four primary modes: the abandoned and abused child, the detached protector, the punitive parent, and the angry child modes. A mode is similar to an ego state. A schema mode is defined as follows: “those schemas or schema operations—adaptive or maladaptive—that are currently active for an individual.” A dysfunctional schema mode is activated when specific maladaptive schemas or coping responses have erupted into distressing emotions, avoidance responses, or self-defeating behaviors that take over and control an individual’s functioning. An individual may shift from one dysfunctional schema mode into another; as that shift occurs, different schemas or coping responses, previously dormant, become active (Young et al., 2003). These shifts are referred to as “flipping” modes. I elaborate on each of the four borderline modes, illustrating them with examples from Ms. S. Although I need more information to confirm whether she actually has each of these modes, there are signs that all four are present.