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## **Transformations in the Sphere of Values and Marriage and Family in the Post-Modern World**

**ABSTRACT:** In the post-modern axiological chaos, the family is essential in educating to values (with some exceptions, of course) – this is the main thesis of the Author. The text first addressed the uneasy task of a multi- source description of what values are and an in-depth analysis of the modern crisis. Then, after placing this data on the screen of the philosophical-pedagogical and social context, the author designs on it marriage and family looking at the environmental transmission of values. From her observations she draws conclusions, which in practice can be an important help in educating the younger generation towards values.

**KEYWORDS:** pedagogy, child, family, parenthood, values.

### **Introduction**

*The essential thing remains that everything I have to say  
is based on certain fundamental values*

(F. A. von Hayek)

The issue of values and valuation is a constant subject of reflection of representatives of many scientific disciplines, including philosophy, psychology, sociology and pedagogy. The world in which we exist is a world of values. Values are a factor that integrates human development, they give meaning

and direction to a person's life. The times we live in are characterized by imbalance, fluidity, loss, acceleration, impatience, futility of models, consumerism and demanding attitudes. The risk is in a way inscribed as the goal of our lives. Chaos in the sphere of values is becoming more and more noticeable. This chaos manifests itself mainly in the undermining of the hitherto unquestionable system of values, the relativization of values and the crisis of morality. As a result, we are faced with many difficulties, which include weakening of the value of marriage and family, increasing number of divorces, difficulties in everyday life (depressions, suicides, loneliness, addictions, single parenthood). Contemporary man is put in the position of being able to give his life a multitude of meanings, because life offers many value systems that are often presented as interchangeable and changeable. The image of the family is also changing, and thus often the whole system of upbringing and socialization.

In upbringing to values it is the family (with some exceptions<sup>1</sup>) that seems to be the most important social reality in which upbringing to values takes place. Passing on of values is an indispensable element of parenthood, it is in the family upbringing process that the value system is formed. It is believed that man is by nature a family-minded being (*homo familiaris*) (Kawula, 2008). This thesis seems to be confirmed by research indicating the high position of the family („successful family life”, „happy family”) in choices of Poles. Research also indicates that having a child is a determinant of high satisfaction from life (Doerner, Nadler, Lowery, 2011). It has been more and more often emphasized that marriage and parenthood are one of the options to choose from. The modern family has undergone many changes, we are even dealing with a redefinition of its concept.

When parents decide to have offspring, they take on a number of responsibilities, including (or maybe mainly) those concerning upbringing to values, living in a world of values and living in values. In times when we are often dealing with the collapse of authorities and the lack of role models, this issue seems to be extremely important. Creating an educational reality without reference to values, upbringing in an axiological void is a harmful activity. Upbringing in the context of values is necessary, because they are the predictors of man's choices and determine his sense and quality of life. Valuable life and upbringing to values becomes a challenge and an educational task.

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<sup>1</sup> Such exceptions include dysfunctional families, children brought up in orphanages, etc.

## Upbringing towards values

Contemporary pedagogy once again asks how we should live, in harmony with what values and what values we should strive for (Adamek, 2015). Thematic considerations require to define the term „value”<sup>2</sup>. It is not easy to define clearly what values are. It is impossible to give a satisfactory, interdisciplinary definition of the concept of „value”, moreover, descriptive difficulties arise even in the area of individual scientific disciplines. What they have in common is a consensus that they play an important role in both personal and social life. Once we see the value of something, it means that it is important to us, not indifferent, it matters to us. The value means a reality that is worth working for, devoting your strength and time to achieve it.

Milton Rokeach defines „value” as „a type of belief, centrally located in someone’s overall belief system; a type of belief about how one should and should not behave or about some end state of existence worth or not worth of achieving value (Joubert, 2005, pp. 321–322). According to Shalom Schwartz, the value is „a cognitive representation (...) of a motivational, desirable, supra-situational goal” (Cieciuch, 2013, p. 37)<sup>3</sup>. The main thesis of his theory can be formulated as follows: „the structure of human values has the shape of a universal, motivational circular continuum”. The value structure is therefore a „circular continuum” and its content is of motivational nature (Cieciuch, 2010, p. 37).

Roman Ingarden (1987), like Max Scheler, believes that man’s ability to live by values, to realize them, distinguishes him from the animal world. Man who does not live by values is reduced to the animal level and suffers a spiritual death. Values therefore play an important role in the life of man because they constitute his humanity and give meaning to human existence.

Agnieszka Regulska writes that „values become determinants of life choices and aspirations and determine a person’s personal development. The value is a model and demands to be realized in a human act” (Regulska, 2013, p. 148).

Upbringing to values becomes extremely important at a time when, according to Zygmunt Bauman (2007, p. 20), our „ground” on which our

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<sup>2</sup> The Latin term *valor* (value) comes from the verb *valere*, which means to be valuable, meaningful to someone or something (Kowalczyk, 2006).

<sup>3</sup> Using the Rokeach value catalog and analyzing the research using multidimensional scaling, Schwartz put forward a thesis of circular value structure. This model does not undermine the hierarchical nature of Rokeach’s values but complements it (cf. Cieciuch, 2010, p. 27).

life prospects are potentially based is uncertain. The pain that was previously caused by a limited choice has now been replaced by the pain of having to make a choice while being uncertain about its accuracy (Bauman, 2007, p. 146). It is worth emphasizing at this point that identification with false values leads to loss of identity as a consequence, therefore one of the fundamental tasks in life is a proper and responsible axiological choice. The real value ontologically outweighs the man who entrusts himself to it. For the value to play an important role in human life, it must be internalized. We accept the value as our own when we accept what it carries. The value comes from the dialog field, where the meeting of people takes place through common values. If these common values are missing, this causes an escape or conflict. It should be noted that tolerance in its liberal version is precisely a symptom of the lack or decline of values, and the lack of reaction to the violation of basic, fundamental values for a given community is an announcement of its death. False values are illusions, yet they persist strongly in the real world and can affect a given community for a long time (Wadowski, 2004).

Modern society is described by Krystyna Chałas (2003, p. 84) as a “society of choices”. The choice of higher values mobilizes people more strongly, the higher the values, the higher the quality of the meeting and dialog. Man finds his proper place by searching for what has value, which means, what is worthy to him and what proves his dignity. Values have not only a social dimension, but also an individual one. The shape and quality of one’s life depends on what values they choose and realize. Values are signposts on the paths of human existence, they are a determinant of motivation and behavior of an individual. Thanks to values, man makes decisions, making choices between good and evil. The world of values is an important dimension of every man’s life – it is difficult to imagine a fully responsible life without accepting and internalizing a certain hierarchy of values (Błasiak, 2004). It is not without significance what values a person chooses and realizes in life. Values are also the foundation of every culture, they give meaning to human life, they are a kind of compass in interaction with the social world. Human existence in a world without values is impossible (Giddens, 2006). Values play an important role in human existence, being an indicator of the quality of humanity. They are assigned the functions of identity creation both in the individual and social aspect. There is no upbringing without values. The integral development of man (to which upbringing should lead) is determined by the realization of the highest values (Chałas, 2003, pp. 29–42).

## The crisis of values

Bauman writes that modern culture consists of offers, not orders. It contains proposals, not standards. It is being transformed into a „world lived by people transformed „ into consumers who must be „seduced” every day by temporary desires. Culture is supposed to keep people permanently unsatisfied (Bauman, 2007, pp. 27–30). In this complex situation the world of values is threatened (Chąłas, 2003, p. 94), often leading to a crisis of values and valuation. The crisis of valuation is defined as „insufficient formation and stabilization of the individual hierarchy of values” as a result of which an individual has difficulties in formulating their own conclusions and criteria of evaluation (Śliwak, Zarzycka, Rak, 2011, p. 78).

The crisis of values, leading to their transformation, is in fact a crisis of experiencing, treating and realizing them by man. Components of value-building relationships are subject to certain processes leading to changes. Changes in the relationship between things and man, the environment and people, etc., affect man’s attitudes to values, which in the ontological and metaphysical perspective is the cause of the crisis of values. In this sense, the crisis of values belongs to the human fate, and man has only a negligible influence on it and can only try to understand and accept it. From an anthropological perspective, the source of the value crisis is the activity of man, his behavior and thoughts leading to the interruption of realization of values due to their inadequate interpretation. These two general sources of the crisis of values lead to a third one, which is in a way intrinsic to the values themselves, namely, their crisis occurs when they are left by man to themselves. Most often, large crises cover common values – or regarded as such – with a low degree of universality. The crisis of values manifests itself in man as an expression of a lack of awareness of the existence of values and a lability of attitudes towards them. This difficulty in making a choice, the inability to convince oneself of what has values and what is valuable, leads to difficulties in realizing true rationality. The crisis of values consists of three complex processes: rapid development and dissemination of knowledge, prosperity and a sense of real freedom. Each of them, apart from their positive aspects, also causes the so-called side effects. A society deprived of its values experiences difficulties in educating its members (Krajewska, 2018, pp. 30–31). The significant sources of a contemporary threat to values are indicated by Chąłas (2003, p. 97), and according to her they include: „secularization of moral values” and their individualization. These factors combined with the

positivist model of science lead to the subjective treatment of man, to the primacy of technology and science over technology. It becomes necessary to oppose the tendency to eliminate axiological issues from pedagogy. Leaving the issue of values to other disciplines could lead to upbringing in an „axiological void” or in optimistic variant in a narrow space.

The crisis of values finds fertile ground for its „development” in post-modern society<sup>4</sup>. Postmodern times, postmodernism (called by other sociologists the late modernity (Giddens, 2002), radicalized modernity (Giddens, 2008), liquid modernity (Bauman, 2006) and other modernity (Beck, 2004) is a notion that means that we are dealing with a different kind of modernity than we have had before. For postmodern times, it is important and noticeable to change values, to replace some with new ones. Postmodern times are times in which globalization and individualization are increasing. What counts is an individual his or her welfare, needs and self-fulfillment. The processes of change we are witnessing have a wide range, so it is no wonder that they affect the family. The family is in a way participating in these changes (Kwak, 2011).

### **The world of values in post-modernity**

It can be assumed that life in post-modernity is the functioning in the mass of information, in which the structures of the social world entail „the disintegration of such obvious ideas about the world that give the sense and meaning to our aspirations and, as a consequence, to our life” (Marody, 2014, p. 112). This is a world in which we are dealing with undermining matters that until now have been considered as obvious, universal. With the meaning of meanings being undermined. With the relativism of life, and therefore also with the relativism of values. This relativism in the treatment of values often leads to the loss of man in whom this system is only just being formed (Frączek, 2011). The functioning of man in social life is threatened when he does not have clear criteria according to which he has to evaluate what constitutes the essence, the meaning of existence in his life, and what is only an addition of no significance.

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<sup>4</sup> The concept of post-modernity is used to describe the characteristics of modern society that the 19th century Western society has taken on. On the other hand, it is used by sociologists to describe a general form of socialization that is opposed to traditional society (Marody, 2014, pp. 37-38).

According to Mirosława Marody (2014, p. 36), the mere appearance of new terms, which have been produced at a dizzying pace, indicates that deep changes in social reality are taking place. Post-modernity has a mass of people, goods and institutions at its core. The times we have to live in are the times of excess. And in such excess, an individual must cope. However, despite experiencing the „crowd”, the „excess” of people, an individual also experiences a sense of loneliness „in the crowd of unknown and usually indifferent people” (Marody, 2014, pp. 82–83).

Ryszard A. Podgórski claims that contemporary man opts for an individualistic utopia of happiness, which is separated from human bonds, truth, love, responsibility and common sense. „Total relativism and the associated nihilism of values, lies in a complete axiological, moral, religious and worldview void”. Man has no socially recognized value (Podgórski, 2006). Podgórski draws attention to the fact that nowadays we can talk about the loss of man. In general, it is connected with the loss of human qualities and values, the dehumanization of contemporary culture. In a strict sense, he speaks of the „disappearance of the deeper humanistic values in human personality, social life and culture” (Podgórski, 2006, p. 91).

In diagnosing man of postmodern times, Bauman used, among others, the metaphor of a tourist and a vagrant – to be free „one must live wisely [...] be careful not to make long-term commitments. Oppose any kind of attachment – to ideas, people or places” (Bauman, 2000, p. 142). „Do not promise undying faithfulness to anybody and to anything” (Bauman, 2000, p. 143). Lack of faithfulness to values is therefore one of the essential characteristics of contemporary man, who „travels without any burden” (Bauman, 2000, p. 144). The reason for this is certainly the development of modern technology and industrial civilization as well as mass culture. Man needs values mainly to remain human and retain what is most human in him. Man should rediscover what the essence of his humanity is, shape himself consciously in order to give sufficient testimony to the modern world about truth and humanity. This can be done only through the axiological dimension of values, because only they can shape contemporary man; direct him towards the truth and free him from the illusion the world gives him (Podgórski, 2006).

Contemporary man cannot function in a „thoughtless lethargy” concerning the meaning of his existence, he must stand for individual values and reject others, that is, make choices (Plopa, 2007). It is worth quoting here the words of Handke, who says that „it is impossible to escape from values and the relativism of values is extremely dangerous – you cannot say that lying is reprehensible and at the same time allow the possibility of lying in certain

situations” (Frączek, 2004, pp. 11–12). Human social life consists of two levels: lower – biological and higher – mental. This second plane is characteristic of the world of human, as it has the ability to go beyond current needs and situations. The full spiritual life of man requires him to break his own self-centeredness and egoism and join a wider community (Podgórski, 2006). As an emphasis on the essence of upbringing to values, it is worth referring at this point to Mieczysław Łobocki, who writes as follows: „upbringing to values seems particularly necessary nowadays, when man is capable both of guiding the processes involved in the increasingly complex production of material goods and of using means of mass destruction; he does not even hesitate to interfere with the laws of nature, as exemplified by genetic engineering and genetic code changes – but he still cannot effectively fight the opposites of fate and the evil he created himself” (Łobocki, 2009, pp. 98–99).

### **Values and marriage and family**

Having described the causes and types of the crisis of values that lead to their transformation and briefly characterized postmodern times, it is now worth considering the impact of these „factors” on the image of the modern family.

The transformations of the family were outlined as early as 1987 by the Swiss sociologist Hans Hoffmann-Nowotny. In Poland, the synthesis of the family was outlined by Stanisław Wierchowski at the end of the 20th century. Based on the ideas of classical sociologists (mainly D. Tönnies), Hoffmann-Nowotny has made the structural and cultural paradigm the starting point for his vision of a new macro-social system. This system is supposed to replace the „traditional” Christian system of social values – it is aimed at such values as universalism, pluralism, and especially the individualism of an individual ensuring his/her emancipation and self-fulfillment. Thus, it assumes radical changes in the family, especially the reduction of its functions. The author believed that there would be a transition from community life (marriage, family), which imposes numerous limitations on man’s autonomy, to a „modern” and „postmodern” society, through new lifestyles (cohabitation and other consensual relationships) that enable the development of an individual. This transition will determine not only the demographic changes, but above all will affect the state and development of the family (Kawula, 2007).

Currently we can notice a process of moving away from the institution of marriage to a „free relationship” with a supposed temporality and „the possibility of ending the relationship at any time and for any reason” (Bauman, 2006, p. 231). Moreover, human relationships are treated „as a consumer good



subject to the same evaluation criteria as apply to any other consumer good” (Bauman, 2006, p. 253). The durability of the relationship is being replaced by „the desire to enjoy a ready-to-use product, and if the pleasure achieved does not meet the promises and expectations, or if the refreshing sense of the new disappears along with pleasure, we will be able to apply for divorce, invoking consumer rights and the law on free trade in goods” (Bauman, 2006, p. 253).

The transformation of the family leads, among other things, to the „emotional fulfillment” becoming the goal of a marriage, which can be achieved in relationships other than the family, and therefore the family becomes only a „periodic contract”. The transition from a nuclear, patriarchal family takes place towards a single parent (mother) – child/children or patchwork families, based on affinity (the reason for this are numerous divorces and new often informal relationships). In this arrangement, the purpose of a family is no longer the welfare of the family as a group of people, but the welfare of the individual, who can leave the family at any time, comes to the fore. The family is beginning to be seen as a source of limitations of freedom for its individual members, as a necessity to submit to individual aspirations and choices (cf. Marody, 2014, pp. 139–145).

Anna Kwak (2012, p. 55) also writes about the process of “deinstitutionalization” of marriage as the main modern imperative. The author (2011) points to three basic trends of „post-modernity” that relate to the family:

- 1) Changing views on the stability and inviolability of the family sphere – assuming that the rules and forms of family life can be violated
- 2) The spread of the multiplicity of forms of family life – the presence of pluralism of forms is recognized
- 3) Deepening the importance of personal bonds in the family.

Philosophy, sociology and common knowledge form the conviction that the family is the basic cell of social life. A strong and durable family is a source of social order, it acts as a pacifier of centrifugal tendencies of individuals, motivating to conformist attitudes, it is a kind of social „police”. At the same time, paradoxically, the family is the most subversive institution in the history of mankind, and its self-sufficiency weakens central power, making it difficult for other types of social groups to form. When the importance of the family for the development of an individual was recognized, mainly its role in civilizing innate impulsiveness and the imposition of normative restrictions on the individual by shaping the conscience were emphasized (Giza-Poleszczuk, 2005). Therefore, the family crisis (according to this view) means an increase in the number of people who are not fully socialized, which may be a potential economic burden or even a public threat.

At the theoretical level, the description of the impact of the crisis of values on marriage and family in the postmodern world will depend on the understanding of the conceptual apparatus used in this issue. In fact, the contemporary change in the meanings of „marriage”, „family”, „post-modernity”, „value” or „crisis” can lead to the transmission of quite different or even contradictory contents under the seemingly same terms.

The value of marriage and family becomes particularly important in the contemporary postmodern world (Stala, 2009). Anna Kwak (2012, p. 47) writes that there is a change in the approach to the family, pointing to the growing awareness of society, which is moving away from the requirement to accept only one form of family. Alternative forms of family life understood by the author as „sexual and family relationships that are not legally sanctioned and/or do not have biological parenthood” are becoming widespread (Kwak, 2005, p. 91). Nowadays, the image of marriage has changed, which is less and less reminiscent of its traditional originality. The number of divorces, and consequently of single parents, is significantly increasing. The institutions of marriage and family still exist and occupy an important place in our lives, but their character has changed radically. That is why modern marriage and family must be understood in an axiological dimension. Man cannot exist in a world that is meaningless and axiologically empty. It is difficult for contemporary man to imagine life without a family, since man is by nature a family being (*homo familiens*) (Giddens, 2006).

Reflecting on the family of the twenty-first century, one should read what strengthens it, what makes it strong and what weakens it and threatens its sustainability. The factors that currently strengthen the family are: the law, which upholds the interests of adults and a legally formalized relationship, and a significant part of public opinion, which plays an important role in creating attitudes in favor of the traditional family model. It is worth noting that the acceptance of alternative forms of marital and family life is often not synonymous with their implementation in one’s own life or by the closest people. Among the factors that weaken the rank and sustainability of the family one should mention: liberalization of attitudes, social acceptance of behaviors that were previously considered reprehensible, change in value systems and attitude towards realization of one’s own needs by adults (Kwak, 2011).

### **Family and value transmission**

In a pluralistic society, upbringing to values is of great importance. In this type of society there is a struggle to win people for various values,

including those that cannot be considered socially and morally desirable. This conflict takes place on a diverse philosophical, ideological and religious level, often not in the name of real values but for cheap popularity or gratification. Thus, a pluralistic society is not conducive to a uniform upbringing process in a climate of morally and socially desirable values. On the other hand, however, it provides strong protection against axiological collectivism in non-democratic countries. In a pluralistic state, natural law is a strong support for established law, understood as being valid in conscience and being in its essence internalized moral norms. Of course, there is not always a convergence between the two types of laws, so upbringing to values has a huge impact on the creation and observance of the law and provides strong support for natural law. The internalized value has a greater influence on the behavior and moral choices of the individual than the external law, which is why upbringing to values is so important (Łobocki, 2007).

In the context of these changes in marital and family life, it is worth considering the contemporary condition of realization and transmission of values not only between the spouses themselves, but also between them and their children. After all, parents are the first educators for the child, thanks to them socialization takes place, a transfer of fundamental values that are the basis of social order (Czekalski, 2009). Of course, the way parental roles are performed is influenced in some way by socio-cultural conditions (Frączek, Lulek, 2010). The value system also influences the evaluation of the life of one's own family, as well as that of other families in the context of life's solutions and intentions. Family functions are also subject to valuation; depending on the value system adopted by the family, certain functions are valued higher or lower (e.g. material-economic more important than emotional-expressive functions).

The introduction of a child to the world of values should take place in the family. It is in it that attitudes, behaviors and actions of those closest to the child should be role models. The family in a way „sculpts a man” for their whole life. Today's noticeable social transformations sometimes violate the sustainability of the family in an extremely strong way. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the social awareness of the importance of the family, especially among young people who take steps to establish it, increases. Only a family that is durable and strong in its values gives a person the opportunity to experience their own value, to recognize themselves as a being that is needed and worthy of existence (Frączek, Lulek, 2010). Helping a child to realize values is a difficult task. As Krystyna Chałas states, it requires permanent presence with and for the pupil. In the process of valuation, she attributes

an important role to upbringing, defining it as a complex and in many ways targeted process. Based on Piotr Oleś's position, she lists six elements in this process:

1. Providing the pupils with the freedom to choose from alternative options.
2. Assisting the pupils in analyzing the consequences of choice in terms of right and wrong.
3. Supporting the pupils to positively emphasize values.
4. Confronting the pupil's own choices with those of others.
5. Helping them making their own choices a reality.
6. Consolidation of the choices made by the pupil (Chałas, 2003, pp. 43–55).

For a child, family is extremely important because it is a bridge between him/her and the surrounding reality (Dyczewski, 2009). Bringing children into the world of moral values and norms is not a simple educational task. As a result, the child learns to distinguish between good and evil, „to classify persons, phenomena, ideas in terms of their importance” (Frączek, Lulek, 2010, pp. 20–21). The role of parents has a significant impact on the child's personality, on the formation of the child's hierarchy of values, on the ability to function in social life.

Citing Józef Jaroń, we can list important principles in education to values:

- faithfulness to the words, views and values proclaimed;
- the unity of parents' attitudes and actions in everyday life;
- direct interpersonal contact between parents and children, whose basic form is a conversation and dialog based on opening up to the child while maintaining the rules of trust, kindness and cordiality;
- partnership – treating a child in a subjective way, based on an emotional bond;
- the transfer of real values, not fictitious or apparent ones;
- the transfer of values as a process, not a single action;
- absoluteness, i.e., the transfer of moral, social, aesthetic, religious, ecological, health, family values (Szymczyk, 2017; after Jaroń, 1998, p. 8);.

It is impossible to imagine the educational process without reference to values, there is no *valueless* pedagogy. One can argue about the kind of axiological priorities, but they cannot be excluded from educational activities. The issue of how to transfer values becomes an extremely important problem, especially in postmodern times. It is, therefore, a matter of using tools that will allow to move from axiological theory to the interiorization of values, i.e. to their communication. The issue of passing on values is closely related to the issue of freedom. The essence of freedom is the possibility of choice,

and choice is always made on an axiological level. However, it is important to note that freedom from values is in an antinomial situation. For freedom can only be fully realized as a choice of good, and yet good or other values cannot ultimately determine man. There is a tension between „should” and „choose”, and this „choose” is not always a stand for value. This tension is possible precisely because of the freedom that is often faced with dramatic choices. It is worth remembering about this antinomial situation during the upbringing process. Values cannot be „chosen” under authoritarian coercion, this leads to totalitarianism, nor will values be internalized if they are not adopted by free decision. Therefore, the starting point of upbringing must be respect for the freedom of the pupil, in other words, the communication of values must start with the child, to freedom. It is a truism to say that upbringing to freedom must be accompanied by upbringing to responsibility. The scope of freedom must correspond to the respective responsibilities. The attitude of freedom is the foundation of becoming a man in their personal dimension, their relationship in the social dimension and a place of realization of values. It is in interpersonal references that man discovers, internalizes and creates values. Communicating values should not be just a simple transmission, but a process encouraging the child to transcend their own limitations for the purpose of axiological exploration and discoveries. Such a process is possible on condition that a certain type of relationship exists (Królikowska, 2010).

One such type of relationship is the model proposed by Carl Rogers. This model is capable of preserving the unconditional affirmation of human freedom, given its antinomiality. In the relationship mode proposed by Rogers, the ability to accept other people’s points of view and their unconditional acceptance is important. Such an attitude is part of the existential and phenomenological trend in which the person, their development and self-realization are most important. The fundamental features of the pro-developmental relationship are: authenticity, understood as the sincere and truthful display of one’s spiritual interior, acceptance or recognition of a person of unconditional value and understanding of their feelings, thoughts and attitudes. When speaking of obstacles to the communication of values through a relationship that supports development and upbringing to freedom, they are considered on an individual and social level. In the individual dimension, a certain difficulty may be to adopt an attitude of decentralization and unconditional acceptance. On the other hand, in the social dimension, the difficulties are connected with contemporary culture, which is permeated with the ideas of postmodernism, aiming at building a solidarity between people on the common lack of all the bases (Królikowska, 2010).

A hierarchy of human values is formed in the family, in which a person enters into the relations that are the most valuable in terms of upbringing and education (direct, personal and permanent). The family is a place that unites its members with biological, emotional, cultural and economic ties. It is the best place for proper human development (Frączek, Lulek, 2010). The presence of a human being in the family, for the first several years or so, shapes their ideas about patterns of interaction between spouses, between spouses and children and between the family and the outside world. A properly functioning family is therefore a point of reference and a model of interpersonal relations. An adult who establishes a family gives it a shape, which is significantly conditioned by the experiences from the family home (Biernat, Sobierajski, 2007). A person lives in a family for a long period of time encountering specific values, much earlier than the influence of other environments in their life will appear. The child, imitating people who are important during this period of their life, also takes over their value system. It is important that the verbal communication of values is adequate to realize these values in action. Therefore, parents should make sure that the values that are most important to them become important to their child as well. The process of encouraging a child to internalize axiology starts with the presentation of basic values towards higher values. The process of upbringing to values should, of course, include a gradual assumption of responsibility for the realization of values by the child (Błasiak, 2002). The research conducted with the Polish adaptation of the PBVS-C method by Ciecuch and Harasimczuk (2010) „confirmed the hypothesis of the existence of a differentiated value structure already in late childhood” (Ciecuch, Harasimczuk, Döring, 2010, p. 42). If at such a young age, already in childhood, a certain axiological structure is formed, and not only (as one might suppose) a certain reading of values, this suggests the very early formation of sensitivity to what is important in further life. That is why such an important role in human development is played by properly understood and implemented data transmission in the family.

### **In lieu of an ending**

The family, due to the power of influence on its members and its importance in the development of a young person, is by its very nature the best and most natural, original environment of axiological transmission. The quality of transmission and realization of values depends on what values are preferred in a given family and what is the level and type of interpersonal references between spouses and their children, because values are dialogical

in nature. Of course, all these elements are more or less determined by the general changes in the world of values and the model of marital and family life in post-modern times. In each family, the influence of these „external” conditions and their „power” will vary, depending on the type and number of planes they intertwine. In other words, we are dealing here with the contact between two organisms: family and society, their intertwining and interaction with each other, where the „end result” is the result of many forces.

The hierarchy of values adopted by man is the basis for the choice of a certain conduct, purpose and sense of our existence. Living in the world means as much as experiencing events in relation to the world of values, other people and oneself. The recognition of pluralism as a characteristic feature of modernity should not lead to the approval of all mutually exclusive values (Błasiak, 2002). For the comprehensive development of the personality, it is not enough to have material values, so much promoted by the modern world, but it is necessary to immerse oneself in higher, universal values, rooted in the humanist tradition.

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