

experienced, to a conceptual or cognitive knowing which rests on perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc.

2.2.1.2.9 Child experiencing also embodies *moments of anticipation* which contain a fore-grasping of that which is immediately given in experience. So, on the basis of his "experienced-ness" or possessed knowledge, the child anticipates certain things. This can be concretely illustrated by the following example. We say we see a house; however, we really only see the front side. The back side, as an unseen part of the house, is anticipated within this perceiving. Thus, this aspect of anticipation peculiar to experiencing embraces aspects of imagining and fantasizing, of thinking, and even of remembering.

2.2.1.2.10 Experiencing is also a meaning *giving and taking activity*. The child continually gives sense and meaning to that which he experiences, and it is especially here that child lived-experiencing comes to the foreground (see below).

In light of the above essential characteristics of child experiencing, it is necessary to keep in mind that these essences are actualized as a totality in the act of experiencing, and that they are merely distinguished for scientific purposes. In agreement with this, and by means of a synthesis following Strasser, a provisional description of child experiencing can be given. *Experiencing is an original, continuous act of turning to and reaching (grasping) reality which leads to knowing. It is the beginning of a becoming aware of reality by which cognitive or conceptual thought is made possible. Experiencing is the first orientation of the subject (person) in his surrounding world and forms the basis for an understanding of the world on a higher level.*

#### 2.2.1.3 EXPERIENCING AS A MODE OF ACTUALIZATION OF THE CHILD'S BECOMING AND LEARNING

From the beginning, the child finds himself as open-possibility in the world and this is shown in the fact that he experiences the world. In this *being involved* with the life-world, the child experiences the nearness of that which surrounds him. To this not only belongs the bodily contact with the mother through bodily care, cleaning, and feeding but also the most original experiences of the child. By the child's *feeling-, seeing-, tasting-, and hearing-experiencing*, he is aware of his own presence as well as of the presence of others and of things in the world. For example, the

"warmth" of the mother's bodily presence is *felt*, the mother's milk tastes, her sympathetic smile is *seen*, and her comforting voice is *heard*. These earliest experiences in the continual progress of the child's becoming are the first moments by which the child begins to *know* (learn). Although these experiences are initially strongly *self-bound* and even though the child has difficulty distinguishing between experiencing himself and experiencing the world, they already include *moments of learning*. Thus, here there is still little mention of a *knowing or cognitive experiencing*, and the child still cannot adequately distance himself from reality. The child still experiences reality preponderantly on an *emotional* or pre-cognitive level. However, it cannot be denied that these initial experiences embody aspects of knowing.

For the child, the primary situation of upbringing is the first space for experiencing. An experience of this pedagogic space as *room for becoming* and as safe and secure also lays the basis for the child's willingness to "experiencingly" *explore* his world. In the situation of upbringing, for the first time, the child experiences his helplessness and dependency on the adult for loving care, authoritative guidance, and continuous accessibility, all of which pave the way for the child to go to meet his world with adequate confidence.

The progressing course of child experiencing, in and by which his *becoming is actualized*, is an event during which the child continually learns new things. This is to say that the child not only experiences bodily but also, via language, his named experiences, orderings, classifications about which he thinks, and it is said that he learns. By implication, this means that the child, in the course of becoming adult, continually experiences by learning and learns by experiencing. Experiencing is not only the basis for all learning but the child's learning activities, as a consequence, have additional "experiencedness".

In this respect, Buck says that experiencing is the basis for all learning. Learning belongs necessarily to experiencing and it is the necessary consequence of experiencing. Further, he says that experiencing which is without lasting learning consequences, from which nothing is learned, is not experiencing. That which the person experiences changes the person himself, his conduct, actions. This, experiencing also has as a consequence additional becoming by the child, and an elevation in his becoming. In this



respect, Linschoten's statement is meaningful, "Experiencing transforms us from moment to moment; the experiencing of things changes us. One who has experienced has a history behind him that has taught him to see, to think, and to experience differently." By experiencing, the psychic life of the child not only comes into motion but it is indeed actualized. The child learns when he experiences, explores his world, and because of a qualitative as well as a quantitative increase in his possessed experience, the child distantiates himself from reality, objectifies it and thus emancipates himself.

However, a child's experiencing, by which he learns and changes, is an event that is actualized in time. The adult, whether parent or teacher, accompanies the child in his acquisition of experience and has the responsibility to elucidate certain experiences for the child as well as to purposefully create situations (at home and at school) during which the child can acquire experience. These situations vary from the most simple situations of instruction at home during which the child learns to dress himself to eat, and behave properly, to the more formalized instructional situation in the school where the child becomes acquainted with new, even complicated, facets of reality.

By way of a summary, it ought to be obvious that experiencing is an essence of the psychic life of the child-in-education by which his becoming and learning are actualized. It is also obvious that a description and elucidation of this event is possible if we use experiencing as a Psychopedagogic category.

## 2.2.2 *Willing as a psychopedagogic category*

### 2.2.2.1 CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPT

With reference to Van der Merwe, who has undertaken an intensive study of willing as an essence in the psychic life of the child-in-education and whose insights into willing are mainly supported in this section, the following definition of the concept of willing can be given from an etymological point of view. Willing is the possibility by which a person is disposed to consciously perform an action. It shows a striving, a desiring, a longing, and a wanting to do something, all of which stress a connection with a person's emotional life.

Besides this, "willing" also means an initiative which is the basis for a person's freedom of choice, of decisions, and of a

readiness to take part. It is also a direction-giving power in the performance of particular actions. Willing also has a relationship to the future in the sense that a particular aim is striven for which must yet be fulfilled. This striving is expressed in such sayings as "I still want . . .", "when I grow up I will . . .", etc. According to Van der Merwe and C.K. Oberholzer, these expressions of willing, which are directed to the future, cannot be adequately actualized if the person's intellectual potentialities are not also taken into account. Further, with reference to the view of Rollo May, willing is linked to one's own identity and identity acquisition which comes to expression in such sayings as "I can", "I will", and "I am".

Against the background of the above clarifying remarks, it seems that the phenomenon of child willing has particular value for the education of the child, especially concerning the actualization of his psychic life.

It is conspicuous that willing embodies a particular dynamic and power by which the child's psychic life is activated and its goal-directedness is actualized.

### 2.2.2.2 SOME ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PHENOMENON OF CHILD WILLING

During a scientific fathoming of willing as a phenomenon in the life-world of the child, from a psychopedagogic view, Van der Merwe differentiates the following essences:

2.2.2.2.1 Willing is a mode of manifestation of child *intentionality* which is especially expressed in the child's openness and directedness to reality.

2.2.2.2.2 Willing is *dynamic* in nature and forms the basis for the actualization of one's own initiative. Thus, willing implies the initiative to actualize the psychic life in terms of becoming and learning.

2.2.2.2.3 The act of willing is actualized on the basis of a personal decision which, by its nature, is normatively determined. By willing, the child gives form to the fact that he himself is someone who will be and become. It embodies a personal choice and readiness to, actively contributes to the actualization of his own psychic life.

2.2.2.2.4 Willing is *goal-directed* in nature, which indicates that the psychic life is actualized in terms of particular purposes. The psychic life, via willing, is directed to an aim by which it is actualized as a totality-in-function;



2.2.2.2.5 Willing is *direction-giving* and *indicates a course*. By this is meant that by the direction-giving and course-indicating tendency of willing, the actualization of the child's becoming and learning, as this is directed to an aim, is defined:

2.2.2.2.6 Willing implies *assent* to the inevitable in the child's relationship to the world. This means that the child's bodiliness, his potentialities, and reality itself present particular limits for the actualization of his becoming and learning:

2.2.2.2.7 Willing is qualified by the *emotional life*. A stable emotional life defines the strength of willing while emotional instability (lability) weakens willing:

2.2.2.2.8 The quality of the actualization of intellectual potentialities is co-defined by willing. This means that a child's possibilities, and in particular his intellectual potentialities, will be effectively actualized provided the child has the necessary will-power at his disposal:

2.2.2.2.9 Willing points to the *future*; consequently, it is the driving power basic to the child's striving to become a proper adult:

2.2.2.2.10 By actualizing child willing, the child confirms and acquires his own *identity*.

On the basis of the above essential characteristics of the phenomenon of child willing, the question is now posed as to the particular meaning willing holds for the actualization of the child's becoming and learning on his way to adulthood.

#### 2.2.2.3 WILLING AS A MODE OF ACTUALIZATION OF THE CHILD'S BECOMING AND LEARNING

Since no one is born and adult, each person has the task of becoming a proper adult. Thus, from the beginning of child existence, there is a fruitful tension between what the child is and what he ought to become.

No one has the right to deprive the child of his childhood, but it is inappropriate for him to remain a child. However, as far as being human is concerned, the child shows himself as someone who *will* become adult. From an early age, the child already *desires, wishes or longs* to be as an adult. This child initiative to become adult is seated in his willing, and it creates the golden opportunity for the adult, through upbringing, to accompany the child so that this aim can be attained.

Within the framework of his own potentialities, the adult is a good judge of life and of the attendant demands of propriety and has the responsibility, by educative instruction, to continually search for ways and means by which the child's wanting to become grown-up can be actively supported.

Also, by way of affective education, the adult supports the child such that he is ready (willing) to *experience* and to *explore* his world. Such upbringing is characterised by a climate of warmth, love, and trust which encourages the child in his free-willing and personal decisions (Van der Merwe) to actively contribute to his own becoming. Affective upbringing *strengthens* the child's *willing* and also the cognitive exploration of his world. This entails that the child also be accompanied or brought up knowingly (cognitively) by the adult so he will explore his world by perceiving, thinking, imagining, etc. The actualization of the act of willing by the child also especially defines the nature and direction of his becoming, particularly the quality and level of the actualization of his cognitive potentialities.

Van der Merwe says that a child must be brought up in order to actualize his potentialities for knowing. This means the awakening of the child's willing to properly and responsibly use his potential. Thus, the child *learns* on the basis of a *willful decision* and the effect that his learning activities has on his becoming is largely determined by the strength of the child's willing. Examples of this are numerous in the everyday course of upbringing and instruction since learning problems are often the outcome of a deficient willingness to learn. If the child's willpower shows a deficiency and, hence, there is a lack in the necessary *direction* and *course* of his becoming, the child's becoming will be retarded with the consequence that his *emancipation* will be seriously handicapped.

It has been stressed repeatedly that proper adulthood is the aim of all educative instruction. This aim is difficult to attain if the child does not show signs that he progressively maintains his own standpoint toward matters, norms, values, etc. However, if the child succeeds in gradually establishing a position toward himself, passes judgement, and makes choices (normative becoming), a definitive corroboration of his own *identity* shows in this. With this, the child announces himself in his willingness to be personally involved in his own becoming grown-up, thus someone who is



willing to be co-responsible for the unfolding of his becoming a person in the direction of adulthood.

By way of a brief synthesis, it is obvious that the actualization of the child's psychic life, as this shows itself in his becoming and learning, is co-defined by the child's willing. Also, attention was directed to the part played by upbringing in the actualization of the child's willing, without which the child's wanting to become and learn could not take a desirable course. A meaningful connection between child willing and experience was similarly brought to the fore in the sense that the actualization of willing necessarily must influence the child's *going to reality*, not only concerning the direction and course but especially concerning the quality of the child's experiencing.

## 2.2.3 *Lived-experiencing as a psychopedagogic category*

### 2.2.3.1 CLARIFICATION OF THE CONCEPT

Lived-experience and lived-experiencing refer to such events as a living through, going through, living to see, being witness to, living in, etc. Lived-experiencing refers to a condition which resists on experiencing. Thus, "lived-experiencing" is an act or action by which something is *lived-through*. In the language of psychopedagogics, we say that what one *experiences* is at the same time *lived-experienced*, being an action by which the person gives sense and meaning to that which is experienced.

### 2.2.3.2 SOME ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVED-EXPERIENCING

Following the lead of Sonnekus, Pretorius, Van Niekerk and others who have undertaken a thorough study of lived-experiencing as a phenomenon in the life-world of the child and who have used this as a psychopedagogic category, we turn our attention to the following important essences of lived-experiencing:

2.2.3.2.1 Lived-experiencing is an action arising out of a person's openness for being directed to reality. As an activity, it is primarily *sense-seeking* as well as *sense- and meaning-giving* in nature (Husserl). Lived-experiencing is in essence normative in nature and, as such, we speak of *lived-experiencing meaning*. As an intentional being, the child continually gives sense and meaning to the world around him, and this occurs by the act or action of lived-experiencing;

2.2.3.2.2 Lived-experiencing in its origin is both *emotional* (affective) as well as *knowing* (cognitive) in nature and these are only distinguishable and not separable (Heidegger);

2.2.3.2.3 In the search for sense and meaning, lived-experiencing is always directed to *something*. This something appears as life-world content, e.g. norms, values, codes of behaviour, learning content, etc. to which the child must continually give meaning;

2.2.3.2.4 Lived-experiencing shows a character of continuous flowing, called by Linschoten the *stream of (lived-) experience*;

2.2.3.2.5 Lived-experiencing has an *integral* character and, therefore, is always a unitary lived-experiencing. Each aspect of lived-experiencing in the stream of experience is thus characterised by emotional, knowing-, and normative-moments;

2.2.3.2.6 Lived-experiencing is *selective* in nature which implies that the child in his being directed-to something gives selective sense and meaning to that something;

2.2.3.2.7 Lived-experiencing is also characterised by a continual *changing* and because of its particular dynamics, it is an important mode of actualization of the child's becoming and learning (Sonnekus). This implies that as the child becomes and learns in time (on the basis of his historicity), he repeatedly lived-experiences differently (Pretorius);

2.2.3.2.8 Lived-experiencing is always *person-bound*; that is to say, lived-experiencing is always "my lived-experiencing" (Pretorius) because it always involves sense and meaning for me. Each person, thus also each child, gives sense and meaning to the world in a unique way;

2.2.3.2.9 Human *bodiliness* is the *centre* of lived-experiencing. In and by the body which I am (Merleau-Ponty), I experience my being-in-the-world.

Against the background of the above essential characteristics of lived-experiencing, Sonnekus describes it as follows:

"*Lived-experiencing is an intentional taking of a personal position (attitude) by the child (person), as totally-in-function, in his communication with reality.*"

As in the case of experiencing and willing, we give further atten-