

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RESULTS OF PERSONAL ACTUALIZATION

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

That self-actualization by means of actualizing the psychic life and learning is at the center of a child's participation in his/her educating no longer is unfamiliar. However, as important as self-actualization is, it is not a goal, in itself, but, along with educating or adult accompaniment, it is responsible for **personal actualization**. It is a means to that end. Therefore, the ways this end is reached are looked at. According to Sonnekus (1984, p 25) there must be an inquiry into the result or outcome of actualizing the total psychic life and learning. In this connection, the question is: What happens to the content a child has experienced, has willingly decided to practice, that he/she has learned to know and lived experience, i.e., to which he/she has attributed sense and meaning?

The answer is that by attributing meaning to it, the content congeals in the form of **possessed experience**. This possessed experience is the entirety of a child's **possessed knowledge** and it is where his/her **self-concept** is formed. What occurs and is formed in possessed experience gradually becomes observable in his/her **behaviors** (now viewed as the outcome of actualizing his/her psychic life) and from this his/her level of **becoming** that has occurred is inferred.

#### 2. THE OUTCOME OR EMBODIMENT OF A CHILD'S SELF-ACTUALIZATION

##### 2.1 Building up possessed experience

Everything with which a child makes contact and experiences he/she also lived experiences by giving sense and meaning to it. As mentioned in chapter III, all content is not lived experienced as equally meaningful. A child continually determines what the **value** of the relevant content is for him/herself and, accordingly, he/she lived experiences it as more or less **meaningful** or even as **meaningless**.

What occurs now that he/she has given sense and meaning to the content? By lived experiencing, the experienced content is "**congealed**" (Van der Stoep) and as such is integrated into his/her **possessed experience** (See Sonnekus, 1984, p 25). By giving sense and meaning to the content of reality, he/she constructs or builds up for him/herself **personal possessed experience** that gradually increases in **depth** and **breadth**. Such possessed experience is important for future experiencing and is codetermined by the level on which he/she attributes sense and meaning to reality (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 70). Thus, possessed experience is two-dimensional: On the one hand, it is the result of actualizing the psychic life and, on the other hand, it influences this actualization **now** and in the **future** (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 72).

The way possessed experience is formed shows no correspondence with filling an empty vessel with water (See Van der Stoep, 1973, p 105). It occurs in unique and personal ways and no two persons have the same possessed experience. A child's possessed experience is formed and built up because the content to which he/she has attributed sense and meaning becomes integrated and ordered in his/her already possessed experience in the form of a **hierarchy** or **rank order** of content invested with meaning (Sonnekus, 1984, p 25). This integration is an activity that relates the new content to existing knowledge. Existing possessed experience thus is continually expanded; that is, there is a quantitative increase as well as a qualitative deepening of it (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 129). Thus, possessed experience is furnished with meanings of a higher as well as a lower quality. That is, it is **not** merely content lived experienced as meaningful that become part of one's possessed experience but rather all content that at one time or another has been given (meaningful or meaningless) sense. The hierarchy or rank order of content in possessed experience thus is built up by a preference for or rejection of particular content in terms of values that a child attributes to the content (See Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 191). All content with greater or higher meaning is integrated in particular ways while those with less, lower or even "**negative**" meaning will be brought into relationship with each other (See Sonnekus, 1984, p 26).

In terms of content, possessed experience is a complex nuance of knowing, knowledge, particular capacities to act and judge as well as to give sense and meaning to reality in unique ways. Thus, it is the totality of all that a child comes into contact *and* to which he/she

gives meaning, i.e., learns to know. Possessed experience embraces his/her **possessed knowledge**. So viewed, it is the "**storage place**" of his/her **knowledge**. However, it does not only have a knowing or cognitive flavor but because of its personal nature, it also is emotionally and normatively colored (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 73). Consequently, integration does not occur merely on the level of values (meaningful or meaningless) attributed to the content but also by the **nature** of lived experiencing (i.e., emotional, knowing or normative).

The content to which a child gives meaning and to which he/she attributes **value** eventually becomes **norms** for him/her with which he/she **identifies** and in terms of which he/she organizes his/her own life. Initially, he/she identifies strongly with the person who presents and exemplifies the content, but gradually there is more focus on the content as such. This implies that now he/she no longer follows an adult since that is no longer expected or required of him/her because he/she has appropriated the norms for him/herself and has identified with them. Thus, there is movement from personal identification (with an adult) to norm identification (See Pretorius, 1982, p 15). In doing so, the content invested with sense and meaning gradually becomes norms for him/her in terms of which he/she lives. In this light, a child **always** is in **education** since the norms in possessed experience are **representative** of the adult or educator. In this way, the **learning content**, as derived from reality, becomes **life content** and he/she increasingly lives the norm-image of adulthood.

In summary, possessed experience is the **ordered** totality of a child's lived experiences of meaning. From a psychopedagogical perspective, this is the result of educating as well as what he/she has given sense and meaning to. As such, it is the resulting product of his/her actualizing his/her total psychic life in relationship with adults (Sonnekus, 1984, p 26). How his/her possessed experience appears will ultimately be manifested in his/her behavior. Thus, without the continual broadening and deepening of his/her possessed experience, he/she will not become a proper adult.

## 2.2 Acquiring a self-concept

It is now clear that a child's possessed experience plays an important role in his/her becoming an adult. It is formed by

his/her contact with and giving sense and meaning to the content of reality. Therefore, it is also his/her possessed experience that allows him/her to find his/her way more independently and autonomously without the help and support of adults or educators.

However, he/she is not only involved in building up his/her possessed experience of the world **around** him/her but also with respect to **him/herself**. The "**success**" or adequacy of his/her becoming adult thus is not only determined by his/her possessed experience of the world but also by his/her possessed experience of him/herself. In this connection, Jacobs (Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 7) observes that some people succeed at all tasks they engage in. In contrast, there are others who always fail. This "**ability**" or "**inability**", however apparent, is not directly related to a person's real potentialities. This can happen if one person expects to succeed even before he/she engages in something, while another expects to fail.

Between these limits are a wide variety of persons who regularly succeed at some tasks and fail at others with the consequence that later they will avoid engaging in what they expect to fail or at best give a half-hearted attempt (Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 7). Hence, each person carries with him/herself an idea or concept regarding his/her "**successfulness**". This idea or notion of him/herself is his/her **self-concept**. It is formed from his/her beliefs about him/herself. Most of these beliefs are formed from previous experiences by which he/she has given meaning to his/her own manner and from this his/her self-concept is formed (Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 7).

The obvious question that now arises is: How is his/her self-concept formed and what is its significance for his/her personal actualization?

Initially, a very young child makes no distinction between him/herself and the surrounding world. However, gradually he/she becomes more aware of his/her body and begins to discover him/herself and learn to know him/herself as a person. From relatively early, he/she is aware of a unique **self** (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 27) and as he/she becomes older he/she begins to differentiate him/herself from the world around him/her. When this stage is reached, he/she begins to be aware of his/her own **identity** and thus he/she forms a **self-identity** (Jacobs and Vrey,

1982, p 18). Although a young child becomes aware of him/herself and his/her own identity from an early age, it still is vague and unstructured; one's identity is first established during puberty or even later (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 27). To want to be someone (Langeveld) or to form a self-identity is given with being-a-child and, therefore, he/she continually seeks an answer to the question: **Who am I?** (Vrey, 1979, p 48; also see Pretorius, 1982, p 11; Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 18 and Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 100).

According to Pretorius (1982, p 14), a child's identity acquisition is a **pedagogic-social** matter because it is acquired in communication with fellow persons and especially with his/her parents, and it is determined by the degree to which he/she feels him/herself acknowledged **by others**. The concept **identity** only has significance for him/her when he/she is among others because the question "**Who am I?**" actually is "**Who am I in the eyes of the other?**" Thus, one's own identity is unknowable without fellow humanity--it is nourished by interactions with fellow persons. In this connection, Vrey (1979, p 51) says that it is not just in the words, behavior and eye of the other that a child learns to know him/herself. He/she anticipates the judgment of his/her activity by other persons he/she regards highly and, in this way, his/her **subjective standards** arise by which he/she evaluates his/her activities as well as his/her total identity.

**Communication and identification** (See Senekal, 1978, pp 40 and 46) play an extremely important role in acquiring an identity. It is only in communicating with fellow persons that a child's potentialities can be actualized and a unique identity can be acquired. A young person who is acquiring an identity shows an intense need for and seeks intimate communication with his/her educators. Gradually, he/she identifies him/herself with an adult or educator with whom he/she has adequate educative communication (See Pretorius, 1982, p 15). He/she can only acquire his/her own identity by such identification. He/she requires **examples** to which he/she can direct his/her becoming adult; he/she is in search of **norms** that are meaningful for him/her. He/she **will** identify him/herself with an adult and, on his/her own initiative, choose an educator with whom he/she can associate, with whose image of adulthood he/she can **feel at one** (Pretorius, 1982, p 15).

This identification takes place on three levels (Engelbrecht, 1982, pp 100-101):

- \* Examples from the immediate environment (nearby ideals);
- \* Famous ideals (distant ideals); and
- \* Self created ideal images (abstract ideals).

Even with respect to a parent, his/her abstract ideals increase. Initially he/she identifies him/herself with his/her parents but gradually he/she comes into contact with new possibilities of identification. Also, he/she must make a transition from personal identification (with his/her parents) to norm identification. For him/her, the person and matter at hand (norm) are a unity but during puberty he/she distances him/herself from his/her parents and he/she differentiates between person and norm (Pretorius, 1982, p 15). The ideal that is lived experienced is detached from the person and a young person becomes aware of the norms represented by the person identified with. Now he/she no longer identifies with the person as such but with the norms and values he/she will make his/her own in the future (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 101).

In searching for his/her own identity, in fact, h/she tries to attain who he/she **will** be. Thus, he/she investigates and experiments with different roles that he/she views as possibilities. He/she identifies with a variety of other persons and copies and experiments with their ways of behaving (Vrey, 1979, p 49). In this role-playing, he/she tries on ready-made identities to see how they fit. Some roles are based on persons he/she knows and others on imaginary characters that he/she has gotten to know from television or stories. Sometimes it is a role that is geared to an occupation, e.g., a future teacher. In this way, he/she tests different roles to determine which identity best fits him/her. During late adolescence these roles that he/she "**plays**" gradually begin to become his/her own identity (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 103-104).

Jacobs and Vrey (1982, p 19) emphasize that identity is not a simple concept but is many faceted; for example, there is sex-role identity, gender identity, self-identity and bodily identity. Also acquired are a personal, a group and a cultural identity (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, pp 210-211). In another publication they refer to these facets as "**elements of identity**" that refer, e.g., to my knowledge of myself as a man, as a rugby player, as a teacher, as a father, as a student, as an automobile driver. Thus, acquiring one's own identity is paired with **activity and action**. Each identity to be developed requires

personal involvement and activity. "I need to engage in studying or playing or parenting in such a way that I identify with the activity" (Vrey and Jacobs, 1982, p 100). By identifying with a specific activity or action, a specific role is accepted and integrated into one's own identity.

Along with acquiring a personal identity, a child is involved in forming an **image** of who he/she now really is. This means that he/she can have different self-images corresponding to his/her different identities. Thus, he/she forms a **self-image** of him/herself as a son, as a pupil, etc. A person's **self-image** is a **representation** of his/her identity within a specific context (Vrey and Jacobs, 1982, p 99-100).

As mentioned, a person's self-image or representation is largely determined by his/her association with other people. On the basis of the ways in which another person objects to him/her, his/her disapproving attitude and his/her response to his/her behavior allow his/her own "**subjective standards**" to arise by which he/she judges and evaluates him/herself. The implication is that the self-image formed is evaluated against his/her own subjective standards that are formed in relationships with others. (Vrey, 1979, p 51). It is not sufficient for a person to know **who** he/she is, but it is in comparison with others that he/she evaluates him/herself as good or bad. By this self-evaluation, he/she takes a **stand** in the face of **him/herself** and he/she also gives **sense** and **meaning** to him/herself. This **evaluated self-image** is the **self-concept** that is a **complex and dynamic system of conceptions he/she holds regarding the truth about him/herself** (Pretorius, 1982, p 63) and it is based on the sense and meaning he/she attributes to him/herself.

The above is a broad stroked and synoptic exposition of the ways a person's self-concept is formed. However, from a psychopedagogical perspective, it is necessary that a more definitive explanation be given of **how** this occurs. From the previous chapter, forming a self-concept is closely related to **educative accompaniment** and **self-actualization**.

### 2.2.1 Educating and acquiring a self-concept

It has been noted that identity acquisition is a pedagogic-social matter because a child's identity is acquired in communicating with

fellow persons and especially with his/her parents. Thus, **educating** has a role in his/her acquiring a self-concept.

A child is affectively, cognitively and normatively educated or accompanied (See chapter II, section 2). This occurs in terms of the **content** of reality, and by giving it meaning he/she gains knowledge of it. It is no different in his/her acquiring a self-concept where he/she also must be accompanied affectively, cognitively and normatively. However, the difference is that the content here does not come so much from his/her surrounding world (Umwelt) but rather **he/she him/herself is the content** to which he/she must attribute sense and meaning to acquire a self-concept.

Affective accompaniment is the basis and framework within which an educative event and personal actualization occur. In a firm emotional relationship between parent and child, a parent is extremely important to him/her. Because he/she cares for and looks after him/her regarding his/her needs, he/she will highly value his/her parents. The opinions that they have of him/her are, therefore, very important to him/her. When in their educating they establish a warm, intimate and trusting emotional climate, he/she lived experiences that they care for him/her, that he/she is important to them and that they value him/her highly. From this arises a **lived experiencing of his/her own worth** and he/she will also highly value him/herself and thus build up a positive self-concept. Affective educating implies that his/her parents lovingly accept, respect and trust him/her. Only then can he/she learn to esteem and respect him/herself. In this way, he/she accepts him/herself, increases his/her self-confidence and views him/herself in a positive light.

Cognitive accompaniment primarily is characterized by a purposeful striving by both adult and child to learn to know each other better (Prinsloo, 1984, p 55). An adult should know his/her child and his/her destination (adulthood), and a child must increasingly learn to know what the educating stands for (Landman, 1974, p 24). Second, cognitive accompaniment is directed to actualizing his/her **learning potential** (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 295). With respect to acquiring a self-concept, this means that he/she also must be guided to learn to know **him/herself**.

The adults should guide a child so that he/she can learn to know his/her potentialities and optimally actualize his/her learning.



Thorough self-knowledge he/she can set realistic and attainable goals for him/herself. If adults do not know him/her and his/her potentialities well, they cannot accompany him/her to adequate self-knowledge and this can result in him/her entertaining unrealistic expectations. Demands that are too high will lead to him/her continually failing and this will result in low self-esteem. Where the demands are too few or too low, he/she will not optimally actualize his/her potentialities and his/her low level of becoming will lead to a low self-regard and a negative self-concept.

Normative (meaning giving) accompaniment implies that the adults should present and exemplify educative norms in such a way that he/she can and will identify with them. The extremely important role of identification in acquiring one's own identity has been indicated. A child must be guided not only to identify with the person of the adult, but especially with the norms he/she represents. A child sets for him/herself the ideal image of what he/she one day will be as an adult. By appropriating and living up to the norms, he/she gradually reaches who he/she will be and this leads to high self-regard and a positive self-concept.

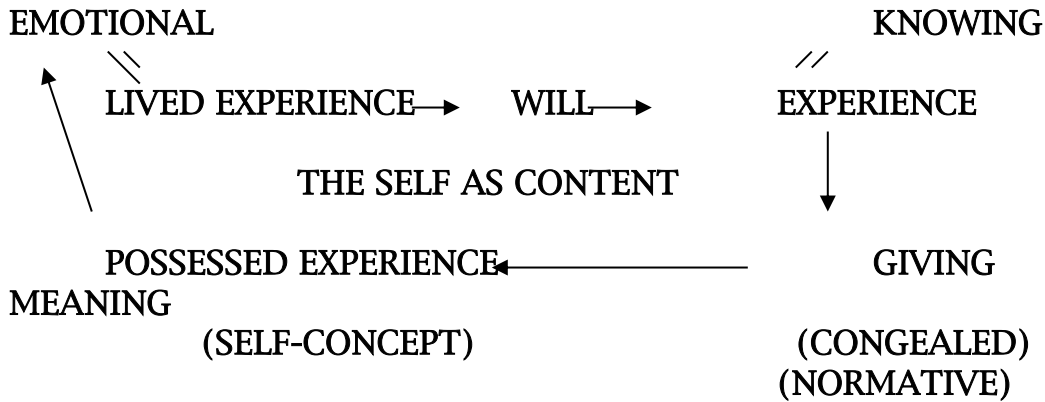
Thus, an adult's accompaniment plays an important role in a child's acquisition of a self-concept. However, what is of decisive importance is not the accompaniment, as such, but rather a child's own **giving meaning** to it as well as to him/herself. Hence, ultimately, a child's self-concept is formed by him/herself giving meaning to him/herself in his/her intercourse and communication with his/her world.

### **2.2.2 Actualizing the psychic life and acquiring a self-concept**

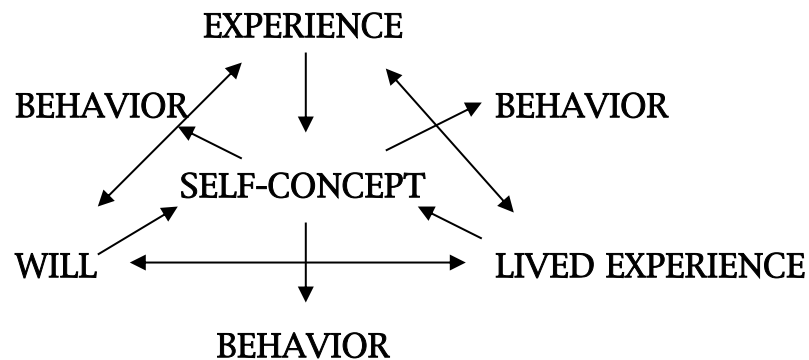
A child is involved in and participates as much in forming his/her own self-concept as he/she does in an educative event and in his/her own personal actualization. His/her role in becoming adult and personal actualization is to give meaning to the content of reality by actualizing his/her psychic life. The content taken up in acquiring a self-concept is mainly the child him/herself. The implication is that his/her self-concept is formed because he/she evaluates him/herself and gives affective, cognitive and normative meaning to him/herself.

From this, a child lived experiences him/herself emotionally which can stabilize or labilize him/her. His/her will to be and become

someone and the strength of his/her willpower guide and codetermine how he/she experiences him/herself. In this way he/she attributes meaning to him/herself and builds up a possessed experience of him/herself, i.e., he/she builds up a hierarchy of meanings with respect to him/herself. Thus, his/her self-concept is formed in his/her **possessed experience** and is based on the sense and meaning he/she attributes to him/herself. This is schematically represented as follows:



Analogous to Jacobs and Vrey (1982, p 31), the above discussion also is represented as follows:



Forming a self-concept is closely interwoven with personal forming and actualization. Because a self-concept is born from the question "Who am I?" the answer to it is related to the deepest meaning of the I. One's self-concept is one's own expression of one's I or spiritual personal core, i.e., it is the actualized and evaluated I. As with any other potentiality, a self-concept must be formed daily by giving meaning via actualizing the psychic life. The adequacy of this actualization determines whether his/her self-concept will be positive or negative.

Actualizing the psychic life is a co-determinant of forming a self-concept. The reverse also is true. How a person views and evaluates him/herself contributes to his/her emotional state and this determines his/her "willpower" that gives direction to experiencing and influences its quality. If he/she has a positive self-concept, this will contribute to a more adequate actualization of his/her psychic life. From this it is clear why one person in accepting a task is attuned to success while another expects failure from the beginning.

Although a self-concept gradually forms part of a child's possessed experience, it doesn't remain concealed there but is expressed in his/her behavior. Thus, a child with a positive self-concept shows a good venturesome attitude while one with a poor self-concept might appear hesitant and uncertain.

In summary, a child's self-concept is formed by his/her giving meaning to him/herself and in its turn, a self-concept co-defines how he/she attributes meaning. That is, a child with a positive self-concept more readily will lived experience something as meaningful than a child with a negative self-concept.

### 2.3 Behavior as result of self-actualization

In chapter III ((section 2.4) it is indicated that within a psychopedagogical context the concept **behavior** has a two-fold meaning. **Behavior as a mode of actualizing** the psychic life has already been handled and next attention is given to **behavior as resulting** from that actualization.

According to Botha (Sonnekus, 1973, p 159), the concept **behavior** often is paired with the results of education. From an early age, behavior is associated with **demands of propriety** and their obedience. With an expression such as "**You must behave yourself!**", behavior is brought into line with the demands of propriety or norms of a particular society.

Educating to propriety is observable in a child's behaviors and., therefore, the effect of educating is evaluated in terms of his/her behaviors (See Sonnekus, 1973, p 159). Behavior, as a matter of becoming adult, should be viewed in terms of the **aim of educating**. This is clearly reflected by the fact that a child is educated to increasingly behave as an adult. Educating is directed to a child

continually refining and changing his/her behaviors according to a norm-image of adulthood (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 64).

Bondesio (1977, p 53) indicates that the concept of behavior is closely coupled with and is defined by the **normative** as well as the fact that a person is someone who makes choices among possible behaviors. These choices are guided by norms that determine this choice. Hence, human behavior resulting from actualizing the psychic life is a **response to a situation** and this is determined by a person's **own choice** in terms of particular **norms**.

A distinction is made among **reflexive, voluntary** and **expressive behavior** (Bondesio, 1977, p 63-86). As for **reflexive behavior**, a **moment of willing** is absent and it is not **intentional**. Examples are the pupil-, plantar- and patellar-reflexes. Although reflexive behavior is not purposive it is appropriate and derives its meaning not from itself but from a person's total involvement with the world (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 62). Bondesio also distinguishes the following characteristics of reflexive behavior (1977, p 69-72):

- \* It is innate and not acquired;
- \* occurs rapidly;
- \* shows the same form each time;
- \* is repeatable;
- \* takes place consciously as well as pre-consciously;
- \* is the result of a stimulus.

Although reflexive behavior is a vital part of human existence, in itself, it is not meaningful but is meaningful because of a person's total behavioral involvement in the world (See Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 63).

With respect to **voluntary behaviors** (Bondesio, 1977, pp 72-83) simple, complex and habitual behaviors are distinguished and each is characterized by the presence of a moment of choice. Voluntary behaviors also are called **actions** in contrast to reflexive behavior that is labeled as **movements** (Bondesio, 1977, p 72).

As far as **complex voluntary behaviors** are concerned, a **moment of willing** as well as a **choice** among different reasons (motives) enter the foreground (See Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 63).

**Simple voluntary behaviors** differ from complex ones only because different motives are absent. There is only one motive present, which is difficult to fathom, so a person does not purposefully choose among reasons but makes a choice among different possibilities (Bondesio, 1977, p 80).

In its outward form, **habitual behavior** seemingly is similar to reflexive behaviors. The similarity, however, extends no farther than this and habitual behavior shows the following characteristics (Bondesio, 1977, pp 80-83):

- \* It rests on experience and thus is acquired;
- \* is less conscious and "**apparently**" runs its course automatically (Driving a car, playing the piano, writing, reading, adding and playing a sport are examples);
- \* is simplified and consequently more accurate in reaching a particular goal;
- \* is meaningfully attuned to a particular goal;
- \* reasons (motives) "**seemingly**" are absent.

However, reasons are present but become absorbed through practice and refinement, and the complex and simple voluntary behaviors now seemingly run their course automatically.

All voluntary behaviors (complex, simple and habitual) involve moments of willing and choosing and thus are actualized according to norms.

Kwant (1968, p 10) indicates that all human activities have an **expressive** character. In the light of this, Bondesio (1977, p 84) states that all behaviors, including habitual and reflexive, are expressive. A person's total existence is revealed in his/her **expressive behaviors**. During the discussion of behavior as a mode of actualizing the psychic life (chapter III, section 2.4) it is indicated that there is a very close connection between behavior and **bodiliness**. The essentials of bodiliness, i.e., **movement** and **attitude**, also are human **modes of behaving** that are both **instrumental** and **expressive**. With respect to behaving as a **mode of actualizing** the psychic life, bodiliness, especially in terms of its **instrumental** nature, is closely connected with behavior. However, here, where behavior is considered as a **result** of actualizing the psychic life, the relationship is mainly in the **expressive** character of bodiliness.

That is, actualizing the psychic life is revealed, via bodiliness, in expressive behaviors.

In summary, on the one hand, actualizing a child's psychic life becomes knowable through his/her expressive behaviors and, on the other hand, behavior is an essential without which actualizing the psychic life is unthinkable.

## 2.4 Becoming adult as a result of a child's self-actualization

As mentioned in chapter I, the **educative phenomenon** or **educative reality** is the area of study of pedagogics and its part- perspectives. All societies where there are children, and thus education, have the proper adulthood of a child as the aim of educating. In other words, proper adulthood is the ultimate result of a child's actualizing his/her psychic life while participating in his/her educative event. Since psychopedagogics especially is interested in the **ways** or **how** he/she becomes an adult, it is necessary to reflect on this matter.

For the sake of clarity, attention is given only to the difference between **adulthood** and **becoming adult**. Landman (1974, pp 84-87) states that the following are aims of educating and they can also be viewed as the essentials of becoming adult:

- \* Meaningful existence
- \* Self-judgment [and self-understanding]
- \* Respect for human dignity
- \* Moral and independent choosing and acting
- \* Norm identification
- \* Outlook on life [Philosophy of life]

The implication is that when a person shows the above essentials in his/her life, he/she has reached adulthood (as the aim of education). Adulthood is a "**state**" reached where a person gives evidence through his/her behaviors that he/she no longer is a child but an adult. However, this is not a static state but **changing** and **forming** continually occur (a person is never completed or finished). However, now there no longer is educating and becoming adult. Thus, adulthood is the ultimate aim of education.

**Becoming adult**, on the contrary, is very **dynamic** and refers to the way adulthood is achieved. Essentially, becoming (adult) is a continual **changing** and **moving**. However, all change and

movement are not "becoming" but only those that are directly related to the aim of educating as stated above. Thus, only change and movement that bring a child closer to adulthood qualify as becoming. In pedagogical and particularly psychopedagogical terms, becoming is not separable from a norm-image of adulthood (Bondesio, 1977, p 113). Consequently, becoming has a very strong **normative** character. Change that does not have the aim of educating in view can lead to **degeneration**. From this, becoming adult is a **precondition** for adulthood. Actualizing becoming involves a child **continually changing** in the direction of bettering or elevating the level of life in which he/she takes part, under the accompaniment of an adult, after which he/she finds him/herself at a particular level (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 135). Since becoming is an ascending change in the direction of adulthood, it is described as an **elevation in the level** (Landman) of a child's **dialoging** with and **giving sense and meaning** to reality. Thus, elevation in level implies an **elevation in dialogue** or also an **elevation in meaning** in a child's becoming adult. According to Landman et al. (1978, p 35) the course of a child's becoming is characterized by an elevation in dialogue, an acceptance of co-responsibility for the educative event, the attribution of meaning and making choices.

#### 2.4.1 The relationship between becoming adult and development

For the sake of completeness, it is noted that a child changes even when neither he/she nor an adult initiate it. Here reference is to biological growth and development that also is an unfolding of human potential. In this connection, Bondesio (1977, pp 115-116) indicates that biological growth and development, as a factual event, to a greater or lesser extent falls outside of the range of a child's initiative as someone who will become someone, as well as outside of pedagogic intervention. Yet this biological event that seems to occur automatically and results in change also must be considered in educating a child. Without biological or physical development, educating becomes restrained and even forced to a standstill. Thus, the meaning of this development should not be sought in itself, but rather in its relationship to a child in his/her total situatedness as a person (see Bondesio, 1977, p 116).

From the above, becoming and development are not synonymous. However, within an educative context, they should not be considered apart from each other. Development is largely

determined by **hereditary** and **environmental factors** (see Sonnekus, 1976, p 18) while becoming is the result of **educating** and **self-actualizing**. Thus, the influence of these developmental factors is not denied. However, it is important to note that a child is not surrendered to these factors but that he/she has a role in actualizing his/her inherited potentialities and he/she even gives meaning to the environmental factors that influence him/her.

Also, theorists have divided a child's course of development into **phases**. These divisions are based mainly on **physical** and **psychological characteristics** that a child shows. According to this approach, the characteristics shown are products of hereditary and environmental factors. Specific objections are made to this approach when the important roles of (adult) accompaniment and (child) self-actualization are overlooked in these different phases. In this connection, Sonnekus (1976, pp 20-21) says there is no basic objection to phase divisions providing they are not viewed as absolute stages within which all children will show precisely the same characteristics. The unique role of a child in each of these phases is decisive. Because of his/her own willing, each child is free to make decisions during each phase and his/her unique role in his/her development should not be underestimated. Thus, he/she is not surrendered to a series of characteristics that are the product of heredity and environment. In each of these phases, he/she also is subjected to the educative influences of his/her parents. How he/she acts in a specific phase is thus codetermined by the educating he/she has received before and during that phase and still receives (see Sonnekus, 1976, pp 20-21). In chapter VII, the different periods of life are discussed from a pedagogical perspective and adult accompaniment and self-actualization are thoroughly taken into account.

Thus, becoming does not exclude development. On the contrary, becoming is not possible without development.

#### **2.4.2 The relationship between becoming adult and learning**

In the above discussion **what** is understood by the concept becoming or becoming adult is briefly discussed. Becoming is a general theme of pedagogics and is addressed to a lesser or greater degree by its part-perspectives. In psychopedagogics, the concern is not so much with the **fact** of becoming but with **how** it is **actualized** by a child. In other words, what is the basis of or what makes



his/her becoming adult possible? Thus, in psychopedagogics there is a search for the **modes of actualizing** becoming. On the one hand, this concerns the modes that reflect a child's role in the event of becoming and, on the other hand, the possible ways in which an adult's role arises (Bondesio, 1977, p 116). Thus, with respect to becoming, **self-** and **guided (accompanied)-**actualization are inseparable aspects.

In the words of Ferreira (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, pp 32-34), this close connection between self- and guided-actualization is described as follows: From his/her first moments of existence in the world, a child announces him/herself as someone who participates in life reality. Because of his/her openness for and directedness to the world, from the beginning he/she is actively **actualizing** his/her given **potentialities** which implies that he/she is **changing**. The fact that he/she changes is discernible in his/her actions, activities and behaviors, i.e., in his/her **becoming**. From a psychopedagogical perspective, the question is *how* this becoming takes place or what is its basis. Because of the structure of his/her psychic life (see chapter III), a child has the potentiality to become adult and is also able to take an active role in his/her becoming. However, without education, he/she cannot become a **proper** adult and, therefore, educating is the necessary opposite side of his/her own role in becoming adult.

When becoming is described as changing, the question of how this occurs remains. An analysis of this event shows that a child can change only if something makes it possible. According to Ferreira (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 33) this "**something**" is **learning** (which was briefly considered in chapter III and is discussed more fully in chapter V). A child's learning is the basis for his/her becoming and changing. As an essential of becoming, it cannot be actualized if he/she does not learn.

He/she has the potentialities to change but their proper actualization is preeminently a matter of educating. Thus, he/she does not learn because he/she is educated but he/she is educated because he/she learns. An educative relationship between adult and child is carried by an adult's educative teaching and by a child's readiness to learn.

An adult has the responsibility to guide a child so that he/she gradually lives like an adult. Through **teaching** he/she needs to be

given the opportunity to **learn** to make the norms, values, dispositions and proficiencies of the adult lifeworld his/her own. Then he/she becomes equipped to take increasing responsibility, to increasingly choose and decide and thus to show that he/she continually moves toward proper adulthood (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 34). Learning continually elevates the level on which a child **carries on a dialogue with reality, accepts responsibility, makes choices, actualizes values and attributes meaning** (Van Niekerk, 1978, p 6).

Consequently, becoming and learning are two distinguishable but inseparable aspect of a child's becoming adult. Within an educative context, learning is the necessary and inevitable precondition without which changing to adulthood is not realizable. As far as his/her **becoming adult** is concerned, **educating** (teaching), **becoming** and **learning** are inseparably related (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 34).

#### 2.4.3 The relationship between becoming adult and actualizing the psychic life

The question here continues to be how a child's becoming adult is actualized. More particularly, what is a child's own role in becoming adult. He/she always participates in his/her own educating by **learning**. In chapter III attention is called to the relationship between actualizing the psychic life and learning. Now the question is about the relationship between actualizing the psychic life and becoming adult. The answer is that there is a strong relationship and a child's share in becoming adult is that he/she continually has to actualize his/her psychic life in adequate ways. Thus, actualizing his/her psychic life is how he/she participates in becoming adult (Sonnekus, 1984, p 29). In the light of this strong relationship, becoming starts when he/she first becomes aware of and goes out to reality. Also, the origin of becoming is constituted in the beginning moments of experiencing. **Experiencing**, as a continuous activity, and the concomitant **lived experiencing** of and attributing meaning to experience implies that there is movement and thus continual **change** toward adulthood, which is the essential meaning of becoming.

However, it is in forming **possessed experience** that becoming settles in. As mentioned, a child's possessed experience is formed to the

extent that he/she actualizes his/her psychic life and especially by him/her giving meaning to content of reality. Since actualizing the psychic life and attributing meaning continue to occur, his/her possessed experience also continually **changes**. This change is not merely a matter of **content** but it also is **structural**. As far as the structure of possessed experience is concerned, it was indicated that content invested with meaning is arranged **hierarchically**. In this connection, Sonnekus (1984 p 30) says that integrating or ordering content in possessed experience assumes the form of a stratified ranking that amounts to a child's becoming.

As a child builds up his/her experiences in his/her possessed experience, his/her becoming adult is actualized in terms of the content to which values and meanings are attributed. Thus, he/she becomes adult in terms of learned content (see Sonnekus, 1984, p 30).

Becoming, as it takes place in possessed experience, is not directly discernible there but the degree to which a child has **become** is revealed in his/her **behaviors** (see Bondesio, p 117). Thus, **actualizing becoming**, since it begins the moment a child becomes aware of reality, represents the total **act** or **activity character** of his/her psychic life (see Bondesio, 1977, p 118). **Becoming** as embodied in the changes that have occurred in a child, however, should be viewed as **resulting** from actualizing the psychic life and learning, and it manifests itself in his/her **behaviors**.

## 2.5 Criteria or yardsticks for evaluating becoming adult

A child is continually **changing** and this change is not only physical, but from an educational point of view, it is a change in the **direction of adulthood**. As mentioned, this is a result both of his/her own role in becoming adult and of an adult's accompaniment to that end. Hence, a child's behaviors are a manifestation of the degree to which he/she has become adult. However, this cannot be the only yardstick or criterion for evaluating a child's becoming adult because manifested behaviors and "**characteristics**" are not necessarily telling of each child. For this reason, there is a search for criteria that are valid for each child. The following five yardsticks (also known as forms of actualizing becoming) are used to determine the extent to which a child's personal actualization has already occurred (see Sonnekus, 1984, pp 45-47).

### 2.5.1 Exploration

Exploration appears throughout the entire course of a child's becoming. How this is actualized differs from age to age and from child to child. Exploring is a child's initiative to go out to the world, to **explore**, set foot on and **discover** it (Prinsloo, 1979, pp 63-64). In this way, he/she learns to know the world and increasingly can maintain him/herself within it.

At first exploration is **bodily** in that a child explores his/her world through his/her body as well as initially exploring his/her own body and in doing so learns to know something of both. Further, he/she explores his/her world **emotionally** and especially **cognitively** to give meaning to it. The quality of as well as the way(s) in which this exploration occurs depends on his/her level of becoming in that a young little child, by preference, explores his/her world bodily by touching, smelling, tasting, seeing, etc. while an older child, who already has this experiential knowledge at his/her disposal, explores his/her world more by thinking, comparing, analyzing and interpreting (see Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 38).

A lived experience of **security** is a primary precondition for a readiness to explore. Thus, if a child does not explore, this is an indication of insecurity and uncertainty as well as that his/her becoming adult isn't progressing as it should. A very small child's exploration is first directed to his/her own body and to his/her immediate surroundings. A toddler explores his/her world through play and the questions he/she directs to his/her parents, while an adolescent, e.g., explores the relationship between the two genders, explores an interest in science or explores possible vocational choices.

By attending to the nature and ways a child explores, adults have a criterion for determining the level of his/her becoming adult.

### 2.5.2 Emancipation

When a child explores, he/she already shows signs of **emancipation** or, better, his/her initiative to **be** and to **become** more **independent** (**self-reliant**) (Sonnekus). It is also the aim of all educating to support a child in his/her exploration so that his/her emancipation increases. Also, to the degree that he/she progresses toward adulthood, increased emancipation appears to a point in time when

an adult's educative intervention becomes superfluous (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 38).

Through exploration, a child not only discovers his/her world but also discovers him/herself as **someone with potentialities**. Therefore, from early childhood on he/she strives to expand his/her potentialities and **become someone him/herself**. Thus, emancipation points to a child's propensity to want to be someone him/herself or to **strive for self-actualization**. In this regard, Van der Merwe (1975, p 147) says: "Emancipation includes an increase in becoming free as an increased acquisition of norms, responsibility, as an increased proclaiming of a unique identity". Thus, emancipation is closely related to acquiring a unique identity.

Emancipation begins to emerge very early in a child's life and especially when he/she takes his/her own **initiative**, shows **independence** and a unique **identity**. With a young child, this takes the form of wanting to feed him/herself, wanting to dress him/herself, etc. It usually reaches a high point during puberty and adolescence with a child's critical attitude, moodiness and obstinacy that really are nothing more than an indication of his/her search for his/her own insights and norms.

If an adult wants to evaluate a child's becoming adult, he/she also must pay attention to the degree of emancipation that has occurred.

### 2.5.3 Distancing

A child's total becoming adult is largely built upon distancing and in a certain sense it is the aim of educating. A child must be educated so that he/she progressively distances him/herself from the adults (parents). Indeed, the entire educative event is characterized by distancing. At birth, a newborn is distanced from his/her mother with the cutting of the umbilical cord and this continues until finally he/she leaves home as an adult.

Distancing does not occur solely because of an educators' urgings. A child also yearns to gradually loosen him/herself from his/her parents and to be more independent. This yearning should be welcomed and parents should not stand in their child's way.

In addition, distancing implies that he/she will loosen him/herself from his/her own bodily boundedness and create a distance between him/herself and reality to thus acquire from this distance a proper perspective on it. This indicates that distancing includes an **independent attitude** toward the world around him/her. Because clear judgment is required for him/her to acquire this perspective, he/she must move from an emotional to a more cognitive attitude and, therefore, emotional stability has to be lived experienced (see Prinsloo, 1979, p 64).

For Sonnekus (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 182) distancing is a child's initiative to loosen him/herself gradually from the influence of his/her parents and other adults and stand on his/her own feet. This implies that in distancing, he/she is being autonomous and that he/she is giving an indication of being more independent.

Also, in the case of distancing, **security** is an important precondition. A child who feels insecure will not be ready to distance him/herself from his/her parents and go to meet the future on his/her own. The idea is not that parents push their child away but that he/she is given the opportunity to practice independence under parental supervision.

Thus, the degree of distancing that has occurred is an indication of the level of adulthood a child has attained.

#### 2.5.4 Differentiation

Differentiation points to a child's initiative to progressively and willingly differentiate among matters. The distance between a child and his/her relationship to reality is correlated with his/her **differentiation** of a variety of possibilities for doing so. As he/she becomes older, attains more flexibility and especially acquires language, differentiation becomes more conspicuous and he/she shows him/herself as someone who can analyze more keenly, make finer differentiations and maintain a personal standpoint toward reality (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 39). This potentiality to differentiate appears on all levels of the psychic life and, therefore, it is more cognitive, but he/she also shows progressive and increased differentiation in his/her emotional life (see Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 182).

Through differentiation he/she continually is involved in a new and larger field of exploration and, therefore, he/she broadens the level on which he/she moves "**horizontally**" and this again enables him/her to "**vertically**" actualize his/her becoming adult on a higher level (see Sonnekus, 1973, pp 37-38).

### **2.5.5 Objectification**

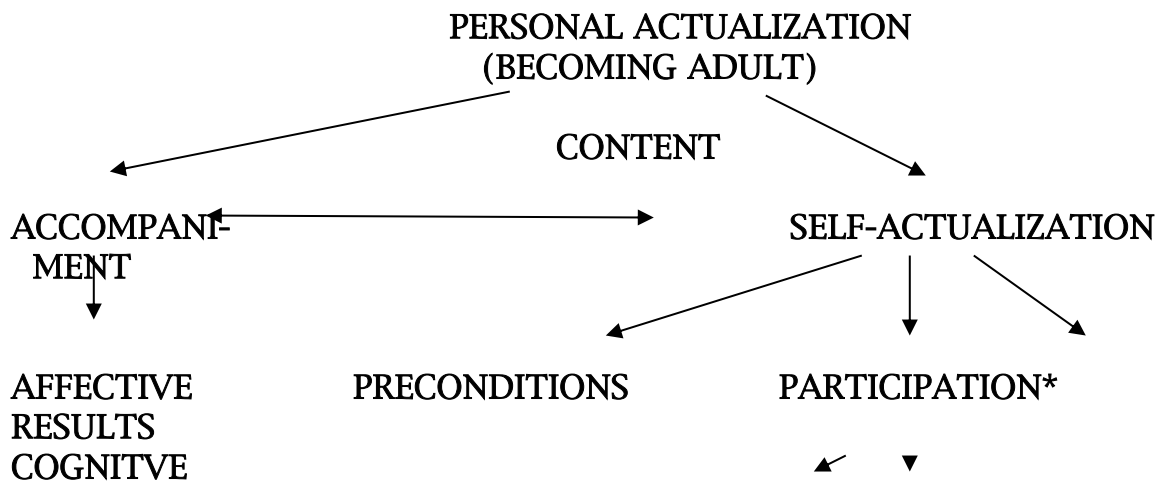
To be able to proceed to objectification, the previous forms of becoming must be adequately actualized. Objectification refers to the possibility that unfolds in a child's involvement with reality where he/she can distance him/herself from it and take an objective attitude by trying not to be too subjectively involved. This is his/her potentiality to distance him/herself from a matter but also to loosen him/herself from him/herself to be able to judge a matter in its objective givenness as it is. In other words, objectification is a more matter-of-fact attunement to life without his/her own subjective opinions always being the decisive factor (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 183). A young child especially is emotionally involved in his/her world and as he/she becomes adult, he/she must gradually distance him/herself until he/she can step outside of him/herself and view him/herself objectively.

Objectivity is a precondition for an unbiased judgment of different facets of reality that he/she necessarily encounters each day (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 39). Objectification is a high level of becoming, and it requires cognitive becoming, and, therefore, it is very appropriate as a criterion for evaluating his/her becoming adult.

### **3. SYNTHESIS: A POSSIBLE BASIC PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL STRUCTURE**

In the previous three chapters the domain of psychopedagogics, as it appears today, is covered extensively. Personal actualization and the ways this occurs are overarching themes for psychopedagogics. In chapter II, the preconditions for personal actualization are discussed. chapter III is devoted to a child's own participation in personal actualization by means of actualizing his/her psychic life and learning. Chapter IV is mainly devoted to the results of this self-actualization.

These preceding discussions now are schematically represented as follows and this serves as a possible basic psychopedagogical structure:







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