

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

1. THE PEDAGOGIC: A SCIENCE OF EXPERIENCE

A human being is born incomplete.¹⁾ He/she comes into the world as a being who is entirely dependent, and who is committed to the help and support needed from other persons for his/her survival.²⁾ No human being is ever born an adult. Each person enters this world as a child who, from the beginning, is the subject of parental intervention. The parents are aware of their child's involvement with reality, even if, in due time, it is a conscious "being-involved" with things, it is not yet a meaningful event for him/her. For attributing meaning, he/she is still committed to the support, help and guidance of those adults who accept responsibility for his/her "being-there". Being learned is not required to arrive at this insight and even the most "primitive" persons are aware that for his/her becoming to adulthood, a child must receive help from adults. If we view this help in becoming as educating, we can assert without the possibility of contradiction that this activity (of educating) is given with being human. Thus, educating belongs to the most original experiences at a human being's disposal. Where there are humans, the activity known as educating appears. Thus, it is not surprising that, through the ages, educating, as a terrain of study has interested people. By the nature of things, the disclosure of the meaning of his/her being-there is rooted in these educative activities. Therefore, educating must be a matter of interpreting meanings: Dasein [being-there] of a child, and his/her futurity, indeed, are meaningful matters. The question is: In what is their meaning as such seen if there are interpretations? The practice of educating very clearly shows that it is a matter of activity—not only in so far as it involves adult activities. Also, a child must him/herself act within the limits of propriety. Since, in his/her involvement with persons and things, he/she acquires experience, because he/she assimilates those lived experiences which have

addressed his/her feelings, he/she slowly contributes to his/her becoming. Thus, a child is involved with reality as an acting being. In so far as the study of educating describes these activities, it is involved in interpreting that piece of experience which all persons have experienced, do experience, and will yet experience, i.e., the help to oneself become a grown-up. Educating is not an activity which humans have invented, but is an activity which already **is**. This activity is not equally complex everywhere, but it becomes more intricate to the extent that the life situation becomes more complex. It increases in tempo to the extent that the tempo of life of people increases. Therefore, the help is **help to a child to him/herself enter the world**. As an active being, he/she necessarily participates in the world and in life. This entering reality by a child, by which he/she enters the world, and the accompaniment which the adults offer in this, are constitutive **of the most original [primordial] experiences at a human being's disposal**.

A child does not merely have a lifeworld from the beginning. He/she is totally dependent for his/her survival on the caring of his/her parents. A child's first experiences, lived experiences and encounters with reality, especially arise in his/her being-with his/her mother.³⁾ It is from this ground situation that a child goes out to meet the world, a world which is extremely dangerous to him/her and, at times, is also even menacing. Should a parent turn his/her back on this dependent being, this means that the child is delivered to this dangerous and unfriendly world. A parent's primary activity with respect to his/her child is centered on his/her educative **acting**. It is an activity by which he/she plans to broaden his/her child's **experiencing**—experiencing of everything which is important for his/her becoming adult. Thus, Van Dyk⁴⁾ indicates that there is a close connection between learning and experiencing, and that a child's field of experience must be extended as far as possible. The educator must even make use of secondary sources of experience to involve a child in life so that his/her activities are continually brought more into harmony with the demands of an adult's lifeworld. As he/she goes into the world, a child constitutes a lifeworld, and the sense and meanings he/she learns to confer or attribute, proclaim the relief [or "texture"] of that lifeworld. With this, there is then a profile of the landscape with which he/she dwells.

This entry-into-the-world by a grown-up with a child, is an experiential fact. It is original [primordial] and is given with being-human. As a science, pedagogics describes the essences of this experience, and makes inferences about how it is functionally implemented in a child's becoming. Thus, a pedagogician describes **what** is performed, **how** it is performed and **why** it is performed. He/she describes a piece of human experience which cannot be thought away from the lifeworld of persons. The pedagogic is a matter of experience—original experience.

To learn to know this aspect of experiencing in its essences, a thinker (researcher), in his/her analyses, must penetrate to the categories or illuminative means of thinking which describe these essences of his/her experiencing. To indicate to what extent this point of view was already found in Western thought for ages (at least since Aristotle), four views of the matter "experience" are summarized. The aim is not to reproduce these standpoints as such, but to indicate that the relationship person-world cannot be reflected on without implicitly or explicitly involving the problem of experience.

FOUR PERSPECTIVES ON EXPERIENCE

a) Immanuel Kant

The problematic of experience conspicuously deals with the evident and non-evident (what is conspicuous, presumptions, expectations, anticipations, what are cherished, etc.) about what **is**. Thus, there is no doubt that next to its directedness to the physical (evident) there also is its directedness to the metaphysical (non-evident but indeed real) aspects of what **is**. This aspect of the problematic of experience is evident in the thoughts and pronouncements of Immanuel Kant, by which a perspective on the question of "experience" comes to view.

Beforehand, however, the question: why does this deal with the metaphysical, i.e., with metaphysical conceptions? Metaphysics is that aspect of science which is focused on problems of reference to the ultimate destiny of persons in that sphere which extends above

all experiencing.⁵⁾ Thus, metaphysical insights are those insights which are apparently independent of all experience. For example, when a person expresses him/herself about God, then he/she does this in terms of insights and ideas which do not depend on any experience. In this connection, the standpoint of Leibniz and Hume is that the source of the metaphysical is nonempirical.⁶⁾ With the sciences of experience, this is necessarily stated differently. Insights and ideas about the pedagogic should contain knowledge which Kant calls “*a posteriori* knowledge”. This he describes as empirical knowledge which is **factual** and which speaks from a person’s experiencing. For this reason, it is important to investigate Kant’s standpoint on human experience.

For Kant, experience implies empirical knowledge.⁷⁾ Hence, it is knowledge by which an object is determined by means of perceiving; i.e., it is the assimilation of impressions in consciousness. Thus, he asserts that everything which **is** evident or knowable is through experience. “Erfahrung ist dass einzige Erkenntnis worin Gegenstände gegeben werden”.⁸⁾ Experiencing makes a **synthesis** of perceiving possible. This synthesis is not concealed in perceiving itself, but consciousness possesses a combining character which links together many types of perceiving into a unity. These unities constitute the core of our knowledge of objects—i.e., from our experiencing. Kant asserts “dass alle unsere Erkenntnis mit der Erfahrung anfangt, daran ist gar keine Zweifel”.⁹⁾ Thus, for him, all knowledge begins with experience. How else can our possibilities of knowing (understanding) be activated if they are not aroused by objects which impinge on our sense organs? These sensory impressions must be elaborated into knowledge of objects, which then are called experience.

As far as Kant is concerned, the combining (synthesizing) character of experiencing must be seen clearly. In our understanding, perceptions are joined together into a unity and, thus, knowledge is induced from existing or available experiences. For example, someone who, for the first time, excavates under the foundation of his/her house, knows from another experience that the house is going to collapse. Therefore, one can claim that the experience, although not direct, has given rise to this knowledge. If understanding is influenced merely by representations, this

knowledge cannot achieve objective reality and, thus, insight is lacking. Thus, Kant asserts: “Jeder Gegenstand steht unter den notwendigen Bedingungen der synthetischen Einheit des Mannigfaltigen der Anschauung in einer möglichen Erfahrung”.¹⁰⁾

How can one have the needed experience? Experience is the knowledge of objects through perception, a synthesis of perceptions which gradually increases one’s understanding by means of perceptions”.¹¹⁾ Experiencing is only possible through a necessary connecting(synthesis) of perceptions. Indeed, Kant asserts that experience is empirical knowledge which flows out of a synthesis of perceptions, i.e., a joining together of perceptions. Hence, all human knowing begins with observations (perceptions) which, through the course or act of synthesis, become a concept. This synthesis manifests itself in human understanding as an idea. Experiencing necessarily leads to insight by which it becomes possible to name and formalize objects, i.e., to become involved with things.

Experiencing is possible only in so far as there **are** things; experiencing refers to understanding objects in terms of practical concepts. A person acquires his/her experience in so far as he/she is him/herself active in a world which, for him/her, is real and meaningful.¹²⁾ This life experience is closely related to teleology, i.e., to the doctrine of purposefulness in creation. Also following from this is the Kantian deduction that experiencing is **comparative** in nature. It does not have true, general validity, since it says what **is there** but not that it necessarily can be so and not otherwise. Hence, it possesses a comparative character, but cannot make the claim of universal truth.¹³⁾

Summary: According to Kant, experience is manifested in a three-fold manner of:

- immanence—immanent sense or meaning of things;
- consequence—relations of cause and effect;
- combination—relationship between things which combines into a unity.¹⁴⁾

b) Edmund Husserl

One of the most important contributions to our insight into experience comes from Edmund Husserl. He offers what he calls a genetic analysis of experiencing in which he explains that anticipation plays a decisive role in our understanding of experiencing, particularly because it can be disclosed and grasped only in accordance with the idea of intentionality.¹⁵⁾

According to his view, this anticipating belongs to the *a priori* structure of experiencing.¹⁶⁾ Husserl's explication differs greatly from the traditional views in that he sees experiencing as an original way of being in the world, i.e., as a primordial knowing (mobility) out of which flows additional and further relationships between person and world. With this, Husserl discloses a definite connection between the *a priori* and *a posteriori* of the concept of experience, i.e., that of a definite relationship between person and reality because of experiencing.¹⁷⁾

Understandably, this view also means that experiencing is a matter of knowing reality. Although Kant had already emphasized this, Husserl does not view this as knowledge itself, but as an achievement of the subject (the knowing person) by which the existing, i.e., the extant relationship between person and reality is continually expanded and exceeded in the experiencing.

The genetic aspect of his view of experiencing agrees with Kant's findings about the significance of beholding (sensory perceiving), but with the difference that the **categorical functionality** of things is synthetically bound together in experiencing. In this way, Husserl explains that experiencing belongs to a person's understanding of the world (Weltverstehen), and this implies that, in experiencing itself, there is an ascending line to be observed in which the achievement effects of this are manifested. Because of this, experience acquires an actuality-meaning which previously had not yet been attached to it, i.e., that in the context of experiencing, all things (objects of knowledge, matters, etc.) speak functionally. For Husserl, the relationship between perceiving (observing) and experiencing lies in this.

According to Husserl, the concept “experience” has a two-fold interpretation, i.e.:

- (i) that the givenness of a matter is squeezed into a person’s field of vision, and
- (ii) that a synthesis (unity) arises which, in thinking, becomes sedimented as function (achievement).

For Husserl, the understanding of reality flows from the coherence of these two aspects, in the sense of the achievement of consciousness. In this way, sensory impressions are joined into a conceptual unity and this understanding forms the basis of a person’s cognizance of reality which is observable as a mobility within reality. Briefly, a person learns through experiencing, but in a particular way.

Considering the whole of Husserl’s view, it follows (understandably) that Husserl asserts that experiencing is continually transcended. By this he means it is elevated to a **life sphere** for a person, by which something such as a **life horizon** (also see **lifeworld**) becomes possible.¹⁸⁾

Thus, experiencing always **functions** from a **framework of meaning**. This framework of meaning is visible in the original, i.e., primordial, anticipations which arise with him (e.g., attributing meaning, naming, etc.). Practically speaking, this implies that anticipations function (are functionalized) because of a person’s openness to experiencing.¹⁹⁾

Because of this, the inductive aspect of experiencing, to which Husserl refers, acquires the meaning of pre-interpreting on the basis that the intentionality behind the experience determines its course. Thus, this inductive aspect leads experiencing on—as being **in motion in the world**.²⁰⁾ Heidegger later indicates that the effect of this is establishing new relationships with reality.

c) Martin Heidegger

For Martin Heidegger, **Dasein** is the first ontological category. From this first ontological category, experiencing is understandable for him; indeed, it is the precondition for experiencing.²¹⁾ The **being** of

the being-there, i.e., in the emphasis of the “**Sein**” of Dasein, experiencing is presented as a first, subjective, unique, non-transferrable matter. “Erfahrung überhaupt” [experiencing in general] is only to be considered from this personal, subjective characteristic. The first emphasis with experiencing falls not on **that** which is experience, but on the fact **that** something such as experiencing is possible. This is a definite expansion of the view of thinkers from Plato to Kant, i.e., that all knowing begins with experiencing. Heidegger identifies experience as a category of **being in the world**. The emphasis of the “**Sein**” in Dasein postulates the uniqueness of experiencing. On this basis, he views the “**Sein**” as a precondition for experiencing.

However, Dasein has **temporality** as a category, i.e., a beginning and an end.²²⁾ Thus, Dasein is restricted and bound to time. The time of experiencing is the time of the present—not that of the future or past. Therefore, experiencing is a matter of **now**. According to Heidegger, experiencing is momentary because it is determined temporally. The actuality of experiencing lies in the moment that is present, in what is happening. A person experiences when he/she is busy undergoing something. Hence, experiencing is actual in the realization of Dasein.²³⁾

Now the task of the experiencing person is in the fact that ways of disclosing reality speak to him/her which make his/her entry into that reality meaningful. This sense of reality directs itself such that a person enters a relationship with that reality. More explicitly, by entering reality, a person understands the sense of reality. This entering reality (**going** to reality) manifests itself as unveiling, disclosing, and illuminating what are given, and by which the meaning of things arises.

The meaning of things, understandably, is inseparably connected with the intention[ality] of the one who **experiences**. But the things, i.e., reality, are not organized apart or in isolation. The things form a collective “Gestalt”.²⁴⁾ Thus, the meaning of things shows a coherence by which a relationship between person and reality is possible. Heidegger calls this intended relationship which a person arrives at **primordial experience**, and this means the disclosure of the above-mentioned collective “Gestalt”. This disclosure makes

things (contents) experienceable, i.e., makes them present as a field of play for experiencing.

Viewed in this way, for Heidegger, in the first place, experiencing involves a relationship with reality in that the things are meaning-disclosing.²⁶⁾ Because experiencing creates a relationship, for Heidegger, it has a functional significance which leads to judgments with perspective as the result (the creation of a personal lifeworld). Thus, experiencing makes a person mobile within reality because:

- (i) the things are unlocked by experiencing, and
- (ii) the interpretation of meaning based on experiencing can be put into words. With this, the things stop being concealed and qualify as life contents in a functionally experienceable sense.

Thus, for Heidegger, experiencing is a way of being in the world, i.e., a mode of Dasein.

d) S. Strasser

Following Strasser's views, a person's conduct and activities in the world are carried by insights which are rooted in thinking as well as intuition. Thus, Strasser distinguishes "evidence of thinking" and "intuitive evidence". It is impossible to draw a clear boundary between the two, since experiencing plays an important role in both. However, experiencing must not be seen here empirically, as a sequence of sensory impressions, since this view of experience is too mechanistic—a mechanism on the by which the outside world is assimilated into an organism.²⁶⁾

As a phenomenologist, by experiencing, Strasser means a person's **original** (primordial) turning to what is, in so far as this leads to knowing. (In Dutch) "In the following, we shall understand experiencing as the original turning of a person to the beings, in so far as this turning to leads to a knowing presence".²⁷⁾ Thus, experiencing is the necessary **beginning of becoming conscious**; thinking with concepts and categories is a continuation of this primary turning to, but on a higher level. The question arises about what Strasser means by "...to the beings"? (In Dutch) "By experiencing, we understand the form of involvement with the **to be**

known reality which leads to a more or less concrete presence of this reality to the knower”.²⁸⁾ Thus, experiencing is not a meaningless event, but assures the first **orientation** of a knowing being in his/her surrounding world. Each obviousness (evidence) is the result of experiences, i.e., “evidence of thought” by means of thinking, but also “intuitive evidences” obtained in a more direct way. Thinking has an abstract character—it blossoms out of experiencing, but differs essentially from it.²⁹⁾

Not all experiences lead to evident knowledge. Human experience has a **dialectic character**. There is a clear **result** only when the various knowing intention[alities] have led to a harmonious **synthesis**. If a person still has doubt about a certain aspect of an object, his/her urge to know is not yet satisfied, and his/her exploratory trip is not yet finished. His/her experiencing must lead him/her to an **unimpeded insight**.³⁰⁾ Partial experiences can lead to data which are in mutually agreement, and which are united into insights. **Thus, experiencing has a fundamental character in so far as it provides the foundation for insights and ideas (concepts) which arise in persons.**

3. ESSENCES OF EXPERIENCING

With reference to the four summarized views, and other contemporary pronouncements about experiencing, the following is a description of experiencing in its essences.

Because the origin and nature of experiencing, as they are given primordially with being human, are so closely related, it is extremely difficult to describe them separately. The origin (there where experiencing begins) and its nature (the ways in which it appears) often show such a close connection that they can be set apart only with difficulty. Often, its origin refers to its nature, and the other way. If there is an enquiry into the origin of experiencing, there is only one possibility for an explication of the entire problem, and that is to proclaim that one finds its origin only in the fact that the [experiencing] person is in the world.³¹⁾ Therefore, the person, as Dasein, proclaims the problematic of experiencing. To properly understand this, the meaning of the word “experiencing” is examined. Experiencing literally means to **enter**, to **reach** or to

endure [something]. Thus, when we talk of human experiencing, this proclaims a person in motion; one who goes into, reaches the world or who endures in it. In his/her involvement with the world as a surrounding reality, a person is continually involved in establishing relationships, arriving at new concepts, shifting the horizon of his/her lifeworld, changing the relief [profile] of his/her landscape, etc. As an acting being, a person is necessarily involved in participating in the world and in life; he/she is involved in **entering** the world. The meaning of this **entering** the world lies in the **doing**, as a way of encountering the world.³²⁾ In the act, experiencing embraces being through activity, as a way of being in the world.

The original meaning of experiencing lies in **doing**, i.e., in the way the world is **encountered**.³³⁾ Thus, here there is prominent mention of experiencing as an event which realizes itself (see Heidegger) and experiencing as a condition (see Husserl). To distinguish, one can talk of the first as **happening to** and the second as experiencing. It must be clear that such an artificial distinction is for the sake of argument because the dynamic movement (happening to) and its results are not different modes of Dasein. The one without the other is unthinkable, and they **essentially** constitute the same conception. For explanation and clarification, the following is offered: the new encounters with the world (what we can call happening to) become elaborated into experiences. The results [residues] of the experiences appear as the possession of the living person in what can be called memory. Thus, memory creates the possibility to know again because of an earlier experience. One of the wonders of experiencing is in this possibility which memory establishes. A consciousness (of I), the **something** undergone [happened to] and the elaboration into experience of what was undergone belong to experiencing. This leads to a better understanding of reality because a wealth of experience is built up by which each person establishes for him/herself a framework of meaning. Thence, experiencing always functions out of this framework of meaning³⁴⁾ by which a person acquires a better grasp of reality and by which he/she attains more mobility.

The question arises of how the first experiences which a person goes through are possible. In this regard, Langeveld³⁵⁾ refers to the view

of Kant in which the position is held that certain knowledge (a *priori*) belongs to the constellation of the human intellect from which all experiencing can take its beginning. Concepts such as magnitude, causality, etc. that are not supported by experience belong to this constellation of human intellect. For Kant, these are concepts of pure reason. A human being's intellect already has at its disposal the pure preconditions for each possible experience. Being human thus implies the possibility of experiencing.

The universality of experiencing speaks from the first ontological category, i.e., Dasein.³⁶⁾ The "Being" [Sein] of Dasein [Being-there] creates the preconditions for experiencing, in the sense that, as Dasein, a person, among other things, is there as an acting being. Each activity, whether carried through successfully or not, means a new experiencing³⁷⁾ which is manifested in the possibility of formulating, reorienting, and learning. With an adult person, where the "conversation" with reality occurs on a higher level, this experiencing is thoughtfully and appreciatively assimilated and, thus, this leads to improved and more appropriate activities. Thus, an adult person learns more quickly from his/her experiences because they exercise a controlling function by which he/she more systematically and confidently can make distinctions among his/her activities.

A person does not have innate patterns of behavior or instincts at his/her disposal which guarantee or determine his/her mobility, i.e., his/her course in the world is not determined. Although a person is predisposed to experience, the possibility of actualizing these predispositions does not indicate specific patterns or built in (innate) variations in style. The experiences of a person are always realizations of possibilities, and not instinctive or driven reactions. From this, it is not contended that his/her ways (modes) of being in the world do not also contribute to his/her ways (modes) and, therefore, also to the nature of his/her experiences. Indeed, this implies that the totality of his/her experiencing cannot be genetically interpreted and/or explained. Therefore, it is appropriate to understand that a person, by virtue of his/her being-there, will necessarily experience but, on the other hand, that his/her experiencing is not a constant, complete magnitude. His/her experiencing, indeed, represents his/her movement, his/her

course in and through reality. Although experiences congeal (i.e., there is mention of being experienced—a condition), experiencing is movement, as already indicated. The implications of this have been raised and further elucidated by Gehlen³⁸⁾ who interprets the concept “expansion of experience” as verbalizing the moving, accumulating course of a matter. These ideas are explained later.

Experiencing is a necessity for each person because no one can set the world aside. Because he/she is a human being he/she must necessarily go forward to meet the world, attribute meaning to things (and matters), become involved meaningfully and accountably with things (matters) and, thus, enter the world. He/she must go forward to meet reality such as other persons, endure and, as it were, undergo it. A person is also only aware of the world in so far as this entering the world is a matter of consciousness for him/her and an accumulative matter of being-conscious. That is, certain aspects of his/her entering the world congeal. These congealed aspects or residues then proclaim his/her experiential knowledge of the world and of life **as such**.

Where there are congealed aspects or residues of experience, by implication there also are contents. To experience is to always experience something, which means it is realized in terms of contents (something), and that experiences take their beginning from previous experiences in form, interpretation, meaning, conception, etc. Thus, it must be possible to increase and broaden experience. Gehlen views the expansion of experience as a person’s acquisition of mobility within reality. Ten Have³⁹⁾ says that to acquire this mobility, situations must be created within which it is possible for a person to broaden his/her experiencing. Viewed in this way, experiencing is also a positive dynamic participative matter of human existence. The essence of the broadening of experience can be seen functionally as perceiving and acting which have the result of transferability (applicability). Among other ways, perceiving functions, e.g., in that it results in attributing meaning. The acting is visible through placing the new meanings in a broader framework of meaning. The expansion of experience, then, amounts to the transfer of insight. Gehlen views this transfer as a factor which speaks strongest in various situations. Thus, there is a general factor which will have significance in **various** respects and in

a variety of situations. The most important consequence of this is the view that a person anticipates the nature of new situations based on experience. This anticipation is already a form of abstraction,⁴⁰⁾ i.e., conceptual knowing. Gehlen views the following aspects as important for expanding experience:

- (1) A reflective learning which often is the result of hit-and-miss (trial-and-error) experiences.
- (2) Decisive, reflective perception which orders characteristics or symbols.
- (3) Changing a situation to a problem by which a synthesis with other already existing experiences acquires form.
- (4) Expanding the totality of experience by which various aspects are organized under one category.
- (5) Experiences which are directed to once again recalling new experiences, e.g., in an experiment. In such a case, the experience itself is the motivating power for the creation of the new experience.⁴¹⁾

The expanding of experience ultimately refers to a broadening of the lifeworld because it is always involved in experiencing meanings and forms of achievement.

In entering the world, life contents appear before a person to which he/she must attribute meaning. These contents are not merely available to a person, but the lifeworld, with all of its contents, offers him/her a space which he/she **can** enter as a person, but which he/she **must** also enter because of his/her being human. In relation to human openness (being open for reality), these contents (meanings) constitute two matters, i.e., an **attunement of a person** and an **establishedness of reality**. Initially, the sense and meaning of reality are obscure and concealed because he/she has not yet become acquainted with them, but in his/her entering reality, he/she must disclose the sense and meaning of the contents. These contents and meanings might be evident and non-evident.

Before elucidating the concepts of evident and non-evident reality, the whole problematic of the acquisition of knowledge in the context of experiencing is examined. The concept experience is used a variety of times in close connection with **becoming, knowing, insight and learning**. Does experience now merely imply these four

concepts, or in what mutual relationships are they to each other and to the whole matter of experiencing? A separation among these concepts is difficult to imagine because experiencing lies at the foundation of all four.⁴²⁾ To make a systematic thinking through of the problem possible, a distinction, indeed, is made, although there cannot be any consideration of the separateness [isolation] of these matters.

To be able to constitute a personal lifeworld within which a person can create meaningful relationships with reality, objective and grounded **knowing** is of primary importance. Kant asserts, “Die Erfahrung gibt uns die eerste kunde von der Welt”. All our knowing, thus, begins with experiencing. A person learns to know his/her world in terms of the knowledge accumulated from experiencing. Thus seen, human becoming is viewed as the continual acquisition of experiences by which the acquisition of knowledge is the primary task and, thus, becoming mainly represents an elevation in level of knowing. There is only human becoming and learning if opportunities are created for undergoing experiences which are elaborated into knowledge of the objects and matters. The activity of **learning** cannot be considered without experience and, thus, experience is a category [essence] of learning. The phenomenon human “learning” cannot be considered without experience because, among other things, the event of learning presumes an increase in experience.

Although one can view learning as an event which springs from experience, they cannot be equated. Indeed, a person learns by experiencing, but then, in a different way. For example, experiencing also belongs to a person’s intuitive understanding of the world which, in one way or another, influences his/her code of behavior—future behaviors must only become richer in meaning.⁴³⁾ Experiencing only becomes **learning** if it contributes to increasing a person’s radius of action. Therefore, Weniger speaks of experience as impressions and perceptions which can be of significance for the assignments and tasks which are presented to us. This includes insight into the essences of things which can contribute to the solution of problems which one confronts.⁴⁴⁾ These meanings have their beginning in the first knowledge of reality out of which flow further and additional relationships between person and world.

Thus, a definite relationship exists between former and future experiencing and, therefore, there is a decisive relatedness between person and reality because of experiencing.⁴⁵⁾ This has a comparative and controlling character from which a synthesis to concepts and insights is possible. An experience is only knowledge if it can be brought into relation with other experiences (reflective) and is seen in a grip on the general, e.g., the essences of relationships with things. This grip ensures a mobility which was not previously there. The value which Langeveld attributes to experience as fertile soil for the teaching event, is expressed in the following [In Dutch]: “First, soil must be laid or disclosed on which something can grow and, at first, one must continually cultivate that matter from these life experiences before a child can possess reality. ... One who succeeds in being involved in situations which a child has constituted for him/herself has a good chance of speaking about things which can be something meaningful to the child.”⁴⁶⁾ Thus, a person can give meaning to his/her world in terms of earlier relationships built up from experiencing, and which speak in the present.

In his/her journey through life and the world, a person is continually involved in trying to determine his/her own foothold. He/she does this by means of beacons (contents or meanings) of aspects of reality in terms of which he/she can orient him/herself to acquire a certain degree of mobility. These contents or meanings can be evident or non-evident. One should be able to interpret their being evident, in the sense that they are visible, perceptible, and able to be pointed to. At the same time, there are also non-evident contents, in the sense that they are not visible or perceptible, although they are as real as the evident contents. Both are part of a person's act-intentionalities, i.e., they direct the **ways**, but also the **directions** in which he/she moves. Thus, both are coordinate, co-determinants of the ways in which a person enters the world and, in experiencing, the non-evident contents are given meanings in the same way as are the evident contents.⁴⁷⁾ Experience proclaims these evident and non-evident matters as those aspects of reality which a person eventually experiences. Thus, this makes the totality of reality present as perceivable **and** non-perceivable. Therefore, this is a matter of the directedness to meaning of a person who enters the world, in that he/she searches for the interpretation of the

meaning of the evident or perceptible things as well as the meaning of the non-evident matters. Everything which **is**, and which appears in a person's lifeworld is the terrain for human "going into the world".

Human openness (open to reality) makes it possible for a person to step up to or go to meet reality. In this action (stepping up to) with its clearly specifiable "fruitful moments" there are congealments or residuals, as acquired knowledge which make it possible for a person to further step up to reality. However, no one can encounter and experience this reality for another person because it is a personal encounter—it is a single, unique nontransferable, thus, subjective matter. Indeed, the residuals of human experience, as knowledge in the form of information, can be transferred, but the **experiencing itself** cannot be imparted or transferred. Thus, it is a life task, a necessity of life for each person to enter the world **him/herself** and, in this way, to learn to know the world and life. The fact that this entering the world can also occur under the supervision and guidance of other persons does not put experiencing aside, but only makes this entering the world less precarious and time consuming. Otherwise, each person would have to undergo each experience anew, also as this has accumulated in science. The guidance makes the intermediate experiences superfluous and leads one to shortcuts from one experience to another so that it also becomes possible for a child to more quickly and more assuredly be able to reach his destination [adulthood].

A person experiences whenever he/she is involved in undergoing something.⁴⁸⁾ From experiences of the past, congealments, or residues are present as knowledge which continually change and which have the consequence of broadening the intended lifeworld, and to which one must continually reorient oneself. Thus, the experiences of the future, and their anticipations, are also not the experience itself. Indeed, they predispose the experiencing. According to Heidegger, experiencing is momentary because it is temporally determined, i.e., it is a matter of the **now**. Out of a specific framework of meaning or situatedness, from moment to moment, a person is directed to a piece of life content which is not for him/her something obvious. One must broach this life content from his/her situatedness, and in his/her entry into reality, he/she

understands the sense of reality. Thus, experiencing makes it possible for a person to attribute new meanings and make this entry meaning-disclosing, unveiling, illuminating—briefly, to make possible the establishment of a meaning-giving entry into life contents. In this sense, experiencing is essentially a matter of establishing an intended relationship with reality, i.e., entering the world with a purposeful and preconceived aim.

Strasser views experiencing as a person's original [primordial] turning to reality, in so far as this leads to knowing.⁴⁹⁾ In the life of a child, this refers to the first sensing of that which is. Strictly speaking, this is not yet thinking, perceiving, or lived experiencing. This first turning to reality implies that a person turns his/her face to reality. Thinking, lived experiencing and interpreting are decisively connected with this primordial sensing, which is the ground from which a person can give direction to his/her progressing and becoming, but perceiving, etc. are not equated with experiencing. Perceiving (as an aspect of experiencing) has a strongly dialectic-hermeneutic character because, in experiencing, it is involved in establishing, investigating, and undergoing possibilities of reality. These possibilities are expressed in statements and judgments; explanations are given so that comparisons can be found and pronouncements can be made about reality. Without experiencing, these pronouncements are not possible because it is from his/her experiencing that a person continually interprets aspects of reality, and gives an explanation of the meaning of his/her own existence. Essentially, the meaning of experiencing as a mode of being human lies in this.

From what is said about experiencing thus far, two aspects strongly arise:

- (a) **Fundamental aspects** of experiencing, as a **structure**, i.e., as a mode of Dasein. These aspects elucidate the concept of **experience as such**—they have a descriptive function.
- (b) The **functional aspects** of experiencing. These aspects illuminate the significance of experiencing for a person's going out to the world, i.e., the ways in which one actively and acquiringly steps up to meet reality.

Thus, we summarize the matter “experiencing” to evaluate its significance for the construction of didactic theory, and these two aspects are now presented in a particular relationship. To push through to what experiencing essentially is (i.e., the *fundamentalia* of experiencing) in the light of what has emerged from the descriptions so far, the following are classified as *fundamentalia* of experiencing:

Experiencing is a matter of intentionality. Outside of a person’s purposeful entry into reality, there is not such a thing as experiencing. Also, one gradually steps up to reality because, for him/her it has an inviting character to which each person answers in a unique way by making interpretations and by attributing meanings. In these ways, each person interprets and gives meanings, he/she is directed to reality and there is mention of intentionality. Fundamental to the question of intentionality is the **relationship** a person establishes with reality with his/her entry in it. This relationship is a personal one based on acquired knowledge and meanings already given to reality. Thus, a person views the world in a particular relief. Certain things (matters) figure in the foreground and others become shifted to the background because a person enters reality in a very particular way. Thus, experiencing reaches to a life perspective.

A human being is the only being who has experiences at his/her disposal—experiencing is an exclusively human matter. Experiencing, to the extent that it has resulted in residues of knowledge, is accumulative, i.e., experiences of the past do not disappear but remain in a person’s consciousness as knowledge by which he/she is more mobile, and which shows its sedimentation in an achievement-effect. Stated more strongly (following the view of Husserl), experiencing is a matter of achievement-consciousness. In experiencing, a person actualizes potentiality because in it, e.g., **becoming** and **learning** are actualized. The more importantly: in experiencing, the more these events lend themselves to **guidance** in their actualization. Thus, actualization means that this entering the world is a dynamic matter in which a person is actively involved such that experiencing, in addition to its presumed being a state, is also a matter of activity. It is a state, in the sense that with an experienced person, there are residues in the form of acquired

knowledge-structures but, on the other hand, this state carries the mobility of a person within reality, i.e., this knowledge of reality at his/her disposal allows him/her to move in a much more assured and safe way. After all, it is also the sense of teaching to create securities in the life space by means of **guiding** a child in his/her entering (actualizing) reality so that he/she does not become impaired by his/her own deficient experience, and eventually participate as a person within reality in an inferior way.

The totality of the fundamental aspect of experiencing, consequently, are summarized in the concept of **constituting**, i.e., that a person, both in the way and the fact that he/she comes forward to meet reality, creates a personal lifeworld for him/herself. The human world of meaning is the intentional correlate of his/her achieving- and appreciating-consciousness.⁵⁰⁾ Orientation in a world which is continually re-created by him/herself is a creative activity which is closely related to human openness and freedom. A person is continually involved in ordering things differently, making new disclosures, expanding, etc. and during this dynamic course, he/she must create for him/herself a meaningful and secure lifeworld. This constituting, as a summary of the *fundamentalia* of experiencing, thus has an act-character, i.e., a character of activity. The fact that experiencing accumulates also plays an important role, since it is a matter of the achievement of consciousness and of a person, as consciousness, planning his/her way through the world. The fact that a person has foreknowledge and residues from experiencing at his/her disposal, enables him/her to evaluate, with greater security, the situations which he/she comes across, and by which he/she constitutes his/her own lifeworld in a unique, personal, and individual way.

The functional aspect of experiencing, because of its accumulating and achieving nature, emerges as syntheses, i.e., in his/her experiencing, a person arrives at compilations.⁵¹⁾ Experiencing makes a synthesis of perceptions possible, or it makes available a compilation of ideas and concepts which can be described as **judgments**. These judgments push through to new situations but, indeed, are coupled with previous experiencing by which one arrives at the very important matter of the **anticipation** of the future in ordering and formulating his/her activity structures. Husserl

asserts that the anticipations from experiencing function in terms of a person's openness to experiencing. A person's entering and turning to reality are future-directed, in the sense that he/she plans his/her activities with respect to the future by which, to a degree, he/she establishes (constitutes) his/her own future. Each completed task includes for him/her the expectation of new **possibilities which** are coming forward such that one expects to be thriving more meaningfully in future situations. Therefore, experiencing is situation exceeding. A person is not delivered to a piece of reality as it is given. He/she can always rise above what is given. From his/her experiencing, he/she can enlarge his/her lifeworld by extending its horizon. His/her interpretations become more precise because he/she understands the context in which things appear and has mastered relationships intellectually. These interpretations, indeed, refer to an understanding of reality and of one's own being situated within it. Thus, the functional aspect of experiencing is an event. As an event, it is dynamic and one's moving in a particular way is emphasized. Thus, it is not strange that on the by meaning interpretations, experiencing creates the possibility that things can be unlocked for a person by which his/her entry into reality becomes possible. Hence, experiencing is a precondition for a person's becoming human, which can be viewed as the progressive figuring forth of adulthood.

The role which language plays in this dynamic event must also be seen. There can be no meaning interpretations before things are verbalized. Hence, in so far as experiencing is a matter of knowing, it is also a matter of language; this means that, within the sphere of experiencing, reality becomes verbalized.

Considering the above findings, the functional aspect of experiencing is drawn together under one overarching concept, i.e., **orienting**. In experiencing, beacons are established in terms of which one's own foothold in life is determined. Because life and the lifeworld are not static, new meanings are continually attributed, and there is a repeated profiling of a person's world. There is a continual change and expansion of this integrated world such that it is necessary for one to continually reorient oneself to it. Among other ways, this orientation occurs in terms of experiencing.

For the sake of systematization, the following essences of experiencing are postulated from this discussion. This is done irrespective of the sequence in which they are described.

1. Experience is universal—all human beings experience
2. Experience speaks of a climate of encounter.
3. Experience is an event as well as a state.
4. Experience is achievement consciousness.
5. Experience implies mobility.
6. Experiencing involves its activity or act-character.
Experiencing is a matter of acting.
7. Experience is not determined, i.e., it does not have a predetermined definite course.
8. Experience is predisposed, in the sense that a person is encountered in the world actualizing potentialities as an unavoidable task.
9. Experience is accumulating, interpreting, orienting, and anticipating.
10. Experience is directed to sense and meaning.
11. Experience is ordering.
12. Experience is constituting.
13. Experiencing is a category of the activity of learning.
14. Experience has a conceptual sedimentation by which a person's grip on reality is indicated.
15. Experience has a comparing and controlling effect with respect to a person's participation within reality.
16. Experience is dialectic-hermeneutic in nature.
17. Experience discloses the original [primordial] life form of a person in its essences.
18. Experience is reflective.
19. Experience always is evidence of an attunement or disposition, i.e., the the unlocking of experiential content presumes a particular attunement of a person.
20. Human presumptions or hypotheses are the expectations which a person entertains with respect to experiencing reality.

4. TEACHING AS A PHENOMENON OF EXPERIENCING

A person's involvement with reality demands of him/her that he/she act. The life of which he/she is an inseparable part, is a

life of choices, decisions, confrontations, etc. In brief, because a person **is** there, he/she must participate within reality and life. He/she cannot refuse this because he/she is part of the world; he/she is co-accountable for the whole of that which **is**. His/her participation in life expresses the ontological category of “human-being-in-the-world”. A person is called to exercise certain practices or to participate in them and give meaning to his/her being-there. Thus, he/she can do nothing more than to be involved in administering justice, practicing a religion, a vocation and much more. One also cannot refuse to be co-involved in the practice of educating. Everywhere there are persons, there is educating because a person is committed to educating for his/her becoming an adult. Without the practice of educating, it is not possible for a person to become what he/she ought to and can become. Educating is attuned to bringing about changes in the life course of non-adults so that a state is reached whereby the participation of those involved is a meaningful and accountable event. Educating is one of the most important meaning-giving activities of human beings, and cannot be thought away from the course of life. Thus, educating belongs to the most original experiences at a person’s disposal.

How is this practice of educating realized during the life of persons? Why is it that a person allows a non-adult to change so that he/she eventually will show the image of adulthood? There is only one accountable way to be able to obtain a decisive answer to these questions, and that is to perceive a person, in his/her involvement in the world, i.e., to allow the original experience to speak. As indicated,⁵²⁾ a child’s initial involvement with reality is not directed to giving meaning and interpreting meaningfully. However, this is a state which cannot endure in the life of a child. His/her life involvement announces teaching as an implicit matter of life because it is involved in disclosing the meaning of being. Educating involves the activity by which one unlocks meaningful relationships and meanings for a child such that he/she/him/herself will discover in them the sense of hi/hers being-there. To realize this, a child must be taught regarding those aspects of reality which are viewed as important and life relative. The meaning of the teaching activity cannot be sought outside of educating. A person must teach because

he/she wants to and must educate and, in so far as educating involves teaching, one has no choice but to participate in life. All persons teach—thus, teaching also belongs to a human being's original experiences.

Experiencing is a uniquely human matter because only a person, as openness, comes forward to meet the world. In its totality, this covers the entire involvement of a person with reality and, thus, also his/her involvement in the activity of teaching. There cannot be thought about [primordial] teaching outside educating because, indeed, one cannot exceed one's own experiencing. This implies that a thinker, should he/she seek what is essential to teaching, cannot forsake the terrain of experiencing.

Educating involves the support and help to a child so that he/she can acquire his/her own foothold in life and the world and can dwell in the world in meaningful and accountable ways. An educator converses **with** an educand [i.e., child who must be brought up] **about** life contents which are first directed at speaking to his/her feelings/attunement [gemoed] and which have a lasting effect on his/her religious and moral life. Here, educating is seen as teaching intervention especially directed to the conscious life of a person, and by which the contents of the lifeworld are raised directly. The educator unlocks the [categories of the] lifeworld for the educand to make the world inhabitable for him/her. But then, there is also the expectation that he/she will live as a person ought to live. And to succeed at this, he/she must necessarily **learn**. It is not the terrain of this study to decisively study how a person learns or to investigate the various modes of learning. Of importance is the fact that a person learns. For a person, learning is a way of being. A didactician moves on his/her rightful terrain as he/she, in his/her didactic intervention, applies him/herself to allowing a child's learning activity to occur as effectively as possible; this means to help him/her move from one level of becoming to another, i.e., to an elevation in his/her dialogue [with reality] by means of accountable teaching. Instead of sending a child into the world on his/her own, and exposing him/her to possible harm, an educator teaches (Afrikaans: "onder-rig"; German: "Unter-richt" both of which mean to **show together**) him/her

about life contents because a child cannot learn [this life content] **effectively** on his/her own.

Effective teaching justifies the expectation of effective learning. The teaching ventured into by an educator in his/her educative intervention with a child, must never take a haphazard course because the educator (teacher) seeks a learning effect which can only be the result of careful planning. In his/her planning, he/she strives to create a harmony between what he/she will unlock for a child (contents) and the form in which he/she will cast these contents. (The didactic imperative). If he/she succeeds in creating this harmony, there can be a learning effect which can be evaluated or judged. Only then can there be an application of yardsticks in terms of which the event can be evaluated and repeated again if necessary. However, also in his/her search for essences with evaluative possibilities, a didactician does not allow him/herself to drive life reality away. These essences must make it possible for a practice to take a form in which the change striven for will be shown by a child as a perceivable learning effect (changing, becoming, forming).

Where there is educating (teaching), there necessarily is a structure because the event assumes a form which is peculiar to the human form of living. Didactic pedagogics must describe, make knowable, evaluate, and so refine these structures that they can appear again in a practice which can be plied every day by people. It is precisely in this that the meaning of didactic theory is found. It must make the matter of **teaching** knowable [recognizable], i.e., describe it so that, for a thinker, it is possible to say, "This is teaching". Thus, this fundamental aspects (categories) of this piece of human experience must be disclosed. In addition, its functional aspects must be disclosed (criteria) so that a decisive answer can be acquired about how teaching functions in an educative event. The role which life contents play in teaching also must be viewed more closely. The core questions which loom up for a theoretician are:

- (1) **What is teaching?**
- (2) How does teaching function in an educative plan?
- (3) With respect to what does teaching occur?

Didactic theory itself must answer these questions. Since no second order institution [e.g., schooling] or any other practice can disclose the essences of teaching, a didactician turns him/herself to the reality of educating in which the matter of teaching is tightly enmeshed. Here, he/she will search for the fundamental essences (categories) of that piece of human experience called teaching [first question], and it is here that he/she also must search for and disclose its form and choose contents so that he/she can answer the last two questions.

[The source of] a person's original [primordial] experience (of educating) must be in the world because a child is never born educated. To become educated, he/she must be taught so that a learning effect is manifested and, therefore, one searches for sources of knowledge about "teaching". This source is human experiencing which, among other things, discloses the form of educating (teaching). This aspect is universally valid because this **form** of living [teaching] is peculiar to being human. The **contents**, i.e., that in terms of which teaching occurs, are universal, in so far as there must be contents to be taught, but particular with respect to the contents as such. Teaching is a piece of experiencing which brings together forms of living and life contents so that a secure lifestyle is crystallized in a child. As one who carries out the practice of teaching, a didactician dare not leave his/her teaching activities to chance. The grounding of teaching, viewed in the light of the fact that it never occurs outside human experiencing, must take its point of departure in the reality of educating, which speaks from a unique piece of human experiencing.

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