

CHAPTER 3

THE BECOMING OF THE AUTISTIC CHILD-IN-EDUCATING

3.1 WHAT IS BECOMING?

3.1.1 Introductory orientation

Viewed anthropologically, a human being, in contrast to an animal, does not dwell in a closed, fixed, and predetermined world, but finds him/herself as being incomplete, indeed, equipped with given potentialities, in an open world in which he/she must master a culture to create a unique lifeworld for him/herself (1 p 45). This implies that he/she must actively collaborate in the unfolding of his/her human potentialities, a matter which unquestionably refers to the course of his/her becoming (adult). Because of his/her openness and directedness to the world [i.e., intentionality], *from the beginning a child is actively involved in realizing his/her given potentialities*, and this implies that he/she is involved in changing. A child's changes are seen in his/her conduct, actions, and behaviors, i.e., in his/her becoming (2 p 31). Becoming, as an elevation in level, by which is meant an elevation in dialogue or meaning in the life of a child (3 p 195) includes an increasing and continuous movement in the direction of the adult lifeworld. As a normative matter, becoming is the necessary change which must arise in a child's life, and be directed to becoming a *proper* adult.

3.1.2 A fundamental pedagogical perspective on child becoming

Because of the structure of his/her psychic life, as a given potentiality, a child has the potential to become adult, and he/she is also able to actively participation his/her becoming. By him/herself taking part in his/her becoming, a child shows him/herself to be *someone who wants to learn*. *The realization of learning by a child*

is the basis for his/her becoming, and changing, as an essence of becoming, cannot be realized if a child does not learn. The child's realization of learning, and the event of becoming, thus, must be viewed as a unitary event (4 p 143).

Even though a child him/herself learns and becomes, there is no mention here of an event in the life of a child which merely can be taken for granted. A child has at his/her disposal the potentialities to change, but their proper realization is clearly a *matter of educating*. The educability of a child is a reflection of the fact that he/she can learn, and the educative relationships between adult and child are carried by an adult's educative teaching of a child, as well as by a child's readiness to learn (5 p 33). Teaching and learning, as essences of the course of educating, thus, are directed to an aim, i.e., a child's progressive becoming on the way to proper adulthood. An educator accepts responsibility to accompany a child such that he/she will become a full-fledged adult, and through an adult's teaching, he/she enables a child to learn to make the adult lifeworld his/her own. Educating (which also implies teaching), learning, and becoming show a coherence, as far as a child's becoming adult is concerned.

According to Langeveld (6 p 158), human being is a being who educates, is educated, is committed to educating, and opens him/herself to it. Because a child becomes educated, he/she receives support in his/her becoming toward adulthood.

To be able to provide an answer to the fundamental pedagogical question of how educating must appear there to support a child in his/her becoming, it is mentioned that the pedagogical relationship, sequence, aim, and activity structures must be adequately realized. These matters are concisely discussed in the first chapter and are not repeated here. Where, in the present study, there is a presentation of a psychopedagogical perspective on the actualization of the psychic life of an autistic child-in-educating, however, it is meaningful to take three dimensions in educating, i.e., *emotional* (affective), *knowing* (cognitive), and *normative educating* as a basis for psychopedagogical reflection. In their entwinement, these three modes of educating are indispensable for the adequate

becoming of a child and, therefore, are discussed at length in Chapter 4.

3.2 CHILD BECOMING AS ACTUALIZATION OF THE

PSYCHIC LIFE, WITH REFERENCE TO THE AUTISTIC CHILD-IN-EDUCATING

3.2.1 General

It is indicated that a child him/herself participates in his/her learning and becoming. This self-actualization of psychic-spiritual potentialities (among which are especially cognitive, knowing, intellectual potentialities) is decided by a child him/herself. Thus, child becoming is a matter of willing—it is co-propelled by a positive, powerful willing, because of a stable affective lived experiencing. In addition, a child's self-actualization is accomplished by experiencing, willing, and lived experiencing, as modes of actualizing his/her learning and becoming.

This self-actualization is also a matter of giving meaning, i.e., what is meaningful for a child in his/her becoming adult will be appropriated as meaningful and is made his/her own possessed experience. Possessed experience, once again, is of essential significance for his/her future behaving because it is going to determine the level of his/her behaviors. From this, it also is concluded that the ways in which, and the levels on which a child him/herself behaves, will largely reflect his/her state of learning and becoming.

However, this self-actualization cannot occur adequately without the pedagogical *accompaniment by an adult*, hence, the term “accompanied self-actualization”. This accompaniment can only lead to the adequate actualization of the psychic life if the pedagogical structures within the pedagogical situation are realized in a full-fledged way. Since a *pedagogical accompaniment perspective on the present problematic* is discussed in Chapter 1, and in Chapter 4 regarding accompaniment of an autistic child, a couple of observations suffice, in this respect:

Initiative, as an active participation of a child in his/her learning and becoming, suddenly directs attention to the essences of the psychic life of a child, by which his/her learning and becoming are *realized*. These essences which show a profound cohesion are experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing, and behaving. In the following these five essences, also called modes of actualizing the psychic life of a child-in-educating, are explicated as essences of becoming, with reference to an autistic child.

3.2.2 Essences of the psychic life of the child, as essences of becoming, with reference to the autistic child-in-educating

a) Experiencing, as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

In exploring the etymological basis of the word *experience*, it is noted that the German word “fahren” means “to go” or “to be in motion”, and in this motion “to reach” something (7 p 42). The prefix “ex”, in experience, means to “undergo” something. In addition, the verb “erfahren” (experiencing) means to come to know something, to learn to know, and to become aware of, and to undergo. This also includes the meaning that, by self-involvement, as a personal, effortful, active participation, something is reached or encountered, by which a person learns to know it. (Bollnow, as cited by Sonnekus and Ferreira (8 p 43), says that experiencing is the personal going to things, the self-involvement with the things of which he/she becomes aware. What a person experience, by means of a story, or through the medium of the newspaper, does not have the same impact as does being there oneself. It requires a personal taking part, effort, difficult work, etc.). Thus, a person benefits little by someone else’s experiencing; he/she must him/herself experience, and by this experiencing, learn.

Experiencing, thus, is a genuine human phenomenon in a child’s dialogue with reality and, as such, is a way of manifesting his/her standing open to, and being directed to reality (intentionality). Also, experiencing lays the foundation for a child establishing relationships with fellow persons, and things in life reality.

Following Strasser's line of thought, Ferreira (9 p 53) describes experiencing as follows: "Experiencing is an original, conscious act of turning (moving) to, and grasping (reaching, in living contact with) reality, which leads to knowing it. Thus, it is the necessary beginning of becoming aware of reality, by which cognitive or conceptual (gnostic-cognitive) thought is made possible. Experiencing is the first orientation of a subject (person) in his surrounding world and forms the basis for understanding the world on a higher level".

2 Essences of experiencing

As an original act of turning to and reaching in a lifeworld, experiencing is realized in a three-fold way, i.e., by *moving to*, *acting in*, and *reaching* reality (10 pp 54-62). These three essences are not isolated but are only distinguishable modes by which experiencing is realized in the lifeworld.

By *moving to* reality, a child affirms his/her intentionality, as his/her openness for and being directed to reality, and by the act of experiencing, the entirety of his/her psychic life comes into motion. As an example, from the beginning, by his/her spontaneous, intentional directed bodily movements (touching, grasping, reaching for, feeling, seeing, etc.), a child is involved in designing an experiential world for him/herself (11 pp 56-57). However, a child not only goes to, but resolve to give and receive meaning, he/she also undergoes, i.e., at the same time, he/she is influenced by the surrounding reality.

In the second place, experiencing also implies *activity* which says something about handling things, viewing, designing, investigating, exploring, thinking, learning, making choices, etc. Experiencing, thus, has senso-gnostic and gnostic-cognitive moments, as is evident in a child's search for sense and coherencies, and in terms of which his/her horizon of experience becomes continually extended, deepened, and enlarged.

Experiencing also includes *reaching* reality. This first or basic grasp (acquaintance) of reality serves as a forerunner for a structuring

and understanding knowing it on a higher level. Sensorial, sensing, as getting acquainted on a concrete level , by an intellectually effortful activity, undergoes completion on the level of perceiving, thinking, and imagining, and becomes possessed experience.

3 Some essences of experiencing in psychopedagogical perspective

a) Intending

As a way of actualizing intentionality, experiencing is an intended (willful), active taking a position, and a going to things with an eye to an eventual gnostic-cognitive grasp of them (Van der Stoep). As an active attempt to become acquainted with reality, this implies that various moments in the psychic life of a child come into motion (e.g., modes of learning such as sensing, attending, observing, perceiving ,and thinking). This gives rise to a child exploring the world, being able to distance him/herself from it, objectify it, and eventually emancipate him/herself (12 p 44).

b) Orienting

In his/her communication with reality, from the beginning a child is involved in determining his/her own participation with reality. To orient literally means to determine your own place in terms of given landmarks, according to Van der Stoep, as cited by Ferreira (13 p 64). The human body is the center of orientation in communicating with reality, and a child experiences his/her body in that way. Concepts such as “near, far, large, deep, in front, above, under, left and right” are experienced depending on the shape and position of the body in space. Also, through bodily involvement with things, especially via sensory-motor ways of experiencing, such as touching, grasping, smelling, feeling, and tasting, a child arrives at a concept of “cold, warm, rough or smooth, large or small, bitter or sweet”, and he/she orients him/herself accordingly. Such orientation, however, first acquires a knowing or cognitive flavor as soon as a child acquires language since, in this respect, it is the means for giving meaning, ordering, distancing, and objectifying ((14 p 44).

c) Knowing

In its original structure experiencing cannot be thought of outside the knowing-moment, and it is justifiable to designate intuitive knowing as an essence of experiencing (15 p 66). All experiencing leads to knowing, which can vary from a preconceptual, or intuitive knowing, built on an attunement to things and a trust that they really are as immediately experienced, to a conceptual, or cognitive knowing, which rests on perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. (16 p 45). Each person, as well as child, has a rich source of possessed experience at his/her disposal which might show structural shortcomings. but which is essential in identifying and judging new situations, problems, relationships, etc. Without this “fore-knowledge” as a precondition for truly valid knowledge, a grasp on life reality simply cannot be acquired (17 p 68).

d) Anticipating

Experiencing also shows that essentially its immediacy is exceeded, and there is a fore-grasping of the essentials of each experience. Thus, from his/her “experienced-ness,” or experiential knowledge, certain matters are foreseen, or anticipated. This moment of anticipating necessarily embraces moments of imagining and fantasizing, thinking, and even remembering (18 p 70). Distancing, objectifying, and transcending, thus, become possible. This is illustrated concretely as follows: one asserts that a house is seen, while now, only the front can be perceived. The back side, as an *unseen* part of the house, is co-assumed, or anticipated in this perceiving (19 p 45).

4 The significance of experiencing for child becoming

According to Ferreira (20 pp 54-55), experiencing, via giving sense and meaning, calls a child’s experiential world into existence, as a horizon of the known and familiar. Lifeworld structures (Heidegger) are changed into a personally meaningful world and, in doing so, the diffuseness of the world is eliminated, and the child established a familiar world, as a personal experiential world clothed in meaning. The world of experience becomes a personal experiential world through his/her own unique meaning-giving attitude. Via the

act of experiencing, a landscape is delimited, and enlivened for him/herself in a genuinely personal way.

Experiencing is of cardinal importance to a child, because it is the bedrock of all learning, and represents a way of realizing learning and becoming. The activity of learning has a greater experienced-ness as an additional result, and experiencing which remains without learning effects, i.e., when nothing is learned, cannot qualify as experiencing (21 p 47).

Experiencing also has a formative value for a child because he/she, as a person him/herself, is changed by it, as is seen in his/her behaviors, and on the by which his/her state of becoming is evaluated. Linschoten, as cited by Sonnekus and Ferreira (22 p 47), notices the following about this: “Experiencing transforms us from moment to moment, it changes us and, thus, the experience of things changes. One who has experienced has a history behind him which has taught him to see, think, and experience differently”. By experiencing, the psychic life of a child not only comes into motion, but it is actualized. More explicitly, experiencing results in a child’s further becoming, as its elevation.

Bodily contact with the mother, physical caring, spoiling, cleaning, and feeding a child by his/her mother belong to the most original experiences of a child and serve as a way for his/her affective forming, as a matter of becoming. In this regard, educating implies offering a child opportunity to acquire experience and, in doing so, to self-actualize his/her becoming. These situations vary from the simplest teaching situations at home, during which a child learns to dress him/herself, to be neat, to eat properly, and to behave him/herself, to more formalized teaching situations in the school. Experiencing can, thus, be correctly viewed as an important way of actualizing a child’s learning and becoming.

5 Some demands which adequate experiencing places on a child

The primary situation of educating (the home) is the first place for experiencing. A safe and secure lived experiencing of this space, as room for becoming, provides the foundation for a child’s stable

affective lived experiencing, and his/her readiness to explore his/her world by experiencing it.

Because language is clearly a means for giving meaning and ordering, its mastery is necessary to be able to name, order, classify experiences, proceed to think about, and learn from them.

Experiencing also demands that a child show openness and be able to conceptually assimilate experience, and attribute generally valid meaning to them.

6 The relationship between experiencing and lived experiencing

From a psychopedagogical view, it is essential to indicate that what a child experiences is equi-primordially lived experienced and that lived experiences are essentially congealed experiences, according to Van der Stoep, as cited by Ferreira (23 p 74). Lived experience is the meaningful completion, refinement, and deepened meaning (of experience), which necessarily pushes through to valuing, or evaluating what is experienced. Concretely, this is expressed as follows: It is like a dam which is filled (with water) from a fountain. The fountain (experiencing) provides the water, but it is in the dam itself that the depth and life of lived experiencing are found. (24 p 75).

7 Experiencing by the autistic child

Because of an excessive turning into him/herself, and an under actualization of his/her intentionality, it is obvious that, from the beginning, the experiential world of an autistic child will be extremely attenuated. Because, from an early age, such a child, asserts Prick (25 p 274), “... een onvolwaardig lichamelijk bestaan gefixeerd blijft, word het begrijpelijk waarom hij over geen bewuste intensies beschikt, geen echte menselijke intensionaliteiten realiseert, noch tot verstandelijk – en zelf-bewustzijn geraakt en evenmin willekeurig leert spreken”. The implications of such a way of existing are described by him as follows (26 p 196): “Het betreffende individu left dan nauwelijks buiten het eigen zelf; het left ternauwernood elders. In plaats van existent te zijn is het dan

insistent. Deze ongedifferentieerde, te smalle bestaanswijze treedt op, als de mens niet in contact treedt in de prille jeugd met de wereld, in bijzonder met de medemens”.

Where experiencing means an aim-directed *moving to, active self-involvement with, and a reaching of reality*, out of which experiential knowledge is acquired, it is conspicuous that an autistic child does not build up adequate possessed experience because of a labile affective life, weak willing, a venturing attitude which is wanting, fear of the unknown, lack of interest in new things, a desperate clinging to the familiar, and no active dialogue carried on with reality. Thus, his/her experiential world is not broadened, deepened, and expanded, i.e., he/she fails in changing lifeworld structures (Heidegger) into his/her own meaningful world. Where a normal child is continually involved in designing an experiential world via ways of being, such as grasping, reaching for, pointing to, touching, tasting, listening, looking, imitating, playing, spoken language, asking questions, etc., an autistic child remains bogged down in a compulsive, monotonous, rigid, meaningless, and dehumanized handling of objects, which have no learning consequences and, therefore, cannot be deemed as “experiences”.

Thus, experiencing, as a mode of becoming, is realized in an impoverished way by an autistic child, and not one of the essences of experiencing is adequately realized by him/her. Since his/her world appears as diffuse, chaotic, and often anxiety provoking, there is mention of a different experiencing which leads to a becoming- and being-different.

b Willing as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

Van der Merwe (27) undertook an intensive study of willing, as an essence of the psychic life of a child-in-educating. From an etymological-semantic perspective on willing he mentions that the Afrikaans dictionary of Terblanche and Odendaal attributes the following meaning to willing (28 p 141): “the ability to consciously make an effort to carry out an activity”. According to Van der Merwe (29 p 141), willing is connected to the Greek word:

“eldomai”, which means: “wish, desire, strive, want”. In addition, he mentions the Latin words “*voluntate (mea)*” and “*volutatio*” (both derived from the word “*volo*” = “will”) and which, respectively, have the following meanings: “of one’s own accord, to freely choose, directing the spirit, willingness, disposition, inclination”, and “rotating, unrest, instability” (30 p 141). Here, the following essences of willing clearly emerge: a connection with the affective life, freedom of choice and decisions, the initiative which, in this connection, resides in a person, a readiness to participate, direction-giving quality (choose in terms of norms), dynamic, and intentional act-character, as well as the future-directedness of willing. The adequate exercise of willing requires normal intellectual potentialities and, according to May (31 p 48), willing is linked to the acquisition of one’s own identity, as is evident in sayings such as, “I can”, “I will”, and “I am”.

2 The structure of volitional life

Garbers (32 p 387) distinguishes the following three moments (facets) of volitional life:

a) The moment of striving

With respect to the moment of striving, Garbers refers to motives, impetuses, or drives which are at the basis of human behaviors. In this regard, he distinguishes reflexive, instinctive, vital drives and emotions within the vital sphere of being human, and social strivings, humane or absolute (value) strivings, which are assigned to the psychic-spiritual sphere of being human. These impulses are closely related to a person’s needs and aim in living together, and are, in their turn, greatly influenced by a cultural (life) milieu. Imprisonment in the vital sphere of being human leads to the inadequate assimilation of meta-personal values, as well as to a deficient adulthood. According to Garbers (33 p 420), the will is the coordinator, and integrator of a person’s strivings, which gives them a course or direction, and he explicates this matter as follows: “The will is the driver of the carriage of life, and the strivings are the horses which pull it”.

b) The moment of choosing

The fact that a person must choose because of the presence of different strivings in him/her, is also emphasized by Oberholzer (34 p 181), when he says that the exercise of willing also implies that a human being can also “say no” when he/she fulfills a personal aim. During this moment, the idea of *norm identification by a person* arises, by which it is determined what striving is valued more highly, and as fitting and, thus, as preferred.

c) The moment of deciding

During this moment, a person has arrived at clarity regarding the choice and, thus, to a decision. He/she arrives at the aim, and the act of willing is completed as the dynamic in his/her person structure (35 p 144). That which is aimed at now, by morally independent deciding, becomes direction giving to the involved person’s activities, e.g., an educative aim has been realized, which refers to adequately becoming adult. Responsibility for decisions, and consistent, reliable acting on their basis are viewed by Landman and co-workers (36 p 36) as one of the criteria for adulthood.

3 Some particularized essences of the phenomenon of willing

Following Garbers (37 pp 411-429), Van der Merwe (39 pp 36-37), as well as Sonnekus and Ferriera (39 p 49), particularize the following essences of the phenomenon of willing:

- (i) Willing is a way that intentionality (i.e., openness and directedness to reality) manifests itself.
- (ii) The act of willing springs from a child’s own initiative, and because it implies the actualization of the psychic life in terms of learning and becoming, it possesses a dynamic.
- (iii) The act of willing is actualized by a personal decision grounded on norm identification.
- (iv) Willing is determinative of a child’s goal-directed activities.
- (v) Willing gives direction and indicates a course. Thus, the realization of a child’s learning and becoming, as

- directed to an aim, is determined by the direction-giving, and course-indicting nature of willing.
- (vi) Willing is indissolubly entwined with the cognitive and emotional life of a child. The nature and quality of the intellectual potentialities, and the emotional life (stability or lability) determine the power of willing, and even place limits on a child's actualization of learning and becoming.
 - (vii) The quality of realizing the potentialities of knowing is co-determined by the power of willing.
 - (viii) Willing implies complying with the inevitable in a child's relationship with the world, because his/her own bodiliness, and intellectual quality place limits on his/her realization of learning and becoming.
 - (ix) Willing is directed to the future, i.e., it provides the impetus for a child's striving to be a proper adult.
 - (x) By actualizing willing, a child affirms and acquires his/her own identity. Considering the phenomenon of willing discussed, in the following it is necessary to attend to the significance of willing for realizing a child's learning and becoming, as matters regarding actualizing his/her psychic life.

4 Willing as a way of actualizing learning and becoming

From an early age, a child has a yearning to become an adult him/herself, as is shown in refusing the help of adults, and stubbornly insisting on doing things for him/herself. Thus, in his/her educative accompaniment, an adult is obligated to find ways of connecting with a child's wanting to become an adult. However, by means of *emotional educating*, a child must be supported to be willing and ready to experientially explore his/her world. Also, by creating appropriate educative situations, a child must be accompanied and supported to intellectually explore, and master reality by perceiving, thinking, imagining, fantasizing, etc.

The realization of the act of willing, within a didactic (teaching and learning) situation is determinative for the nature and direction of a child's becoming, especially the quality and level on which he/she

actualizes his/her cognitive potentialities. If the power of willing is weak, his/her learning and becoming are delayed, and his/her emancipation is seriously handicapped. A strongly powered willing leads to his/her taking his/her own standpoint, own position, deciding (normative becoming), and this points to a definite confirmation of his/her own identity. With this, a child announces him/herself in his/her willingness to be involved in his/her becoming adult, as someone who willingly is co-responsible for the unfolding of his/her being a person in the direction of adulthood (40 p 51).

5 Actualizing willing by the autistic child

As far as an *autistic child's becoming adult, via the exercise of willing* is concerned, it is emphasized that willing has the character of an intentional act, and that by such a child, there is little mention of a consciously attentive presence, a directedness to giving meaning, and a self-initiated attempt to master reality (41 p 189). Various authors mention an autistic child's passivity, a deficient enthusiasm, and problems stimulating his/her ardor because of an extremely weak *willingness to want to be*, and become someone him/herself (42a pp 78, 428; 42b p 125; 42c p 45).

That willing is indissolubly entwined with the cognitive as well as emotional life, is especially evident in an autistic child's deficient potentialities for giving meaning, as is shown in his/her insistence on preserving the same circumstances, and fierce resistance to change in an arrangement, as well as a deep insecurity, and a deficient venturing attitude to come forward to meet the unknown (43a p 64; 43b p 451). Only by long-term, intensified emotional educating is it possible to support an autistic child to an interestedness in the surrounding reality, and the awakening of a willingness to explore by experiencing (44 pp 230, 194).

Educating an autistic child in his/her willing presents the educators (parents and teachers) with a tremendous challenge, as is evident from the following assertion: "It is the mother who has to withstand the main brunt of a child who will not settle into any sort of routine; a child who will not respond to any attempts to set a regular feeding pattern, to toilet training, to simple commands, and who does not

learn the correct pattern of accepted social behaviours which, when learnt, make life easier for everyone” (45 p 136).

An autistic child's willing, as the way he/she initiates his/her experiential world, is attenuated. The direction-giving effect of willing is attenuated, and he/she appears aimless. His/her propulsive power remains directed to the vital level (his/her intentional directedness is thwarted by his/her imprisonment in vital-pathic lived experiencing), and it becomes difficult to progress to a psychic-spiritual level by which willful acting, choosing, and deciding come forth.

c Lived experiencing as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

A search for the meaning of a word such as “lived experiencing” has revealed that it is an act, or activity by which something is lived through. It refers to an experience (state) which rests on an experiencing, which has been “spiritualized”, or preserved (46 p 52). According to Sonnekus (47 p 118), lived experiencing is the completion, refinement, and deepening of meaning experience, and necessarily pushed through to a valuing or evaluating of what was experienced. Sonnekus (48 p 23) describes it “... as the intentionally determined, subjective, personal (pathic-normative) attitude of a person, as a totality-in-function, in his communication with reality”. Pretorius (49 p 8) has expanded on this and describes lived experiencing as “the personal (subjective, gnostic, normative), intentional (meaning-giving, meaning-experiencing, taking a position, signifying) continuous activity of being conscious of reality”.

2 Some essences of lived experiencing

- a) Lived experiencing is an *act* of intentionality and is directed to lived reality. This directedness is characterized by seeking and giving meaning, which gives lived experiencing a normative character.

- b) Lived experiencing has *disclosive* (pathic, affective) as well as *illuminative* (gnostic-cognitive) sides, which are distinguishable but inseparable from each other.
- c) Because of its meaning-searching and meaning-giving nature, lived experiencing is *always directed to content* of lived reality (e.g., values, norms, codes of behavior, etc.).
- d) Lived experiencing shows a *unitary character*. Its stream is, thus, characterized by emotional, knowing, and normative moments. What is more, it is not actualized via the separate sense organs.
- e) Lived experiencing does not have a momentary but a *continuous, flowing character*, called the *stream of lived experiencing*, by Linschoten.
- f) Lived experiencing, in its essence, is *selective* in nature; it is directed to something to which sense and meaning are given.
- g) Lived experiencing shows a *dynamic character* because a becoming child continually gives different (higher) meanings as he/she learns and becomes.
- h) Lived experiencing is always *person-bound*, in that each person gives sense and meaning to things in a unique way.
- i) Human bodiliness is at the *center* of lived experiencing.

3 Lived experiencing as a way of actualizing learning and becoming

In establishing relationships with the world, a child is continually involved, via lived experiencing, in giving meaning to these relationships. He/she not only looks for clarity about his/her own existence, but also with respect to what surrounds him/her. As an educand, in his/her search for meaning, he/she is accompanied by adults. By means of educating, an adult unlocks those contents which he/she considers to be meaningful for a child's becoming adult. A child lived experiences their meaningfulness by him/herself giving meaning to them, by which he/she continually realizes his/her becoming on a higher level (50 p 54).

With reference to its essential characteristics noted above, it is emphasized that it realizes itself in the stream of lived experiencing within which distinguishable emotional, knowing, and normative moments of lived experiences arise (51 p 54). To better understand these distinguishable essences of lived experiencing and determine their significance for the child's learning and becoming, it is necessary to briefly explicate each.

With respect to *emotional lived experiencing* there is a distinction between pathic (senso-pathic and pathic) and affective lived experiencing (52 p 54). *Senso-pathic lived experiences* are conspicuous in the infant (suckling) because his bodiliness is the center of his lived experiencing and consequently he directs himself emotionally to his world primarily via his sense organs. This means that he explores his world by touching, feeling, smelling, tasting, hearing, and looking (53 p 63). The infant, e.g., tastes and smells his mother's milk during breastfeeding and crows with delight when his skin is caressed (54 p 112).

Because of the bodily boundness of these ways of being emotionally directed, they have a conspicuously impulsive character. Becoming adult, as far as emotional directedness is concerned, includes the child progressively distancing himself from his senso-pathic directedness. Such a distancing results in the stabilization of his emotional life. Sonnekus (55 p 22) gives evidence of this when he states that this becoming is recognized in the fact that the impulsivity of senso-pathic directedness of the child periodically changes into lability and on occasion gives evidence of a dawning stability. For example, at one moment the child is cheerful and happy, only to burst into tears in the next. However, as he becomes and learns and his possessed experiences increase qualitatively and quantitatively his emotional life displays more stability. Affirmation of such a structural elevation but also a relapse is found in Vermeer's (56 p 126) explication of the impulsivity and lability of the play of toddlers. She mentions that senso-pathic play is especially noticeable in the play of a toddler who, even though he proceeds to illusive [make believe] play (a structural elevation is his emotional life), he continually gives evidence of relapsing in his pattern of play to merely handling objects. For example, he gets

pleasure from slapping the water in a bowl with his hands or even merely by pouring the water out of it.

In connection with the above it is noted that associated with a very young child (baby) there is a senso-pathic level of lived experiencing and a preponderantly impulsive and labilized emotional life. If there is not an elevation in structure, i.e., a stabilization in the child's emotional lived experiencing, the extent to which there is no parental intervention, and that the child does not simultaneously succeed in breaking through his imprisonment in a sensory oriented world involvement, there is mention a labilized emotional life, restrained becoming and an infantilizing. Emotional stability implies that the emotions show a greater consistency, and the child progressively controls them and holds them in check. Affective lived experiencing that confirms this are mainly characterized by a heightened sensitivity for values and norms, i.e., the appearance of norm identification.

Increasing stabilization of the child's emotional directedness implies an elevation in his senso-pathic directedness that Sonnekus (57 p 20) designates as an elevation to a *pathic level*. Pathic directedness is an intermediate stage, a bridging from a predominantly impulsive emotional directedness of a baby to a predominantly stable emotional directedness of, e.g., an adolescent. Stabilization of a child's emotional lived experiencing, as a matter of becoming, is not realizable without affective educating.

Progressive stabilization of emotional directedness (lived experiencing) is made possible by a gradual distancing from the senso-pathic appeal of the world of things because, via his knowing directedness, the child gradually turns himself to the surrounding reality (58 p 97). This change in the toddler's giving meaning to reality is promoted by his acquisition of language. This acquisition enables him to pass beyond his bodiliness and to also express his pathic directedness outside of his bodiliness, according to Langeveld (59 p 49). Language is one of the most important media for expressing emotions. Therefore, a restrained actualization of language can be an indication that a progressive stabilization of the emotional life is not realized.

Stable *affective lived experiencing* is viewed as a perfection [fulfillment] of the emotional life and points to the achievement of full-fledged adulthood. Such affective lived experiencing indicates cognitive control, master, and consistency as well as to a heightened sensitivity for values and norms with a correlated valuing of what is valuable for living such as the esthetic, moral and religious facets of human existence (60 p 55). A stabilized emotional directedness is especially evident in a person's acts of deciding and choosing. In addition, a person's participation in life essentially is a participation determined by values (61 p 184).

Although the older toddler and adolescent ought to show a higher degree of stability in their emotional life, according to Sonnekus, as cited by Strydom (62 p 52), the adolescent is dependent on the adequacy of his affective education as well as on his own self-actualization. A relapse to a labilized affective directedness, especially during times of crisis, remains possible and emotional outbursts indeed can arise. An older child might experience a labilization of his emotional life like that of younger children, but it is precisely based on the differences in frequency of their occurrence, their intensity, and characteristic behaviors that there is evidence of emotional stabilization. In this respect, Hurlock, as cited by Strydom (63 p 40), asserts: "The older adolescent recognizes the importance of learning to control his emotional reactions, while, at the same time, not allowing them to be so controlled that they make him nervous, irritable and edgy" and "... He does not 'blow up' emotionally when others are present but waits for a convenient time and place to let off emotional steam in a socially acceptable manner". Two important questions that can be asked about the appearance or not of a harmonious becoming adult or the level of becoming he has attained, as inferred from his predominant affective lived experiencing, according to Strydom (64 p 60) are: "Has he succeeded in getting his emotional life under cognitive control? Has he succeeded in adequately distancing himself from a vital-pathic directedness?"

In comparison with the child's emotional lived experiences, that are mostly fore-knowing, and naïve in nature, his *knowing lived experiencing* is directed to learning to know reality as it is, i.e., in its general validity. In this respect, a distinction is made between the

gnostic lived experiencing of a younger child and the cognitive lived experiencing of an older child (65 p 56).

With the very young child who directs himself to reality in senso-pathic ways, a senso-gnostic directedness, as a knowing way of being directed to and of associating with things, is noteworthy. According to Langeveld (66 p 74), the very young child, with respect to his knowing directedness, is dependent on a sensory predisposed involvement with reality, as is evident in the following assertion: "Het jonge kind is 'totaal sensueel', d.w.z. geheel op zijn zintuiglijkheid aangewezen: temperatuurzin, evenwichtzin, tastzin, smaak, trillingzin, geleidelijk aan ook gezicht en gehoor, ze geven hem aan wat er in zijn levensruimte geschiedt". Because with the infant (suckling) there is not yet a mastery of language, the form and structure of his knowing directedness differs markedly from that of an older child. Because of the disclosing and ordering character of language, it offers the child with language the possibility of distancing himself from a predominantly emotional to a predominantly knowing directedness to the surrounding reality. Thanks to the control of language, the intuitive, genuine knowing of the small child thus makes room for an ordered knowing as is evident from the quality of his modes of learning and the occurrence of the gnostic-cognitive modes of learning. The gnostic lived experiencing of the younger child, that has a strong emotional undertone, is mainly visual in nature and it also is realized on the level of the concrete. The acquisition and control of language enables him to gradually distance himself from the concrete and already abstract on a limited level. The disclosing, meaning giving and ordering character of language especially comes to the fore in the child question. To allow the child's knowing directedness to adequately unfold it is of cardinal importance that the educator answers his questions adequately (in an illuminative way). The knowing potentialities of language-impooverished children, and especially those whose child questioning is largely lacking, thus cannot flourish, they will show a restraint in becoming and for a long time will achieve on a level like a weakly endowed child.

However, to the extent that a child controls language and can name, discuss, reason about, order and systematize his concrete lived experiences, he progressively finds himself on the level of the

abstract and there is mention of cognitive lived experiencing. Thus, in this respect, there is an elevation in level or dialogue.

Consequently, it is accountable to use the progressive ordering (i.e., a structural change in it) as a criterion for adequately becoming adult.

Cognitive lived experiencing implies that the child is critically directed to problems, that he reasons, thinks conceptually, grasps, knows, understands, and can proceed to a distanced objectifying (67 p 38; 68 p 56). However, it must be well understood that the initial gnostic lived experiencing of the younger child also results in knowledge and insight, but it does not show the same depth and quality as the cognitive lived experiencing of the older child (69 p 56). This elevation in level of cognitive lived experiencing is especially reflected in the older child's distinguishable ways of being directed (also called modes of learning) among which are the actualization of thinking, remembering, fantasizing and the actualization of intelligence and language. Improved making relationships, generalizing and a higher level of abstract and conceptual thinking especially characterize the structural differences between the cognitive lived experiencing of the adolescent in comparison with that of the younger child.

An elevation in the level of gnostic-cognitive lived experiencing has a stable emotional lived experiencing as a foundation since it will provide a child with the needed impetus to acquire the unlocked learning content on a cognitive level by *him/herself* attributing sense and meaning to it. Adequately realizing his/her knowing directedness on a cognitive level also is closely related to the quality of the child's control of language. In this regard, Van der Stoep (70 p 89) indicates that the language constrained child's intentional (and knowing) directedness is weak, and that he/she shows an unwillingness to leave the concrete-sensory, the certain, and the known, and take the plunge into abstractions.

From the above, once again, it is emphasized that, with the gradual elevation in lived experiencing, from the pathic to the affective, the gnostic to the cognitive, and the pathic-affective to the gnostic-cognitive, and vice versa, it is clear that a child continually realizes his/her learning and becoming on a higher level (71 p 56).

4 Lived experiencing by the autistic child

To adequately describe the actualization of “lived experiencing” as a way an autistic child actualizes his/her psychic life, its nature, structure, level, and dynamic (if present) need to be judged, understood, and explicated. It is mentioned that the lived experiencing (of a normal child) shows a dynamic because a becoming child continually attributes different (higher) meanings to the extent that he/she learns and becomes. Becoming adult implies a continual elevation in meaning and level, thus, also concerning the prevailing level of lived experiencing, whether emotional or knowing.

As far as his/her emotional life is concerned, an autistic child differentiates him/herself from other children in that he/she *remains bogged down for an extremely long time in senso-pathic lived experiences*. Because an autistic child is weakly directed to the surrounding reality, h/shee is imprisoned in his/her bodily directedness and, therefore, also is devoted to vital-pathic lived experiencing, where this must do merely with bodily satisfaction, as is evident in the following assertions by Frye (72 pp 66, 71, 428): “Das Empfinden der Eigenen Leiblichkeit spielt fortwahrend eine zu grosse Rolle.” “Beim Autisten ist er Korper ein Gefangnis”. “Ihr Korper ist eine Quelle der Lust und, wenn sie sich sachlich einstellen müssen, eine Last”. “Hoheres Tempo und energisches Auftreten kommen eerst zur Entwicklung bei einer Intentionalitat, die das Korperliche depassiert”. This bodily imprisonment especially comes to the fore in excessive finger play, continually investigating the hands, feeling parts of the body, touching the genitals, masturbating, somersaulting, as well as incessant bodily rocking back and forth on a chair or swing (73 pp 164-167). Excessive obsession with one’s body, or certain of its parts, however, does not result in such a child building up a grounded knowledge of his/her body. Because of his/her excessive involvement with him/herself (introversion), without any self-distancing, and his/her being unaware of him/herself and others (as persons), he/she has at his/her disposal an extremely deficient bodily awareness, knowledge image, and knowledge of its uses.

An autistic child does not show an increase in structure, i.e., a stabilization of emotional lived experiencing, and, thus, this/her lived experiencing *shows an intense and long-lasting character of impulsivity, and lability*. As far as several autistic children in puberty are concerned, the frequency of occurrence, as well as the intensity of impulsive, unstable, and uncontrolled emotional lived experiences and expressions indicate an inhibition in becoming and are infantile. Wing (74 p 8) sketches this matter as follows: “The moods and feelings of these children seem difficult to predict and understand. Especially in the early years, they are very liable to severe tantrums in which they scream, kick, bite (themselves and others), and in which all their odd movements are accentuated”. Wild outbursts and banging one’s head, and even serious injuries to him/herself occur, and in incomprehensible ways, such a child can very easily change from laughing to crying, and vice versa, excessive laughing, and crying when inappropriate, laughs when another child is punished, cries if the ball rolls in the preferred direction or even seems “full of love”, while this serves only an aim to let others know his/her wishes (75 p 75). Thus, there is agreement with Prick’s (76 p 212) conclusions in this regard: “Tenslotte van op, dat zij meer dan normale kinderen, overgeleverd zijn aan stemmingswisselingen, waarin zich de labiliteit van hun emotionele regulatie toon”.

Being emotionally unformed or blunted also can appear in an autistic child’s extremely inadequate sympathy, compassion, empathy regarding suffering, sorrow, or misfortunes of another, and little attunement to and understanding of the finer nuances of another’s voice (77a p 90; 77b p 416). In addition, there is little notion of demands of propriety regarding emotional expressions, proper emotional expressions with unfamiliar persons, and his/her emotional life can be viewed as superficial, because nothing makes a deep or lasting impression on him/her.

Regarding the *knowing lived experiencing* of an autistic child, he/she usually remains bogged down in an extremely primitive senso-gnostic lived experiencing, and simultaneously shows a devotion to bodily satisfaction (stimulating or “lustful gratification”, according to a psychoanalytic view). Where, in the course of time, a normal child relies less and less on his/her so-called near senses

(sense of touch, smell and vibration), and concentrates more on using his/her far senses (vision and hearing), and eventually by manipulating language, proceeding to a more distanced way of exploring reality, an autistic child shows, in this respect, not only an extreme delay in becoming, but even involvements with reality unworthy of a human being. With an autistic child, there is no mention of an adequate distancing from a predominantly vital-pathic directedness, as is evident in the following pronouncement: "Autistische kinderen zijn op een dwangmatige wijze overgeleverd aan hun tactile-kinesthetische zintuiglijkheid, aan hun reuk- en smaakzintuig, benevens aan hun visceroreceptoren. Op die laagste trede van het lichamelijke bestaan is de wereld de autist slechts gegeven onder het aspect van het tastbare, het stuitbare, het snuffelbare, het aflikbare en het afzuigbare" (78 pp 210-216).

An autistic child's uncontrolled arm and hand movements, as well as his/her special liking of music, possibly merely point to a search for bodily satisfaction because the vibrating air which is created, and the resulting vibratory sensations appear to be enticing. The devotion to haptic contact, i.e., a desire to feel and touch objects not for the sake of senso-gnostic lived experience, but for the sake of pleasurable stimulating the skin is especially clear when Wing (79 p 42) describes the comings and goings of an autistic girl: "She would examine objects by holding them near her eyes - also by touching, tasting and smelling them and seemed to find enjoyment in the feel of smooth surfaces". Certain autistic children even go so far as to smell a person on the first acquaintance (80 p 68). That with autistic children, there is little mention of adequate ordering of and distancing from his/her senso-pathic lived experiences speaks clearly from the following statement of Frye (81 p 74): "Dass Lust und Unlust ihn jedesmal uberspulen, , bedeutet nicht, dass sie aussert stark sind, sondern dass sie vollkommen ungeordnet sind, das ser sie nicht beherrscht".

Because of defective language control, an autistic child is hindered in proceeding to gnostic-cognitive lived experiencing. Because of the lack of the child question, he/she must do without the disclosing, meaning giving, and ordering power which lies within language, and he/she cannot gradually distance him/herself from the concrete, and enter the level of the abstract. An autistic child

also cannot name his/her concrete lived experiences, to discuss them, to think about them, to reason about, order, and systematize them. There is little mention of an adequate ordering in his/her knowing directedness, and a breakthrough to cognitive lived experiencing. Hence, lived experiencing, as an essence of becoming, is inadequately actualized by an autistic child.

d Knowing as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

When “knowing”, as a verb, is analyzed, it has the following meanings: to have a correct idea, to have knowledge, or understanding of something; to be aware of, or acquainted with something; to have experience of, or familiarity with something; to have accurate information. or to have knowledge of something at one’s disposal. As a noun, the concept “knowledge” includes the following: the totality of what a person knows; acquaintance with; knowing; awareness; good understanding; insight; experience of; learned facts, and much more. Thus, knowing is viewed as an activity or action by which knowledge, insight, and understanding are acquired (82 p 57).

2 Some essences of knowing

- a) Knowing, as a way of actualizing intentionality, is present from the beginning with each child because it is a given human potentiality. As such, it is an activity directed to a search for the sense and meaning of everything with which a child enters a relationship, and which awakens his/her wonder.
- b) Regarding its beginning, knowing is essentially intuitive knowing, i.e., a pre-conceptual relationship of knowing built on a feeling and trust that things are as they are immediately experienced.
- c) In essence, knowing is question-asking in nature and, therefore, is a search for understanding and insight.
- d) Knowing has its origin in wondering, which calls into being attending, observing, and question-asking, as manifested attitudes of knowing.

- e) Knowing is grounded in childlike willingness to learn to know.
- f) The act of knowing embodies a moment of anticipation, i.e., a fore-grasping (fore-understanding) of what will be known.
- g) Knowing is essentially structuring in nature, i.e., it is an activity of analyzing, schematizing, ordering, interpreting, and synthesizing.
- h) Knowing is also an activity of comprehending and, thus, it includes moments of understanding, grasping, and insight.

3 Particularized essences of knowing

Sonnekus (83 pp 130-134) differentiates five essences or ways of knowing which arise and are indicative of a raise in the level of the child's knowing attitude, i.e., an intuitive, explicit, questioning, structuring, and understanding knowing.

Intuitive knowing is a naive, pre-conceptual understanding of things, and serves as the point of departure for additional, more rational forms of knowing. As an attitude of knowing, it is built on the feeling and trust that things are as they seem; however, this asks for amplification, extension, and meaningful fulfillment. Intuitive knowing is not the same as sensory perception, but rather is on the level of sensing and definitely includes a cognitive component (84 p 131).

Explicit knowing, a form of knowing on a higher level than intuitive knowing means a degree of certainty is built up regarding confidence in my knowing. It is a landmark or beacon on the way to fully knowing or understanding, in contrast to naivete, there is a degree of distancing and objectifying. The didactic-pedagogic task announces itself clearly here, i.e., in the question of accompanying a child's explications in his/her searching intuitive knowing (85 p 132).

Questioning knowing, an essential characteristic of child-being, manifest a child's intentional directedness, and includes an interrogating of the world of universals. As an extension of explicit

knowing, it begins with the question of “what”, which points to the practically grounded unity between child and world. An elevation in the level of questioning appears at about two and a half years of age, thanks to an improved control of language, a breaking-through the sensory horizon, and a distancing from the concrete-visual, as is shown in the “why question”. This question is directed more to finality, and causality, and points to a penetration into the origins of making one’s own or becoming familiar with the questioned reality. Also, included in this is a didactic task for educators that, for the sake of a child’s harmonious learning and becoming, he/she must be encouraged to ask questions, and such questions must be answered with dedication (86 p 133).

In his/her course of knowing on his/her way to adulthood, a child gradually proceeds to a *structuring knowing*. Globalizing, as a diffuse-comprehensive knowing is articulated, analyzed, and explored, which means a structuring of the piece of reality which initially figures forth.

Thus, knowing shows itself in terms of a qualitative course of forms, or steps on the way to interpretation and understanding, of which articulating is one of the most important (87 p 134). Second, following articulating is *interpreting*, a representative understanding, as a dawning understanding. Third, *ordering* appears, which testifies to classifying, schematizing, and logic. A logical course of thinking, reasoning, and drawing preliminary conclusions are now the order of the day. Fourth, *synthesizing*, as the result of articulating, comes to the fore as structure. Compiling questioned ideas, condensing, lumping (Van Parerren) now arise as precursors to understanding. The whole now has a varied structure with a visible relief.

Understanding knowing, the result of structuring knowing, subsequently arises because insight and vision (Strasser) make their appearance. The pre-scientific, intuitive knowing has now become a genuine scientific knowing because of an elevation in level. In ordinary language, a child has now arrived at insight – structured insight, which varies in perspective and transferability (88 p 134).

4 Knowing as a way of actualizing learning

and becoming

The initial child-world relationship, especially as shown in play, is not primarily directed to cognitive knowing, but to handling things, and is strongly colored emotionally. As a first grasp of things, this intuitive knowing paves the way for more distanced and objective knowing. However, it already contains moments of understanding, but also misunderstanding (Strasser) and, thus, is the source of the understanding and misunderstanding of all experiencing and lived experiencing (89 p 59). A child's act of learning is implicitly present here, since this involvement with things results in knowing, and the educative task speaks from this. A child lived experiences that he/she does not fully understand, and because he/she is directed to knowing reality, he/she continually asks his/her parents questions. Within this lies a fruitful moment for teaching by an adult and learning by the child. This questioning attitude of knowing shows a search for structure (understanding and insight) in his/her knowing exploration of reality and is indispensable for the realization of learning and becoming.

A child's structuring activities of knowing, such as analyzing, comparing, ordering, interpreting, and synthesizing enable him/her to obtain a firmer grasp of and familiarity with reality. These acts of knowing occur on a cognitive level by means of actualizing modes of learning such as perceiving, thinking, and remembering, and the result is genuine understanding, knowledge, and transferrable insight (90 p 61). Viewed from a perspective of becoming, such possessed knowledge, or possessed experience makes it possible for him/her to gradually loosen him/herself from an adult's help and support until, finally, he/she is an adult [i.e., emancipate] (91 p 61).

5 Knowing by the autistic child

Because knowing is a way of actualizing intentionality, it is obvious that an autistic child, because of his/her not living as bonded with others, and shows a conspicuously obscure intentionality, will have an inadequate attitude toward, or disposition for knowing. Rutter (92 p 123), in this copytext, emphasizes a remarkable absence of original remarks and "informative statements" by an autistic child, while Prick (93 p 164) draws attention to the fact that an autistic

child seldom, if ever, asks someone a question. Because an autistic child shows such a peculiar way of carrying on a dialogue with reality, his/her *intuitive knowing* is also defective, and the so-called “knowledge” at his/her disposal can merely be designated as “private”, and not as generally valid knowledge. An autistic child’s willingness to learn to know is almost entirely absent and, thus, it is understandable that such a child finds it extremely difficult to proceed to the more advanced levels of structuring and understanding knowing. Thus, an autistic child shows an extremely defective intuitive, explicit, questioning, structuring, and understanding knowing.

Because language is the most important medium for exploring and constituting his/her own lifeworld, it is not surprising that it is very difficult for an autistic child to arrive at structuring and understanding knowing. Rimland (94 p 80) sketches an autistic child’s problems with language control, and the detrimental results of this for his/her knowing as follows:

“Autistic children reveal an inability to understand or use language in its symbolic and conceptual meaning; to grasp or to formulate properties of objects in the abstract, (e.g., size, form, colour); to comprehend or to evolve word definitions, similarities, differences, common denominators, logical analogies, opposites, metaphors; to conceive of the idea of causality, to raise the question “why” regarding real happenings, to deal with fictitious situations, or to comprehend their rationale”. With his/her limited vocabulary and grasp of language, such a child finds it almost impossible to penetrate to the essence of things and matters, his/her acquisition of knowledge remains largely superficial, and he/she gives great value to the externally perceptible, the literal, and the realistic. All the moments of knowing of an autistic child are, thus, qualitatively and quantitatively deficient.

d Behaving as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

In contrast to behaviorism (a line of thought in psychology) which, with respect to human behavior, is directed to its *outer appearance*,

and according to which all behaviors are reducible to *reflexes*, and *conditioned reflexes*, a phenomenological essence analysis, grounded in an anthropological understanding of it, this mechanistic explanatory hypothesis is rejected, and it is shown that a human being *behaves in a self-directed, meaning-giving way*, and that this phenomenon is clearly characterized by *normative* and *choice moments* (95 pp 159-163). Bondesio (96 p 53), who, from a psychopedagogical perspective, applies insights into behaving, as a category, to shed light on child becoming, offers an etymological explanation of the concept “behave”, and stresses its normative aspect. According to him, the verb form in English “behave”, and the German words “sich haben”, and “verhalten” all refer to the norm-directedness of behave. This is seen in the following meanings of the word “behave” (97 p 53):

“behave” – to act, to conduct oneself properly, to exhibit good manners; having good (bad) manners”.

“sich haben” – refers to assuming responsibility for one’s behaviors.

“verhalten” – is translated by restrained, contained, checked behavior.

From the above, behaving is about *someone* who behaves him/herself, and that his/her behaving is directed by norms, as well as by the choices he/she makes (98 p 61).

2 Some essences of behaving

Under the sub-title, “Some anthropological considerations of behaving”, Bodesio (99 p 46) indicates that behaving is a genuinely human phenomenon by which he/she finds him/herself as a *person in the world*. Behaving especially shows itself in the various relationships which a person establishes with his/her world. The *situational connectedness of behaving* (100 p 165) emerges clearly when Buytendijk states that behaving is a way of being which is in harmony with an attitude, i.e., with a meaningful involvement with something, whether an object, fellow person, living beings, etc.

A person also behaves (him/herself) as a *totality* in relation to the world (i.e., bodily, emotionally, psychic-spiritually, conceptually, normative-ethically, religiously) and, therefore, behaving is the

meaningful crowning of a person's total involvement with reality. This means that one can only understand another's behaviors if he/she understands his/her personal circumstances, as well as the situation which is relevant to his/her behaving.

Following Merleau-Ponty, Marcel, and Sartre's phenomenologically oriented anthropological pronouncements regarding corporeality, as the center and point of departure in the relationship between person and world, Bondesio (101, pp 46-47) stresses the fact that behaving is also manifested by means of *bodily expressions*. A frown or a smile, the wave of a hand, the stamping of a foot, etc. each represents a relationship to reality (102 p 62).

With respect to the ways in which behaving appears, and its underlying essential characteristics, Bondesio (103 pp 63-86) distinguishes the following modes of appearance of behaving:

a) Reflexive behaving

Reflexive behaving is characterized by the absence of a moment of willing and, thus, is stripped of conscious intention, purposeful deciding (Bondesio), as well as goal-directed action (104 p 63). Examples of reflexive behaving are the pupil-, cornea-, and plantar-reflexes. Although reflexive behaving is an indispensable part of our existence, it is not meaningful itself, but becomes meaningful because a person is involved in the world as a totality.

b) Voluntary behaving

Voluntary behaving has its origin in a child's intentionality, i.e., his/her being open for and directed to reality; it is a conscious activity, and is characterized by a moment of choice, which emphasizes the personal role, and responsibility of a person (105 p 63).

As far as complex voluntary behaving is concerned, Bondesio (106 pp 76-79) shows that moments of willing come strongly to the fore, in this mode of behaving, especially as a choice among different reasons (motives). A person's choice, thus, is willed, in that he/she

defines his/her goal, resolves how to attain it, and then realizes it ((107 p 63).

Except for the absence of a variety of reasons (motives) and the awareness of choosing them (elevated to an aim-motive), there is no difference between simple and complex willful activities (108 p 79).

c) Habitual behaving

Habitual behaving, according to Bondesio (109 p 80), is based on experiencing and, thus, is acquired. These behaviors are carried out “less consciously”, and in the language of Van Parreran, they can be designated *automatisms*. These behaviors presume practicing and controlling everyday activities which can range from a simple task, such as dressing, to a more involved activity, such as playing tennis (110 p 64). It is further characterized by an apparent absence of reasons (motives), choices, and decisions, as well as organizing ways of realizing them (111 p 81).

d) Expressive behaving

All behaving has an expressive character, i.e., lived experiences of something or other about the nature of a person him/herself are revealed. For example, interhuman relationships are visibly manifested in expressive behaviors. Via expressive behaving, a person expresses his/her emotional lived experience, such that they can be perceivable by another person. Facial expression, such as a smile which depicts accessibility, affection, sympathy, and tranquil satisfaction, as well as other representations, such as a shaking fist, a rebuking finger, hand movements which express a waving to or greeting, are also mentioned in this regard. Expressive behaving is continually actualized in situations of encounter and must be correctly interpreted by the participants.

One of the most important ways in which a person (child) expresses him/herself behaviorally is certainly by implementing language, because language is such an appropriate means for expressing feelings and stimulating others.

3 Behaving as a way of actualizing learning

and becoming

Becoming adult implies that, as a child learns and becomes, he/she has the task of continually elevating the level on which he/she behaves. To the extent that he/she behaves in accordance with norms, as an adult does, there is mention of an elevation in becoming.

The gradual and progressive elevation which appears in a child's behaving is a matter of active participation of a child him/herself (self-actualization), and the purposeful accompaniment to his/her self-actualization by an educator. Pedagogical approval and disapproval, with respect to a child's behaving, are directed at refining his/her behaviors by supporting him/her to acquire the (behavioral) norm-image of adulthood (112 p 65).

For a child to behave correctly and properly, first requires an experience and lived experience of the meaning of such behaving, thus, also knowledge, insight, a positive willingness to make and carry out decisions, and a norm awareness regarding this behaving. Child behaving can never be grasped or understood until it finds expression, since behaving only places the crown on his/her experiencing, lived experiencing, willing, and knowing.

A child's state of becoming, largely determined by the nature of his/her learning activities and is indicative of the level on which his/her behaving is going to be realized. Positive change in and modification of his/her behaving in accordance with the norm-image of proper adulthood is an indication that a child has learned, and his/her becoming is actualized in the direction of proper adulthood.

Child behaving reflects a child's quality of control of the world, and this varies from child to child, and from age to age. For example, a younger child can perform with ease certain simple habitual behaviors, such as dressing, eating, and washing, but falls short with advanced behaviors requiring decision-making, a matter which is attainable to some degree by an older child. Viewed pedagogically, child behaving is paired with accepting responsibility and, therefore, norm identification is a precondition for behaving

purposefully and meaningfully. A child learns in accordance with the fact that he/she finds him/herself behaving in an educative situation while, at the same time, his/her behaving is indicative of the levels of learning and becoming on which he/she finds him/herself (113 p 66).

4 Behaving by the autistic child

It is emphasized that child behaving reflects the quality of his/her control of the world, and is indicative of the level of learning and becoming on which he/she finds him/herself. Also, voluntary behaving, as an act of intentionality, as a conscious acting characterized by a moment of choice, which emphasizes the personal role and responsibility of a behaving person. Hence, the following is an illumination of a few peculiar, compulsive, ritualistic, stereotypic, and difficult to understand behaviors of an autistic child.

The most conspicuous, characteristic behavior of an autistic child is *excessive turning into him/herself* (introversion), along with an *unusual aloofness* toward others, a decided preference to be *alone*, and to want to be alone. Such behaviors imply a mere passive presence among others without any interpersonal involvement. They prevent the acquisition of a personal footing in society, and leads to an intense life uncertainty (114 pp 42, 49). This life uncertainty, which often gives rise to a flight from reality, and an escape into him/herself exercises a great influence on the entire range of his/her becoming adult.

In the case of an autistic child, a flight from reality goes hand in hand with an unwillingness to explore the unknown, *a desperate clinging to a personal, familiar little world*, an active attempt to resist change, and a violent resistance to any threat, or change in existing conditions, or arrangements (115 p 1485). These behaviors are interpreted as the manifestation of emotional lability, a defective familiarity with reality, and an inability to intellectually assimilate and cope with unfamiliar situations. There is no doubt that these behaviors exercise a negative influence on a child's becoming.

Where a normal child continually actualizes his/her behaviors on progressively higher levels, and can shift his/her horizon of knowledge and familiarity, an autistic child not only shows an intense attachment to the familiar, but also an *unusual maintenance of a daily routine, and a fixed pattern of living*, according to which activities are carried out; stereotypic, peculiar behaviors, compulsive and ritualistic behaviors, an attachment to specific objects, toys, junk, the collection and carrying around of objects, or waste material which perhaps are meaningful to him/her, as well as a ceaseless daily fumbling with a specific object (116a p 153; 116b p 64).

With respect to an autistic child's *stereotypic, meaningless handling of objects*, Wing (117 pp 9, 10) reports the following: "Autistic children tend to use objects in ways which are quite unrelated to their proper function, for years after the infant stage. Such activities seem empty, meaningless, obsessionally (sic) repetitious, and quite unlike the creative fantasies of the normal child. Some children are interested only in spinning the wheels of toys, others in shaking them to make a noise, and so on. Whatever the interest, any available object is pressed into service regardless of its intended use and cannot be qualified as part of imaginative play, as normal children would do".

In addition to the unusual handling of objects, an autistic child often executes *peculiar, inexplicable bodily movements*, especially when upset or anxious. Incessant rocking movements of the body as a whole, or only the head, when sitting on a chair, banging the head against the crib, punching his/her head, turning and reeling movements of the body, quick turning movements of the fingers and wrists, uncontrolled waving, clapping, and swinging movements of the fingers, hands, and arms, "flying movements", jumping, and head movements, as well as peculiar facial expressions which are not the behaviors expected under such circumstances, often arise in autistic children (118a p 38; 118b p 173).

Ritualistic behaviors arise in several autistic children. Before leaving for school, an autistic child, e.g., will use the toilet, whether this is needed. Also, each time an autistic child enters the playground, he/she might pick up a blade of grass, or the leaf from

a flower, and then continually rotate it. Such a leaf or blade of grass is then meaninglessly waved around, or continually flicked back and forth with the fingers of the other hand (119 p 64).

The conspicuous “otherness” of an autistic child’s behaviors is also manifested in his/her *attachment to a specific object or activity*. For example, he/she carries an object everywhere with him/her, he/she continually handles, or stares at it for a long time. Even autistic adolescents sometimes are not able to abandon a habit, e.g., taking an empty vessel everywhere with him/her. However, it is often moving, mobile, rotating, round objects, such as watches, wheels, gears, as well as moving parts of machines or vehicles, such as concrete mixers, locomotives, airplane propellers, the reels of film projectors, as well as bicycle and motorcycle wheels which demand this child’s full attention. In this connection, Rimland (120 p 9) mentions the following: “Repetitive behavior and fetishlike preoccupation with mechanical objects such as vacuum cleaners, stoves, light switches, etc. are common amongst these children, and any attempt to divert a child from this type of pursuit is met by an intense and violent temper tantrum”. (For additional details see the Appendix).

With respect to *expressive behaving*, a way of being which figures forth within interhuman situations of encounter, as emotional expressions, the conspicuous otherness of an autistic child is once again noticeable. Because of his/her being emotionally blunted, and deficient attribution of meaning, an autistic child does not understand expressive gestures and, thus, does not use them. He/she often speaks with a monotonic, “emotionless” voice, shows an immobile, expressionless face, and does not make use of accompanying or presentational gestures, as ways of expressing emotions (121 p 58). Prick (122 pp 276, 166) emphasizes the absence of expressive behavior in an autistic child, and offers the following explanation for this: “Van echte representatieve bewegingen die bewuste intenties tot uitdrukking brengen, is bij het infantile autisme geen sprake, daar autistische kinderen niet tot bewuste intensie kunnen geraken. Uitdrukkingsbewegingen en representatieve bewegingen vertonen zich pas in een subject-wereld-verhouding, waarbij de twee pollen gevormd worden respectievelijk

door mij en de andere. Het is juist deze subject-wereld-verhouding, die bij deze kinderen gestoord zijn”.

From the above, it is inferred that an autistic child inadequately realizes his/her psychic becoming potentialities, via willful and expressive behaving, and that his/her behaviors often must first be elevated for him/her to strive for a harmonious becoming.

f Conclusions

From the above, there is a close affinity and interdependence among experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing, and behaving, as modes of intentionality, and for each of these ways of actualizing the psychic life of an autistic child, there is mention of a *serious under actualization* and, thus, also an *extremely inadequate becoming*. This has serious implications for intervening with such a child orthopedagogically, and orthodidactically. These implications are considered closely in Chapter 4, which deals with educatively accompanying an autistic child.

3.2.3 Ways of actualizing the psychic life, as becoming, with reference to the autistic child-in-education

g

a General

Positive change in a child's becoming, i.e., a progressive elevation in becoming, or improvement in the level, or state of his/her having become, is shown by means of a progressive and sustained exploring, evidence of emancipating, greater distancing, and objectifying in his/her behaving, and a marked differentiating concerning his/her potentialities, as well as choices (123 p 36). However, the question which now arises is what is understood by each of these modes of becoming, and how each arises in a child's lifeworld. In the following, these matters are closely considered, and are continually investigated with an attunement to the course, nature, and state of exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating, and objectifying by an autistic child-in-education.

b Exploring as child becoming

Exploring, as a mode of becoming, means a child's intentionally directed going out to and exploring the world (124a p 46; 124b p 35). Langeveld (125 p 48) describes this active going out to (the world) of a child as follows: "Het veilige kind gaat op de wereld in, gaat op de dingen en de mensen af, ontmoet ze, manipuleert eraan en ermee, ondergaat hun wijze-van-zijn met openheid en leert deze wijze-van-zijn kennen". In this way a child continually broadens his/her horizon of the known, and the familiar. New, areas of life are discovered and, in their turn, they create opportunities for further exploration, and new possibilities for learning (126 p 15). Standing (127 pp 26, 47) expresses himself as follows in this regard: "Every child is a born explorer. He never loses a minute but takes every opportunity of investigating the world. His life, in fact, is a continuous series of the most absorbing scientific experiments. By means of touching, handling, opening, shutting, collecting, comparing, this little scientist is incessantly prying into everything". Van Zyl (128 p 6) views exploring as a child's search for a grip on reality to be able to acquire a hold on, or a foothold without which becoming at home in the world is not possible.

Thus, it is concluded that exploring should not be thought of apart from a child's learning initiative and activities, because when he/she explores the world, he/she always becomes aware of (senses) something, perceives something, thinks about it (all modes of learning) and, in doing so, he/she acquires knowledge of what he/she explores and investigates (129 p 37). In addition, it must be continually kept in mind that a child *becomes* in his/her exploring, as it is actualized in his/her behaving. Also, in his/her exploring, learning, and becoming are two equi-primordial structures for actualizing his/her psychic life.

It is also important to remember that exploring is realized in various ways of acting, on different levels, or degrees of progression, and levels of lived experiencing. A baby, who finds him/herself literally at the starting point on his/her way to adulthood, because of his/her initial immobility, absence of language, and speech, ignorance, fluctuating emotional life, and a world-involvement on a primarily vital-pathic level, is largely dependent on an non-distanced (immediate), tactile-kinesthetic-sensory directedness, and

sensing in being able to enter a dialogue with reality in an emotion-filling, and meaning giving way. However, to the extent that a child acquires more control over his/her body, he/she turns his/her eyes and head in the direction of the source which demands his/her attending to listen to and observe it, he/she begins to sit upright, crawl, stand up, and learn to walk, and his/her senso-pathic directedness, and lived experiences no longer dominate, to the same degree as the nature of his/her meaningful association with, and exploration of the world. As he/she becomes older, he/she no longer confines him/herself to the same extent with what is at hand, and he/she no longer depends largely on the senses of touch, smell, and taste in his/her exploratory sensing of reality. Exploring also occurs on a more advanced level because a child now directs him/herself in more formal, gnostic-cognitive ways to reality, and lived experiences it as such. Objects are handled on a level of seeking meaning, a child lived experiences circumstances differently, and with the discovery and mastery of language, what he/she wonders about can now be questioned and named (130 p 61). A child's exploring, meaning experiencing, and meaning giving association with reality occurs on a higher level because, in his/her exploring, he/she is more thinking, comparing, analyzing, and interpreting and, thus, progressively uses the senses of hearing, and sight as media for and by which he/she acquires experience and expands his/her world of meaning.

The child question and play also are important ways of exploring the surrounding reality, and the quality of improvement, or elevation in level, which continually occurs here can be used as criteria to gauge a child's state of becoming. In both these child ways of being, as ways of exploring, with an older child, provided the accompaniment is adequate, there is a greater distance between him/her and his/her world than is the case with a younger child, since the former has a greater and more comprehensive knowledge, or possessed experience.

For a child to be able to adequately explore surrounding reality, requires that he/she have certain competencies, and a positive willingness to do so. This requires an emotional readiness for him/her to venture into the unknown, and this can only happen if his/her emotional life shows balance and thrives harmoniously. If a

child experiences security because an educator establishes a stable affective relationship with him/her, and allows him/her to lived experience security, safety, belongingness, and assurance (131 p 63) ,he/she will conquer his/her helplessness's and will actively and trustingly turn him/herself to reality to transform it into meaning-for-him/herself (132 p 125). At the same time, this requires a conscious, attentive, and active behaving, as a self-distancing from and a dialoging with surrounding reality, and the ability to cognitively assimilate impressions, and make sense of them.

From the above, the following is directed to *the autistic child's directedness, willingness, and competence to meaningfully explore reality*, and the impediments which are experienced in this regard: Characteristic of an autistic child is that his/her initiative to explore is often lacking. An autistic child is not only unaware of him/herself and others, as persons, but also is unaware of important things in his/her surroundings, he/she shows no appropriately human directedness to things, no self-determined activity, or creativity, and fails in establishing a meaningful world for him/herself (133a pp 434, 445; 133b pp 178, 193). No genuine human intentionality is realized because he/she does not have at his/her disposal a conscious resolve, according to Prick and Calon (134 pp 274, 286).

The inadequacy of self-initiated, intellectually effortful activities emerges in the way this child handles objects. In this respect, Bettelheim (135 p 440) expresses himself thusly: "In dealing with objects they fail to experiment. They do not destroy, they do not modify, they do not investigate; instead, they leave the objects exactly as they found them, or they repeat repeatedly the same, once-learned simple activities".

Wing (136 p 209) emphasizes that the unknown is not only dreaded by an autistic child but is even anxiety provoking. This phenomenon clearly shows the lability in the emotional life of an autistic child who is lacking in interpersonal bonding, belongingness, and security. Van Spanje (137 p 32) expresses himself as follows about the deeper significance of the experience of security, and how this offers him/her the necessary driving force for exploring and disclosing reality: "De wereld lokt dan uit tot nieuwe

en andere ontmoetingen, met mensen en dingen, persoonlijk en intiem”. A deficient giving and lived experiencing of meaning allow him/her to hold even more tightly to his known, familiar, and narrow world, and this leads to the further labilization of emotional lived experiencing, which detrimentally influences his/her readiness and willingness to explore.

Also, in the case of an autistic child, the lived experience of this security is a necessary precondition for and a power which pushes exploration forward. Bettelheim (138 p 194), as well as Kaufman (139 p 133) mention that an autistic child, who lived experiences security, eventually succeeds on his/her own initiative in exploring reality. About the improvement shown by an autistic child in this respect, Bettelheim reports: “It was after some thirty months with us that her greater courage in looking at reality developed into tentative efforts to explore it. This she could do only when actively supported by her counselor. When frightened she now rushed to her counselor for security and comfort, after which she could go on exploring”.

c Emancipating as becoming

When a child explores, he/she already shows signs of his/her emancipation, i.e., being and becoming more independent (141 p 37). Langeveld (142 p 49) sketches this matter as follows: “Het kind, dat de werkelijkheid ontmoet, leert daaraan ook zichzelf kennen en wordt eraan getoets (wat kan ik wel of niet, waarvoor ben ik bang, wat durf ik aan enz). Dat wil zeggen: in het exploratiebeginsel ligt ook een ander beginsel genetisch beschikbaar, naamelijk dat het kind zelf iemand zijn will (‘emancipatiebeginsel’). This phenomenon, a fundamental given in the psychic life of a child, is manifested as a spontaneous, natural initiative by a child to want to walk, play, dress and undress, use eating utensils, wash, comb his/her hair, etc. *him/herself*. That this initiative is of cardinal importance for a child’s becoming independent (becoming adult), and must not be discouraged, is an irrefutable fact. At the same time, it is the aim of all educating to support a child in his/her exploring, so that he/she will progressively become emancipated.

Sonnekus (143 p 35) states that “emancipating as lived experience becoming”, occurs on different levels, which vary from the most minimum senso-pathic lived experiencing where, e.g., a child him/herself must put a spoon in his/her mouth while he/she eats, to levels of pathic, affective, senso-gnostic, gnostic, and cognitive lived experiences. With a child in puberty particularly, this has to do with *ordered cognitive lived experiences* and especially the normative lived experience of meaning (144 p 36). A child in puberty will readily be and become someone him/herself on a cognitive and normative level by progressively finding opportunities to make choices, and act responsibly in morally independent ways (Landman). The so-called criticism against and questioning of his/her parents’ educative interventions, with him/her, his/her stubbornness, and moodiness signify a seeking of affective, cognitive, and normative lived experiences of meaning, whereas a child in puberty no longer accepts everything, but is in search of his/her own insight, and norms by which those of his/her parents are often rejected (145 p 36). Educators must welcome these inclinations towards emancipation because they are positive indications of a child’s progress in becoming adult.

The journey of emancipation (Van Niekerk), however, is dependent on a child’s emotional stability and experiencing which also includes the strength of his/her wanting (willing) to be someone him/herself, and his/her lived experience of his/her own dignity.

It is indicated that an *autistic child* inadequately experiences, wills, and lived experiences and, therefore, he/she also experiences difficulties in becoming emancipated. Because autistic children become emancipated inadequately, their curriculum includes many educative and teaching aims directed at promoting their independence, and socializing. On the so-called Gunzburg Chart for evaluating the state of becoming of these children, a research medium generally used in these schools, several items appear, which specifically indicate their already attained readiness to become emancipated. (This matter is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4).

d Distancing as becoming

To carry on a dialog with reality on a continually higher level, a child must gradually distance him/herself from him/herself, and direct him/herself to the world, and especially from the known to the unknown (146 p 2). Thus, distancing means a changed entering and dialoging with reality, in the sense of a loosening from and creating a distance by taking an *independent attitude* toward reality (147 p 37). As a child becomes older and his/her possessed experience increases qualitatively and quantitatively, he/she is progressively able to judge more objectively, and take his/her own position regarding matters, relationships, behaviors, values, and norms. Distancing implies a progressive becoming independent, and indicates that he/she lives more independently. This distancing can be realized because of a strengthening of a child's willingness to lived experience on a higher level, an increased stability in his/her emotional life, and greater orderliness in his/her cognitive lived experiencing.

Thus, as a child becomes, he/she actualizes his/her distancing on different levels of lived experiencing. Hence, e.g., he/she distances him/herself from a more direct bodily involvement with the world on a senso-pathic and senso-gnostic level, to a level of carrying on a dialog which can be characterized as abstract, conceptual, and distanced (148 pp 131, 132).

In lived experiencing security, safety, and confidence, a child gradually distances him/herself from his/her parent(s), because of a desire to stand on his/her own feet. In the case of a school beginner, distancing can be viewed as a criterion of school readiness. In addition, the sex identification of a juvenile can also be considered a form of distancing. Thus, a juvenile boy, in a sense, creates a certain distance between himself and his mother because he identifies himself with his father as a symbol of manliness. Also, a juvenile girl increasingly identifies herself with her mother, and other females. During puberty the lived experience of a changing body is an important impetus for the mentioned gender identification. With the adolescent, personal identification is transformed into norm identification.

Besides, via gender identification and norm identification, distancing, as a mode of becoming, can also be noticed in a child's

levels of play. That is, purely senso-pathic play is gradually stopped to make a place for more constructive, esthetic, and illusive play. Also, distancing progressively arises in the level of a child's control of language, as is seen in his/her linguistic expressions. Because language especially lends itself to being an expressive and abstracting medium, for a child, it also is an important medium for distancing.

An *autistic child* whose full-fledged wanting to be someone him/herself by wanting to know, and do things him/herself is lacking, often is afraid to take the leap from the known and familiar to the unknown. Besides this, an autistic child also is not able to point with his/her finger at an object which he/she considers important (149 p 87). Distancing from the concrete, touchable presence of objects, and proceeding to name them, also does not occur with a young autistic child. Often an adult must take his/her hand and, as it were, "drag" him/her to what demands his/her attention.

As far as distancing from his/her parents is concerned, an important criterion for ascertaining the school readiness of normal children, an autistic child separates him/herself from other children, in that, at school going age, he/she is still usually not bonded with his/her cohorts, and separating or distancing from his/her parents doesn't make the slightest impression on him/her. With an autistic child, there is little separation anxiety, i.e., on being left by the parents, as well as joy in reencountering them after the course of the school day.

Distancing from senso-pathic lived experiencing, via stabilized affective lived experiencing to carrying on a dialog with reality on more distanced levels (i.e., affective-gnostic, and gnostic-cognitive levels) are extremely difficult for an autistic child. Distancing from his/her own body, and from senso-pathic lived experiences of touching, tasting, and smelling, and pushing through to the level of cognitive lived experiencing is a problematic matter even for many autistic children in puberty.

Gender identification, the phenomenon which especially distances the normal juvenile and pubescent from the parents, and

identifying with the same-gendered parent, is lacking with an autistic child because interhuman affection is so difficult to bring about.

Difficulty in distancing from an extremely primitive senso-pathic level of playing is one of the most general phenomena of an autistic child. Thus, it seems that distancing, as an essence of becoming, is largely lacking in the life of an autistic child.

e Differentiating as becoming

As an intentional attitude, differentiating implies a refining of various ways of actualizing intentionality. Thus, differentiating means various ways in which a child directs him/herself in his/her becoming, particularly in bodily or corporeal, pathic-affective, and gnostic-cognitive ways of becoming (150 p 37). Hence, there is mention of differentiation distinguishable *ways* of world involvement. Ferreira (151 p 106) selects experiencing as one of the differentiated modes of actualizing a child's psychic life. Because differentiating is manifested in a child's behaving, differentiated levels are distinguished on which behaviors are actualized. In this respect, the following levels are distinguished: senso-pathic, pathic-affective, affective-gnostic, and gnostic-cognitive.

Sonnekus and Ferreira (152 p 38) mention that, initially, a child lives in an intimate being bonded with the world around him/her, and clearly directs him/herself to it on a senso-pathic level. However, as he/she becomes older, more mobile, and acquires language, the event of differentiating becomes more conspicuous, as is seen in sharper analyses, making finer distinction, and taking one's own standpoint towards matters. This event of differentiating is especially observable on a cognitive level, and points to a child's becoming a proper adult. A child will increasingly investigate matters more critically, reflect more deeply about them, and weigh different possibilities against each other (153 p 194).

On an emotional level, as he/she becomes older, he/she appears calmer and more composed in making his/her decisions and, thus, shows a more advanced differentiation, in contrast to a young child,

who still shows a great lack of restraint and inconsistency in his/her emotional decisions.

According to Sonnekus (154 p 37) differentiating can be actualized “horizontally”. On a horizontal level, distinguishable, particularized modes of perceiving become more logically differentiated. Seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling, as sensing, are distinguished in this connection (155 p 122). These mentioned modes of perceiving can also become differentiated in terms of a “vertical” elevation in level to looking, listening, touching, savoring, and sniffing, in more distinguishable ways. Sensing, on a senso-pathic level, thus, can undergo a “vertical” elevation in level, as global perceiving on an affective-gnostic level, or even as objective, analytic, and synthesizing perceiving, on a gnostic-cognitive level (156 p 121).

Differentiation, the phenomenon which a child directs him/herself to reality in distinguishable ways, and thereby becomes involved in it, figures forth in very inadequate ways with an autistic child—whether it is characterized as emotional, exploring, or intellectual effort. According to Prick (157 pp 257-258), with an autistic child there is only mention of very primitive, scantily differentiated intentional relationships and acts because of an undifferentiated bodily way of being. According to him, with such a child, there is only mention of “... het bemeerken en lustvol opgaan in het eigen lichaam”. He calls this phenomenon “ ... het stemmingsmatig ervaren van het eigenzelf en van de wereld, voorzoverre deze laatste het subject gegeven is in lichaaamlijke toestandveranderingen, welke door milieuinvloeden zijn opgeroepen”. Because an autistic child experiences, wills, and lived experiences inadequately, it then is also clear that he/she differentiates inadequately by entering reality in various horizontal ways of exploring, emancipating, and distancing to create his/her own experiential world.

f Objectifying as becoming

Change in a child’s becoming, in addition to his/her ability to explore, emancipate, distance, and differentiate is also observable in the degree to which he/she succeeds in objectifying reality. By this is meant an impersonal attunement to reality, an objective attitude,

or a lived experiencing on a distanced, gnostic-cognitive level, which is directed to identifying and determining what is essential, generally valid of a matter, or object, without his/her own subjective opinions predominating (158 p 194). By objectifying, a child essentially arrives at knowledge of him/herself and others, as persons, and this implies judging a matter in its objective givenness, i.e., as it is.

To be able to objectify places many demands on a child, which deserve to be mentioned. At first, it is emphasized that it requires a high degree of intellectual becomingness, i.e., cognitive refinement, which is found more frequently in older children. Objectifying is largely supported by an ability to distance. Thus, a child must be able to step “outside of him/herself”, out of his/her own body. so that by his/her self-consciousness, he/she can consider him/herself “objectively” and, at the same time, can judge a slice of reality objectively. Objectifying, as a distanced attunement, also sets in when a child has acquired language, is able to identify with norms, can express moral judgments, understands his/her own behaving, and how others interpret it, and shows that he/she has an attunement to, or empathy for the feelings of others. Stable affective lived experiencing serves as a forerunner to and support of the act of objectifying, which clearly requires a cognitive disposition.

Concerning a small child, it is emphasized that, initially, he/she does not enter his/her world from a distance. Child and world, thus, are one, and everything “belongs to me”. Thus, it is “*my* papa, *my* mama, *my* little brother, *my* toy”, etc. The idea of “your toy” does not exist, at first, and a small child does not understand what it means to share a toy with a playmate (159 p 38). As a child arrives at an elevation in level, he/she is involved in a lived experience of objectifying, because his/her intentionality becomes directed by his/her cognitive ways of being (160 p 38).

Objectifying implies an impersonal attunement, a lived experiencing on a distanced, gnostic-cognitive level to be able to judge things in their objective givenness, or generally valid quality.

One of the greatest hindrances in the life of an *autistic child* proceeding to objectify is that he/she does not fully enter into an interhuman encounter, via spoken language communication. Because language is such a suitable medium for making lived experiences sharable with others by means of spoken language communication, it is obvious that a lonely autistic child cannot constitute a meaningful personal and/or shared world. Thus, an autistic child remains bogged down in giving subjective meaning, and is not able to give objective or generally valid meaning to reality. In this respect, Bosch (161 pp 54-55) reports: “The relationship between own world and common world are now such that a continuous enriching and differentiating of the common world takes place through communication about this world in the encounter with the others with whom I am there, and with whom I am related to one world. In the act of focusing-on-each-other, a world is constituted, which, with Husserl, we wish to designate a communicative or common world”. Because an autistic child fails in adequately stepping “outside of him/herself” (his/her own bodiliness), encountering others, discussing matters, and learning to judge as others do, does not fully control language and implement it communicatively, and also is not affectively stable, objectifying, as a cognitive way of being, does not effectively figure forth. Such a child’s defective objectifying can also be attributed to his/her strong senso-pathic, senso-gnostic bond to reality.

g Conclusion

An autistic child is seriously impeded in his/her exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating, and objectifying as ways of becoming adult and which, once again, refers to a serious under actualization of his/her psychic life.

3.3 THE BECOMING OF THE AUTISTIC CHILD: SYNTHESIS

The becoming of an autistic child is impeded by a great many factors which are unique to autism, as a phenomenon. As a result of an excessive aloofness, a turning inward, bodily imprisonment, a lack of interhuman accessibility, affection, directedness, involvement, and encounter, as well as a lack of an active search for, a receiving of, and attributing meaning to reality, makes it obvious

that the becoming of such a child will be inadequate. The absence of a “conscious” way of being, the defective giving of meaning, problems with acquiring and controlling language, and its communicative implementation, as well as an extremely labile affective life, lay an inadequate foundation for these acts of intentionality. More specifically, it is asserted that autism gives rise to an inadequate experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing, and behaving such that he/she under actualizes his/her exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating, and objectifying, as ways of becoming, i.e., his/her entire psychic life, with his/her inadequate becoming adult, as an outcome. The educative accompaniment of an autistic child to self-actualizing the potentialities of his/her psychic life (becoming) offers a great challenge to the involved educators, and is discussed in the following chapter.

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