

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RESULTS OF PERSONAL ACTUALIZATION

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

##### 2.1 Building up possessed experience

Everything a child makes contact with and experiences he also lived-experiences by giving sense and meaning to it. As mentioned in Chapter III, all contents are not lived-experienced as equally meaningful. A child continually determines what the **value** of the relevant contents are for himself and, accordingly, he lived-experiences them as more or less **meaningful** or even as **meaningless**.

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

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

In terms of content, possessed experience is a complex nuance of knowing, knowledge, particular capacities to act and judge as well as to give sense and meaning to reality in unique ways. Thus, it is the

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

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

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

## 2.2 Acquiring a self-concept

It is now clear that a child's possessed experience plays an important role in his becoming an adult. As mentioned, it is formed by his contact with and giving sense and meaning to the contents of

reality. Therefore, it is also his possessed experience that allows him to find his way more independently and autonomously without the help and support of adults or educators.

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

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

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

Initially, a very young child makes no distinction between himself and the surrounding world. However, gradually he becomes more aware of his body and begins to discover himself and learn to know himself as a person. From relatively early, he is aware of a unique **self** (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 27) and as he becomes older he begins to differentiate himself from the world around him. When this stage is reached, he begins to be aware of his own **identity** and thus he forms a **self-identity** (Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 18). Although a young child becomes aware of himself and his own identity from an early age, it still is vague and unstructured; one's identity is first established during puberty or even later (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, p 27). To want to be someone (Langeveld) or to form a self-identity is given with being-a-child and therefore

he continually seeks an answer to the question: **Who am I?** (Vrey, 1979, p 48; also see Pretorius, 1982, p 11; Jacobs and Vrey, 1982, p 18 and Engelbrecht et al.,1982, p 100).

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

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

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

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

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

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

Jacobs and Vrey (1982, p 19) emphasize that identity is not a simple concept but is many faceted; for example, there is sex-role identity, gender identity, self-identity and bodily identity. Also acquired are a personal, a group and a cultural identity (Engelbrecht et al., 1982, pp 210-211). In another publication they refer to these facets as "**elements of identity**" that refer, e.g., to my knowledge of myself as a man, as a rugby player, as a teacher, as a father, as a student, as an automobile driver. Thus, acquiring one's own identity is paired with **activity** and **action**. Each identity to be developed requires personal involvement and activity. "**I need to engage in studying or playing or parenting in such a way that I identify with the activity**" (Vrey and Jacobs, 1982, p 100). By identifying with a specific activity or action, a particular role is accepted and integrated into one's own identity.

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

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

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

### 2.2.1 Educating and acquiring a self-concept

It has been indicated that identity acquisition is a pedagogic-social matter because a child's identity is acquired in communicating with fellow persons and especially with his parents. Thus, it is clear that **educating** has a role in his acquiring a self-concept.

Without in any sense repeating, a child is affectively, cognitively and normatively educated or guided (See Chapter II, section 2). This guiding occurs in terms of the **contents** of reality and by giving them meaning he gains knowledge of them. It is no different in his acquiring a self-concept where he also needs to be guided

affectively, cognitively and normatively. However, the difference is that the contents here do not come so much from his surrounding world (Umwelt) but rather **he himself is the content** to which he has to attribute sense and meaning in order to acquire a self-concept.

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

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

The adults should guide a child so that he can learn to know his potentialities and optimally actualize his learning. Thorough self-knowledge means that he can set realistic and attainable goals for himself. If adults do not know him and his potentialities well, they cannot guide him to adequate self-knowledge and this can result in him entertaining unrealistic expectations. Demands that are too high will lead to him continually failing and this will result in low self-regard. Where the demands are too few or too low, he will not optimally actualize his potentialities and his low level of becoming will lead to a low self-regard and a negative self-concept.

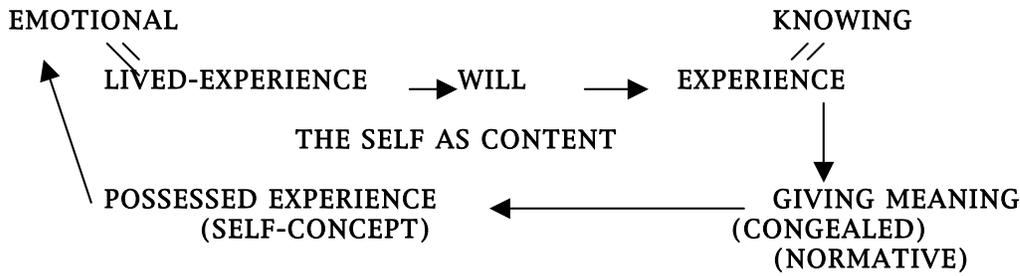
Normative (meaning giving) guidance implies that the adults should present and exemplify particular educative norms in such a way that he can and will identify with them. The extremely important role of identification in acquiring one's own identity has already been indicated. A child has to be guided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

Thus, the adult's guidance plays an important role in a child's acquisition of a self-concept. However, what is of decisive importance is not the guidance as such but rather the child's own **giving meaning** to this guidance as well as to himself. Hence, in the last instance, a child's self-concept is formed by himself giving meaning to himself in his intercourse and communication with his world.

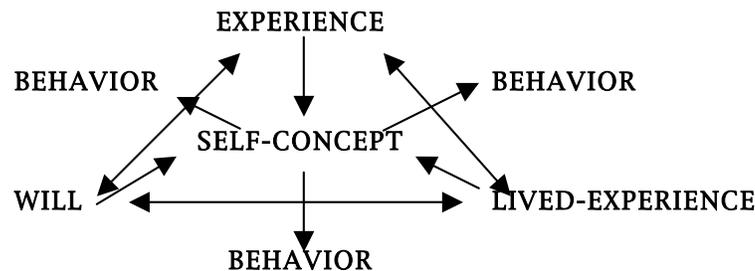
### **2.2.2 Actualizing the psychic life and acquiring a self-concept**

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

From this, a child lived-experiences himself emotionally which can stabilize or labilize him. His will to be and become someone and the strength of his will power guide and co-determine how he experiences himself. In this way he attributes meaning to himself and he builds up a possessed experience of himself, i.e., he builds up a hierarchy of meanings with respect to himself. Thus, his self-concept is formed in his **possessed experience** and is based on the sense and meaning he attributes to himself. This is schematically represented as follows:



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



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

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

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

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

### 2.3 Behavior as result of self-actualization

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

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

Educating to propriety is observable in a child's behaviors and therefore the effect of educating is evaluated in terms of his behaviors (See Sonnekus, 1973, p 159). Behavior, as a matter of becoming adult, should be viewed in terms of the **aim of educating**. This is clearly reflected by the fact that a child is educated to increasingly behave as an adult. Educating is directed to a child continually refining and changing his behaviors according to the norm-image of adulthood (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 64).

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

A distinction is made among **reflexive, voluntary** and **expressive behavior** (Bondesio, 1977, p 63-86). As for **reflexive behavior**,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

- \* It rests on experience and thus is acquired;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Becoming adult**, on the contrary, is very **dynamic** and refers to the way adulthood is achieved. Essentially, becoming (adult) is a continual **changing** and **moving**. However, all change and movement are not "becoming" but only those that are directly related to the aim of educating as stated above. Thus, only change and movement that bring the child closer to adulthood are qualified as becoming. In pedagogic and particularly psychopedagogic terms, becoming is not separable from the norm-image of adulthood (Bondesio, 1977, p 113). Consequently, becoming has a very strong **normative** character. Change that does not have the aim of educating in view can lead to **degeneration**. From this it is clear that becoming adult is a **precondition** for adulthood. Actualizing

becoming involves a child **continually changing** in the direction of bettering or elevating the level of life in which he takes part, under the guidance of the adult, after which he finds himself at a particular stage (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 135). Since becoming is an ascending change in the direction of adulthood, it is described as an **elevation** in the **level** (Landman) of a child's **dialoging** with and **giving sense and meaning** to reality. Thus, elevation in level implies an **elevation in dialogue** or also an **elevation in meaning** in the child's becoming adult. According to Landman et al. (1978, p 35) the course of a child's becoming is characterized by an elevation in dialogue, an acceptance of co-responsibility for the educative event, the attribution of meaning and making choices.

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

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

From the above, it is clear that becoming and development are not synonymous. However, within an educative context they should not be considered apart from each other. Development is largely determined by **hereditary** and **environmental factors** (see Sonnekus, 1976, p 18) while becoming is the result of **educating** and **self-actualizing**. Thus, the influence of these developmental factors is not denied. However, it is important to note that a child is not surrendered to these factors but that he has a role in actualizing his inherited potentialities and he even gives meaning to the environmental factors that influence him.

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

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

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

In the above discussion **what** is understood by the concept becoming or becoming adult is briefly discussed. Becoming is a general theme of pedagogics and is addressed to a lesser or greater degree by all of its part disciplines. In psychopedagogics the concern is not so much with the **fact** of becoming but with **how** it is **actualized** by a child. In other words, what is the basis of or what makes his becoming adult possible? Thus, in psychopedagogics there is a search for the **modes of actualizing** becoming. On the one hand, this concerns the modes that reflect a child's role in the event of becoming and, on the other hand, the possible ways in which the adult's role arises (Bondesio, 1977, p 116). Thus, with respect to becoming, **self-** and **guided-**actualization are inseparable aspects.

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

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

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

The adult has the responsibility to guide a child so that he gradually lives like an adult. Through **teaching** he needs to be given the opportunity to **learn** to make the norms, values, dispositions and proficiencies of the adult life world his own. Then he becomes equipped to take growing responsibility, increasingly to choose and decide and thus to show that he continually moves toward proper adulthood (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 34). Learning continually elevates the level on which a child **carries on a dialogue with reality, accepts responsibility, makes choices, actualizes values and attributes meaning** (Van Niekerk, 1978, p 6).

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

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

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

However, it is in forming **possessed experience** that becoming settles in. As mentioned, a child's possessed experience is formed to the extent that he actualizes his psychic life and especially on the basis of his giving meaning to contents of reality. Since actualizing the psychic life and attributing meaning continue to occur, his possessed experience also continually **changes**. This change is not merely a matter of **contents** but it also is **structural**. As far as the structure of possessed experience is concerned, it was indicated that the contents invested with meaning are arranged as a **hierarchy** or **rank order**. In this connection, Sonnekus (1984 p 30) says that integrating or ordering contents in possessed experience assumes the form of a stratified ranking that amounts to the child's becoming.

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

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

## 2.5 Criteria or yardsticks for evaluating becoming adult

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

### 2.5.1 Exploration

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

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

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

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

### 2.5.2 Emancipation

When a child explores he already shows signs of **emancipation** or, better, his initiative to **be** and to **become** more **independent** (**self-reliant**) (Sonnekus). It is also the aim of all educating to support a child in his exploration so that his emancipation increases. Also, to the degree that he progresses toward adulthood, increased emancipation appears to a point in time when the adult's educative intervention becomes superfluous (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 38).

Through exploration, a child not only discovers his world but he also discovers himself as **someone with potentialities**. Therefore, from early childhood on he strives to expand his potentialities and **become someone himself**. Thus, emancipation points to a child's propensity to want to be someone himself or to **strive for self-actualization**. In this regard, Van der Merwe (1975, p 147) says: "Emancipation includes an increase in becoming

free as an increased acquisition of norms, responsibility, as an increased proclaiming of a unique identity". Thus, emancipation is closely related to acquiring a unique identity.

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

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

### 2.5.3 Distancing (Distantiation)

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

Distancing does not occur solely on the basis of the educators' urgings. A child also yearns to gradually loosen himself from his parents and to be more independent. This yearning should be welcomed and parents should not stand in their child's way.

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

For Sonnekus (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 182) distancing is a child's initiative to gradually loosen himself from the influence of his parents and other adults and stand on his own feet. This implies

that in distancing, he is being autonomous and that he is giving an indication of being more independent.

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

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

#### 2.5.4 Differentiation

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

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

#### 2.5.5 Objectification

To be able to proceed to objectification, the previous forms of becoming have to be adequately actualized. Objectification refers to the possibility that unfolds in a child's involvement with reality where he is able to distance himself from it and take an objective attitude by trying not to be too subjectively involved. This is his potentiality to distance himself from a matter but also to loosen

himself from himself in order to be able to judge a matter in its objective givenness as it is. In other words, objectification is a more matter-of-fact attunement to life without his own subjective opinions always being the decisive factor (Sonnekus and Ferreira, 1987, p 183). A young child especially is emotionally involved in his world and as he becomes adult, he has to gradually distance himself until he can step outside of himself and view himself objectively.

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

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

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

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



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