

CHAPTER 3

THE BECOMING OF THE AUTISTIC CHILD-IN-EDUCATION

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 himself as being incomplete, indeed equipped with given potentialities, in an open world in which he must master a culture to create a unique life world for himself (1 p 45). This implies that he must actively collaborate in the unfolding of his human potentialities, a matter that unquestionably refers to the course of his becoming (adult). Because of his openness and directedness to the world, *from the beginning a child is actively involved in realizing his given potentialities* and this implies that he is involved in changing. A child's changes are seen in his conduct, actions and behaviors, i.e., in his becoming (2 p 31). Becoming, as an elevation in level, by which is meant an elevation in dialogue or meaning in the life of the child (3 p 195) includes an increasing and continuous movement in the direction of the adult life world. As a normative matter, becoming is the necessary change that must arise in the child's life and be directed to becoming a *proper* adult.

3.1.2 A fundamental pedagogical perspective on childlike becoming

Because of the structure of his psychic life, as a given potentiality, the child has the potential to become adult and he is also able to actively take part in his becoming. By himself taking part in his becoming the child shows himself to be *someone who wants to learn. The realization of learning by the child is the basis for his becoming, and changing, as an essence of becoming, cannot be realized if the child does not learn.* The child's realization of learning and the event of becoming must thus be viewed as a unitary event (4 p 143).

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

According to Langeveld (6 p 158) human being is a being who educates, is educated, is committed to education and opens himself to it. Because the child becomes educated he thus receives support in his becoming toward adulthood.

To be able in any way to provide an answer to the fundamental pedagogical question of how educating must appear there in order to support the child in his becoming, it can be mentioned briefly that the pedagogical relationship, sequence, aim and activity structures must be adequately realized. These matters have been 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 the autistic child-in-education, 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 particular entwinement these three modes of educating are indispensable for the adequate becoming of the child and therefore are discussed at length in Chapter 4.

3.2 CHILDLIKE BECOMING AS ACTUALIZATION OF THE

PSYCHIC LIFE WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO THE AUTISTIC CHILD-IN-EDUCATION

3.2.1 General

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

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

However, this self-actualization cannot occur adequately without the pedagogical *accompaniment of the 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 the autistic child, a couple of observations will suffice in this respect:

Initiative, as an active participation of the child in his learning and becoming, suddenly directs attention to the particular essences of the psychic life of the child by which his learning and becoming are *realized*. These essences that show a profound cohesion are experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving. In the following the five essences mentioned, also called modes of

actualizing the psychic life of a child-in-education, are explicated as essences of becoming with particular reference to the autistic child.

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

a) Experiencing as an essence of becoming

1 Conceptual clarification

In exploring the etymological basis of the word *experiencing* 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 the 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 becomes aware. What a person experiences 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.) Consequently, it is clear that a person benefits little by someone else’s experiencing; he must himself experience and by this experiencing, learn.

Experiencing is thus a genuine human phenomenon in the child’s dialogue with reality and as such is a way of manifesting his 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 childlike experiencing as follows: “Experiencing is an original, conscious act of turning (moving) to, and grasping (reaching, in living contact with) reality that 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 the 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 the childlike life world, 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 childlike life world.

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

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

Experiencing also includes actually *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 undergoes, thanks to an intellectually effortful activity, completion on the level of perceiving, thinking and imagining and becomes possessed experience.

3 Some particular 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 the child come into motion (e.g., modes of learning such as sensing, attending, observing, perceiving and thinking). This gives rise to the child exploring the world, being able to distance himself from it, objectify it and eventually emancipate himself (12 p 44).

b) Orienting

In his communication with reality, from the beginning the child is involved in determining his own participation in 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 the child experiences his 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 orients himself accordingly. Such orientation, however, first acquires a knowing or cognitive flavor as soon as the 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 of the knowing-moment and it is justifiable to designate intuitive knowing as an essence of experiencing (15 p 66). All experiencing leads to knowing that 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 that rests on perceiving, thinking, remembering, etc. (16 p 45). Each person, as well as child, has a rich source of possessed experience at his disposal that might show structural shortcomings but that 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, on the basis of his “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 can be illustrated concretely as follows: one asserts that a house is seen while at the moment only the front can be perceived. The back side, a an *unseen* part of the house is co-assumed or anticipated in this perceiving (19 p 45).

4 The significance of experiencing for childlike becoming

According to Ferreira (20 pp 54-55) experiencing, via giving sense and meaning, calls the childlike experiential world into existence as a horizon of the known and familiar. Life world 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 own unique meaning-giving attitude. Via the act of experiencing a landscape is thus delimited and enlivened for himself 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 experiencedness as an additional result and experiencing that remains without learning consequences, i.e., when nothing is learned, cannot qualify as experiencing (21 p 47).

Experiencing also has a particular formative value for the child because he as a person himself is changed by it, as is seen in his behaviors and on the basis of which his 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 that has taught him to see, think and experience differently”. By experiencing, the psychic life of the child not only comes into motion but it is indeed actualized. More explicitly, experiencing results in the child’s further becoming or its elevation.

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

5 Some demands that adequate experiencing places on the child

The primary situation of education (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 the child’s stable affective lived experiencing and his readiness to explore his 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 the child show openness and be able to conceptually assimilate experiences 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 the child experiences is equi-primordially lived experienced and that childlike lived experiences are essentially congealed experiences, according to Van der Stoep, as cited by Ferreira (23 p 74). Childlike lived experience is the meaningful completion, refinement and deepened meaning (of experience) that necessarily pushes through to valuing or evaluating what is experienced. Concretely this can be expressed as follows: It is like a dam that is filled (with water) from a fountain. The fountain (experiencing) provides the water, but in the dam itself is found the depth and life of lived experiencing. (24 p 75).

7 Experiencing by the autistic child

Because of an excessive turning into himself and an under-actualization of his intentionality it is obvious that from the beginning the experiential world of the 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 the autistic child does not build up adequate possessed experiences on the basis of a labile affective life, weak willing, a venturing attitude that 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 experiential world is not broadened, deepened and expanded, i.e., he does not succeed in changing life world structures (Heidegger) into his own meaningful world. Where a normal child is continually involved in designing an experiential world via childlike ways of being such as grasping, reaching for, pointing to, touching, tasting, listening, looking, imitating, playing, spoken language, asking questions, etc., the autistic child remains bogged down in the compulsive, monotonous, rigid, meaningless and dehumanized handling of objects that have no learning consequences and therefore cannot be deemed as “experiences”.

Thus, experiencing as a mode of becoming is realized in a totally impoverished way by the autistic child and not one of the essences of experiencing is adequately realized by him. Since his world appears as diffuse, chaotic and often anxiety provoking, there is mention by him of a different experiencing that 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-education. 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*” that means: “wish, desire,, strive, want”. In addition, he mentions the Latin words “*voluntate (mea)*” and “*volutatio*” (both derived from the word “*volo*” = “will”) and that 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 that, in this connection, resides in the person, a readiness to participate, direction-giving quality (choose on the basis of norms), particular 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 that 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 that 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 the particular 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 that gives them a particular course or direction, and explicates this matter as follows: “The will is the driver of the carriage of life and the strivings are the horses that pull it”.

b) The moment of choosing

The fact that a person must choose because of the presence of different strivings in him 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 fulfills a personal, particular aim. During this moment the idea of *norm identification by a person* arises on the basis of 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 the person has arrived at clarity regarding the choice and thus to a decision. He arrives at the aim and the act of willing is completed as the dynamic in his person structure (35 p 144). That which is aimed at now, by morally-independent deciding, becomes direction giving to the involved person’s activities, i.e., an educative aim has been realized that 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 childlike willing

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

- (i) Willing is a way that childlike intentionality (i.e., his openness and directedness to reality) manifests itself.
- (ii) The act of willing springs from the child’s own initiative and because it implies the actualization of the psychic life in terms of learning and becoming, it possesses a particular dynamic.
- (iii) The act of willing is actualized by a personal decision grounded on norm identification.
- (iv) Willing is determinative of the child’s goal-directed activities.
- (v) Willing gives direction and indicates a course. Thus the realization of the 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 as well as emotional life of the child. The nature and quality of the intellectual potentialities and the emotional life (stability or lability) determine the power of willing and even place particular limits on the 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 the child's relationship with the world because his particular bodiliness and intellectual quality place particular limits on his realization of learning and becoming.
- (ix) Willing is directed to the future, i.e., it provides the impetus for the child's striving to be a proper adult.
- (x) By actualizing willing the child affirms and acquires his own identity.

On the basis of the phenomenon of childlike willing discussed, in the following it is necessary to attend to the particular significance of willing for realizing the child's learning and becoming as matters actualizing his psychic life.

4 Willing as a way of actualizing childlike learning and becoming

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

The realization of the act of willing within a didactical (teaching and learning) situation is determinative for the nature and direction of childlike becoming, especially the quality of and the level on which he actualizes his cognitive potentialities. If the power of willing is

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

5 Actualizing willing by the autistic child

As far as the *autistic child's becoming adult via the exercise of willing* is concerned, it must first be 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 the autistic child's passivity, a deficient enthusiasm and problems stimulating his ardor as a consequence of an extremely weak *willingness to want to be and become someone himself* (42a pp 78, 428; 42b p 125; 42c p 45).

That childlike willing is indissolubly entwined with the cognitive as well as emotional life is especially evident in the autistic child's deficient potentialities for giving meaning, as is shown in his insistence on preserving the same circumstances and fierce resistance to change in a particular 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 the autistic child to an interestedness in the surrounding reality and the awakening of a willingness to experientially explore (44 pp 230, 194).

Educating the willing of an autistic child 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).

The autistic child’s willing, as the way he initiates his experiential world, is attenuated. The direction-giving effect of willing is attenuated and he appears aimless. His propulsive power remains directed to the vital level (his intentional directedness is thwarted by his 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) that rests on an experiencing that has been “spiritualized” or preserved (46 p 52). According to Sonnekus (47 p 118) childlike lived experiencing is the completion, refinement and deepening of meaning experienced 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 intentional *act* and is directed to lived reality. This directedness is, in itself, characterized by seeking and giving meaning that gives lived experiencing a normative character.
- b) Lived experiencing has *disclosive* (pathic, affective) as well as *illuminative* (gnostic-cognitive) sides that are distinguishable but inseparable from each other.

- c) On the basis 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 the becoming child continually gives different (higher) meanings as he 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 childlike learning and becoming

In establishing relationships with the world the child is continually involved, via lived experiencing, in giving meaning to these relationships. He not only looks for clarity about his own existence but also with respect to what surrounds him. As an educand, in his search for meaning, he is accompanied by adults. By means of educating, the adult unlocks those contents that he considers to be meaningful for the child's becoming adult. The child lived experiences their meaningfulness by himself giving meaning to them by which he continually realizes his 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, in spite of the fact that 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, command 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 similar to that of younger children, but it is precisely on the basis of 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. On the basis 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 similar to 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 is able to 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 the child with the needed impetus to acquire the unlocked learning content on a cognitive level by *himself* attributing sense and meaning to it. Adequately realizing his 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 also knowing) directedness is weak and that he shows an unwillingness to leave the concrete-sensory, the certain and the known and take the plunge into abstractions.

In light of the above, once again it is emphasized that with the gradual elevation in childlike 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 the child continually realizes his 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 the autistic child actualizes his psychic life, its nature, structure, level and dynamic (if present) need to be judged, understood and explicated. It was mentioned that the lived experiencing (of a normal child) shows a particular dynamic because the becoming child continually attributes different (higher) meanings to the extent that he 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 emotional life is concerned, the autistic child differentiates himself from other children in that he *remains bogged down for an extremely long time in senso-pathic lived experiences*. Because the autistic child is weakly directed to the surrounding reality, he is imprisoned in his bodily directedness and therefore also is devoted to vital-pathic lived experiencing where this has to 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 body. Because of his excessive involvement with himself (introversion) without any self-distancing and his being unaware of himself and others (as persons), he has at his disposal an extremely deficient bodily awareness, knowledge, image and knowledge of its uses.

The autistic child does not show an increase in structure, i.e., a stabilization of emotional lived experiencing, and consequently this lived experiencing *shows an intense and long-lasting character of impulsivity and lability*. As far as a number of 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 being 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 himself 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 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 the 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 emotional life can be viewed as superficial because nothing makes a deep or lasting impression on him.

Regarding the *knowing lived experiencing* of the autistic child, he usually remains bogged down in an extremely primitive sensognostic 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 so-called near senses (sense of touch, smell and vibration) and concentrates more on using his far senses (vision and hearing) and eventually by manipulating language proceeding to a more distanced way of exploring reality, the autistic child shows in this respect not only an extreme delay in becoming but even involvements with reality unworthy of a human being.

With the 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 afdraagbare en het afzuigbare (78 pp 210-216).

The autistic child’s uncontrolled arm and hand movements as well as his special liking of music possibly merely point to a search for bodily satisfaction because the vibrating air that 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 experiences 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 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”.

On the basis of defective language control, the autistic child is hindered in proceeding to gnostic-cognitive lived experiencing. Because of the lack of the child question, he has to do without the disclosing, meaning-giving, and ordering power that lies within language and he is not able to gradually distance himself from the concrete and enter the level of the abstract. The autistic child also is not able to name his 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 knowing directedness and a break-through to cognitive lived experiencing.

Consequently, lived experiencing, as an essence of becoming, is inadequately actualized by the 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 basically is a given human potentiality. As such it is an activity directed to a search for the sense and meaning of everything with which the child enters a relationship and that awakens his 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, that 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 that 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 and where, 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 the child's explications in his searching intuitive knowing (85 p 132).

Questioning knowing, an essential characteristic of child-being, manifest the child's intentional directedness and includes an interrogating of the universal world. As an extension of explicit knowing, it begins with the question of "what" that points to the pathically 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 more directed 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 the child’s harmonious learning and becoming, the latter must be encouraged to ask questions and such questions must be answered with dedication (86 p 133).

In his course of knowing on his way to adulthood, the 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 that 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 that 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 as a result of the elevation in level. In ordinary language, the child has now arrived at insight – structured insight that varies in perspective and transferability (88 p 134).

4 Knowing as a way of actualizing childlike 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 basic 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). It is clear that the childlike act of learning is implicitly present here since this involvement with things results in knowing and the educative task speaks from this. The child lived experiences that he does not fully understand and because he is directed to knowing reality, he continually asks his parents questions. Within this lies a fruitful moment for teaching by the adult and learning by the child. This questioning attitude of knowing shows a search for structure (understanding and insight) in his knowing exploration of reality and is indispensable for the realization of childlike learning and becoming.

The child's structuring activities of knowing such as analyzing, comparing, ordering, interpreting and synthesizing enable him 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 to gradually loosen himself from the adult's help and support until, finally, he is considered to be an adult himself (91 p 61).

5 Knowing by the autistic child

Because knowing is a way of actualizing intentionality, it is obvious that the autistic child, on the basis of his 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) emphasizes in this context a remarkable absence of original remarks and "informative statements" by the autistic child while Prick (93 p 164) draws attention to the fact that an autistic child seldom if ever asks someone a question. Because the autistic

child shows such a peculiar way of carrying on a dialogue with reality, his *intuitive knowing* is also defective and the so-called “knowledge” at his disposal can merely be designated as “private” and not as generally valid knowledge. The 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. Consequently, the 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 own life world, it is not surprising that it is very difficult for the autistic child to arrive at structuring and understanding knowing. Rimland (94 p 80) sketches as follows the autistic child’s problems with language control and the detrimental results of this for his knowing:

“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 limited vocabulary and grasp of language such a child finds it almost impossible to penetrate to the essence of things and matters, his acquisition of knowledge remains largely superficial and he gives great value to the externally perceptible, the literal and the realistic. All of 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) that 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 in reality 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 applied insights into behaving as a category in order to shed light on childlike becoming, offers an etymological explanation of the concept “behave” and stressed 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 particular behaviors.

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

From the above it is clear that behaving is about *someone* who behaves himself and that his behaving is directed by norms as well as by the choices he 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 finds himself as a *person in the world*. Behaving especially shows itself in the various relationships that a person establishes with his world. The *situational connectedness of behaving* (100 p 165) emerges clearly when Buytendijk states that behaving is a way of being that 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 (himself) 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 the person's total involvement with reality. This means that one can only understand another's behaviors if he really understands his personal circumstances as well as the situation that is relevant to his 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 particular fact that behaving is also manifested by means of *bodily expressions*. The frown or a smile, the wave of a hand, the stamping of a foot, etc. each represents a particular relationship to reality (102 p 62).

With respect to the ways that behaving appears and their underlying essential characteristics, Bondesio (103 pp 63-86) distinguishes the following modes of appearance of childlike 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, in itself it is not meaningful, but becomes meaningful because a person is involved in the world as a totality.

b) Voluntary behaving

Voluntary behaving has its origin in the child's intentionality, i.e., his 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 the 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). The person's choice is thus willed in that he

defines his 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 in the course of 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 that 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 the person himself are revealed. For example, inter-human relationships are visibly manifested in expressive behaviors. Via expressive behaving a person expresses his emotional lived experiences such that they can be perceivable by another person. Facial expressions such as a smile that depicts accessibility, affection, sympathy and tranquil satisfaction, as well as other representations such as a shaking fist, a rebuking finger, hand movements that express a waving to or greeting are also mentioned in this regard. It is clear that 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 himself 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 childlike learning and becoming

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

The gradual and progressive elevation that appears in the child's behaving is a matter both of the active participation of the child himself (self-actualization) and the purposeful accompaniment to his self-actualization by the educator. Pedagogical approval and disapproval with respect to a child's behaving are directed at refining his behaviors by supporting him 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. Childlike behaving can never be really grasped or understood until it finds expression since behaving only places the crown on his experiencing, lived experiencing, willing and knowing.

The childlike state of becoming, largely determined by the nature of his learning activities, can indicate the level on which his behaving is going to be realized. Positive change in and modification of his behaving in accordance with the norm-image of proper adulthood is an indication that the child has learned and his becoming is actualized in the direction of proper adulthood.

Childlike behaving reflects the 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 fall short with advanced behaviors requiring decision-making, a matter that will be attainable to a greater degree by an older child. Viewed pedagogically, childlike 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 finds himself behaving in an educative situation while, at the same time, his behaving is indicative of the levels of learning and becoming on which he finds himself (113 p 66).

4 Behaving by the autistic child

It was emphasized that childlike behaving reflects the quality of his control of the world and is indicative of the level of learning and becoming on which he finds himself. Also, voluntary behaving, as an intentional, conscious acting characterized by a moment of choice emphasizes the personal role and responsibility of the behaving person. In this light, the following is an attempt to illuminate a number of peculiar, compulsive, ritualistic, stereotypic and difficult to understand behaviors of the autistic child.

The most conspicuous, characteristic behavior of the autistic child is *excessive turning into himself* (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, that often gives rise to a flight from reality and an escape into himself exercises a great influence on the entire range of his 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 can be interpreted as the manifestation of emotional instability, a defective familiarity with reality and an inability to be able to intellectually assimilate and cope with unfamiliar situations. There is no doubt that these behaviors exercise a negative influence on childlike becoming.

Where a normal child continually actualizes his behaviors on progressively higher levels and has the ability to shift his horizon of

knowledge and familiarity, the 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 that perhaps are meaningful to him as well as a ceaseless daily fumbling with a specific object (116a p 153; 116b p 64).

With respect to the 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, the 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 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 that are not the behaviors expected under such circumstances, often arise in autistic children (118a p 38; 118b p 173).

Ritualistic behaviors arise in a number of autistic children. Before leaving for school, an autistic child, e.g., will use the toilet whether this is really need or not. Also, each time an autistic child enters the playground he 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 be meaninglessly waved around or continually be flicked back and forth with the fingers of the other hand (119 p 64).

The conspicuous “otherness” of the autistic child’s behaviors is also manifested in his a particular *attachment to a specific object or activity*. For example, he carries an object everywhere with him, he 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. 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 that 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 pp 207-216).

With respect to *expressive behaving*, a way of being that figures forth within inter-human situations of encounter as emotional expressions, the conspicuous otherness of the autistic child is once again noticeable. Because of his being emotionally blunted and deficient attribution of meaning, the autistic child does not understand expressive gestures and thus does not use them. He 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 to 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 the autistic child inadequately realizes his psychic becoming potentialities via willful and expressive behaving, and that his particular behaviors often must first be elevated for him to strive for a harmonious becoming.

f Conclusions

From the above it is clear that 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 the 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 that deals with educatively accompanying the autistic child.

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

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 having become, is shown by means of a progressive and sustained exploring, evidence of emancipating, greater distancing and objectifying in his behaving and a marked differentiating concerning his potentialities as well as choices (123 p 36). However, the question that now arises is what is understood by each of these modes of becoming and how each arises in the childlike life world. 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 the autistic child-in-education.

b Exploring as childlike becoming

Exploring, as a mode of becoming, means the 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 the 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 the child continually broadens his 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 the child's search for a grip on reality in order 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 the child's learning initiative and activities because when he explores the world, he always becomes aware of (senses) something, perceives something, thinks about it (all modes of learning) and in doing so he acquires particular knowledge of what he explores and investigates (129 p 37). In addition, it must continually be kept in mind that a child *becomes* in his exploring as it is actualized in his behaving. Also, in his exploring it is clear that learning and becoming are two equi-primordial structures for actualizing his psychic life.

It also is important to remember that exploring is realized in various ways of acting, on different levels, or degrees of progression and levels of lived experiencing. The baby, who finds himself literally at the starting point on his way to adulthood, because of his initial immobility, absence of language and speech, ignorance, fluctuation emotional life and a world-involvement on a primarily vital-pathic level is largely dependent on an undistanced (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 the child acquires more control over his body, he turns his eyes and head in the direction of the source that demands his attending in order to listen to and observe it, he begins to sit upright, crawl, stand up and learn to walk and his senso-pathic directedness and lived experiences no long dominate to the same degree the nature of his meaningful association with and exploration of the world. As he becomes older he no longer confines himself to the same extent with what is at hand and he no longer depends largely on the senses of touch, smell and taste in his exploratory sensing of reality. Exploring also occurs on a more advanced level because the child now directs himself in more formal, gnostic-cognitive ways to reality and lived experiences it as such. Objects are handled on a level of seeking meaning, the child lived experiences circumstances differently and with the discovery and mastery of language what he wonders about can now be questioned and named (130 p 61). The child's exploring, meaning experiencing and meaning giving association with reality occurs on a higher level because in his exploring he is more thinking, comparing, analyzing and interpreting and thus progressively uses the senses of hearing and sight as media for and by which he acquires experience and expands his 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 that continually occurs here can be used as criteria to gauge the child's state of becoming. In both of these childlike ways of being, as ways of exploring, it is clear that with the older child, provided the accompaniment is adequate, there is a greater distance between him and his world than is the case with a younger child since the former has a greater and more comprehensive knowledge or possessed experience.

For the child to be able to adequately explore surrounding reality requires that he have certain competencies and a positive willingness to do so. This requires an emotional readiness for him to venture into the unknown and this can only happen if his emotional life shows balance and thrives harmoniously. If the child experiences security because the educator establishes a stable affective relationship with him and allows him to lived experience security, safety, belongingness and assurance (131 p 63) he will

conquer his helplessness and will actively and trustingly turn himself to reality to transform it into meaning-for-himself (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.

In light of the above, the following is directed to *the autistic child's directedness, willing and competence to meaningfully explore reality* and the impediments that are experienced in this regard: Characteristic of the autistic child is that his initiative to explore is often lacking. The autistic child is not only unaware of himself and others as persons, but also is unaware of important things in his surroundings, he shows no appropriately human directedness to things, no self-determined activity or creativity and does not succeed in establishing a meaningful world for himself (133a pp 434, 445; 133b pp 178, 193). No genuine human intentionality is realized because he does not have at his 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 the 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 over and over again the same, once-learned simple activities".

Wing (136 p 209) emphasizes that the unknown is not only dreaded by the autistic child but is even anxiety provoking. This phenomenon clearly shows the lability in the emotional life of the autistic child who are 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 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 allows him to hold even more tightly to his known, familiar and narrow world, and this leads to the further labilization of emotional

lived experiencing that detrimentally influences his readiness and willingness to explore.

Also, in the case of the autistic child, the lived experience of this security is a necessary precondition for and a power that pushes exploration forward. Bettelheim (138 p 194) as well as Kaufman (139 p 133) mention that the autistic child who lived experiences security eventually succeeds on his 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 childlike becoming

When a child explores he already shows signs of his 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 the child, is manifested as a spontaneous, natural initiative by the child to want to walk, play, dress and undress, use eating utensils, wash, comb his hair, etc. *himself*. That this initiative is of cardinal importance for the 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 the child, as such, in his exploring so that he will progressively become emancipated.

Sonnekus (143 p 35) states that “emancipating-as-lived-experienced-becoming” occurs on different levels that vary from the most minimum senso-pathic lived experiencing where, e.g., the child himself tries to put a spoon in his mouth while he eats to levels of pathic, affective, senso-gnostic, gnostic and cognitive lived

experiences. With the child in puberty, in particular, this has to do with *ordered cognitive lived experiences* and especially the normative lived experience of meaning (144 p 36). The child in puberty will readily be and become someone himself 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 parents' educative intervention with him, stubbornness and moodiness signify a seeking of affective, cognitive and normative lived experiences of meaning where the child in puberty no longer accepts everything but is in search of his own insight and norms by which those of his parents are often rejected (145 p 36). Educators must welcome these inclinations towards emancipation because they are positive indications of the child's progress in becoming adult.

The journey of emancipation (Van Niekerk) however is dependent on then child's emotional stability and experiencing that also includes the strength of his wanting (willing) to be someone himself and his lived experience of his own dignity.

It was indicated that the *autistic child* inadequately experiences, wills and lived experiences and therefore he will also experience difficulties in becoming emancipated. Because autistic children become emancipated inadequately, their curriculum includes numerous 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, a number of items appear that in particular indicate their already attained readiness to become emancipated. (This matter is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4).

d Distancing as childlike becoming

In order to carry on a dialog with reality on a continually higher level, the child must gradually distance himself from himself and direct himself to the world and especially from the known to the unknown (146 p 2). Thus distancing means a changed entering into 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 the child becomes older and his possessed experience increases qualitatively and quantitatively he progressively is able to more objectively judge and take his own position regarding matters, relationships, behaviors, values and norms. Distancing implies a progressive becoming independent and indicates that he lives more independently. This distancing is realized on the basis of a strengthening of the child's willingness to lived experience on a higher level, an increased stability in his emotional life and greater orderliness in his cognitive lived experiencing.

Thus, as the child becomes he actualizes his distancing on different levels of lived experiencing. Hence, e.g., distances himself 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 that can be characterized as abstract, conceptual and distanced (148 pp 131, 132).

On the basis of lived experiencing security, safety and confidence the child gradually distances himself from his parent(s) because of a desire to stand on his 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 sex identification. With the adolescent, personal identification is transformed into norm identification.

Besides via sex identification and norm identification, distancing, as a mode of becoming, can also be noticed in the child's levels of play. That is, purely senso-pathic play is gradually stopped to make a place for more constructive, illusive and esthetic play. Also distancing progressively arises in the level of the child's control of language, as is seen in his linguistic expressions. Because language especially lends itself to being an expressive and abstracting

medium, for the child, it also is an important medium for distancing.

The *autistic child* whose full-fledged wanting to be someone himself by wanting to know and do things himself 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 finger at an object that he considers important (149 p 87). Distancing from the concrete, touchable presence of objects and proceeding to name them also does not occur with the young autistic child. Often the adult must take his hand and, as it were, “drag” him to what demands his attention.

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

Sex identification, the phenomenon that especially distances the normal juvenile and pubescent from the parents and identifying with the same-sexed parent, is lacking with the autistic child because inter-human 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 the autistic child. Thus, it seems that distancing, as an essence of becoming, is largely lacking in the life of the autistic child.

e Differentiating as childlike becoming

As an intentional attitude differentiating implies a refining of various ways of actualizing intentionality. Thus, differentiating means various ways in which the child directs himself in his becoming, in particular bodily or corporeal ways of becoming, 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 the child's psychic life. Because differentiating is manifested in the 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 the child lives in an intimate being bonded with the world around him and clearly directs himself to it on a senso-pathic level. However, as he becomes older, more mobile and acquires language, the event of differentiation becomes more conspicuous as is seen in sharper analyses, making finer distinctions and taking one's own standpoint towards matters. This event of differentiation especially is observable on a cognitive level and points to the child's becoming a proper adult. The 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 becomes older, he appears more calm and composed in making his decisions and thus shows a more advanced differentiation in contrast to a young child who still will show a great lack of restraint and inconsistency in his 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 smell 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 can thus 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 that a child directs himself to reality in distinguishable ways and thereby becomes involved in it, figures forth in very inadequate ways with the autistic child—whether it is characterized as emotional, exploring or intellectual effort. According to Prick (157 pp 257-258) with the autistic child there is only mention of a very primitive, scantily differentiated intentional relationships and acts as a result 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 lichamelijke toestandveranderingen, welke door milieuinvloeden zijn opgeroepen”. Because the autistic child experiences, wills and lived experiences inadequately it then is also clear that he will differentiate inadequately by entering reality in various horizontal ways of exploring, emancipating and distancing in order to create his own experiential world.

f Objectifying as childlike becoming

Change in a child’s becoming in addition to his ability to explore, emancipate, distance and differentiate is also observable in the degree to which he 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 that is directed to identifying and determining what is essential, generally valid of a particular matter or object without his own subjective opinions predominating (158 p 194). By objectifying the child essentially arrives at knowledge of himself and others as persons and this implies judging a matter in its objective given-ness, i.e., as it really is.

To be able to objectify places many demands on the child that deserve to be mentioned. At first, it must be emphasized that it requires a high degree of intellectual becoming-ness, i.e., cognitive refinement that is found more frequently in older children. Objectifying is largely supported by the ability to distance. Thus the child must be able to step “outside of himself”, out of his own body so that on the basis of his self-consciousness he can consider himself “objectively” and at the same time can judge a particular slice of reality objectively. Objectifying, as a distanced attunement, also sets in when the child has acquired language, is able to identify with norms, can express moral judgments, understands his own behaving and how others interpret it and shows that he 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 that clearly requires a gnostic disposition.

Concerning the small child, it must be emphasized that initially he does not enter his 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 the small child does not understand what it means to share a toy with a playmate (159 p 38). As the child arrives at an elevation in level he is involved in a lived experience of objectifying because his intentionality becomes directed by his cognitive ways of being (160 p 38).

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

One of the greatest hindrances in the life of the *autistic child* proceeding to objectify is that he does not fully enter into an inter-human 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 the lonely autistic child cannot constitute a meaningful personal and/or shared world. Thus the 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 the autistic child does not succeed in adequately stepping "outside of himself" (his own bodiliness), encounter others, discuss matters, and learn 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 strong senso-pathic, senso-gnostic bond to reality.

g Conclusion

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

3.3 THE BECOMING OF THE AUTISTIC CHILD: SYNTHESIS

The becoming of the autistic child is impeded by a great number of factors that are unique to autism as a phenomenon. As a result of an excessive aloofness, a turning inward, bodily imprisonment, the lack of inter-human 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 the mentioned intentionalities. More specifically it is asserted that autism gives rise to an inadequate experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving such that he under-actualizes his exploring, emancipating, distancing, differentiating and objectifying as ways of becoming, i.e., his entire psychic life with his inadequate becoming

adult as an outcome. The educative accompaniment of the autistic child to self-actualizing the potentialities of his psychic life (becoming) offers a great challenge to the involved educators and is discussed in the following chapter.

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