

AN INVESTIGATION OF ACTING AWAY (DISTORTING) FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGIC ESSENCES•

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1. INTRODUCTION

Among other things, to educate is to actualize pedagogic essences. Of particular importance is the quality of actualization that can support a child adequately in the direction of adulthood. In contrast, this quality can be so weak that it can be said that the pedagogic essences are not actualized. This latter means the “educator” acts as if pedagogic essences did not exist and they are distorted. When an essence is acted away, a vacuum is not formed in its place. On the contrary, something other than the pedagogic is actualized. In extreme cases, contradictions of the essences appear that are in conflict with the pedagogic essences. Then two antithetical forces are active. The positive (the pedagogic) is in opposition to the negative (what is acted away) and the latter can lead to tragedy.

The pedagogic meaninglessness of the contradictions is that they can not only obscure, alter and conceal but even can nullify genuine educating. Essence-actualization is pedagogic work while contradiction-actualization is pedagogic neglect. Just as different degrees of pedagogic neglect can be noticed, so different levels of the actualization of contradictions can be distinguished. For example, such levels can range from an authentic relationship of fellow-humanness through a restrained relationship to a rejection of human relationships. Hence, when contradictions are mentioned in the present study, what is really meant is “in the direction of actualizing contradictions.”

• South African Journal of Pedagogy (1978), 12 (1), 130-147. English translation available at: <http://www.landmanwa.co.za/pedesdis.htm>

2. THE VALUE OF INVESTIGATING CONTRADICTIONS

The following are possibilities based on the investigation of the life worlds of children referred to the Child Guidance Institute for detection of what gave rise to their problems and for appropriate assistance (pedotherapy).

2.1 The interpretation of results obtained with different exploratory media in terms of contradictions can lead to a more effective conversation with the parents. For example, it is not as effective to talk with the parents about aggression and dissatisfaction as it is to clarify for them that a mood or atmosphere of working together does not exist in their house. Thus, there is disagreement between them and their children over how they are living together (Instead of feeling close to each other, a feeling of opposing each other prevails).

The pedagogue who conducts the investigation has to be able to interpret the results of the exploratory media in terms of contradictions because this will allow for a profound understanding of a child-in-distress.

2.2 If pedotherapy is viewed as a restoration of pedagogic essences in the life world of a child-in-distress, the following is possible: the pedotherapist who interprets the results in terms of contradictions knows that his assistance has to be directed at their removal. For example, if a child experiences a failure in human relationships, pedotherapeutic work has to restore them. In this way, a more focused pedotherapy becomes possible.

2.3 When the historicity image and the exploratory media are interpreted in terms of acted away pedagogic essences, i.e., in terms of appearing contradictions, it is easier to establish if and how the pedagogic investigation confirms the historicity image. Such confirmation (or not) is a meaningful part of the investigation. The connections among the historicity image and the interpretations of the exploratory media further facilitate the conversation with the parents and emphasize for the pedotherapist the direction his assistance should take.

2.4 The pedagogue sticks with the problem so that he can use certain exploratory media in his pedagogic investigation of the life world of a child-in-distress. Although these media often are referred to as “psychological tests,” the pedagogue knows that pedagogic work is not and cannot be applied psychology; even so here he puts psychology into practice! These so-called psychological media are obviously of value for the pedagogic investigation. However, this is so only because the investigating pedagogue implements and interprets them as pedagogic media. One way to accentuate this pedagogic implementation and interpretation is to interpret their results in terms of pedagogical essences or their contradictions.

3. THE INVESTIGATION

The person-images of 25 children whose ages range from 5 years 4 months to 15 years and whose IQs range from 70 to 147 were analyzed.

From the historicity images there are signs that all of these children come from homes displaying a poor pedagogic quality. In order of frequency, the following problems were observed:

- (i) Rejection by the parents was mentioned 27 times in the historicity images (in the form of direct rejection, “education” turned over to servants, children irritate their mother, no communication with the children was sought or maintained, tension between the children leading to tension between them and their parents and also between the parents themselves, the parents tell their child that only the worst is expected of him)
- (ii) Tension between the parents (12)
- (iii) Divorce (11)
- (iv) Neglect of the relationship of authority (in the form of a father without authority, lack of authoritativeness by both parents, exercise of authority in the form of shouting, threats and name-calling (9)
- (v) Overprotection (3); favoritism among the children by the parents (2).

4. RESULTS FROM THE EXPLORATORY MEDIA

4.1 Rorschach contents

When the contents of the Rorschach responses of these children were viewed, the following contradictions were observed (in order of frequency):

- (i) Rejection of human relationships (12)
- (ii) Experience of not belonging and a lack of “our” space (11)
- (iii) Mistrust (especially in the form of deficient being together and absence-in-mistrust) (8)
- (iv) Being solitary and yearning to escape (4).

4.2 Columbus contents

In order of frequency, the following contradictions were found:

- (i) Alienation (in the form of a lack of feeling at home, a lack of turning to, an absence of closeness, rejection or human relationships, yearning to escape) (17)
- (ii) Rejection (10)
- (iii) Mistrust (especially in the form of a deficient being together, rebellion against the authority of norms, being solitary) (9)
- (iv) Experience of not belonging and lack of “our” space (7).

4.3 T.A.T./S.A.P.A.T.*

In order of frequency, the following contradictions appeared:

- (i) Alienation (in the form of yearning to escape, absence of closeness, rejection of human relationships, experience of a neglectful space, lack of bonding) (17)
- (ii) Rejection (7)
- (iii) Mistrust (especially in the form of turning away-in-mistrust, rejection of being together, being solitary, rebellious against the authority of norms) (7)
- (iv) Experience of not belonging (3).

* Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.) and South African Picture Apperception Test (S.A.P.A.T.)

4.4 Graphic representations (Drawing person, house, etc.)

In order of frequency, the following contradictions appeared:

- (i) Alienation (in the form of absence of closeness, deficient sharing, creation of distance, rejection of human relationships, no attraction, yearning to escape) (12)
- (ii) Experience of not belonging and lack of “our” space (10)
- (iii) Rejection (7)
- (iv) Mistrust (in the form of absence-in-mistrust, being solitary, rebellion against the authority of norms) (6).

4.5 Play diagnosis

The following contradictions appeared during the diagnosis of play:

- (i) Rejection of home (5)
- (ii) Rejection of “our” space (4)
- (iii) Experience of not belonging (4)
- (iv) Absence-in-mistrust (3)
- (v) Rejection of human relationships (3)
- (vi) Experience of inaccessibility (2)
- (vii) Experience of a neglectful space (2)
- (viii) Rejection (1).

4.6 Rotter sentence completion

In order of frequency, the following contradictions appeared:

- (i) Rejection (7)
- (ii) Lack of bonding (3)
- (iii) Absence-in-mistrust (3)
- (iv) Experience of not belonging (2)
- (v) Being solitary (1)
- (vi) Yearning to escape (1)
- (vii) Experience of inaccessibility (1)
- (viii) Lack of sharing (1).

4.7 Results of particular pedagogic importance

When the results reported in 4.1 to 4.6 are more closely examined, they mainly involve a falling out and a decline regarding relationships between parents and children. The pedagogic relationship thus is distorted and this leads to the observation of other distorted pedagogic results such as the following:

- (i) Inadequate appreciation of potentialities (20)
- (ii) Not being appealed to (9)
- (iii) Lack of direction (9)
- (iv) Lack of experiencing the future (8)
- (v) Ignoring norms (6)
- (vi) Satisfied to remain a child (6)
- (vii) No indication of persistence (5)
- (viii) Rejection of authority (4)
- (ix) Weakening of the idea of propriety (3)
- (x) Rejection of responsibility (3)
- (xi) Not allowed to have his say (3).

Observation:

(i) to (xi) are contradictions that appear because of a disparity between parents and children. They are indications of pedagogic neglect. Consequently, in the conversation with the parents the following need to be pointed out to them:

- (i) how the child lived experiences the existing disparity; and
- (ii) what the effect of this is on their child's being and on his becoming a proper adult.

The pedotherapist has to rectify the disparity or meaningfully rework it. At the same time, during pedotherapy, attention has to be given to the contradictions (i-xi).

5. THE CONTRADICTIONS

To accomplish the interpretations alluded to above means the investigating (exploring) pedagogue needs to have a list of defined contradictions. In this connection, it is recommended that he understand and know the fundamental pedagogic essences and

express them in his own words with the aim of planning the conversation with the parents and engaging in pedotherapy to rectify the contradictions.

A list of defined fundamental pedagogic essences appears in Landman, W. A. *Fundamentele Pedagogiek en Onderwyspraktyk*. Durban: Butterworths, 1977, pp. 63-75*

6. THE ACTUALIZATION OF THE PSYCHIC LIFE AND ACTING AWAY (DISTORTING) FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGIC ESSENCES (A more detailed account of the actualization of the psychic life of a child-in-education can be found in Sonnekus, M. C. H. *The Teacher, the Lesson and the Child*. Stellenbosch: University Publishers and Booksellers, 1975).

Previously under 4.7, the following two questions were posed:

- (i) How does a child lived experience the existing disparities?
- (ii) What is the effect of this on a child's being and on his becoming a proper adult?

To answer these questions, first we must briefly indicate the meaning of the psychic life of a child-in-education and, in particular, the importance of its adequate actualization on a child's way to adulthood. This means that notice must be taken of a very important event in a child's growing up, namely, his psychic life and its actualization. A child himself always participates in actualizing his psychic life, and also this actualization is directly influenced by the educating provided by adults, that is, by the relationships of educating mentioned above.

But how does acting away fundamental pedagogic essences influence the actualization of a child's psychic life, i.e., what is the influence of the appearance of the mentioned contradictions on this? This section (and later section 8) takes a closer look at a child's experiences as well as lived experiences of the disparities in the home or the acting away of the fundamental pedagogic essences

* These pages have been translated by George Yonge)

when he actualizes his psychic life. The aim also is to try to understand the effects these disparities and acting away have on his being and on his becoming adult.

6.1 How does the actualization of a child's psychic life occur?

It was already stated that, on the one hand, a child himself participates in actualizing his psychic life and, on the other hand, that the educating by his parents, teachers and by other adults directly influences its actualization.. This actualization means particular psychic ways of living. In toto, this is known as the self-actualization or self-realization of his psychic life, i.e., his own participation in his becoming adult.. These psychic ways of living are called by psychopedagogics experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving.

Without considering these essences of the psychic life in detail, we only mention briefly some of the particular essentials of each and their interrelations. Thus, a child is first experientially in the world and he experiences things and persons in his relationships with them. This means he goes out to the world, explores it and ultimately takes meaning from and gives meaning to it. In other words, in his experiencing, he is searching for new meanings of the world around him. However, his experiencing is guided by his willing which directs and gives a direction to it. Thus, this willing is decisive as well as direction-giving in his search for the sense and meaning of the relationships in which he finds himself. Thus, a child, as an intentional being, directs himself experientially and willingly to the world around him and also to his educators.

But a child also lived experiences things. The contents he encounters in the world, and this includes his educative relationships by which he converses with his parents and vice versa. To lived experience is to search for sense and meaning in the world and, in particular, in educative relationships. Particularly, there are different modes of lived experiencing; there is affective or emotional lived experiencing, which can appear as impulsive, labile or stable. Psychopedagogics clearly shows that as a child progressively lived experiences stability, it correspondingly will be more meaningful to him. There also is cognitive or knowing lived experiencing; that is

this is a more understanding, conceptual way, of actualizing his psychic life and experiencing the world around him as well as the educative relationships between him and his parents. Also he seeks cognitive meaning in the relationships and contents which his educators present to him. Viewed psychopedagogically, cognitive lived experience can be for a child very global, diffuse or vague but also more systematic and ordered. Progressively ordered cognitive or knowing lived experiencing, along with the already mentioned affective, also is a mode or way of giving meaning when he actualizes his psychic life; progressively ordered cognitive lived experiencing is for a child a progression in sense and meaning.

At the same time, there is a close connection between affective and cognitive lived experiencing and, indeed, it is reciprocal. In other words, as a child progressively lived experiences affective stability, this supports and prepares him for ordered cognitive lived experiencing; reciprocally, when he lived experiences cognitive order in his relationships with his parents or teachers, he lived experiences affective stability and, indeed, these two ways of lived experiencing (as modes of actualizing the psychic life) are preconditions for a child's normative lived experiencing of meaning.

In actualizing his psychic life by experiencing, willing and lived experiencing, he also is actualizing his cognitive life. In other words, in these ways of knowing he is learning about his world. That is, a child learns to know his world in affective, cognitive and normative ways. Although knowing is a cognitive mode, it always is supported by the affective aspects of the psychic life. Further, the results of all of the above modes of actualization flow into a child's possessed experience or experiential residue. Possessed experience is a child's experiences of contents (including the contents of education) with which he has entered into dialogue and given meaning. As the outcome of a child's actualization of his psychic life, possessed experience defines and co-defines each of his new experiences and lived experiences in the future.

Finally, a child's experiencing along with his willing and lived experiencing are knowable in his behaviors. Behaviors directly reflect the actualization of the psychic life and this actualization also is visible in his learning and becoming. Thus, from the moment

of birth, and for his entire life, a child/person is busy learning; that is, he gives sense and meaning to particular contents by appropriating them for himself. Learning is an affective as well as a cognitive activity but in and through the affective and the cognitive it also is a normative, meaning-giving activity. Learning is actualized by different modes that only are mentioned and not considered in detail. They are sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering. The psychic life manifests itself as a totality via these modes of learning. In and by learning, a child's psychic life is actualized by his own participation as well as being influenced by the teaching by adults (including teachers).

Yet another mode of the manifestation of the psychic life is becoming. As with the other moments of the psychic life, becoming is an activity in which a child participates and which also is guided by adults. Briefly, becoming is an elevation in the level of a child's growing up on his way to adulthood. Of interest is the fact that a child's learning is observable in his becoming. In other words, a child becomes adult because he learns. Becoming does not mean a developmental process such as contemporary developmental psychology will make it. Rather, it is an important educative event in which a child participates by actualizing his psychic life via the modes mentioned above. Particular modes of becoming also are distinguished, namely, exploration, emancipation, distantiation, differentiation and objectification.

These particular modes of becoming are shown in a child's growing up owing to the fact that he actualizes his psychic life by learning, experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving. The aim of this brief discussion is to present to the reader the tasks confronted by a child in relation to an adult such that he will progressively become a proper adult.

Once again the question arises regarding the influence of acting away fundamental pedagogic essences (i.e., the appearance of contradictions) on a child's psychic life. In the following sections, this matter will be gone into in a little more detail; however, at this stage it is emphasized that a child's entire learning and becoming will progress inadequately if the mentioned fundamental pedagogic

essences become increasingly acted away, or, in other words, if contradictions increasingly appear in a child's actualization of his psychic life.

6.2 Guidance to adequately actualizing the psychic life as a pedagogic task

With reference to the previous section, affective, cognitive and normative self-actualization are three particular modes of actualizing the psychic life. They do not occur apart from each other and are distinguished only for the sake of better understanding. On the one hand, a child actualizes his psychic life affectively or emotionally and a precondition for this is a lived experience of progressive affective stability. On the other hand, and paired with this is the lived experience of progressive knowing or cognitive order as another precondition. These two modes of actualization are ways of giving and lived experiencing meaning, thus they are modes of normatively actualizing the psychic life.

From a psychopedagogic view, the task of educating or guiding a child in his self-actualizing his psychic life involves three modes, namely, affective, cognitive and normative guidance. These three modes of adult guidance also follow an inseparable and unitary course. Even so, for sake of clarity, each is discussed separately.

Affective guidance is the emotional contact, relationship or climate that exists between adult and child in education. It involves self-confidence, also known as a trusting relationship between parent and child, it occurs in the association and encounter between adult and child, in the conversation or dialogue between parent and child which continually is called for, etc. Also, it appears by way of pampering a child, whether over or under done; it appears in the degree of distancing or periodic breaking away advocated by a parent in his educative intervention with his child. Even the voices and mutual looks between parent and child primarily are affect-laden and they are lived experienced by a child as such. The younger a child, the more this affective guidance will take the form of pampering, of bodily coddling, warmth, etc. and the older a child the more this ought to diminish, although it always remains a very important mode of guiding a child.

Cognitive guidance is concerned with knowing, understanding or also conceptual conversations between parent and child. For example, a child desires from his parent not only the normative exemplification of his norms, or authority, or discipline but at the same time a cognitive explanation or interpretation by the parent regarding the why and wherefore of the particular norm being exemplified. The well-known child questions arise clearly here, a phenomenon that appears very early in a child's life and continues through his entire becoming adult. These questions mean that a child wants to know and understand more. It is the task of the parent and teacher always to answer the childlike questions in a knowing, clear way so that it will be understandable to him.

As indicated above, stemming from a child's lived experiences, these affective and cognitive ways of guidance by the parents make high demands, namely, that affective guidance has to be of a stabilizing nature, i.e., it must be consistent from day to day as well as from parent to parent; furthermore, there needs to be a constant and stable quality in the entire family. Also, the cognitive guidance by the parents needs to be of a systematic and ordered nature; i.e., a child must experience and lived experience it as stable and ordered and in this way give sense and meaning to it.

It should be clear that this affective and cognitive guidance has a unitary course as does a child's corresponding lived experiences and since these are the ways a child lived experiences sense and meaning, this guidance also involves the normative education or guidance provided by the parent himself. In other words, affective and cognitive guidance by the parents contribute directly to their daily normative guidance.

6.3 The influence of pedagogic neglect (contradictions) on actualizing the psychic life of a child on his way to proper adulthood

At this stage we can return to the two questions posed in section 4.7, how are the disparities (contradictions) experienced and lived experienced and what is the effect of this on a child's being and on his becoming adult?

By now, it ought to be obvious that pedagogic neglect, as the acting away of fundamental pedagogic essences, detrimentally influences the entire actualization of the psychic life. Briefly, this means experiencing and lived experiencing an inadequate educative situation. This involves inadequate guidance on the part of the parents, which means an unstable affective as well as disordered cognitive guidance and, hence, a meaningless normative guidance. This is a highly disharmonious situation for such a child.

Further, the effect is an equally unstable affective self-actualization, a diffuse, poorly ordered cognitive self-actualization and thereby a meaningless normative self-actualization of the child's psychic life--all viewed in terms of his total becoming adult. This means that in such cases a child's becoming adult takes an inadequate and distorted course.

Viewed more closely in terms of the appearance of contradictions, such pedagogic neglect leads to inadequate learning and becoming because it directly restrains them.

In terms of actualizing his psychic life, a child will experience such educative relationships as pedagogic neglect and, correspondingly, this influences the actualization of his willing and lived experiencing (i.e., labile affective, poorly ordered cognitive, meaningless normative lived experiences). A child's intellectual life also is directly restrained by what in turn undermines his cognitive learning which leads to meaningless possessed experiences.

The behavior of these children also gives an indication of this pedagogic neglect or appearance of contradictions, the actualization of which influences his affective, cognitive and normative aspects. In this way, pedagogic neglect leads directly to a child behaving meaninglessly.

Seen as a whole, learning and becoming as two ways a child's psychic life shows itself, also will take a distorted course and there will be definite learning difficulties and problems of becoming (i.e., a child can be seriously harmed regarding his becoming a proper adult.

7. THE PEDOTHERAPEUTIC TASK REGARDING THE APPEARANCE OF CONTRADICTIONS

In section 4.7, the following proposition was presented regarding the task of the pedotherapist: He has to direct himself to rectify the disparity or meaningfully rework it. The question now is what does this mean psychopedagogically and orthopedagogically, and what task does this hold for the pedotherapist?

First, in connection with section 5, a pedotherapist has to take into account the list of contradictions that may have appeared in the interactions between parents and child. Such contradictory guidance by the parents leads a child to attribute negative meanings, as possessed experience, when he actualizes his psychic life in this relationship.

Second, a pedotherapist aims at modifying these negative meanings through his pedotherapeutic intervention; that is, he aims to replace these negative meanings with positive, meaningful sense. In terms of the inadequate parental guidance and the concomitant inadequate, meaningless actualization of his psychic life by such a child, the pedotherapist's task includes repairing the prevailing particular disharmonious relationships of educating by replacing them with meaningful, harmonious educative relationships.

Third, psychopedagogically viewed, such pedotherapy means the labile affective guidance has to be replaced by an affectively stable form, that the disordered cognitive guidance be replaced by a more ordered cognitive form, and the meaningless normative guidance, which springs from the inadequate affective and cognitive guidance, also has to be changed to a meaningful normative form. Accordingly, such repaired ways of guidance will lead a child to a more stable affective, ordered cognitive and meaningful normative self-actualization of his psychic life. In addition, this change in parental guidance and a child's resulting more favorable self-actualization enables him to overcome learning problems owing to the more favorable affective, cognitive and normative actualization of his psychic life.

Among other things, a pedotherapist has to have an understanding of the modes of learning (sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining and fantasizing as well as remembering) so he can adequately guide these different modes of learning in their interconnectedness. Linking up with instructing a child, more particularly with his teacher(s) in school, is of great importance regarding the aim of providing pedotherapeutic assistance that necessarily is directed to the modes of learning and that also is followed up in school.

It also is necessary that a pedotherapist have knowledge of the different modes of becoming (i.e., exploration, emancipation, distantiation, differentiation and objectification). That is, the pedotherapist also aims to adequately guide a child regarding these modes of becoming by giving adequate support so there is an elevation in the level of his becoming. A child participates directly in all of this while remaining under the direct guidance and influence of an adult.

8. ACTING AWAY (DISTORTION) FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGIC ESSENCES: SYNTHESIS AND PERSPECTIVE

8.1 In spite of its limited nature, this investigation of the acting away of fundamental pedagogic essences has led to highly valuable results. One of the most important of these and that is of great importance to the pedagogue, psychopedagogue and orthopedagogue is that acting away pedagogic essences, as an increased appearance of contradictions, is an unacceptable course of action known as pedagogic neglect. Hence, a pedagogue should take note of the phenomenon of contradictions as unacceptable tendencies in educating particular children. In his turn, a psychopedagogue has to take note of the enormous impact that this pedagogic neglect, as an adult's inadequate educating and guiding, has on the way a child actualizes his psychic life, including the course of his learning and becoming.

The orthopedagogue (i.e., pedotherapist), as one who provides help for such children, similarly has to take note of the results of this study because such pedagogic neglect confronts him with highly important pedotherapeutic as well as orthodidactic tasks.

8.2 The present study revealed particular educative problems that ought to be investigated more closely on a broader basis and in more empirical ways. In particular, these problems lead to offering pedotherapy as well as orthodidactic assistance, each of which present tasks from its own domain as well as jointly to design means to repair the inadequate actualization of a child's psychic life and the correlated inadequate course of educating by the parents.

AUTHORS' SUMMARY*

(AN INQUIRY INTO THE DISTORTION OF FUNDAMENTAL PEDAGOGIC ESSENCES)

The actualization of pedagogic essences in education ought to contribute to a child adequately becoming toward adulthood. However, if an educator underestimates or disregards the existence of pedagogic essences this doesn't occur.

An examination of 25 children from homes of poor pedagogic quality revealed that they show signs of social aversion, a lack of warmth in personal relations and a sense of rejection and mistrust. In addition, there is conspicuous evidence of inadequate appreciation of their own abilities and a general lack of direction to and perspective on the future.

The following should be pointed out to their parents during interviews: How the children experience their relations with their parents and how this affects their progress toward adulthood.

Failing to implement pedagogic essences, also known as pedagogic neglect, results in a child experiencing the educative situation as inadequate. This amounts to inadequate guidance by the parent which is the result of his unstable affective, disordered cognitive and meaningless normative guidance of his child.

An equally strong effect is the unstable affective self-actualization by the child of his psychic life, a diffuse, poorly ordered cognitive

* Slightly edited.

actualization of his potential together with a meaningless actualization of his psychic life all viewed in terms of his total progress toward adulthood.

Such pedagogic neglect also impedes a child's learning and, therefore, his total becoming.

The findings of this study indicate that a pedotherapist has an important task to carry out in which cognizance has to be taken of the pedagogic neglect that has taken place, and steps must be taken to prevent further neglect and to restore the pedagogic essences. The basic objective is to change a child's negative meaning structure and to rectify the disharmonious educative relationships.