

## CHAPTER II

### ACCOMPANYING CHILDLIKE POTENTIALITIES OF PERSONAL UNFOLDING TO SELF-ACTUALIZATION AS A PEDAGOGICAL-DIDACTICAL TASK AND THE POSSIBILITY OF DISHARMONY

#### 1. EDUCATIVE DYNAMIC

##### 1.1 Introductory orientation

When educating, as a dynamic event, is viewed in correlation with personal unfolding by a child, suddenly the idea of child developmental psychology is thwarted. Before proceeding to an exposition of an anthropologically-pedagogically accountable view of how a child's becoming adult via learning under the accompaniment of his educators is actualized, it seems necessary and meaningful to take a close look at the phenomenon of personal unfolding since (adequate) "personal unfolding" holds a central position for the aim of the present study.

##### 1.1.1 Personal unfolding as an anthropological-pedagogical way of being

###### a) The structuralist perspective on "development"

The existential phenomenological view of being human today throws into radical doubt the contemporary structuralist stream of thought. Although thinkers such as Levi-Strauss, Foucault, Lacan, Althusser and Piaget must be agreed with that the subject exists by the grace of a relatively careful determination of place,<sup>(1)</sup> the entire denial and decentering of the free subject in favor of the structures within which he finds himself and that speak through him, and as formulated here by Levi-Strauss,<sup>(2)</sup> must be rejected: "... what am I other than a plaything in a war between another society consisting of several million nerve cells hidden under my skull and body that serves society as a robot?" [wat ben ik ... anders dan de speelbal is de strijd tusschen een andere sameleving, bestaande uit enkele miljarden zenuwcellen, verscholen onder mijn schedel en mijn lichaam dat die sameleving tot robot dient?"].

Also, although Piaget's<sup>(3)</sup> unmistakable contributions to "developmental psychology" will not be underestimated, [the validity of] making a particular structure absolute at the expense of the free, active and unique subject, as appears in the following citation from his later work, must be doubted: "If then, to account for the constructions we have described we must appeal to the subject's acts, the subject here meant can only be the epistemic subject, that is, the mechanisms common to all subjects at a certain level, those of the 'average' subject. So average, in fact, that one of the most instructive methods of analyzing its actions is to construct, by means of machines or equations, models ... for which a cybernetic theory can then furnish the necessary and sufficient conditions."

According to Piaget,<sup>(4)</sup> the cognitive structures show the characteristic of "self-government or self-regulation" and, indeed, in mechanistic-lawful ways. In addition, he asks: "If structures exist and each is regulated from within, what role is left for the subject?" ... "--- the subject becomes the mere stage on which the various autonomous structures act out their predetermined role."<sup>(5)</sup> "If cognitive structures were static, the subject would indeed be a superfluous entity. But if it should turn out that structures tend to become connected in some way ... then the subject regains the role of mediator." Thus, it is the (cognitive) structures, as such, that function autonomously, while the *subject is viewed as merely the "center of functional activity"*<sup>(6)</sup> *with respect to the (psychic) structures that develop in him according to a naturally lawful dynamic and unbreakable sequence.*

#### **b) Existential-phenomenological perspective on personal unfolding**

Mikel Dufrenne<sup>(7)</sup> incisively expresses himself against the neo-positivism, formalism and anti-humanism of the structuralist anthropology and even rejects Heidegger's ontology where Dasein is subordinated to "anonymous Being". *"It is not the 'it' that speaks in a human being, but a human being speaks."* [*"Niet het 'het' spreekt in de mens, maar de mens spreekt."*] Viewed, historically, however, it was the existential philosopher Sartre<sup>(8)</sup> who brought human

consciousness and freedom under the same category by stating that human being is what he has made of himself and will become what, in his freedom, he chooses to be and wishes to bring about. And he also carries on a conversation with the structuralist thinking by recognizing the existence of structures and the need to study their mechanisms but adds that a human being is a product of a blind structure in so far as he exceeds it.

According to Paul Tournier<sup>(9)</sup> the greatest merit of Freud is that he had designed a dynamic psychology in which *the living movement of past, present and future, the continual change in persons*, was rediscovered. This also had the consequence that being a child no longer could be viewed as miniature adulthood but is disclosed as a phase with its own “psychology”. Phenomenological psychology discloses the person in his situation and describes him as he turns himself to his world, projects himself in his work and play, enters relationships with fellow persons, and how he integrates these things into his own being: “Thus the current of life has been rediscovered, the element of perpetual becoming in all of its infinite complexity. Man is a history, a personal history.”<sup>(10)</sup> Human unfolding in time is a continual changing: “This changing is made up of seasons, stages in their lives, each of which has its own characteristics and peculiar laws.” However, never is the person viewed as developing according to biological-natural laws because, *given his being human as openness and freedom, his self-becoming is characterized by a continual, effortful going beyond himself*: “Each new situation demands, especially of the child, but also throughout the whole of life, a ‘going beyond’ of himself and of his habits ... If he succeeds in this, he grows by this victory.”

Also for Strasser<sup>(11)</sup> the course of human becoming carries the stamp of the possibility of transcendence. *Transcendental Being constitutes the ultimate potentiality that must be actualized* as the crown on human becoming and the ultimate destination of human being-on-the-way. However, a human being pays for his freedom with the tragic possibility of making a mistake or failing. *Unrealized human potentialities are an expression of his metaphysical vulnerability and must be viewed in connection with his spiritual experiencing of failures as an attack on or threat to the meaningfulness of his existence.* As fallible, a human being, who

does not correspond fully to his essences, is always on a point of balance between being and non-being, affirming or negating, and it is from this point that all ethical systems begin. In his course of becoming between birth and death, a human is the only being who fails. What he inherits he must first acquire before he is able to possess it (Langeveld).<sup>(12)</sup>

**c) Pedagogical perspective: accompanying the child to self-actualize his personal potentialities for unfolding**

This potentiality that unfailingly propels, however much of it might also be lost, is the reality of the *child*: this phenomenon of uniqueness, which is much more than an awakening and birth, this reprieve of a never-ending beginning .... What greater care can we foster or discuss than not to squander this grace as before, as the power for ever-newness that might be saved for renewal? (Buber)<sup>(13)</sup>  
*Human openness and freedom in addition to his never-completed potentialities of becoming are the actualities from which the act of educating takes its point of departure.*

Against this same background Sonnekus<sup>(14)</sup> emphasizes that the realization of childlike becoming on the way to adulthood must not be viewed as a deterministic or “a pre-formed or mechanistic or automatic” event. The child is continually an initiative of relationships (Buytendijk) and is always intentionality. The actualization of the psychic life of the child refers to an intentional way of being that is primarily activated from the person’s total existence as being-there and as being-in the world to which he directs himself and for which he stands open. However, Sonnekus<sup>(15)</sup> also points to the possibility of “degenerating or relapsing or even regressing (Freud) in the course of becoming”, and further:  
*“Becoming adult as actualizing the psychic life in terms of an elevation in level and meaning can thus occur in inadequate ways and lead to degeneration.”* The possibility of inadequately realizing personal potentialities obviously must fall into a two-faceted problematic, i.e., the possibility of the inadequate self-actualization of personal potentialities by the child, on the one hand, and the *possibility if inadequate accompaniment* by the educator, on the other hand, the latter of which is viewed more particularly from a

didactical-pedagogical perspective and indeed is attuned to the lesson practice by which the child must be viewed by the teacher, as accompanier, in his involvement on the way through school to adulthood.

Although childlike becoming adult via learning, as a matter of purposeful future-design and the acquisition of an emancipating identity, is always subject to the child's willed choice to take co-responsibility for the unfolding of his personal potentialities, *the actualization of his total personal potentialities as becoming adult* continually announces itself as an unavoidable pedagogical task: "Future history is not inscribed already by the pen of a causal law on a roll which merely awaits unrolling. Its characters are stamped by the unforeseeable decisions of future generations. The part to be played in this by everyone alive today, by every adolescent and child, is immeasurable, and immeasurable is our part as educators. The deeds of the generations now approaching can illumine the gray face of the human world or plunge it in darkness. So, then, with education: if it at last rises up and exists indeed ..." (Buber).<sup>(16)</sup>

In the following section the *relationship between the phenomenon of learning and the meaningful becoming adult*, a dialectically coupled and dynamic interdependent unitary event that evolves temporally, is examined since it simultaneously *represents the juncture between what normally is viewed as "educating" and "teaching"*. *The precise nature of the relationship between learning and personal unfolding must always be put in clear perspective to be able to gauge the genuine nature and scope of the school's task and responsibility in the life of the child.*

## **1.2 The coherence of learning and personal unfolding as accompanied elevation in meaning and level on the way to adulthood**

The psychic life of the child in the reality of educating is no static entity but a phenomenon that must be actively realized since the child is at the beginning of his life path. This dynamic is rooted in the universal-human situatedness in time. That is, Dasein is continually unfolding in time (temporality) that can and must be related to the phenomenon of the "élan vital": "The 'élan vital'

creates the future before us, and it is the only thing that does it. In life everything that has a direction in time has ‘elan’ and pushes forward, progresses toward a future ....” And this fact of ‘being pushed’ has nothing passive about it”. “... it means that I tend spontaneously with all my power, with all my being, toward a future, thus achieving all the fullness of life of which I am usually capable from this aspect” (Minkowski).<sup>(17)</sup> Thus, the psychic life of a person is a way of being that points to a dynamic, moving and a meaning seeking, meaning giving unfolding to the future and the question now has to do with the *way this actualization* of the psychic life of the child in his being-on-the-way to adulthood occurs in time.

In response to this question, Sonnekus<sup>(18)</sup> states that actualizing the psychic life of the child manifests itself in the unfolding of *two inseparable, essentially related and equi-primordial structures, i.e., learning and becoming*, that also constitute the meaning of this actualization. In light of the fact that the childlike way of being implies being in a pedagogical situation, the core question now is how this structure is realized as self-actualizing by the child as well as by *accompanying the child to this self-actualization* by the educator. Langeveld’s child anthropological fundamental axiom is that the child is someone who wants to be someone himself, who will learn and grow up but that he also essentially is “van zich uit”: he “is an ‘animal’ educandum, he is educable”.<sup>(19)</sup>

Educating can be viewed as the help that one who is already-adult offers a not-yet-adult in order to *accompany the latter (child) to an elevation in level of meanings that he dialogically brings forth in his relationship to himself, to things, to others and to God*, until these meanings answer to the criteria of the norm-structure of adulthood as particularized in a specific cultural-historical context. That in educating there thus is always mention of particular contents that must be conquered and that thereby teaching is necessarily proclaimed to be the way of actualizing educating is axiomatic in contemporary pedagogical thinking. Conversely, teaching *children* cannot be meaningful without being related to educating. The undeniable and logical consequence of this is that neither the dynamic of educating nor the dynamic of teaching, to the extent that children and teachers are involved, can be isolated from or

described apart from each other. Thus, with this a view of the teaching event is held out in prospect that allows *no room for the artificial distinction between and the unaccountable separation of becoming and learning as well as educating and teaching*, a view that will be expanded on and clarified in the following section.

## 2. TEACHING DYNAMIC

### 2.1 The coherence of the dynamic of educating and of teaching

Because in accompanying the child to self-actualize his childlike potentialities of learning and becoming, as psychic life potentialities, there is always mention of particular *contents*, this accompaniment must continually be realized by *teaching* (Van der Stoep), and in the secondary pedagogical-didactical situation (i.e., the school) this occurs in a formalized, purposefully planned and systematic way when the child is involved in a series of lesson situations. The systematic and purposeful conveyance of knowledge is an almost universal human phenomenon but it is uniquely characterized by and necessitates the co-involvement of adults and children in a highly complex and “scientized” lifeworld. By “condensing” possessed culture and knowledge that humanity has disclosed, compiled, ordered and refined by centuries of laborious search and thought, and sometimes by happy chance, by simplifying them via example, demonstration and experiment, they are made accessible to the child. Although the child is someone who himself learns and independently turns himself in an exploring and sense-seeking way to reality, no child discovers by himself anew what the centuries before him have disclosed in times and circumstances in which the disclosed no longer exist. “A child discovers language in speaking, composing in rewriting in a writing, calculating environment..” [“Het kind ontdekt de taal in een sprekend, her schrift in een schrijvend, het getal in een tellend en rekenend milieu”].<sup>(20)</sup> Since no possibility exists for the childlike learning to be actualized in the direction of a “natural genesis”, i.e., to let it progress without direct intervention or accompaniment, there is continual mention of *a systematizing, choosing and ordering* of the whole of available cultural material by the adult. This means that there is mention of *valuing and anticipating with respect to the*

*genuine unfolding of the human child:* “Choice and value judgment and anticipation blong inextricably together and immediately intervene in the person- and world-view of persons and constitute the whole the policy of education>” [“Keuse en waardeoordeel, ordening en anticipatie horen onverbrekkelijk bijeen en zij grijpen onmiddellijk in de mens- en wereldbeschouwing in, welke hat geheel van het beleid der opvoeding uitmaken”] (Langeveld).<sup>(21)</sup>

With this the essential difference between didactics in general and didactic pedagogics is indicated and at the same time so is the inherent entwinement of teaching with educating in the life of a child. Langeveld<sup>(22)</sup> emphasizes that a general didactics without a well thought out foundation in pedagogics “praat over zaken welke zij niet kent. Zij werkt met een ‘leerling’, die geen kind, een ‘leraar’ die geen mens is en met een ‘leerstof’, die geen deel uitmaakt van een geestelijk kultuurgeheel. Een kind is er essentieel op aangewezen, opvoeding en worden. Zodat: wie de leerling niet nauwkeurig ziet in het licht van het kind en het kind niet doordacht heft als en op opvoeding aangewezen wezen, in ijle lucht construeert”.

Thus, what is emphasized by this is that the point of departure for curriculum development in school can be nothing more than the generally valid pedagogical aim structures (linked up with the particular, philosophy of life contents of these structures).<sup>(23)</sup> That the *pedagogical continually manifests itself as a phenomenon of educating as a didactical matter* (Van der Stoep), moreover means, inversely, that the fundamental pedagogical structures and essences have necessary and unavoidable validity in the (school’s) teaching situation.<sup>(24)</sup> Thus, it is the teacher’s pedagogical knowledge that makes him an expert educator<sup>(25)</sup> and this holds true in that he must know the significance of trust, understanding and authority and all of the other fundamental pedagogical structures and essences in their (dialectic-hermeneutic) coherent connectedness, and can explain and present them to the child, and be able to realize them on behalf of the child. This implies that *teaching outside of an anchoring in the pedagogical becomes attenuated to a mere series of artificial didactic tricks* and the child is surrendered to unworthy and devalued techniques and methods. Teaching as a matter of practice and dynamic with respect to educating (educating comes



into motion and is realized via teaching) thus can only be justified and grounded by dialectical-hermeneutic thinking as an authentic synthesis of knowledge of teaching and educating. The fundamental pedagogical categories thus have necessary validity in the lesson situation as a pedagogical-didactical situation,<sup>(26)</sup> while the didactical-pedagogical categories figure as ontologic integrals within the phenomenon of educating as unbreakable entwinements.<sup>(27)</sup>

## **2.2 Accompaniment to self-actualizing childlike psychic life potentialities via teaching**

The role of the adult and of the child in the course of teaching can be viewed from a psychopedagogical perspective as a matter of accompanying to self-actualization. This formulation by Sonnekus is grounded in the anthropological existentialia of being-someone-oneself and of being-with,<sup>(28)</sup> as well as including the well-known Langeveldian axioms of child anthropology. The question of *the way of realizing* childlike self-becoming under the accompaniment of the adult delimits (within the pedagogical) the psychopedagogical field of study and immediately brings the total structure of the psychic life of the child-in-education into the field of light.

In other words, this means that *the joint participation of teacher and child in the course of teaching must be understood as the purposeful, systematic, planned and formal accompaniment [of the child] to self-actualize his psychic life as a totality-in-function.* The learning event can never be viewed or understood as an isolated phenomenon since it undeniably is the result of the child's total intentional involvement in the world as a person. Langeveld<sup>(29)</sup> has convincingly shown that research in which an attempt is made to isolate or fractionate the act of learning cannot penetrate to its essence. The childlike potentiality for learning, i.e., is no impersonal power; it is always the person, the "I" who learns. The learning involvement of the child in any context is only meaningful and essentially understandable as an absolutely personal act. This means that the teacher accompanies the child in the lesson situation to self-actualize his learning and equi-primordial becoming potentialities as realized via childlike potentialities for experiencing, willing, lived experiencing, knowing and behaving and in particular via specific modes of learning, i.e., sensing, attending, perceiving,

thinking, imagining, fantasizing and remembering and of becoming, i.e., exploring, differentiating, distancing, objectifying and emancipating. The way in which the accompaniment is realized also cannot be limited only to the gnostic-cognitive, but as a totality-task, it must include pathic-affective and normative, meaning-giving accompaniment to self-actualization (Sonnekus). These matters will be considered in greater detail later when the possible consequences of the inadequate accompaniment in the lesson situation (that extends over the entire range of childlike potentialities) of these three moments [of self-actualization] are examined more closely.

The fact is that becoming adult and learning, the two equi-primordial structures of the psychic life of the child-in-education are realized inseparably and in parallel in the child's being on his way to adulthood and at the same time they *jointly are the preconditions for and constitute the sense of the activities of educating and teaching*; there is a dialectic-hermeneutic relationship between them that in didactic theory building falls directly under the heading of *forming*, and more particularly under the idea of categorical forming (Van der Stoep). The intimate, unbreakable intertwining of the learning-teaching event with the unfolding of the totality of the child's psychic life potentialities needs no further argument except to indicate that in truth this fact has long enjoyed implicit recognition by all fundamental thinkers of the idea of forming in teaching. Thus, for example Wilhelm von Humboldt<sup>(30)</sup> had verbalized in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, following Kant, Hegel and Herder: "... Bildung (is) the attitude of mind which, from the knowledge and the feeling of the total intellectual and moral endeavour, flows harmoniously into sensibility and character". Hereby a *harmoniously accompanied personal becoming is characterized, via learning as a totality event, by the inclusion of cognitive and affective as well as normative moments of forming*. From modern hermeneutic philosophy Hans-Georg Gadamer<sup>(31)</sup> further develops the idea of "Bildung" and speaks of a "wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewusstsein". This attunement means that "correct" factual knowledge is only important where it is propaedeutic to finding new and more meaningful ways by which a person can carry on a dialogue with reality in order to be able to maintain himself in it. With this, the gain in knowledge is once again placed in a perspective within the framework of the

continually-becoming person's total meaning-giving and meaning-seeking involvement in reality; a matter of a qualitative realization of intentionality and planned interference in the elevation in level of Dasein-expansion in the life of the child.

### 3. THE SIGNIFICANCE AND NECESSITY OF A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE NORM-IMAGE OF ADULTHOOD WITH RESPECT TO AN ACCOUNTABLE TEACHING PRACTICE AND EVALUATION

Behaving by the existential person-as-an-aim-directed-being (Landman) is purposive, hence *the adult with his teaching intervention in behalf of the child always has a particular aim in view*, i.e., the child's eventually becoming adult. In an absolute sense, the precondition for realizing this aim is the learning participation of the child as his response to the appeal or invitation of the adult to constitute his own world by means of the accompanied disclosure of reality. The way to cultural adulthood and moral independence, however, is long and tedious and allows itself to be characterized by a progressive and effortful elevation in level of the dialectic of converting potentialities into reality that continually allows new potentialities to appear on the horizon as obligations. The adult selects those contents that the child in his course of becoming must gradually learn to master and offers them piecemeal in accordance with his intellectual potentialities and already attained level of adulthood. In the second-order [i.e., school] didactical-pedagogical situation this crystallizes into a more formal, ordered way than in the original [i.e., home] educative situation in constituting a sequential series of lesson situations during which particular pieces of subject matter are systematically offered in an increasing line of complexity and degree of difficulty.

Since the professional educator must never involve himself with the child in haphazard, casual or unplanned ways, he must not only be able to justify himself regarding his eventual aim with the child but *he also must be able to give an account of what he has in view with each separate lesson* in light of the overarching aim. Also, the childlike phenomenon of learning refers hermeneutically to a being grounded in the aim of educating since learning, as a primary precondition for educating, at the same time only acquires meaning

as a way of becoming a proper adult. Consequently, if in the lesson situation there is mention of relationships, activities and a particular sequence with an eye to an aim, this must primarily be qualified as the actualization of the pedagogical relationship, activity sequence and aim structures. This implies that the child with learning and teaching problems in the lesson situation first of all must be understood as a child with “educative problems” since the fundamental pedagogical essences do not adequately figure forth in such a child’s life by which he undeniably is delayed or even stagnates in his being-on-the-way-to-adulthood. The total fundamental pedagogical categorical structure must always figure explicitly as well as implicitly as basic ground and final criteria in any view of or reflection on the event of educating.

However, what will be emphasized here is that each lesson is protected from a purposeless and haphazard character by the (explicit or implicit) presence of both a lesson and a learning aim. The lesson and the learning aim jointly form the *teaching aim* that, according to Landman<sup>(32)</sup> in its turn is *carried and grounded by the pedagogical aim structures as verbalizations of the universally valid structural norm-image of adulthood*, i.e.: Meaningful existence; Self-judgment and self-understanding; Respect for human dignity; Morally independent choosing and responsible acting; Norm identification; Philosophy of life. Moreover, Landman demonstrates effectively and convincingly how these essences of the image of adulthood that are aimed and striven for *are interwoven in the lesson event in terms of the essences of the lesson structure via specific subject matter contents*, or rather ought to be. Therefore, there must be agreement with Stellwag<sup>(33)</sup> regarding the far-reaching implications of the “conception of a person or person-image” held by “each pedagogical system” and obviously also regarding the practical consequences of such a theoretical view that ultimately must result in the finest details and nuances of the teaching and lesson practice that must be filtered through these views. Thus, the question that asks for continuous and deeper reflection is how the aim of adulthood to which the child and educator jointly direct themselves must appear if there is to be an accountable and balanced image of the adult re the demands of the present and for an unknown future.

If now it is accepted that the joint participation of teacher and child in the educative event must also be further understood as the purposeful, systematic, planned and formal accompaniment to the self-actualization of childlike psychic life as a totality-in-function, it seems not only meaningful but necessary to ask about *to where* this accompaniment must occur in terms of the psychic life. Thus, the question must be asked about the structural essences of a *norm-image of an adult psychic life* or indeed a psychopedagogical interpretation of the image of adulthood that is the target and original ground of our interference with the child in the school. The question should now be formulated more specifically as: What does the norm-image of adulthood in our culture imply *in terms of the affective, cognitive and normative moments of the psychic life*? It appears to be fairly obvious that an orthopedagogical evaluation of the adequateness (or not) of the school's contribution to the childlike personal unfolding to adulthood would not be possible if we couldn't give a particularized account of our ultimate aim of this personal unfolding, a matter that to date unhappily has not been considered enough by psychopedagogics. Since the terrain of (adult) psychology is closely related to this, possibly it is permissible, and at this stage clearly unavoidable, to appeal to it for help, with the necessary scientific and philosophy of life reservations. The following section then presents a tentative attempt of a psychopedagogical interpretation of psychological findings regarding the ideal-image of adult psychic life, provided that such findings can be accommodated within the framework of what is methodologically, philosophical-anthropologically and pedagogically permissible and accountable.

#### **4. SELF-ACCOMPANIED UNFOLDING OF PERSONAL POTENTIALITIES AS EDUCATIVE AIM FROM A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

It has been stated that the educative aim (adulthood) has a psychological side that must be expressed psychopedagogically and although the immediate aim will continually be interpreted differently in this light in accordance with the potentialities and tasks of becoming and learning of each child on the level on which he finds himself, it will call into existence different tasks for himself and the adult accompanier, here there is an attempt to describe the

psychic life of adulthood as a psychopedagogical aim that for the purpose of this study can be applied as category-illuminating for evaluating the teaching and lesson situation events in the school.

To the question of Epictetus, Socrates answered that one man finds happiness in improving his possessions, another in his horses; his own happiness lies in seeing himself daily becoming a better man.<sup>(34)</sup> For Aristotle the “good” man is he who is guided by reason, who is actively involved in realizing his specific human potentialities.<sup>(35)</sup> Maslow’s<sup>(36)</sup> research on the appearance of psychological health offers this concise image of the autonomous, self-actualizing person that is a reflection of a *gradual self-accompanied realization of level elevation and integration of the affective, cognitive and normative potentialities of the psychic life*: “Such people become self-sufficient and self-contained. The determinants which govern them are ... primarily inner ones, rather than social or environmental. They are the laws of their own inner nature, their potentialities and capacities, their talents, their latent resources, their creative impulses, their needs to know themselves and to become more and more integrated and unified, more and more aware of what they really are, of what they really want, of what their call or vocation or fate is to be.”

Only the integrated, self-actualizing person in his interpersonal relationships is able to love as an adult, viewed as an unselfish, creative, caring directedness to the other as a unique, intrinsically valuable person by which the other is also helped on his way to actualizing his self-becoming. This is only possible on the basis of a genuine integration of the affective, cognitive (note: it is the non-love that makes one “blind”), volitional and normative moments. Thus, here love is viewed as a way of being in relation to the other and also is the precondition for genuine educating as accompaniment of the child to actualize his personal potentialities. With respect to the high incidence of family problems and divorce it appears as if marriage and the participants in it apparently make higher demands of psychic-spiritual adulthood than the level to which our society is educated.

Self-actualization as an adult cognitive way of being in relationship to reality moreover at the same time involves giving evidence of

accurate, objective perceiving of what *is*; wondering and curiosity about the unknown; attraction for the problematic; ability to order synoptically; to abstract; to disclose the new; to differentiate between what is true and real; etc.<sup>(37)</sup> by which the connections among the level of actualization of the affective psychic life and the level and quality of the knowing and learning ways of being are emphasized once again. Moreover, Maslow<sup>(38)</sup> indicates that self-actualization, the integrated adult's level and quality of affective and cognitive self-actualization, forms the obvious basis for the quality and level of his independent, accountable realization of values with respect to personal, social, intellectual, esthetic, ethical, spiritual and religious values.

Fromm<sup>(39)</sup> talks of a “productive character” in his formulation of the aim of personal unfolding, *as a fundamental relationship or way of relatedness in all of the spheres of human experience*, including the mental (cognitive), normative and emotional as well as sensorial moments with respect to *others, things and the self*. This means having the ability and freedom to self-actualize personal potentialities and this implies that he must be aware of his potentialities and know how to realize them. *In a society characterized by depersonalization and automation, a precondition for this is that a person himself must feel at one with all of his potentialities as powers at his disposal ... “that they are not masked and alienated from him”.*<sup>(40)</sup> Thus, the never-completed human personal unfolding requires of the person from birth to death that he himself must actively work on elevating the level on which his emotional, intellectual and spiritual potentialities are actualized as a progressive self-integration.

At first glance it is clear from all of the foregoing that a person who succeeds to a high degree in realizing the psychic life of adulthood as a qualitative way of being, indeed, gives form to the fundamental pedagogical aim structures (see section 3 above) separately and as a whole. It also seems clear that the psychic life of an adult person not only has reached *a particular level and quality of “having become” and of “having learned”* but that this having become adult and this learnedness of an adult also mean that the personal *continued and independent self-becoming and learning* (in and out of a vocational context) are accepted as his own task and

responsibility. In addition to the obvious affective and normative sides of becoming adult and an optimally unfolding psychic life, Maslow's research also has clearly emphasized that the continual elevation in the self-actualization of all of the cognitive modes of learning in the broad areas of life, also figure as criteria in this context. An additional implication is that emancipating, exploring, objectifying, differentiating and distancing must also be added as ways of being and criteria for an adult psychic life and must also be *integrated* into it as important ways of becoming on the way to adulthood.

In light of Strasser's<sup>(41)</sup> phenomenological analysis of feeling ("the heart"), finally, it is important to indicate that the existential "being happy", or *the possibility of being happy as an anthropological way of being that is closely related to the ever-advancing, future-anticipating, unfolding self-actualization of the person's integrated affective, cognitive and normative experiential potentialities as a dialectic event of becoming*. "Freedom and blessedness consist in man's understanding of himself and in his effort to become that which he potentially is, to approach nearer and nearer to the model of human nature" (Spinoza).<sup>(52)</sup> Van der Kerken<sup>(43)</sup> asks the question: What can happiness be other than the complete realization of all of the essential potentialities of the existing person? Happiness as a potentiality is closely interwoven with the *meaningfulness of a person's existence*: "Man wishes to be happy and only exists to be happy" (Pascal).<sup>(44)</sup> In this light, inadequate accompaniment that alienates the child from his personal self-actualizing potentialities is not only viewed as a matter of "problems in becoming" ("developmental problems") but as existential problems that threaten the happy, meaningful existence of the child by which the scope of the pedagogical responsibility of the educator acquires clear relief. However, the question that must be answered now is what is the relevance of the above to the teacher's responsibility in the lesson situation.

##### **5. ACCOMPANYING TO ACTUALIZING PERSONAL POTENTIALITY AS A PEDAGOGICAL-DIDACTICAL TASK "IN CONTRAST TO" ACCOMPANYING TO ACTUALIZING LEARNING**



With this an extremely complex and highly contentious problematic is broached, i.e., the question of the relationship between “educating” or ‘person forming’ or ‘character forming’ on the one hand and “teaching” or ‘giving a lesson’ on the other hand by which the most appropriate relationship between educating at home and the educative task of the school also arises. Here a few orienting remarks must be sufficient. First and foremost it must be emphasized that a person (and thus a child) continually shows himself as a person, thus as a totality-in-function in his communication with reality and that therefore he also presents himself in any situation with all of his potentialities and thus also as a psychic life actualizing child in a lesson situation. Thus, the child is not exclusively present and involved as a ‘learning potentiality’ or a ‘knowing potentiality’ in the lesson event but as a *total personal potentiality* who is dependent for his adequate actualization on the purposeful accompaniment to self-actualization by the teacher as a demander of propriety that is part of the educator’s accepted responsibility for the child to reach his destination (adulthood).

That the child’s realization of his total personal potentialities cannot be separated from the actualization of his learning, on the one hand, and from the activity of educating as a totality and thus from the *accompanying task of the teacher*, and consequently must also thrive in the lesson situation, is emphasized from a pedagogical perspective by many authors. Sonnekus<sup>(45)</sup> states this as follows: “the adult’s educative influence, including that of the parent as well as the teacher ... has a direct impact and role in the way becoming is realized”. That the interference of the teacher with the child for the purpose of his learning to become adult by means of exploring, emancipating, objectifying, differentiating and distancing, as way of level elevation, on continually more stable affective, ordered cognitive and meaningful normative levels of realization, as a distinguishable but essentially inseparable act of affective and cognitive accompaniment as a way to normative accompaniment must be viewed in light of a number of pronouncements by contemporary pedagogical thinkers (see Sonnekus,<sup>(46)</sup> is already seen as axiomatic with respect to the lesson activities of the teacher.

However, Beets<sup>(47)</sup> view, on the other hand, is representative of the more or less generally accepted and current view, i.e., that the

*adequate teaching of children is already person forming*, a claim that can be agreed to with some reservations. Beets' view implies that teaching, and thus giving an effective lesson, alone can qualify as adequate personal accompaniment: "Jonge mensen aan het werk zetten, hem aan het denken zetten, hem voor opgaven stellen en verwachten dat zij hun werk afmaken is meer dan intellectueel vormen. Het is een bijdrage leveren tot de karaktervorming". However, the following argument is focused on showing that such a *conclusion is premature and not completely accountable pedagogically*. The same author's warning that if 'person forming' or 'character forming' are too purposefully at the center of the teaching intervention at school, it must continually be kept in mind that just this aim can be allowed to fail. He refers to the idea of Pestalozzi that in practice results in a tendency toward "mothering" in the modern school, and more particularly in Montessori teaching in the Netherlands, where a new one-sidedness then entails that "a student may come to believe that intellectual development and learning exert an influence but of little significance." ["de leerlingen zouden kunnen gaan menen dat de intellectuele ontwikkeling en het leren zich inspannen eigenlijk maar van weinig betekenis zijn".<sup>148)</sup> Beets believes that in practice this approach that places the person of the child with his various "developmental potentialities" at its center really makes superhuman demands of both the pupil and the teacher. Besides this, there can be an excessive emphasis on affective and social moments at the expense of cognitive and normative accompaniment to accountable and effortful learning via unordered and narrow gnostic as well as too little normative experiencing of meaning; if so, the child becomes so emotionally labilized that there can be no mention of pedagogically accountable, distanced educative accompaniment by which the entire becoming (via learning) of the child is restrained instead of promoted.

In contrast to this it must be said that when there is mention of the teacher's role in the child's realization of his personal potentialities, this does not mean that the teacher in the lesson situation must *take the place of the family* as the primary educative situation, and even less that with this *the emphasis is placed on emotional educating at the expense of teaching*. Although the emphasis with respect to the relative importance and way of affective, cognitive and normative

accompaniment continually appear differently according to the level of becoming on which a child finds himself (e.g., the preschooler, primary school child and the adolescent), the position held here is that effective teaching, that results in effective learning, implies a totality act that includes affective, cognitive and normative moments and that only such accompaniment will result in the optimal realization of the child's total potentialities of becoming.

The precondition for this is that the teacher, as a professional educator, must be able, on the basis of a genuine synthesis of his pedagogical knowledge, psychopedagogical insights into learning as well as his didactic pedagogical and subject matter knowledge, involve the child in a lesson situation, that in a general sense also will be a situation for actualizing personal potentialities. In summary the *lesson situation qualifies as a genuinely educative one* that has the aim of “emancipating education ... as a particular way of help with learning activities that allow the occurrence of an elevation in the level of world-relationships (and skillfulness) via selected contents” (Landman).<sup>(49)</sup>

The core of this problematic can best be summarized as follows: If we accept that educating, i.e., the educative aim, together with its psychopedagogically moment, is realized via the teaching of particular contents (educating is always help with meanings), the logical consequence of this is two-fold: First, help in personal unfolding should never, and it also cannot be seen as theoretically (or practically, as is evidenced by the Montessori schools) *along side of or in opposition to* the learning help in the teaching event. Accompaniment to the self-actualization of the child's total potentialities for personal unfolding must occur in the school—just as at home in the primary educative situation—via the teaching of (selected) contents. Both the way *of presenting* the contents as well as its specific *nature* as such will obviously be of utmost importance for the quality of realizing the essences of educating in the course of teaching. Conversely, it is equally obvious that what a child learns, the circumstances and atmosphere within which he learns and what he doesn't learn, undoubtedly will influence the direction, nature, quality, relief and level of his total personal becoming and the particular image of adulthood to which he will give form in his life. This fact immediately is grasped in advance of the second

consequence, i.e., that *educating need not necessarily be adequately realized in the teaching*. The implication is that in spite of an (apparently) adequate realization of the teaching event as such, as gauged by its own standards, an evaluation of the quality of the actualized pedagogical essences might bring to light that these essences are disturbed or attenuated or are inadequately actualized (Van Niekerk).<sup>(50)</sup> Finally, perhaps the most important implication is if he now can justify to anyone who teaches contents to children systematically and on a large scale and who expect that they will learn these contents, *who indeed are involved in accompanying these children to personal unfolding*. The question is merely *to where* this personal unfolding eventually leads, i.e., to what extent this accompaniment really can qualify as genuine educating, by which the following headings are considered:

## 6. THE DISHARMONIOUS DYNAMIC OF EDUCATING AND OF TEACHING

### 6.1 The possibility that the inadequate accompaniment to unfolding the personal potentialities of a child in school requires a critical evaluation

The following quotation from Brezinka<sup>(51)</sup> might serve to partially answer the question: “What we call “education” is, without exception, a series of *attempts* to change certain things in other people. Under favourable conditions these attempts have a certain chance at success; they can, however, also lead to results that are much different from those one wanted in the first place .... *In addition to useful education, there is also an enormous amount of useless or bad education*. The greater part of educational activity nevertheless probably belongs to that group about which it is impossible to say whether it is useful, useless, or harmful .... Education can only be understood as a means to achieve an end. Education does not have a value in itself; it is not a commodity, and it is not an end in itself. The value of education depends on whether it is actually able to produce desired qualities in the person being educated. If education does not do this, then it is useless; if education hinders the development or continuation of desirable personality traits, then it is harmful, and if the desired effects result without education through spontaneous learning processes,

imitation, or through orientation on the examples of others, then it is superfluous .... Many means, for example compulsory school attendance, as well as much of that taking place in out schools, can act as a barrier to the happiness that education has promised to bring about. For that reason it is a *moral duty in our 'education-oriented society' to unsparingly test demands for more education, promises made by education, and above all education as it is practiced, to see if they benefit or harm the persons they affect.*"

School critics such as John Holt<sup>(52)</sup> state that genuine education is not necessarily the product of formal knowledge, or of contemporary academic institutions: "It is basically the outgrowth of ... a capacity to be psychologically present to the world", with which there is the possibility of failure in attaining the educative and formative aims in the school context as the necessary psychological (psychopedagogical) criterion for determining this also reaffirms. In other words, this means that if the teacher's intervention with the child cannot be qualified as accompanying help to the optimal self-actualization of his total psychic life potentialities to the highest level that is achievable, by which it becomes possible for him to be present to the world as a person (i.e., affectively, cognitively and normatively) in genuinely human (adult) ways, then such teaching can qualify neither as formative help nor as help in becoming adult.

## **6.2 The connections among "teaching problems", "learning problems" and "problems in becoming adult": An orthopedagogical evaluation**

A few orienting remarks regarding the connection of "teaching and learning problems" to "problems in becoming adult" in the lesson situation first seem to be necessary and in my opinion it must continually be kept in mind that the first two mentioned are not problems as such, but must be viewed as problems only in a pedagogical context *since and to the extent* that the child as a person's total becoming adult can be restrained by them, i.e., because the actualization of the potentialities for becoming adult can be so restrained by them that his pedagogically attained level of adulthood does not correspond to the level attainable. The childlike psychic life always realizes itself equi-primordially as learning and becoming, and since in a pedagogical connection it is axiomatic that

this is only meaningful as exploring, emancipating, objectifying, differentiating and distancing *to adulthood*, it appears necessary to also view the question of learning problems from the perspective of becoming (adult) and more particularly to evaluate in terms of psychopedagogical criteria of becoming adult the ways in which and the contents in terms of which the child in the lesson practice is expected to learn. Consequently, it seems meaningful in light of an accountable psychopedagogical aim of personal unfolding to look at the lesson situation event and by such a fundamental critical reflection to try to show that *in addition to and overarching "learning problems", in the lesson situation there also can be "problems of becoming adult" if there is inadequate accompaniment to self-accompanied personal actualization*, a problem that in light of the child's total situatedness constitutes a greater existentially and pedagogically distressful situation than the learning and computing problems that are at the center of interest and concern in the context of a competitive, materialistic-capitalistic society, now inspired by the call to increased economic productivity, more purposeful utilization of manpower, better technical-vocational oriented training, etc.

Learning problems, moreover, in practice always manifest themselves as a conspicuously measureable and evaluable deficiency or poor achievement with respect to the formal contents of the lesson situation and although various investigators have already related this to a more general retardation in becoming, it appears as if there are problems in becoming adult because of the lack of clearly formulated aims and criteria, and the fact that personal unfolding is actualized neither by easy curriculum contents nor via easily testable "achievements" of becoming adult and still is infrequently viewed as stemming from lesson situation problems. A hermeneutic-phenomenological viewing from a psychopedagogical and didactical perspective on critical findings regarding the essence of contemporary school practice as inevitable passage on the child's way to adulthood, brings to the fore the undeniable consequence that besides the overarching to the often indicated failure of formal teaching and learning, the more serious, implicit accusation that the lesson situation repeatedly does not qualify as a situation of becoming adult but rather appears as situation of personal restraint on the child's life-way. Paul

Goodman<sup>(53)</sup> asks, e.g., in his radical and stimulating critical look at teaching as “Compulsory Mis-Education” that “... since schooling undertakes to be compulsory, must it not continually review its claim to be useful?”

With the concept “teaching problems” it thus will also be emphasized that the quality of teaching as well as the child’s learning and becoming adult are open for impeding and restraining moments with respect to each phase where it is presumed that formal content will show a harmonious articulation with the spontaneous childlike turning to reality and appropriating meaning. This implies that the event of teaching can be the preamble to inadequate learning and, conversely, that a child who for whatever reasons already experiences a learning problem, becomes involved in a “teaching problem” in the sense that special care must be taken to also insure that this child’s course of learning is in harmony with the teacher’s planned course of the lesson<sup>(54)</sup> which is a problematic that will be discussed more fully in chapter IV.

### **6.2.1 The possible reverberation of a problematic family educative event in a disharmonious teaching dynamic**

Differently from an animal, the parents of a human child let him explore an open world. However, the precondition is that the parents continually and steadily respond to the child’s expectation of complementing his biological deficits (with sleep, food, etc.); that in doing so they continue to follow and form regularities and habits, and that on the basis of the pampering and emotional warmth with which this is done, the child continually feels safe and secure. In accordance with the way in which and the degree to which these guarantees are realized the child can undertake his exploration in an open world and in a self-actualizing way give form to his own identity. However, it is especially in the intimacy of being bonded with his parents that habitual feelings, relationships and atmosphere stamp a lasting impression on his emotional relationship to the world.

The child’s primary pedagogical situatedness in the family thus has a decisive influence on the way he will explore and learn in the

lesson situation or will not and cannot learn.<sup>(56)</sup> The child's success in school can be restrained by a deficiency in experienced security in the family milieu that can be connected to factors such as family disharmony, family incompleteness, the inability of parents in a bewildered society to offer the child affective and spiritual security, or inadequate normative accompaniment, or the imprisonment of the parents in their own interest because of psychic immaturity, etc. Van Niekerk<sup>(57)</sup> points to various errors in educating that harm the bondedness between child and educator as a being jointly directed to adulthood among which are a defective future perspective, a lack of security, affective neglect, rejection of the child, overprotection, unfavorable comparisons, defective exercise of authority, and ignoring the child as a unique person. Elsewhere he says that affective, cognitive and normative neglect essentially mean that the adult contributes to the origin of the "non-learnedness" of the child as a consequence of a dismantling of his preparedness and readiness to learn.<sup>(58)</sup>

Discontinuity between the family educating and the school can also be obstructive,<sup>(59)</sup> a factor that is not limited to success or failure in elementary education since a difference in cultural background can give rise to conflict throughout the school career that can lead to opposition to either the family or the school. In the literature on learning problems there is continually reference to the child with a cultural handicap, economic-community restraint, the milieu-impaired child, etc. Such cultural short-circuiting obviously will also often coincide with a discontinuity in the pedagogical view between family and school sphere by which the image and expectations of the parents regarding the school also arise. Also related to this is the situation of the family as such within a society that is increasingly characterized by dynamic change, alienation, confusion of values and anomie. According to Perquin<sup>(60)</sup> a teacher is often unaware of a schoolchild's struggle for a clear image of life and his desperate search for the understandable, for ordering and a firm norm structure. Empirical research (Stead, 1976)<sup>(61)</sup> suggests a correlation between a teacher's view of a child's economic and socio-cultural family background and the child's learning achievement, independent of the real social situatedness of the child.



Sonnekus<sup>(62)</sup> indicates that an inadequate or disharmonious realization of the activity of educating at home can be directly responsible a child having learning problems and he distinguishes between defective affective educating that results in a blockage or a flooding in pathic lived experiencing as an inadequate basis for [venturing with the learning task] on a distanced gnostic level. [On the other hand] a weak moral-normative educating will allow the child to fail at learning because of inadequate responsibility and giving defective meaning to the learning task, work, study, school and even life. The importance of the possibility of a problematic primary (i.e., home) educative event especially lies in the fact that the teacher, in order to be able to accompany the child in a lesson situation with understanding, must be aware of this otherwise by untactful behavior he can easily contribute greatly to a child's existential and learning distress. It is then also largely the responsibility of each teacher, as guardian teacher, to make use of his favorable observation position to identify a child who struggles with problems and where necessary to provide care for "intensified" educative intervention with such a child, whether by himself, or in more serious cases by referring him via the appropriate channels.<sup>(83)</sup>

However, it is not only the parents who can contribute to restraining a child's becoming adult and learning since it is also a matter of everyday experience that teachers are guilty of the same charge, a question that will be considered in greater detail.

### **6.2.2 The possible coherence of disharmonious educative relationships in a lesson situation and problems of learning and becoming adult**

#### **a) Disharmony in the relationship of trust between teacher and child**

The relationship between teacher and child is closely connected with the teacher's acceptance of his occupational situation and role. The percentage of those who identify themselves with their role as a contribution of the whole person is very low,<sup>(64)</sup> but the inescapable truth is that in the lesson situation each stands before the child as a pupil "... and not the pupil as a 'thing', a non-being, that learns or doesn't learn and then must merely go". A child does not learn only

with his intellect but with his total being (Vedder).<sup>(65)</sup> Whether a child is positively attuned to the learning material depends among other things on whether he *feels* safe and secure when communicating in class. When this is lacking, a child does not dare proceed to explore the world, things and others as represented in the lesson content. The guarantee of a child's lived experience of safety and security must be provided by a teacher creating a favorable lesson climate by allowing the child to experience and lived experience that he accepts him, is positively attuned to him and likes him otherwise the child's becoming and learning achievements will be unfavorably influenced. "The more a teacher strives to create a milieu in which safety and security prevail, the more the pupils can concentrate on their work" (Perquin).<sup>(66)</sup> In contrast, when a child does not lived experience security in the classroom as an anthropological (pedagogical) space, an antagonistic attitude is taken toward both the teacher and the learning content and he no longer wants to or can learn adequately.<sup>(67)</sup>

Often enough misery occurs such that the life of the classroom becomes shallower and shallower for both teacher and child; view and perspective become obscured and routine, plan and rote take the place of lived experiencing and contact.<sup>(68)</sup>

Unfortunately, it also is so that many teachers feel that a child with learning handicaps is a millstone and a hindrance in the classroom situation who must be "cured" by some form of outside expert help instead of making a place for him where he can feel at home.<sup>(69)</sup>

Studies such as Silberman (1969) as well as Good and Brophy (1972)<sup>(70)</sup>, however, have brought to light that a child whose participation in the lesson event is problematic often are treated with indifference, with criticism and even are rejected by teachers while limiting their acceptance and encouragement to those children who learn and conform as expected. On this basis, an underachieving child often does not receive the same quality of accompaniment as one who achieves well and, ironically enough, when the latter begins to make an error or experience a problem he often receives more attention and understanding from the teacher than the underachiever.

## **b) Disharmony in the relationship of understanding between teacher and child**

Children often are viewed as “lazy”, “careless”, “scattered”, “slow”, “uninterested”, etc. without understanding that these forms of behaving are not causes but rather symptoms of disturbed learning relationships. For example, laziness refers to a defect in activity because of a restraint in learning and a teacher who is not able to understand this underlying tendency will cause more damage than good. This kind of crippling or “impasse” of learning can spring from an oppositional tendency or protest attitude as well as wanting to escape or dejection. The loss of hope and courage is especially dangerous by which there is exposure to failure in an accompaniment without tact and understanding.<sup>(72)</sup>

Also Vedder<sup>(73)</sup> mentions that sometimes a teacher has so little understanding of the child and often allows himself to be guided solely by points or achievement while he is unaware of the compulsiveness, anxiety, apparent conformity or neurotic attunement to which this is related. Children with learning difficulties are then also often the “sweetest” children in the class.<sup>(74)</sup> It is instructive that teachers usually view problems such as disobedience, revolt against authority, dishonesty and such as the most serious while pedagogically trained persons would probably be more disturbed by the shunned, restrained, over-sensitive child, the loner in the class, the dreamer and the anxious child.<sup>(75)</sup> The more a teacher takes into account the individuality of the child, the more he will feel ready to fulfill his learning task, and the reverse. Accountable learning accompaniment is only possible to the degree that a teacher is acquainted with the individual thoughts and feelings of a child as a person.<sup>(76)</sup> A teacher must understand a pupil’s behaviors, he must have an attunement to the distress hidden behind them that might never be captured by judgments of laziness, lack of interest or poor concentration. In the midst of an achievement- and point-obsessed teaching practice, a teacher can easily proceed with a child without educative aims when he overlooks his educative distress by, e.g., a one-sided appeal to his intellectual potentialities during the lesson situation and in this way he contributes further to the child’s inadequate learning.<sup>(77)</sup>

On the basis of diverse research data, Leach and Raybould<sup>(78)</sup> conclude that one of the greatest stumbling blocks in the way of eliminating learning problems is the teacher's attunement that is defined by his interpretation of the origin or basis of the problem. In many cases teachers are still inclined to refer to the psychoanalytic or neurological model and quickly conclude that there is something "wrong" with the psyche or sensorimotor brain functions of a learning handicapped child instead of the possibility that something could be "wrong" with the way he is taught, the class or school organization, the teacher's own relationship with the child, or the relationship between child and parents or peers. In doing this, the teacher abdicates his responsibility and accountability and the child is referred to the "experts" to eliminate the "problem".

**c) Disharmony in the relationship of authority between teacher and child**

As a normative situation, a lesson is characterized by a field of tension among values with which the meaningfulness of the learning contents is closely connected and inadequate or irresponsible participation by any of the participants can lead to a disintegration and failure.<sup>(79)</sup> The teacher who is not continually aware that his authority is only a "derived" authority in obedience to the demands of propriety and as representative of the parent and moreover is closely related to his authority as a subject matter expert, cannot answer the child's need for sympathetic, authoritative guidance. Discipline always implies, as does authority, [at least] two participants in the relationship and is a precondition for the orderly progression of the didactic event. The behaviors of both child and teacher must give evidence of order and discipline; otherwise, there will be chaos rather than orderly and meaningful learning. Disciplinary measures, punishment and corporal punishment are sometimes necessary but must only be used with the greatest discretion and thus in pedagogically accountable ways and take into account the child's state of becoming, unique nature and needs otherwise both the teacher's position of authority and the child's security in the lesson situation will be damaged. The aim must always be to create a secure space of authority within which the

child can carry out his learning discoveries. If a teacher does not also allow his initial authoritative leading of a young child to progress increasingly to an authoritative accompanying he will impede the child's emancipation rather than supporting him to responsible adulthood. Degrading, destructive punishment can give rise to serious problems for the child.<sup>(80)</sup>

Perquin<sup>(81)</sup> indicates that the changed relationship between the generations today must result in a more supple, more understanding structure of authority and giving direction but it also can bring about a lack of clarity that is unfavorable for giving direction to a task and thus results in restraining the way learning figures in a lesson situation. On the other hand, restraints can also appear where the teacher has forced his will, where no discussion or deliberation is allowed and everything must be flatly accepted merely because he says so. Then the child will either protest or fulfill the demands in an even more slavish way in order to avoid difficulties while the real content becomes uninteresting: "He does not learn in order to know more, to acquire better insight, to master skills, he learns because he can't get out of it "Hij leert niet om meer te weten, beter inzicht te krijgen, vaardigheden te verwerven, hij leert omdat hij er niet onder uit kan]." With this, the child becomes alienated from his real task and there can be little real learning. Stellwag<sup>(82)</sup> also mentions the emotional lability of a child resulting from the inconsistent exercise of authority because of the teacher's insecurity, wavering authority and drowsy outlook. The attitude that the child can derive from his freedom in the lesson situation can also be friendly and loving but at the same time in stereotypic, uniform ways the teacher's attitudes, views and schemes of thinking forced on the child, often because of years of being stuck in the same rut, are foreign to reality. A child who feels his freedom threatened by this protests against the whole subject, and even the school in general.

The above is not at all an attempt at completeness but is only an attempt to show via examples how the actualization of a child's personal potentialities in a lesson situation can be co-defined by the quality of realizing pedagogical structures in the classroom. Finally, it is important to keep in mind that the course of the mutual educative activities of parent and teacher, separately or mutually,

and including affective, cognitive and moral-normative moments, can be responsible for a child's learning problems and restraint in becoming adult (Sonnekus).<sup>(83)</sup> Also, Van Niekerk<sup>(84)</sup> emphasizes the pluriformity of the learning-, becoming adult-, educating-, and teaching-event as well as the complex nature of the child's psychic life (emotional, intellectual, volitional, etc.), that can give rise to phenomena of tension among which are a variety of forms of behavioral and learning problems.

## **7. THE NECESSITY FOR A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON A LIFEWORLD ALIENATING SUBJECT-CENTERED CURRICULUM AND TEACHING PRACTICE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BECOMING ADULT**

In light of the radical critiques converging on the school from all regions of the Western world it appears that particular fundamental questions compel serious consideration: What ought to be the primary and overarching aim of school teaching—to prepare children to pursue and study subject sciences or disciplines of knowledge; alternatively to prepare them for humanly worthwhile and meaningful adult ways of living. Must specific subject content that is culturally-historically and scientifically-economically defined and selected be mastered or must children be helped with figuring forth on a level elevating and meaningful way their “conversation” with those aspects of reality that are directly important regarding the central problems of being human? What ought the point of departure be for curriculum development? What subdivisions of subject matter must be taught at the school level or what must a child know and do to be considered someone who has become adult? How can subject scientific contents be selected, ordered and simplified for each subject matter of primary and secondary school teaching: or what aspects of reality as lifeworld content must be unlocked for a child on each level of his becoming on the way to adulthood? It is obvious that with these questions absolute-oppositional alternatives are not necessarily meant in light of the essential structure that is characteristic of the culturally-historically formed Western world-image in which the subject sciences, as ways of categorizing, also have played their part.

However, what will be considered here is the primary aim and point of departure of teaching children educatively that, in my opinion, cannot merely be the subject sciences. It must be kept in mind that contemporary subject disciplines (because of super-specialization of terrain and methodology necessitated by the unceasing explosion of knowledge owing to technologizing and/or theorizing and professionalizing) are often arrived at in ways that are little connected with the original questions of a child. In this case there is little to be recognized of a person's original meaning-seeking dialogue with and about the aspects of those realities that his wondering and admiring have awakened and that was the first impetus to the development of "science" as such, as well as thematizing reality into distinguishable subject sciences in particular. Even meta-sciences arose as reflections and investigations of problems that were generated by the practice of science itself. Tillich<sup>(85)</sup> points out that in a society where today cultural contents are made available through mass media and school teaching to more people than ever before in history, these cultural contents have become "cultural commodities", "...sold and bought after they have been deprived of the ultimate concern they represented when originally created ... They become matters of learning, weapons of competition or social prestige, and lose in this way the power of mediating a spiritual center to the person".

In contrast to this, it cannot be ignored that both the child and the school are situated in a particular way with respect to a demand placing contemporary adult lifeworld as materialistic, capitalistic, technocratic, highly competitive, consumer-societal and occupational world. However, to contend that either the (technical or theoretical) scientific, and the occupational preparation functions of the school, in light of the contemporary degree and level of specialization and the continually increasing tempo of change regarding these two (coupled) areas, or the optimally meaningful unfolding of a child's potentialities, as becoming an adult, can best be served by the system of formal classroom subject instruction would be extremely naïve. To offer the objection that fundamental renewal and reform of a culturally-historically formed, societally-economically determined and institutionally legally established institution such as the school with its curriculum is extremely difficult to accomplish.<sup>(86)</sup> The fact that this problematic is

connected with extremely difficult views of being human and the world, as well as with practical, economic and social questions within a heterogeneous society, and that attempts and experiments to better realize the total becoming of a child which in practice too often have shown themselves to be unsuccessful and even catastrophic (e.g., the Montessori schools in the Netherlands) should excuse neither the pedagogical thinker, as disinterested scientist, nor the society as a whole, exempt from scientific necessity and pedagogical accountability to reflect on this matter in a penetrating way.

#### **8. APPENDIX; PERTINENT FINDINGS OF THE HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH COUNCIL (HSRC) INVESTIGATION OF THE PROVISION OF EDUCATION IN THE R.S.A.<sup>(87)</sup>**

A few pronouncements, principles, findings and recommendations included in the mentioned report of the Main Committee of the HSRC study of education seen in light of the purpose of the previously concluded argument and will be noted here only summarily. In the first place, it is of greatest importance that what the principle guideline clearly recognizes is the imperative of supporting a person to the self-fulfillment and realization of his given potentialities within the framework of the Nation's demands for economic growth and manpower.<sup>(88)</sup> However, it is a pity that in the final formulation of the principle that has relevance to this, i.e., "Principle 4", the balance appears somewhat skewed at the cost of the actualization of a child's given potentialities: "The provision of education shall be directed in educatively accountable ways to the needs of the individual as well as to those of the society and economic development and also will take into account the manpower needs of the Nation."<sup>(89)</sup>

With respect to important problem areas of the contemporary provision of education, it is indicated that education too easily is obviously viewed as the way to development, economic advancement, elevating standards of living, establishing a cultural identity, etc., but that more often than not because of a disharmony between education and societal needs, practice results in problems of unemployment and a hopelessly unrealistic run to universities.<sup>(90)</sup>



The latter obviously is connected to what is called the “academic” value-system of South African education, notwithstanding the fact that a very large percentage of pupils never continued on with academic education: “This resulted in a large part of the White population entered the world of work without adequate occupational qualifications, skills or appropriate values. In the case of other population groups the percentage not continuing to tertiary education not only is much greater, but a high percent leave school before they in any sense have acquired adequate qualifications, skills or useable value systems.”<sup>(91)</sup> The way to mastering technology is viewed as mastering the various scientific disciplines with the result that handiwork and handiness are looked down on and little justice is done to actual preparatory occupational training. To this it is added that it is not unlikely “... that a too abstract approach to a study of the natural sciences is partly responsible for the limited interest and inadequate success in studying the applied sciences”.<sup>(92)</sup>

The following finding is closely connected with this and in all probability it is not exclusively applicable to children from a “more traditional culture” but with slightly different nuances is similarly applicable to the city child, the apartment dweller, a child of working parents, etc., all children who in one or another respect are going to be weighed down by a background of a “limited field of experience”: A large percent of children in all populations grow up in circumstances where they do not have enough concrete experience of science, technology and management that must serve as a basis, e.g., for mastering mathematics and science if they are offered in abstract, academic ways. This partly explains the defects in trained manpower in technical-scientific areas, including teachers of these areas. An academic-theoretical method of teaching scares students away from these subjects. The “academic” system of teaching also is inclined to place a high premium on the acquisition of knowledge. Because this knowledge often isn’t brought into relation with the experiential field of a child from a more traditional culture, this leads more often to memorizing than to developing insight. In spite of the spectacular expansion of the teaching system, this “academic” teaching does not result in attaining the developmental aim, i.e., supplying trained manpower with the necessary value system, insight and skills to contribute to the

development of the Nation. Should such a situation endure for a long time, later it would be extremely difficult if not almost impossible to make changes against the large vested interests in it that have built up.”<sup>(93)</sup> The most important question that flows from this is, moreover, if there are any other circumstances that can be mentioned of the optimal realization of these children’s total personal potentialities for unfolding or becoming a proper adult within a cultural-economic context.

With respect to problems of teaching the natural sciences and mathematics, there is reference to syllabus deficiencies, defects of any sort in adequately trained or qualified teachers, in teacher preparation and teaching methods, etc. all of which are factors that will be considered more thoroughly in a later chapter. That the quality of teaching in need of evaluative inquiry is not limited to the mentioned areas is evidenced by the finding that after leaving school pupils show an inability to communicate even in their first language while also the writing formulation skills of a great many students too often are left to chance.<sup>(94)</sup> It then also is illuminating that it bluntly can be stated that the incidence of scholastically restrained children is related directly to the quality of teaching that they are offered: “It seems from the research that there are great gaps in the degree to which teachers can identify these children, can evaluate and provide help to them with respect to professional personnel who can investigate these children, help them and accompany their teachers, etc.”<sup>(95)</sup>

The reverse of this problem is the indifferent neglect of the special educative need of optimally realizing the potentialities of the highly gifted and talented child.<sup>(96)</sup>

When the quality of a school’s contribution to a child’s personal unfolding is quarried, the question of curriculum development and the problems related to it are an obvious focus of the inquiry. Thus, the report also emphasizes the importance of a coordinated and purposeful curriculum service to provide an answer to the question regarding “... differentiated learning material that is meaningful and relevant and that can be offered in an educatively accountable way so pupils can be educated as responsible members of society”.<sup>(97)</sup> With respect to the existing curriculum practice in the

R.S.A. it is found that there is a lack of curriculum specialists which means that persons who must make curricular decisions are not at all prepared or equipped to do so, while there is not sufficient opportunity for teacher participation in curriculum development on a meso- or macro-level. Recommendations in this respect seldom rest on research and more often on personal preferences and experiences. A lack of oversight caused by the variety of persons, authorities and departments involved with this, has the additional consequence that important curricular areas are neglected.

The historical influence of university admission as a dominant norm for all teaching in the R.S.A., moreover, means that even courses not focused on university admission often are “watered down” but continue to bear the stamp of university admission courses. Fitting in with this is the finding that teachers, even when they differ from this, are exceedingly bound to slavishly following the syllabus and textbooks that sometimes deviate from the original aims of the curriculum developers, the defective dealing with curriculum problems in teacher preparation courses and the skeptical attitude towards and limitations of research, experimenting, etc., and, thus, the scope and seriousness of the problem becomes somewhat clearer. Finally, it still must be mentioned that from the research it has seemed clear that contemporary practice curriculum development is carried out from a variety of different aims, philosophies of life, and views of science and being human and not according to principles proposed for the entire country.

Additional problems of urgent concern are the unsatisfactory state of school and vocational counseling where in practice little is done justice,<sup>(98)</sup> as well as the lack of integrating teaching technology as support function that only now is beginning to be adopted in spite of the extremely valuable role that can be filled in this way if it can be implemented in an accountable way.<sup>(99)</sup> In light of the large increase in the school population as a whole as well as the lack of teachers in certain subjects, teaching technology, by means of distance teaching and other methods, should be able to make the desired contributions to enriching the quality of teaching in the classroom, in the beginning preparation of teachers, etc.

It is stated that, “The standard for employment in teaching mainly is defined by two matters, i.e., the quality of the person prepared and the quality of preparation for effective task performance he experiences.”<sup>(100)</sup> In this light, the critical defects of professionally qualified teachers must be viewed as one of the most pressing problems brought forth in the report, a problem that has the greatest effect on both the quality and quantity [of teaching] in schools for Blacks and Coloreds. The recruiting of adequately qualified teachers, however, was hampered by factors such as the following: non-competitive salaries; excessive bureaucratic control of the profession; the status and image of teaching; lack of professional mobility in teaching; etc. Naturally, the professional status and quality of teacher preparation are interdependent and that are impeded by various factors among which are the low status of teacher training colleges, questionable professional and academic standards, and the fact that the organized profession does not have shared authority for preparing teachers.

Now add to this the gaps in the provision of health services, school plan standards, educational finance and management systems, the linkage between school and community, and so many other areas and it ought to be very clear that there are many questions hanging over nearly all of the facets of the schools’s education-realizaing functions within our society, some of which will be looked at more closely in this study.

## 9. SYNTHESIS

Human openness and freedom regarding a never completed personal unfolding is the actuality from which the task of educating takes its point of departure. Although childlike learning as becoming adult, as a matter of the purposeful design of a future and an emancipative acquisition of an identity are always subject to a child’s willed choice to accept co-responsibility for the unfolding of his potentialities, the actualization of his total psychic life, as becoming adult, continually announces itself as an unavoidable pedagogical task. The coherence between the phenomena of learning and becoming adult represents the junction between what simply and artificially is viewed separately as “educating” and “teaching”. In contrast to this, the dynamic of educating and the

dynamic of teaching, to the extent that children and adults are mutually involved in them, cannot and must not be described as separate entities. A school always and only represents but a formalized, purposefully planned and systematically refined extension of level-elevating help regarding meanings that are offered by adults to children so that the latter gradually will embody the norm image of adulthood.

Thus, a teacher is nothing more than a professional educator and, from a psychopedagogical perspective, this implies that his classroom task and responsibility amount to the fact that, in purposeful, systematic, planned and formal ways he offers accompaniment to the [child's] self-actualization of [his] childlike psychic life as a totality-in-function. The learning access to whatever contents at all is only meaningful and essentially understandable as an absolutely personal act of a child-in-education. Since a professional educator must never involve himself with a child in haphazard, cursory or unplanned ways, thus in educatively aimless ways, he must not only hold himself answerable for his eventual aims for a child but he also must be able to account for what he aims for in each separate lesson in light of the overarching aim as verbalized in the fundamental pedagogical aim structures. The psychic moments of adulthood, however, also are psychopedagogically verbalizable and such a psychopedagogical interpretation of the norm image of adulthood is necessary for an orthopedagogical evaluation of the contribution of the school in a child's personal unfolding. Here one can agree by viewing the psychologically optimal unfolding of an adult as an independent, self-actualizing person as an exemplar of a progressive, self-accompanied, level-elevating integration of affective, cognitive and normative psychic life potentialities. Both the existential being-happy and the meaningfulness of a person's existence are closely related to the ever-advancing, future-anticipating, personal unfolding event of self-actualizing within which the exclusive human ability to transcend also is embedded.

Accompanying a child to self-actualize his potentialities for personal unfolding in school—just as at home—only can occur by teaching particular content. Thus, help with personal unfolding must not be viewed as next to or even over against help in learning in the

teaching event. Although there sometimes is a shift in emphasis in the sense that the teacher at times is more purposefully involved with “emotional forming”, or “educative work” (usually on the playing field!), it is an error that leads to countless malpractices in teaching and lesson practice to mean that one who teaches is not at the same time involved in accompanying personal unfolding. The question is where must this personal unfolding eventually lead and serve; i.e., to what degree is the figurative quality of the pedagogical essences realized adequately or not in the classroom by means of teaching, thus by means of the essences of the lesson structure. This means that if a teacher’s intervention with a child cannot be qualified as accompanying help in the optimal self-actualization of his psychic life potentialities to the highest level attainable for each child as a person (thus, affectively, cognitively and normatively) so that he is authentically present to the world in a human way, such teaching can be qualified neither as forming nor help in becoming adult.

In this light it is clear that the total current curriculum and teaching practice must be critically evaluated with urgency from the perspective of [a child’s] becoming adult, especially in light of the subject matter centered and thus lifeworld alienating character that increasingly characterizes the school. The necessity for this evaluation is underlined by the finding of the HSRC Study of Teaching that in reality the school is not successful in either its academic or occupational preparation functions, and in reality it fails in its task to give young persons to society, on the basis of an accountable curriculum design, who are equipped with the needed value system, relevant knowledge and appropriate skills to be able to maintain themselves in an adult lifeworld and in doing so to realize their own potentialities to the best benefit of our country. In the following chapter there is a more specific consideration of the possible ways of inadequate accompaniment by which a child in school can become alienated from his given potentialities to optimally unfold personally.

## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the above, hopefully it has gradually become clearer that the question of adequateness, or not, in the event of teaching implies

much more than the demand of harmony between form and content. There are many more potential levels of disharmony in the total dynamically interconnected event that come forth and are demonstrable in the school classroom event, e.g., between the education and teaching aim; school achievement and societal demands; the curriculum and the adult lifeworld; contents and the child's experiential world; contents and the child's potentialities for personal unfolding; and much more. An orthopedagogical evaluation of the adequacy of the school's contribution in a child's optimal unfolding thus should take into account all of these facets, as well as those factors connected with the content (curriculum), as such, and the ways the contents are presented (didactic as well as fundamental pedagogical and psychopedagogical considerations included), factors regarding the role of the person of the teacher, and factors and demands determined by the limitations and potentialities of the child as a person.

Finally, attention must be given to the quality of the pedagogical essences in the current curriculum and teaching practice as a macro-structural evaluation as well as to the lesson practice, as such, from a closer view to try to determine if and to what degree there really is success in a lesson structure in unlocking the curriculum contents for a child with an eye to a genuine learning effect of which there will be a closer look on a micro-structural level.

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