

# CHAPTER THREE

## CHILD PLAY: A PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

### A. Some philosophical anthropological categories of child play founded in a child's lifeworld and experiential world

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

One must continually keep in mind that openness is the most fundamental category underlying child existence <sup>(1)</sup>. Playing, as child activity, can only be understood if one fathoms a child in his/her involvement with reality.

It is meaningful that no antonym exists for "playing", in contrast to words such as "laughing" and "sitting". Perhaps, this can be explained by showing that the essentials of playing are unique to the ways a person appears; playing, in fact, is a fundamental tendency of being human. <sup>(2)</sup> Paul Moor <sup>(3)</sup> indicates that it is not possible to account for play as a purely psychological phenomenon. It does not necessarily have an origin or an aim outside itself. The origin of playing is found in playing itself. It is primordially given, and it is an obvious occurrence by and among persons.

Fathoming the phenomenon play allows one to see a child, in his/her becoming, as open possibility. A child cannot be described by fixed rules or laws because he/she continually announces him/herself as possibility (potentiality). This announcing occurs via modes by which a child-as-openness gives form to the world to which he/she directs him/herself <sup>(4)</sup>. In this light, a search for philosophical anthropological categories of play, is a search for the preconditions underlying the playing child as open possibility.

Here it is noted that the forms of life in the primary life situation of the family, cannot be separated, and neither can the philosophical anthropological categories underlying child playing. A child, as a functional totality, is in relationship to and in constant dialogue with his/her world. Philosophical anthropological categories, as expressions of the preconditions for this child-world relationship, are viewed as possible ways a child manifests him/herself to us as open possibility in his/her experiential world.

In differentiating among the philosophical anthropological categories, one must continually keep in mind their mutual connection, and reciprocal implications. Intentionality, and actualization, as specific categories, are described further because, particularly, they underlie the activity of child playing.

### 3.2 INTENTIONALITY

A child who plays is conscious of a surrounding reality and progressively becomes more aware of it. As an act of intentionality, playing is a matter of being-conscious of reality. Thus, it is a mode or way of being conscious. As a philosophical anthropological category fundamental to human playing, intentionality cannot be grasped unless the total structure of human consciousness is held in view.

Because openness is given with being-human, it is an onticity, an undeniable essence of being, a primordial datum of human existence. As openness, a person is intentionality; as being-open-for something, he/she is intentionally directed to reality, and faces the world in a relationship containing an appeal from it (passively receiving meaning) and, as a being-directed-to the lifeworld, in a relationship of answering that appeal (by actively giving meaning).

Since understanding a child's designing a personal lifeworld, thoroughly reflecting on the phenomenon of playing holds a special place in this study, and it is necessary to clarify the concept lifeworld, and especially the distinction between the personal lifeworld of a child, and the universal lifeworld.

The personal lifeworld is the naive, spontaneous life reality which is intentionally established and constituted by each person and which, in its turn, is always a potential experiential world. Lifeworld, as potential experiential world, thus, can refer to the universal, as well as the personal lifeworld.

Van der Stoep<sup>(5)</sup> also sees the foundation of intentionality in the conscious activities of a person. Intentionality is an act, an intentional activity<sup>(6)</sup>, an active going out to and entering the world. Since playing also shows this structure, it is described as a mode of intentionality. The deeper essence and especially the sense and meaning of a playing-being-in-the-world is sought in the difference

between act and functioning intentionality, a distinction first made by Kockelmans<sup>(7)</sup>.

**(a) Act-intentionality**

In his/her playing-being-in-the-world, a person is always intentionally, actively involved in the world. This intentional directedness is to something which is not consciousness itself, and it is designated as act-intentionality<sup>(8)</sup>. This act is directed from the totality of a person and indicates an active participation directed to a matter, an object, an event<sup>(9)</sup>, e.g., by a playing-being-in-the-world.

**(b) Functioning-intentionality**

Where act-intentionality refers to an active going out to the world, functioning intentionality refers to the meaning contained in a landscape, to the meaning a structure shows, and to the assumption that such a structure has a meaning<sup>(10)</sup>. A person is consciousness, but he/she knows him/herself in dialogue with the world. Person and world are two abstract moments of one total structure, presence<sup>(11)</sup>. Person and world form a unity of mutual implication, and a dialectic relationship between them is necessary.

Meaning is the result of an encounter between person and world in which both are involved. Functioning intentionality assumes that there is meaning in the object, matter, or event and, therefore, it is directed to discovering and ordering this meaning. Functioning intentionality is a meaning-giving, meaning-investing activity. Thus, intentionality essentially is an act of giving (and receiving) meaning. Child playing, then, is a mode of functioning intentionality, and can be understood as a mode of intentionality. Child playing is a being directed-to and an openness-for the world. The initiative for establishing relationships resides with a child him/herself.

**3.3 ACTUALIZATION**

A child is openness, i.e., he/she is someone who stands open to the world, but also is directed to it. In other words, his/her being-in-the-world is characterized by intentionality as existentiality. As potentiality, he/she is neither completed nor predictable. That is, his/her positive potentialities must thrive and be actualized. A child him/herself has the greatest share in this, and this is emphasized by mentioning self-actualization. This emphasis on self-actualization is necessary because a child will and must become someone (Langeveld). However, he/she cannot manage this on his/her own and, therefore, accompanied, or guided actualization

by an educator also is necessary. A child becomes ever closer to adulthood by means of accompanied actualization, and, in this study, playing is viewed as a mode of self- and accompanied actualization of a child's becoming.

Becoming is essentially an elevation in the level of a child's living, which means he/she continually lives on higher levels which are increasingly more in agreement with certain demands of propriety. Through self-, and accompanied actualization, the implementation of responsibilities, meanings, choices, and values is elevated.<sup>(12)</sup>

As a mode of actualization, playing is a primordial way of being, and a fundamental form of child existence. Thus, from the beginning, a child plays because he/she is a child. Play is one of the most salient essential modes of existence, and form of actualizing his/her becoming. Hence, a child who does not play does not become since his/her level of living is not elevated.

Vermeer<sup>(13)</sup> distinguishes four levels of playing, i.e., senso-pathic, handling, esthetic (or constructive), and illusive (or fantasy) play. These four levels are viewed as levels of becoming and, e.g., if a child does not engage in illusive play, or does so inadequately, according to Sonnekus<sup>(14)</sup>, his/her becoming is deficient because, then, this elevation does not occur.

It is relevant to emphasize that, while becoming, a child lived experiences on all four levels of play, and these moments of lived experiencing are of a senso-pathic, pathic, affective, senso-gnostic, gnostic, and cognitive nature. Playing, then, is a form or way of actualizing his/her becoming and according to Sonnekus<sup>(15)</sup>, a child who does not play or who is handicapped in his/her play, for whatever reasons, becomes hampered in his/her lived experiencing, as becoming. Thus, a non-playing child's lived experience shows an attenuated becoming.

To play is only a potentiality, and the initiative for playing is in a child him/herself. As a human being, as a person, he/she is intentionality, and an appeal must be directed to him/her, as initiative, to improve (change) the non-playing relationship, when he/she does not play. He/she may have the potentialities for playing but, nevertheless, not play. It is an educative task to make such a child is a playing child.

An additional aspect of actualization is the fact that, in the same way that potentialities in the world become open for a child, he/she becomes aware of him/herself as a new potentiality for acting. He/she becomes spurred on by affective, and cognitive lived experiences.

In playing, a child is always bodily involved. Thus, corporeality, as lived bodiliness, also is an essence of child playing and, thus, of actualizing the essence of intentionality through playing. In play, a child is not merely a bodily, or psychic, or spiritual being, but a functioning totality. This means that, via playing, he/she is involved with his/her whole being in his/her self-actualization.

Child play is characterized by movement. Lived experienced movement in child play means there is a willingness to move, a mode of being which, according to Sonnekus<sup>(16)</sup>, is only possible for a person, in the sense that only he/she can signify what he/she is and, thereby, break away and move in the direction of what he/she ought to be.<sup>(17)</sup> Therefore, play can only be pedagogically meaningful if it helps a child move from the ways he/she gives meaning to his/her world at a given time, to new elevated ways, along with the responsibility which goes with this. This means that, with the help of playing, a child's lived experiences must continually be elevated. That is, he/she must gradually and progressively move away from child ways of lived experiencing in the direction of more adult ways.

Sonnekus has shown that lived experience is a valid psychopedagogical category, and it is discussed next.

## **B. Lived experience as a psychopedagogical category and its significance for understanding child play**

### **3.4 LIVED EXPERIENCE**

Playing is a way of lived experiencing and, thus, it refers to a person's affective way of being-in-the-world, i.e., to his/her meaning-seeking attunement to his/her world.<sup>(18)</sup> Further, with reference to lived experience as an activity, Pretorius<sup>(19)</sup> says that

the concern is not with the fact that a person **has** a lived experience, but that he/she lived experiences and, this, is never passive. In addition, he states that especially Linschoten,<sup>(20)</sup> Sonnekus,<sup>(21)</sup> Lersch,<sup>(22)</sup> and Landman<sup>(23)</sup> strongly emphasize activity as an essential of lived experiencing.

With respect to lived experience as an act of intentionality, playing, as being-in-the-world, is a modality of this intentionality and is an active way of lived experiencing. Thus, to acquire insight into playing as an active way of lived experiencing (and intentionality), the concept or category of lived experience itself must be grasped. From a psychopedagogical perspective, Sonnekus<sup>(24)</sup> mentions the following four essential moments of lived experience:

**a. Lived experience is a human mode of being**, and it is one of the categories of human openness. As such, it is a way of giving meaning to the world. Thus, a playing child, through lived experiencing his/her playing, actively gives meaning. Pedagogically guided lived experiences of playing, then means that this giving meaning is carried out on an increasingly higher level. Here one thinks of the lived experience of the meaningfulness of treating the play material in responsible ways, e.g., by not destroying it, by putting it away;

**b. Lived experience is actualized on different levels**, which vary from a predominantly pathic (affective) to a more gnostic (cognitive) level. To be pedagogically meaningful, accompanying and guiding a child also must contribute to actualizing a primarily gnostic (cognitive) way of behaving;

**c. Lived bodiliness (corporeality)** is the essence of the totality of lived experiencing. This means that a child must be involved in the play situation with the completeness of his/her being a child;

**d. Lived experience possesses** a character of **intentionality** and of **activity**. Sonnekus<sup>(25)</sup> arrives at the following provisional definition, "lived experience is the intentionally determined, subjective, personal attitude of a person, as totality-in-function, in his communication with reality". A significant implication of this definition is that an educator should anticipate that a child must be urged to take an attitude, or position in the play situation. This occurs each time he/she is confronted with a choice, e.g., when a person turns to a child's original experiential world, or lifeworld, it is seen that playing is a way of lived experiencing. Thus, by using "lived experience" as an illuminating means of thought (as a category), child play can be fathomed and understood in terms of it.

Various authors have indicated that lived experience is not a purely cognitive matter, but that it also includes pathic (affective) and moral (normative) moments. These moments (aspects) of child lived experience are not separable because each implicates and includes the others. However, since some moments might momentarily overshadow others, they are distinguishable.

#### **(i) Pathic-affective moments of lived experience**

Straus<sup>(26)</sup> describes the pathic moment as an original given, and as arising from a child's primordial experiencing in his/her direct communication with the world. Sonnekus<sup>(27)</sup> also speaks of a felt pre-cognitive lived experiencing in communicating with the world. Thus, the pathic is a person's unique, subjective, affective way of lived experiencing in his/her dealings with reality. Pathic lived experiencing is the origin, or precondition for gnostic (cognitive) lived experiencing.

As far as playing is concerned, it is evident that the quality of pathic lived experiencing is of fundamental importance. A little child is more disposed to give and to lived experience meaning pathically, and playing is one of the ways in which he/she goes out to the world to master it.

With each return to the safe, pathic space of the play therapy situation, the lived experience of security provides a stable foundation for a higher level of lived experience and makes it possible for a child to explore and to break through to further horizons. Playing, then, is lived experienced play, because each possibility for its actualization offers a child yet a new possibility to be actualized, each time on a higher level. This means that a playing child gradually and progressively steps out of his/her pathic sphere of lived experiencing and enters the gnostic sphere.

#### **(ii) Gnostic-cognitive lived experience**

The gnostic moment of lived experience is cognitive in nature. It is a lived experiencing on a more distanced level than the pathic-affective. The **gnostic** is concerned with the **what**, as this is contained in the reality which is lived experience, while the **pathic** is concerned with the **how** of being involved with this reality.<sup>(28)</sup>

As indicated, to be a person is to be concerned with actualizing one's potentialities, and playing-in-the-world is a mode of being

which is given as a potentiality which must be continually actualized on a higher level. A child accomplishes this through playing.

### **(iii) Pathic-gnostic lived experiencing**

A small child, for the most part, lived experiences pathically. For a becoming child to venture, he/she must progressively distance him/herself from the safe space in which he/she finds him/herself. For this to occur, it is necessary that this space is lived experienced as a stable world. This is because gnostic lived experiencing can only thrive because of a stable pathic-affective experiential world.

The pathic is connected more with the senso-pathic, i.e., the pathic is dependent on the sensory. Thus, the pathic is lived experience which is qualified by the sensory. Therefore, in the play situation, a pedotherapist (an educator) must require that a child use his/her senses, and lived experience the meaningfulness of his/her sensory efforts.

To the extent that a child's becoming flourishes, his/her pathic lived experience undergoes a change in structure. The pathic acquires a more controlled flavor because there is a move away from the immediate sensory. With each elevation in level, through meaningful sensory efforts, e.g., related lived experiences show an ever-differing quality until eventually the pathic can be described as affectivity. This change gives impetus to the cognitive activities.

Just as there is a becoming from a pathic to an affective actualization of lived experience, there is a (correlated) becoming from a gnostic to a cognitive actualization. Then, we prefer to speak of a gnostic-cognitive lived experiencing. Cognitive lived experience has affective lived experience as a fundamental foundation out of which qualitatively different levels of lived experiencing are actualized, but also qualitatively different pathic affective levels are actualized via gnostic-cognitive lived experiences. As far as playing is concerned, as becoming occurs, the pathic undergoes a qualitative change in structure, which serves to support the cognitive ways of lived experiencing (and playing).

### **(iv) Normative ways of lived experiencing**

No lived experience of meaning, attribution of meaning, taking an attitude, as the actualization of intentionality can occur without norms. A child only lived experiences what is of value to him/her.



He/she gives sense and meaning to what is valuable, and in this way, it is elevated to a norm-for-him/her.

Sonnekus<sup>(29)</sup> and Pretorius<sup>(30)</sup> point to the unity between pathic and gnostic lived experiencing, on the one hand, and normative lived experiencing, on the other hand, and they understand that normative lived experiencing also is attributing and experiencing (receiving) meaning. Thus, essentially, normative lived experiencing is concerned with a child's involvement with the demands of propriety, or norms. Both a child and an adult must comply with demands of propriety. If an adult exemplifies these demands, they are and become meaningful to a child. If a child is disposed to live up to the demands of propriety, they become "alive" for him/her (Langeveld).

A child as such, is not placed at the center of an educative situation; but neither can norms be lived up to and enforced without considering the nature of being a child. In an educative situation, a child, indeed, is in the foreground, but the norms are at the center.

Educating through playing, then, is a normative matter. Through playing, a child is introduced to norms. His/her life becomes "norm centered" so that eventually he/she lives and experiences the norm-image of adulthood. Just as adulthood, as the aim of educating, is normative, through playing, it also is a normative concept.<sup>(31)</sup>

### 3.5 BECOMING: LIVED EXPERIENCE AS BECOMING

The term "becoming" is preferred in contemporary pedagogical thought to the naturalistic term "development". Landman<sup>(31a)</sup> describes becoming as an elevation in dialogue, a change in the level of a child's dialogue with his/her world.

Langeveld, in his child anthropological axiom that a child is someone who him/herself wants to be someone, and that he/she is dependent on being educated, recognizes a child's own role in his/her becoming, **and** which he/she cannot be or become someone, as he/she should, on his/her own without the help and support of an adult. Thus, becoming is co-influenced by educating.

Following Sonnekus, self-actualization and guided actualization are accomplished by "lived experiencing as becoming". A lived experiencing child continually takes an attitude during his/her becoming and, in doing this, he/she is aware that he/she becomes.

Elevating in becoming, as elevation in dialogue, is determined, on the one hand, by his/her own contribution and, on the other hand, by an adult's educative participation. An adult uses, among other things, playing and language (conversing) as forms of his/her guided actualization of a child's becoming.

This study especially is concerned with playing, as a form of actualizing, but playing goes hand in hand with language. The moments of lived experience within which these ways of actualizing are implemented, vary across senso-pathic, pathic, affective, senso-gnostic, gnostic, cognitive, and normative levels of lived experiencing. As far as these moments of live experience are concerned, attention is called to the senso-pathic level of sensing, on which a young child initially becomes involved in and lived experiences his/her world. The biological growth of a child is closely related to this senso-pathic lived experiencing. That is, a child lived experiences growth in such a way that he/she assumes an attitude toward it and becomes conscious of it. This also means he/she continually attributes new significance to his/her bodily-pathic experiencing, and this is lived experienced as meaning. A child's becoming is described in terms of some ways of actualization to which this phenomenon gives rise.

#### **(a) The biological moment**

Bodiliness or corporeality is the center of lived experiencing. Linschoten indicates that the lived world, also known as the field of consciousness, always has a human body as its center, e.g., as the center of seeing and acting. All lived experiences of time, space, feelings, thoughts are rooted in bodily activity.

#### **(b) Exploration-as-lived experienced-becoming**

Exploring means to go out to the world, enquire about, and survey it. At first, such exploring is bodily, e.g., when a child crawls, walks, views, perceives. Langeveld indicates that exploration especially is the result of a child's lived experiencing of security arising from overcoming his/her helplessness.

Exploring is an emotional actualization inseparable from the bodily. Even so, a child explores in senso-pathic, pathic, and affective, but also in senso-gnostic, gnostic, cognitive (as well as normative) ways. According to Sonnekus,<sup>(32)</sup> this exploring varies in level from the senso-pathic to the cognitive. Hence, actualizing playing, and the related actualizing of language (on the different levels of lived

experience), are used in his/her exploring-as-lived experiencing-becoming.

**(c) Emancipation-as-lived experienced-becoming**

According to Langeveld, <sup>(33)</sup> the principle of emancipation is embedded in the principle of exploration, which means that, in his/her exploration, "the child himself wants to be someone". This child anthropological pronouncement by Langeveld refers to a primordial (original) way of child-being and is, thus, present from the beginning.

Sonnekus <sup>(34)</sup> says that it is meaningful that a child, in his/her exploration-as-lived experienced-becoming, continually lived experiences that he/she him/herself is, will be, and will become someone. Here there is a lived experiencing of self, which is actualized across the range of the different levels of lived experiencing.

**(d) Distancing-as-lived experienced-becoming**

Viewed from the perspective of lived experience, all elevations in level, or becoming-as-elevation-of-dialogue mean a **distancing**. A child's entire becoming is constructed on distancing. At birth, a baby is already distanced from his/her mother when the umbilical cord is cut. Hereafter, he/she must and will surmount his/her own helplessness, and he/she does this through attaining safety and security. He/she explores and gradually emancipates him/herself by wanting to be someone.

Entering school and identifying with others are additional examples of distancing, and this course of becoming is continued until he/she becomes an adult. Distancing means to lived experience on a higher level, and to take a more ordered (i.e., cognitive) attitude.

**(e) Differentiation-as-lived experienced-becoming**

Here, differentiation must be seen as a child intentionally taking an attitude or position toward him/herself. Sonnekus <sup>(35)</sup> says that differentiation refers to the different ways a child is directed in his/her becoming, e.g., in bodily, in pathic-affective, in gnostic-cognitive ways. The processes of bodily growth remain at a child's disposal, but their actualization occurs by means of "differentiation-as-lived experienced-becoming" in the form of different modes of intentionality. A child him/herself differentiates his/her becoming

by means of sensing, attending, perceiving, thinking, imagining, and fantasizing, and remembering, among other ways.

**(f) Objectifying-as-lived experienced-becoming**

To comprehend objectifying-as-lived experienced-becoming, it is necessary to understand that a small child initially does not enter a distanced world. Child and world are one, and everything "belongs to me"; thus, he/she doesn't understand what it means to share with another. Gradually, he/she arrives at an elevation of level, as distancing, and then he/she can "step out of" his/her own bodiliness and, because of his/her self-consciousness (as spiritual dimension), he/she can view him/herself "objectively". He/she can enter such an objective lived experience of self-judgment by means of his/her potential cognitive ways of being, because of his/her intentional directedness, and differentiation.

Becoming is an existential fact of child being, and is reflected in his/her playing, in that he/she must and will play. However, in his/her playing, and in his/her becoming, both viewed as an elevation in level, he/she is dependent on the assistance of an adult. This means that becoming also is co-defined by playing in educative situations.

Now that lived experience, as a psychopedagogical category, is attended to, the idea of an experiential world is examined more closely. To clarify the concept of "experiential world", one must understand, from a psychopedagogical perspective, the concepts "experiencing" and "lifeworld".

### **3.6 EXPERIENTIAL WORLD**

**(a) Experiencing**

The world originally experienced by a child must be sought phenomenologically, because it is a world in which the data of experience are knowable in their still original, primordial forms. This involves a child's pre-scientific, primordial experiencing in his/her primordial situation (of the family). In the contemporary literature, the concept "experiencing" is used in confusing ways; thus, it is necessary to trace its origin. <sup>(36)</sup>

In its Old Indian origin, the word "psu" means breath, and "ug" means to travel or navigate. Psyche, then, means the "breath that travels". The words "travel" (vaar) and "experience" (ervaar) are

linked to the words "conduct," or "comportment" (voer). To "travel" means to move toward and to be in motion; it implies to "reach" (some place or thing). With reference to the above meaning of "travel" (vaar), a child, via his/her psychic life, can know through experiencing that which manifests itself.

Aristotle describes experiencing as the basis for all knowing. He contends that the beginning of all learning is rooted in experiencing because the particulars available in perception become generalized and explicated to the level of valid knowledge through experiencing.

Husserl shows that insight into a phenomenon such as experiencing is only possible if one takes intentionality into consideration. This intentionality is interpreted by him as the movement of a person to live reality and, in this way, to provide evidence in the acts of consciousness, i.e., in learning to know this reality. Therefore, Husserl speaks of an act of consciousness as a matter of human intentionality. He describes the connection between learning to know and experience as follows: to learn to know reality, i.e., to go out to reality, as intentionality, is the most primary of all human actions. To know means to understand the reality at one's disposal. Such going out to reality implies action directed to mastering this reality. This act of consciousness includes perceiving, but it also leads to experiential involvements by which scientific knowledge becomes possible. A person's active going out to reality, therefore, is an original mode of living and, thus, is a precondition for knowing. Thus, Husserl contends that it is not possible to understand reality without experiencing it. By implication, this means that experiencing enables one to question an unknown (aspect of) reality in meaningful ways.

By virtue of one's being-in-the-world, experiencing enables one to master and control reality through the things with which one becomes involved. This allows for the further possibility of discovering the essentials of things from the things themselves. As a result, a person's primary interest with reality is heightened which, in turn, decisively influences the relationships he/she creates with reality. In these relationships with reality, human intentionality is seen in its essentials (Heidegger), especially concerning the scope of these relationships. In the life of a child, his/her playing experiences are his/her first and fundamental understanding of things and, therefore, his/her primary relationships with reality are disclosed by and displayed in his/her playing.

It also is meaningful to note that each person's experiences of reality are original. A complete view of and insight into an aspect of reality, merely by perceiving is impossible because, as Husserl shows, aspects not yet perceived and experienced cannot merely be assumed to exist. Those aspects which one cannot perceive, but yet are a presence assumed to exist, are called anticipations by Husserl.

Anticipation is an essential moment of experiencing, especially in the sense that it is a pre-understanding of a concrete experiencing and experiential meaning such that these anticipations give rise to additional experiential possibilities.

At this point, the question arises about the relation between experiencing and lived experiencing, as it appears in the reality of educating, as lived experience is actualized in a child's playing.

**(b) The relation between experiencing and lived experience**

The issue of lived experience is particularly significant because its actualization, as explicated by Sonnekus<sup>(37)</sup>, is manifested in a child's activities, including playing. In this connection, Sonnekus mentions three psychopedagogical themes:

- (i) the stream of lived experience varies regarding the pathic-affective and the gnostic-cognitive moments;
- (ii) lived experience is a matter of meaning. The stream of lived experience, as a continuous giving meaning, also is a matter of reasonable and meaningful content;
- (iii) lived experience implies **understanding** (Heidegger) and **attunement**. This means that the mutual relationship between understanding and existential sensitivity (mood-ness) must be discernible, and these forms of living must be manifested in educating. In searching for what constitutes the foundation of a child's lived experience, Sonnekus includes learning to know. An educator intercepts lived experiencing, sometimes by means of playing, to help him/her learn to know. Experiencing, in the first place, assumes knowing, especially in the sense that this knowing is a gathering and ordering of available data so a conscious judgment can be made.

To experience means to be able to do, to be able to act in a situation. Playing, which is supported by experiencing, is no blind action, but one which follows the appeal of the givens (data) which

call and speak from the situation. Experiencing indicates controlling, and is not merely a matter of knowing, but also of doing. Thus, playing is a matter of a child's knowing "play", and it assumes activity and a place where this playing activity can be actualized. The place for play at the Child Guidance Clinic is the playroom (see Chapter 5).

Experiencing also assumes thinking, and thinking, itself, is impossible without an experiential foundation. A person without experience is inconceivable, at least within the framework of pedagogics. Thus, there also is no child who does not experience and lived experience.

Experiencing itself, cannot be communicated; all that is communicated is the **result** of experiencing. A child's, and especially a little child's way of communicating is actualized through playing on the different levels mentioned. This discussion is equally valid for lived experience.

When one works with the concepts experience and lived experience, one is involved with reciprocal concepts. Thus, lived experience can arise from experience, but it also constitutes the origin of experience, especially in a pathic moment. Lived experience, thus, can lead to experience but, on the other hand, experience can arise from lived experience. These moments, then, are reciprocal.

### **(c) Lifeworld**

Sonnekus<sup>(38)</sup> contends that a child's original experiences are rooted in his/her lifeworld. These original experiences, then, are viewed as pre-scientific experiences in his/her lifeworld. According to Sonnekus, the lifeworld is the world which is established via intentionally and constituted by each subjects in his/her relationships to the beings to which he/she directs him/herself. A subject [person] is united with all such beings by intentionality, is not isolated from them, and the lifeworld is the primordial ground for one's own living, and it is given prior to all viewing, knowing, reflecting, and to all science.<sup>(39)</sup>

To fathom the existential sense of child playing, one must go to a child's lifeworld. In this lifeworld, one sees that a child lived experiences, and that playing is a way of lived experiencing. Lived experience is always a lived experience of something, and this something is a child's experiential world.<sup>(40)</sup> In one's search for the

pedagogical, existential character of playing, attention must first be given to a child's experiential world, which now is possible because the key concepts of "experience" and "lifeworld" have been illuminated.

#### **(d) Experiential world of a child**

The total lifeworld cannot be lived experienced all at once. While lived experiencing, as a moment of giving meaning, and taking an attitude, the lifeworld becomes an experiential world.<sup>(41)</sup> Thus, the experiential world is a momentary landscape. Thus, the experiential world is the lifeworld as it is momentarily lived.<sup>(43)</sup>

Pretorius views the experiential world as a slice of reality which a person lived experiences by taking an attitude toward and giving meaning to it.<sup>(44)</sup> Sonnekus<sup>(45)</sup> also emphasizes that, by giving and experiencing meaning, a child creates an experiential world, as a momentary slice of his/her lifeworld, which is viewed as a potential experiential world. Where the lifeworld is a horizon of familiarity, the experiential world is the continually changing, continuous, total reality with which a person, at a specific moment, is intentionally involved, and to which he/she takes an attitude (pathic, gnostic, normative), and to which he/she gives meaning within this horizon (lifeworld).

Child openness, incompleteness, and given potentialities make his/her becoming possible, and enable him/her to continually ascribe new meanings (to what is experienced). The adequate actualization of each moment of playing actualizes lived experiencing and, thus, constitutes an experiential world. When a child creates or constitutes an experiential world for him/herself, this means that he/she constructs, creates, and constitutes relationships with reality in pathic, gnostic, and normative ways. The constitution of an experiential world means an elevation of the form of dialogue, and points to an elevation in level through playing.

In revealing the child anthropological categories of intentionality and actualization, as well as the psychopedagogical categories of lived experience and lived experience-as-becoming, one now has the underlying preconditions, i.e., possible differentiated ways in which a playing child discloses him/herself as an open possibility in the lifeworld.



Now, an additional task is to show how playing is used as: (i) a medium of pedotherapeutic evaluation, and (ii) a pedotherapeutic medium for a disturbed child in his/her world. Thus, in the next chapter, child playing is viewed from a pedotherapeutic perspective. For it to be "pedagogical", an evaluation, first, must be educative in nature. This means that the evaluation must be implemented in such a way that fundamental pedagogical essences are thereby actualized. In the second place, an evaluation must be pedotherapeutic in nature, i.e., an evaluation must be actualized in such a way that it already is a form of pedotherapy.

The following chapter is divided as follows:

The theme "pedotherapeutic perspective" is broken down into two subparts, i.e., (1) playing as a mode of pedotherapeutic evaluation, in which attention is given to the educative and pedotherapeutic possibilities of playing, and (2) playing as a form of pedotherapy.

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