

CHAPTER TWO THE EDUCATIVE AIM

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

The educative activities described and explicated in the previous chapter are not actualized for the sake of those activities themselves. Educating is not initiated for the sake of educating but for the sake of a child-in-educating, thus, a child-under-the-educative-aim. In other words, the fundamental pedagogical structures described in chapter one are actualized in a pedagogic situation as pedagogic relationship and sequence structures with the purpose of realizing the *pedagogical aim structures* (educative aim).

When there is mention of, “for the sake of a child-in-educating,” this means that an educative (pedagogic) situation involves a child and his/her being on the way to live the demands of propriety as an adult ought to live them. In other words, he/she must gradually and progressively live the norm-image of adulthood. Essentially, this involves a child-in-the-normative, thus, a child and the demands of propriety (norms), the *normative*. Both child and adult must satisfy demands of propriety. An adult must exemplify these demands and then they will be and become meaningful to a child. A child must be supported to emulate the demands of propriety and then they will become enlivened for him/her (Langeveld). Thus, a child as such is not placed at the center of an educative situation because this would be a falling into *child-centrism*. However, the norms also cannot be maintained or enforced without considering the childness of a child. This would be a *norm-centrism*. What indeed happens is that in an educative situation a child is brought into the *foreground (child-centrism)* with norms at its center (norm-centrism). Educating, then, is a normative matter. A child is introduced to norms. His/her life becomes informed by norms so that he/she will eventually live the norm-image of adulthood. Adulthood, as the aim of educating, thus, is a *normative* concept. It does not primarily have to do with a person’s age but with whether he/she satisfies particular demands of propriety. When these demands of propriety are studied, knowledge of the universally valid *contents* of the form of being human, which is described as adulthood, is acquired. Consequently, this is what this chapter has in view.

2.2 KNOWLEDGE OF AIM

An educator must know to where he/she will support a child before he/she can begin with educating. He/she must know what he/she will not allow of a child, thus which turns in a child’s course of becoming must be avoided (A. Fischer). If this is not the case, an educator’s pedagogic interference cannot be purposeful and, thus, not effective, and will degenerate into haphazard activities. The aim of educating and an educand are not two separate worlds in opposition to each other. The aim (adulthood) is directly related to an

educand. In educating, the duality “educative aim” and “educand” form an educative unity (Langeveld). It is always an educand who is on the way to somewhere, thus, to a destination, his/her destination; thus, he/she is on his/her way to living the norm-image of adulthood. A child also experiences that adulthood is his/her natural destination (Langeveld). As the *idea* of what must be striven for, adulthood is an indication of what value-possibilities (which norm-image) can be unlocked for a child by pedagogic interference. Whoever talks of the pedagogic (educating) has the idea of adulthood in mind (Oberholzer).

There is a polar field of tension between educating and its aim. It is a tension directed at realizing its aim (Prohaska). This aim is actualized in an event of accompanied dependence entwined with accompanied independence with an eye to self-independence (Oberholzer). An educator leads a child pedagogically because the latter has a need for support. During his/her becoming, a child shows independence and he/she must be allowed to carry all the responsibility which he/she can. This sign of independence must be acknowledged and strengthened by pedagogic approval. When a child eventually guides him/herself independently, he/she is no longer a child but an independent practitioner of the norm-image of adulthood. At first, an educator chooses for a child. This choice for a child is alternated with increasing opportunities which are created for him/her to make choices for him/herself, and eventually he/she must carry full responsibility for his/her choices and the actions resulting from them (Oberholzer). Thus, educating must lead to the awakening of personal responsibility in lifeworld relationships. Hence, the aim of educating is the [child] becoming an adult person by personally deciding to accept unconditionally and consciously his/her responsibility for [meeting] the demands which his/her lifeworld requires of him/her. For this, it is necessary that a child, as becoming adult in a lifeworld which is filled with demands of propriety, be supported to accept responsibility for meeting these demands (Dopp-Vorwald, Derbolav).

Hence, a child ought to gradually become more independently responsible. In an educative situation, this does not primarily involve what a child is, but with what [who] he/she can become and, even more so, what he ought to become. What a child is becomes clearer if one knows what he/she ought to become. What he/she ought to become can only be realized in connection with what he is (T. Litt). Thus, there is an intrinsic connection between the pedagogical relationship of knowing (what is) and the aim of educating (what ought to be). There is a living stream of becoming between the *is* and the *ought*. An educator does not see what *is* as isolated, but as a movement progressing from what *was* to what ought *to be* (T. Litt). It is a pedagogical task, thus an educative aim, which a child must learn in his/her willing and acting to increasingly bond with what ought to be (W. Fischer), i.e., to be a practitioner of the norm-image of adulthood.

A child continually changes in the direction of *greater* adulthood, i.e., in the direction of acquiring moral adulthood (Langeveld). Thus, there is mention of a child *becoming* in the direction of the norm-image of adulthood. What is meant when *becoming* is talked about?

2.3 BECOMING

A child is a participant in the reality of life (lifeworld) in which adults appeal to him/her to continually become different. He/she must and ought to become different. Although it is appropriate to be a child, because he/she is fully entitled to his/her child-being, it is not appropriate for him/her to remain so. He/she who remains a child can be described as infantile and, thus, as immature. Hence, a child ought to become different, and this means that it is a pedagogical demand that he/she be supported in this becoming different. Becoming different in the direction of adulthood is only possible through pedagogical support. Fortunately, a child can and wants to become different, so this difficult pedagogical task becomes possible. Educating is giving support to a child in his/her becoming different; it is *helping-him/her-with-his/her-becoming*. A child's destination is the adult lifeworld, and it is just this tension between his/her non-adulthood and adulthood which makes educating possible. Therefore, this tension is also called a fruitful tension (Glaeser). In this tension there is a progressive affirmation by a child that to increasingly satisfy the demands of adulthood is a matter of propriety.

A child is in a continual relationship with his/her lifeworld. In other words, he/she carries on a *dialogue* with his/her world. The fruitful tension between what he/she is (non-adult) and what he/she ought to be (adult) results in his/her dialogue with the world continually changing. Although very gradual, his/her dialogue continually becomes increasingly more like that of an adult. Consequently, this is also what becoming really means: dialogue change in the direction of adulthood. That is, *becoming is dialogue-elevating*: the level on which the dialogue is carried is elevated by providing pedagogic support. A child becomes through his/her dialogues. This means that an isolated child will remain a child (eventually non-adult). In educative situations he/she must be given an opportunity to elevate his/her dialogues with the world. For example, a child continually elevates his/her dialogue when he/she acquires new knowledge and each time he/she succeeds in satisfying the demands of propriety to a still greater degree. If a child's dialogues remain the same, this in no sense is becoming and at most there can be talk of growth. A child must be supported to change his/her dialogues. Each dialogue which a child adequately actualizes serves as the fulcrum for [elevating] a following dialogue, thus for a child's becoming.

A child is a participant in an educative situation. This means that his/her becoming is also and especially a task for him/herself. In his/her becoming, he/she is increasingly involved in accepting this task. He/she must be given an opportunity to carry all the responsibility which he/she can. Dialogue elevation means for a child to continually accept greater *responsibility*. In a pedagogic situation, a child is called on to elevate his/her dialogues to a continually higher level until he/she shows, in his/her living, the norm-image of adulthood (elevation in responsibility).

A person attributes meaning to the things, events and other persons in the world in which he/she finds him/herself. In other words, both adult and child signify their world. An adult does this in adult ways and a child in not-yet adult ways. In an educative situation,

a child is supported to signify (attribute meaning) in an increasingly adult way. He/she is progressively held responsible for the way he/she attributes meaning. He/she is pedagogically supported to change meaning because he/she cannot remain signifying in a childlike way. Thus, he/she must be supported to an *elevation in meaning* until he/she signifies in accordance with the norm-image of adulthood. It is mentioned that initially choices are made *for* a child. Gradually choices are made *with* him/her, and eventually he/she chooses for *him/herself*. A person is a choosing being, but a child chooses differently than an adult does because of his/her non-adulthood. In pedagogic situations, he/she must now be supported to change [some of] the choices he/she has made (pedagogic intervention). This is a change which becomes ever closer to an adult way of choosing and includes taking responsibility for his/her resulting actions. Consequently, this is an *elevation-in-choosing* until his/her choices are made and his/her activities are realized in the light of the norm-image of adulthood.

The course of a child's becoming is characterized by an elevation of his/her dialogues, by his/her exercise of responsibility, by his/her attributions of meaning and by his/her choices with their resulting actions. Becoming is, thus, an elevation which has educating as a precondition. That is, educating is necessary *help in his/her becoming* in which everything pedagogically permissible is done to make the norm-image of adulthood possible and meaningful for him/her (realizing-an-elevation-in-values).

Now it is clear that a childlike course of elevated becoming must have a *temporal* progression. A child is involved with this progression in time. His/her past influences his/her present and even penetrates into the future, while the relationship between the future and the past continually changes. The past gradually expands—an adolescent has a longer past than a toddler. With an expansion of the past, a clearer participation in the future becomes possible. That the past increases and means a gradual elimination of the educative event becomes possible and necessary. Becoming is activated pedagogically and is a becoming in the direction of a personal future in which the norm-image of adulthood will be lived in the fullest. A child acquires help in becoming so that he/she can live his/her life independently as it ought to be lived (Langeveld). His/her becoming is a gradual understanding of what a life means in the light of the norm-image of adulthood (temporal elevation).

2.4 THE NORM-IMAGE OF PROPER ADULTHOOD

When it is said that educative activities must be purposeful this means an educator must continually hold in view an *idea* which is striven for, although it can never be entirely attained. As an idea of what must be striven for, the norm-image of adulthood is an indication of which value-possibilities can be unlocked for a child by pedagogic interference. In the following, a few such value-possibilities are discussed:

1. *Meaningful existence*

An adult person who leads a meaningful life is aware that he/she may not make demands of life. For example, he/she may not say, "Life has treated me badly." The question is what he/she can offer life. Life makes demands on him/her, e.g., the demand to live

properly (demands of propriety). Thus, a person is called on and one who is called on must respond. An adult must know that his/her response is to live an accountable life, i.e., to be able to *account* for his/her choices and resulting activities. In addition, he/she is aware that his/her choices and activities are carried by his/her knowledge that life is meaningful in that it has a particular meaning for him/her. This especially means that he/she is called on to actualize values.

2. Self-judgment and self-understanding

An adult is capable of an active and critical self-judgment. He/she can evaluate his/her choices and actions in terms of the demands of propriety, i.e., he/she can apply criteria and norms. He/she can express moral judgment about his/her choices, activities and about his/her life plans, i.e., what he/she has in view for his/her life. An adult can critically interpret his/her positive human potentialities and, thus, he/she has self-understanding at his/her disposal. He/she is also able to interpret this self-understanding in terms of the demands of propriety, vocational demands, etc. which life presents him/her with.

3. Human dignity

An adult is aware of his/her dignity as a person, thus that he/she must behave as can be expected of a *person*. He/she can live in accordance with the demands of propriety, something of which only a person is capable. An adult also has respect for the human dignity of other persons.

4. Morally independent choosing and acting

An adult is someone who can remain true to the extreme consequences of his/her decisions. His/her choices and resulting activities are determined by demands of propriety which express a highly esteemed value-idea, i.e., what he/she views as of the highest value for him/her personally. Thus, he/she can choose independently and take responsibility for his/her choices and actions: in this context, [if a believer] he/she feels him/herself as bound to a Higher Authority which calls him/her to account.

5. Responsibility

An adult understands that being responsible is a fundamental principle of being human. His/her disposition toward life confirms that he/she is fully aware of what his/her responsibilities are toward all that is contained in life, and that being human means to perform tasks with responsibility.

6. Norm identification

An adult is someone who does not do what is proper because other expect this of him/her. He/she does what is proper for the sake of the proper itself. That is, he/she lives under the authority of norms because he/she has identified him/herself with these norms: he/she is capable of a norm-directed identification which is evidence of an independent, accountable notion of propriety.

7. Philosophy of life

An adult's choices and resulting activities are characterized by an unconditional commitment to the demands of propriety which express life obligatory values, thus, values which he/she considers he/she has an obligation to realize. These values express his/her philosophy of life, thus, what he/she views as highly valuable for his/her life of choosing and acting. An adult can show a constant obedience to his/her philosophy of life and the demands of propriety which speak from it.

An adult's life of choices and the resulting activities shows a strong bond to his/her philosophy of life and its demands of propriety. This bond amounts to a sensitivity for a commitment to and consistent obedience of the demands of propriety of his/her philosophy of life.

An adult [Christian] is aware that Someone as Task giver calls for him/her to show the norm-image of adulthood in his/her living.

2.5 IN CONCLUSION

An educator represents the norm-image of adulthood in an educative situation. Thus, he/she represents what was described and explicated in the immediately preceding pages. An educator must continually apply the value-possibilities as criteria (norms) to evaluate the quality of his/her representation of adulthood. In this light, he/she can also try to evaluate whether he/she has succeeded in effectively interfering pedagogically, thus, if he/she more closely supports his/her educand in exercising the norm-image of adulthood. This is what pedagogical responsibility means.

A person also has a valuing-consciousness at his/her disposal, i.e., an inherent notion of values. This means that he/she can and must value (evaluate). While he/she makes value judgments, he/she is aware that certain matters are more valuable to him/her than others. Thus, he/she evaluates educating his/her children as valuable and child neglect as not valuable. Hence, he/she evaluates in terms of contrasts such as educating as *worthy* and neglect as unworthy. This means he/she acknowledges that educating is more elevated than neglect. He/she then becomes aware of the worthwhileness of educating, and he/she is grasped and claimed by educating-as-a-value. Educative work is now going to confront him/her with *demands* and, indeed, the demand which expresses the *proper* realization of the pedagogical relationship, sequence and aim structures. This implicates, e.g., these pedagogical structures as demands of propriety. This means that if he/she wants to educate *properly*, he/she must meet the *demand* that these structures must be realized; this means that the following must be clear to him/her:

- the relationship of understanding as a value,
- the relationship of trust as a value,
- the relationship of authority as a value,
- association as a value,
- encounter as a value,
- engagement as a value,
- interference as a value,

return to association as a value,
periodic breaking away as a value,
the educative aim as a value, and
the *contrasts* [*negations*] of these as unworthy.

An educator is aware that in appraising his/her educative work, he/she must judge whether he/she has realized these educative values. This means that these values become *yardsticks* (criteria) for evaluating whether his/her educative work is performed properly; then they become *norms*. These mentioned pedagogical structures now indicate to him/her what ought to occur in his/her educative work. As norms, they give him/her direction, especially in the sense that he/she knows that these structures, which are valuable to him/her, in fact are demands of propriety (norms) to which he/she must show unconditional obedience. This is so because, in the norm (educative value as demand of propriety), he/she is not confronted with a choice, since it is a *task* under which he/she is placed. If he/she does not accept these demands of propriety (norms) as *tasks*, he/she cannot be an educator, because [to be an educator], his/her task is that these norms must be obeyed. This occurs when he/she accepts these educative values as matters which must be realized and when he/she evaluates the quality of his/her educative work in their light.

The mentioned educative values are necessary [valuable] for all educative situations and, thus, the norms which flow from them are valid for performing all educative work. However, each educator is in a particular educative situation in which a particular philosophy of life speaks. This means that the universally valid norms must be furnished with philosophy of life content (e.g., Christian-National). When this has occurred, these norms become *principles* for a particular educator. These norms become rules of behavior which give direction to his/her actions with children (e.g., children of the Covenant).

For example:

The relationship of understanding, as *value*, is *normative* (demanding) in the form of understanding-being-a-child and understanding-the-demands-of-propriety which, in its turn, amount to the following *principles*: understanding the meaning and implications of being a child of the Covenant and of Protestant-Christian *demands of propriety*.