

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-education, thus a child-under-the-educative-aim. In other words, the fundamental pedagogical structures described in chapter one are actualized in a pedagogical situation as pedagogical 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-education” this means that in the educative (pedagogical) situation this involves a child and his being on the way to live the demands of propriety as an adult ought to live them. In other words, he must gradually and progressively live the norm-image of adulthood. Essentially this involves a child-in-the-normative, thus the child and the demands of propriety (norms), the *normative*. Both child and adult must satisfy particular 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 these demands will become enlivened for him (Langeveld). Thus the child as such is not placed at the center of the educative situation because that would be a falling into *child-centrism*. However, the norms also cannot be maintained or enforced without taking into consideration the childness of a child. This would be a *norm-centrism*. What indeed happens is that in the 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 life

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becomes informed by norms so that he 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 satisfies particular demands of propriety. When these demands of propriety are studied, knowledge of the generally valid *contents* of the form of being human that 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 will support a child before he can begin with educating. He must know what he 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, the educator's pedagogical interference cannot be purposeful and thus also not effective but will degenerate into haphazard activities. The aim of educating and the educand are not two separate worlds in opposition to each other. The aim (adulthood) is directly related to the educand. In educating the duality "educative aim" and "educand" form an educative unity (Langeveld). It is always the educand who is on the way to somewhere, thus to a destination, his destination; thus, he is on his way to living the norm-image of adulthood. A child also experiences that adulthood is his 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 pedagogical interference. Whoever talks of the pedagogical (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. In the course of his becoming, a child shows independence and he must be allowed to carry all of the responsibility that he can. This sign of independence must be acknowledged/strengthened by pedagogical approval. When a child eventually guides himself independently he 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 that are created for a child to make choices for himself and eventually he must carry full responsibility for his choices and the actions that result from them (Oberholzer). Thus, educating must lead to the awakening of personal responsibility in life world relationships. Consequently, the aim of educating is the [child] becoming an adult person by personally deciding to accept unconditionally and consciously his responsibility for [meeting] the demands that his life world requires of him. For this it is necessary that a child, as becoming adult in a life world that 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 he can become and, even more so, what he ought to become. What a child is becomes clearer in light of what he ought to become. What he 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, that a child must learn in his 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 (life world) in which adults appeal to him to continually become different. He must and ought to become different. Although it is appropriate to be a child because he is fully entitled to his child-being, it is not appropriate for him to remain so. He 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 be supported in this becoming different. Becoming different in the direction of adulthood is only possible through pedagogical support. Fortunately a child can and also wants to become different so this difficult pedagogical task becomes possible. Educating is giving support to a child in his becoming different; it is *helping-him-with-his-becoming*. A child's destination is the adult life world and it is just this tension between his non-adulthood and adulthood that 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 life world. In other words, he carries on a *dialogue* with his world. The fruitful tension between what he is (non-adult) and what he ought to be (adult) results in his dialogue with the world continually changing. Although very gradual his dialogue continually becomes more and 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 pedagogical support. A child becomes through his dialogues. This means that an isolated child will remain a child (eventually non-adult). In educative situations he must be given the opportunity to elevate his dialogues with the world. For example, a child continually elevates his dialogue when he acquires new knowledge and also each time he 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 dialogues. Each dialogue that 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 becoming is also and especially a task for himself. In his becoming he is increasingly involved in accepting this task. He must be given the opportunity to carry all of the responsibility that he can. Dialogue elevation means for a child to continually accept greater *responsibility*. In a pedagogical situation a child is called on to elevate his dialogues to a continually higher level until he shows in his 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 finds himself. 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 is progressively held responsible for the way he attributes meaning. He is pedagogically supported to change meaning because he cannot remain signifying in a childlike way. Thus, he must be supported to an *elevation in meaning* until he signifies in accordance with the norm-image of adulthood. It was mentioned that initially choices are made for a child. Gradually choices are made with him and eventually he chooses for himself. A person is a choosing being but a child chooses differently than an adult does because of his non-adulthood. In pedagogical situations he must now be supported to change [some of] the choices he has made (pedagogical intervention). This is a change that becomes ever closer to an adult way of choosing and includes taking responsibility for his resulting actions. Consequently, this is an *elevation-in-choosing* until his choices are made and his 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 dialogues, of his exercise of responsibility, of his attributions of meaning and of his choices with their resulting actions. Becoming is thus an elevation that has educating as a precondition. That is, educating is necessary *help in his becoming* in which everything pedagogically permissible is done to make the norm-image of adulthood possible and meaningful for a child (realizing-an-elevation-in-values).

Now it is clear that the childlike course of elevated becoming must have a *temporal* progression. A child is involved with that progression of time. His past influences his 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. The fact that the past increases means that a gradual elimination of the educative event becomes possible and also 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 can live his life independently as it ought to be lived (Langeveld). His becoming is a gradual understanding of what a life means in 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 that an educator must continually hold in view an *idea* that 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 pedagogical 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 may not make demands of life. For example, he may not say, “Life has treated me badly.” The question is what does he have to offer life. Life makes demands on him, e.g., the demand to live properly (demands of propriety). A person is thus called on and one who is called on must respond. An adult must know that his response is to live an accountable life, thus to be able to *account* for his choices and resulting activities. In addition, he is aware that all of his choices and activities are carried by his knowledge that life is meaningful in that it has a particular meaning for him. This especially means that he is called on to actualize values.

2. Self-judgment and self-understanding

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

3. Human dignity

An adult is aware of his dignity as a person, thus that he must behave as can be expected of a *person*. He is able to 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 decisions. His choices and resulting activities are determined by demands of propriety that express a highly esteemed value-idea, i.e., what he views as of the highest value for him personally. Thus, he can choose independently and take responsibility for his choices and actions: in this context, he feels himself as bound to a Higher Authority that calls him to account.

5. Responsibility

An adult understands that being responsible is a fundamental principle of being human. His disposition toward life confirms that he is fully aware of what his responsibility is 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. He does what is proper for the sake of the proper itself. That is, he lives under the authority of norms because he has identified himself with these norms: he is capable of a norm-directed identification that 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 that express life obligatory values, thus values that he considers he has an obligation to realize. These values express his philosophy of life, thus what he views as highly valuable for his life of choosing and acting. An adult is able to show a constant obedience to his philosophy of life and the demands of propriety that speak from it.

An adult's life of choices and the resulting activities shows a strong bond to his 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 philosophy of life.

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

2.5 IN CONCLUSION

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

A person also has a valuing-consciousness at his disposal, i.e., an inherent notion of values. This means that he can and must value (evaluate). While he makes value judgments he is aware that certain

matters are more valuable to him than others. Thus, he evaluates educating his children as valuable and child neglect as not valuable. Hence, he evaluates in terms of contrasts such as educating as *worthy* and neglect as unworthy. This means he acknowledges that educating is more elevated than neglect. He then becomes aware of the worthwhileness of educating and also he is grasped and claimed by educating-as-a-value. Educative work is now going to confront him with particular *demands* and indeed the demand that expresses the *proper* realization of the pedagogical relationship, sequence and aim structures. This implicates, e.g., the pedagogical relationship, sequence and aim structures as demands of propriety. This means that if he wants to educate *properly* he must meet the *demand* that these structures must be realized; this means that the following must be clear to him:

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

must be obeyed. This occurs when he accepts these educative values as matters that must be realized and when he evaluates the quality of his educative work in their light.

The mentioned educative values are necessary [valuable] for all educative situations and thus the norms that 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 generally 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 that give direction to his actions with particular 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 that, 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*.