Bravená, Noemi

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Kassel : kassel university press 2019, 262 S. - (Beiträge zur Kinder- und Jugendtheologie; 43)

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Leibniz-Gemeinschaft

BEITRÄGEZURKINDERUNDJUGENDTHEOLOGIE

Noemi Bravená

"DO NOT BE CONCERNED ONLY ABOUT YOURSELF ..."

TRANSCENDENCE AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE SOCIALIZATION AND FORMATION OF A CHILD'S PERSONALITY

Beiträge zur Kinder- und Jugendtheologie

Band 43

Noemi Bravená

"Do Not Be Concerned Only About Yourself…"

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"Do Not Be Concerned Only About Yourself…"
Transcendence and Its Importance for the Socialization and Formation of a Child's Personality

Noemi Bravená

Abstract

The aim of this interdisciplinary monograph concerning a child's transcending is to make the multivocal concept of educational reality more easily accessible. In the theoretical part the concept of transcendence is analyzed from the point of view of linguistics, the philosophy of education, psychology, and religious pedagogy. The influence on upbringing is also pointed out clearly. The thesis further develops the concept of the ideal *homo transcendens*; care and concern for the transcending of educators, children, and the curriculum is also discussed.

Keywords

dedicated to
Zdeněk Helus and Vladimíra Spilková

Motto

"Personality-developing education is the learning process which helps a student learn through his personality and develops his personality as well. It orients and guides the student toward learning as a comprehensive insight into the world and his place and personal mission in it. By widening and deepening his understanding of the world and his place in it through education, a person is able to accept both his position in the world and his shared responsibility for the world. He realizes and actualizes his mission here, attains competence here, and achieves his self-transcendence here."

<div align="right">Zdeněk Helus</div>

Translator's Note

Dr. Noemi Bravená has provided us with a very important work indeed. Her extensive research and myriad of cited sources make a significant contribution to the field of pedagogy by focusing on child-centered education and personality development expressed most clearly in the "turning toward the child" educational framework. This "turning" demonstrates a recognition of the real problems found in the current educational situation as well as the multitude of opportunities for making necessary improvements. There is no doubt that her work will make a remarkable impact and influence future considerations in a variety of educational contexts, curriculum development, approaches to teacher training, and practical dialogue in the classroom.

Because her interdisciplinary work draws from a wide number of fields and subjects, some key terms may be used quite differently depending on their immediate context – whether theological, psychological, pedagogical, philosophical, etc. Although many specialized terms are interchangeable, relevant distinctions between them should still be noted (e.g, relationship or relation). For example, *transcendence/transcending, crossover/crossing over, outreach/reaching out, overlap/overlapping, overcoming, exceeding*, and *going beyond* are all related to the central idea of a person's activity of transcending. In addition, the concept of a *self* is often expressed as *I* and is normally used in the context of the relational paradigm of *I and You*. As each cited author used a different approach, it was hard to maintain any consistency in translating gender pronouns, so I have merely followed each author's own choice of words in using he, she, man, human being, person, etc.

May the reader always remember that translators provide a great service to those who are unable to read in the original language. We are certainly not perfect, but a good translator will try his best to help the reader grasp the logos, pathos, and ethos of the author's original text. Although this work is an academic monograph, its overall style and content is very understandable. Most importantly, Bravená notes that "the inability to have personal experiences with everything justifies dialogue as a mutual sharing, co-discovery, and co-creation" (13.5.1). Thus, it is our sincere hope that this English translation will serve as an inspiration for *You* the reader to realize the importance of transcendence for your own personality, and that you will "not be concerned only about yourself" but seek and learn to encounter, engage in dialogue, mutually share, discover, and create together.

Angelo Shaun Franklin

Foreword

This book presents the concept of human transcendence as one of the aspects of the new Czech pedagogical paradigm – **a pedocentrism of the new generation**. Its contribution to the global context of thinking about child-centered education is that it offers an interdisciplinary definition of the concept of transcendence. A more expanded essay developed from the positions of various disciplines was not the intent of this book. I aimed to demonstrate that the concept of transcendence has been considered and discovered in different fields and that there is a unified idea among them, even despite the multitude of definitions. The notion of transcendence is not only a concept relegated to theology or philosophy, but it can also become an integrative element and the main goal of education in all countries. Its main idea is striving for a higher meaning and purpose and the greater good of individuals, society, and the entire planet Earth. In this sense, an interdisciplinary understanding of the concept of transcendence provides a metaparadigm which individual societies and states can fulfill through their educational content and cultural specifics.

The idea of transcendence (outreach/overlap) is one of the main aspects of the pedagogical paradigm known as "turning toward the child" education, which has become a new paradigm of primary education in our country. What is transcendence and overlap? Does the child need it and how is it related to the child's education? The purpose of this book is to focus on that sphere which is beyond human beings and yet still a part of our everyday lives. This book presents a challenge for us to think about what this higher *It* actually is and calls us to ask pertinent questions concerning whether or not even this everyday *It* could possibly be something higher.

I will endeavor to find the answer to the question "what is transcendence?" and how it relates to the Latin concept of *transcendere*. I will also investigae the idea of non-egocentricism – not being concerned only about one's own self – which aims to provide a remedy to the unwarranted denial of the subject. True selflessness begins with a true view of oneself and knowledge of one's own self (*I*). Only a profoundly self-reflective *I* is able to get to know *You* and strives to encounter and embrace transcendent realities.

The Latin concept of transcendence, as well as the Czech concept of overlap, perhaps calls to mind only certain approaches and content characteristics. The idea contained in both concepts, however, is associated with mankind from the very beginning of human history. My main concern is to highlight what is **similar or that which leads to a common goal** in the theoretical concepts of different branches of humanities and what can create a real platform for mutual interdisciplinary cooperation and a future focused on the comprehensive education of children.

The book opens with Professor Vladimíra Spilková (chapter 1), who is one of the main originators of the new concept of child-centered education in Czech pedagogy and who has actively been involved in the curriculum reform of Czech education after 1989. In addition to her university activities, she has been helping educators to discover deeper meanings of education and childhood itself. The introductory chapter was written for foreign readers by an author who has experienced the transformation of Czech education and for whom the emphasis on

childhood, humanity, and the new concept of state education is her life credo. This monograph was defended in 2016 as a dissertation at the Pedagogical Faculty of Charles University where Professor Spilková served as head of the Department of Primary and Preschool Education and supported the theme of transcendence even though a dominating lack of trust in this concept in Czech society. This dissertation was successfully defended at the time when the instructor of this dissertation Professor Zdeněk Helus was in a coma and could not write his evaluation or publicly be present.

The main theoretical text is divided into three parts. The term "conceptual analysis" should not dissuade the readers but invite them to **travel across different disciplines** which are directly connected with with the idea or concept of overlap/transcendence. The chapter reveals our terminological commitment in that it also contemplates the hermeneutical specificity of the individual approaches and respects them. I focus on grasping the concept of transcendence in the linguistic-hermeneutical context (chapter 3) and how it has been understood in ancient, medieval, and modern thought (chapter 4). Further, the concept of transcendence is presented in the context of specific psychological issues (chapter 5) and in contemporary religious pedagogy (chapter 6). The conclusion of the first part is the 7th chapter which focuses on a brief summary of the concept of transcendence/outreach.

The second part of theoretical text seeks to answer the question of **what kind of personality is one which is developed in transcending**; it also asks whether and how this goal is attainable (chapter 8). The question is not asked from the position of whether or not transcendence is part of a human being but whether and how this personality component develops. The educator plays an important role as a model in transcending in the process of education. His activity is always associated with his own attitude towards selfing and the discovery of You (the child). Through this new approach to the other person, objectification (seeing others as subjects of interest) can be overcome (chapter 9). Children are not born with already developed elements of personality; children gradually develop and mature. This also applies to transcendence. Therefore, we can find important development milestones in the periods from infancy to puberty, and we can define certain factors that prevent children from developing certain elements of their personality (chapter 10).

The third part of this text deals with the **care for transcendence from the position of education**. It distinguishes care for the transcendental dimension of man's physicality, psyche, and spirituality. Spirituality does not refer to a particular aspect or worldview but rather to everything that leads man toward higher being and knowledge and guides him to a higher meaning of his life and the world as a whole. Caring for transcendence means an intentional focus of concern and care for all those involved in the educational process: the educators, the pupils, and the curriculum. It is a holistic, lifelong, and attentive care which is oriented on the **competence of higher-order thinking** (chapters 11 – 14).

The empirical part of this book (chapter 15 – 26) provides a connection between the theory and the underlying ideas, deals with the specifics of the selected methodology, and subsequently with the pre-research and research design.

This book addresses educators, parents, and all those who are not indifferent to the pursuit of a higher and deeper meaning of life. The **transcendent dimension of education** used to be on the fringe of our interests, but I believe that by following the new paradigm of "turning toward the child education" the importance of transcendence will increase in prominence, especially **in the context of an ever-changing Europe.** This increase will not only come as a unifying or integrative truth **but also as a plurality that requires knowledge and personal commitment** in both unique and everyday actions and in important and ordinary actions. People will not only become oriented towards a higher *It*, but they will also need to embrace everyday tasks and routine concerns in order to pave the way for the transcending *It*.

My dissertation supervisor Professor Zdeněk Helus (1935-2016) was a very humble man. When we spoke about his ideas which he and his colleagues developed into the pedagogical concept of "turning education," I mentioned several times that I

see a "Tetra Pak box" that can be filled with any kind of content. Professionally speaking, he provided a scientific foundation for a **metaparadigm which has profoundly influenced me in learning just how powerful and how simple it is at the same time and how it can be filled with different content in different countries or cultures**. He would always look at me and say, "You think so?" But both of us knew that we were touching upon something that connects, entertains, uplifts, and fills with respect...something that has great potential.

I believe that these timeless ideas will inspire readers in more countries (if so, then please write me...)

<div align="right">
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Contents

THE THEORETICAL PART

I Introduction

1 The Educational "Turning toward the Child" in the Context of the Czech Republic after 1989 and in the Context of the Debates concerning a Paradigm Shift for the International Perspective

Vladimíra Spilková

Since 1989 the attempts to transform the Czech school and education system have been set in the context of a fierce conflict of paradigms, frequently in the form of contradictory opinions and polarities. The dichotomous paradigms of education are referred to using different terms such as *the old and the new paradigm* (as defined in Johnson, Johnson 1994), the *traditional paradigms* which focus on the content of the curriculum/the sharing of knowledge, the *humanistic paradigms* which focus on the child/person (Rogers 1998), the *paradigms oriented towards the past*, and the *paradigms oriented towards the future* (Warner 2006; Young 1998; Greger 2007; Spilková 2012).

The conflict of paradigms and the changing approaches to education are a universal phenomenon distinctly influenced by the development of societies in different parts of the world, by social and cultural characteristics, by the needs of each society, by expectations, and so on. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the "traditional" education and schooling have been the target of strong criticism on a global scale. The international "new education" movement started to gain ground and reached its peak in the 1920s and 1930s (Singule 1992).

The scope of this text does not allow for a full critique, but an illustration of the kind of criticism of traditional education using the words of two distinctive personalities who influenced the debate conerning the changing paradigm will be mentioned. John Dewey rejects the traditional paradigm as undemocratic, inhuman, and one-sidedly intellectual – a sort of training which leads children to acquire ready-made knowledge which is not a product of their own activity and which is distant from their own experience. He ironically refers to pupils as "a theoretical audience," a passive object of the teacher's teaching attempts who merely acquire one-sided verbal and book knowledge (Dewey 1904). He also criticizes the formalism of the teaching methods, drilling, the underestimation of the possibilities of pupils' personality development, the neglect of pupils' needs and interests, and their being overloaded with information.

Carl Rogers, an important representative of humanist psychology, was also an important critic of the traditional approaches to school education (1998, p. 243-248). He formulated his main objections as follows:

1. Education only provides space for a person's intellect but not for the person as a whole.
2. Teachers are the bearers of knowledge, while pupils are expected recipients.

3. Verbal methods are the main instrument used to pass knowledge down to its recipients. Testing identifies the extent to which certain knowledge has been acquired by pupils.
4. Teachers are the bearers of power, while pupils are the ones who must obey. Pupils are best controlled by being kept in occasional or permanent fear.
5. Authoritative control is a recognized method applied in the classroom.
6. There is virtually no trust; pupils only work under control and supervision.

The influence of Rogers' humanistic client-centered approach (pupil-centered education in pedagogy) was becoming ever stronger. The "Copernican revolution" in the perception of the child, the child's education, and the school as an educational institution was reached in the 1960s and 1970s (Štech 2016, p. 74). In the following years, this approach started to lose its influence and was being replaced with the concept of "a child's rights," which also had a significant influence on certain approaches to education (Hejlová 2010). For the past two decades, it has been another concept which has been in the center of attention: the personalization of education, teaching, and learning. Its principles can be considered very close to the humanist concept of pupil-centered education and to the emphasis on the development of the pupil's personality (Helus 2010b). Personalization, for example, is a key point treated in the "White Book," the official paper dealing with the transformation of the English school system (see DfESm 2005, Gilbert 2007). At the same time, however, one needs to note the criticism of humanistic educational concepts expressed by H. Arendtová (1994, 2002), P. Rayou (2000), and by Štech (2016) in the Czech Republic. For many years already the Czech school system has been characterized by the predominance of the *traditional, old and transmissive* concept of school education. The reformist teaching methods only gained significant ground as part of the international new education movement in the 1920s and 1930s. This development was forcefully interrupted after the war, and for several decades the Czech school system returned to the traditional schooling and education (characterized by the above features described by Rogers).

After 1989 it was agreed that the Czechoslovak school system needed an essential systemic change. The key principle of the transformation of education and schooling relied on the idea of the humanization of education as described by the "school reform humanization program" and humanization "as the crystalizing axis of transformational changes" (Helus 1991, 2004; Kotásek a kol. 1991, Kosová 1995; Skalková 1993; Spilková 1997, 2005a; Spilková a kol. 2005b; Lukášová, 2010). In this sense, the 1990s reformatory changes represent a follow-up to the progressive tradition of the Czechoslovak schooling system between the two world wars.

The key point of the humanization of school and school education lies in a significant strengthening of the anthropological orientation understood as a "turning towards the child," a greater attention to the child's needs, interests, and the possibilities of his or her complex personality development. After all, "the proud pursuit of objectivity without a recognition of human limitations and the dimension of subjectivity in the process has proved to be a dead end that emits the stench of manipulation, the loss of human dignity, and finally nihilism" (Valčo, Valčová, 2014, p 25). This "turning towards the child" is called the paedocentrism of the new

generation, as the ideas of the early paedocentrism are being updated to reflect the existing contexts; these include the changing circumstances in the child's life (changes in the child's family structure, the impact of the media, the lack of primary experience and authentic personal experiences, the abundance of stimuli, the distortion of children's attention, etc., Helus 1991, 2004; Spilková 1997). Considering the development of the Czech school system during the past four decades, the emphasis on the child and his/her complex personality development truly represents a "Copernican" revolution concerning the point of school education.

The perception of a child as a dynamically-formed personality with his/her own orientation and ability to actively participate in his/her own development is an important premise. Childhood is understood as a "multitude of potentialities of growth and development." As a child depends on other people, this puts a greater responsibility for the creation of the best opportunities and suitable conditions for the flourishing of each child's potential on adults (Helus 2004, p. 94).

Based on the above perception of the child and of the significance of a good childhood for the child's future life and for the quality of his/her personality in adulthood, school is understood as a service to the child and a means to support his/her development – a development towards true humanity. In the spirit of Comenius' concept of "school as a workshop of humanity," school is a place which creates opportunities for a complex and comprehensive cultivation of a child's personality. The development of a child's personality at school is perceived as a development in the broadest sense of the word, that is, as an introduction to knowledge, as the transmission of social values and norms, as the cultivation of social relations, and also the child's cognitive, emotional, volitional, aesthetic, and ethical qualities (Spilková 1997; Spilková et al. 2005b; Lukášová 2010, 2013).

The emphasis on being human, the concern for the individual, and caring for the complex development of the individual's personality (including all of its qualities) is the key concept of the "***educational turning to the child.***" In the Czech context, this concept represents a paradigmatic change concerning the perception of the meaning and goal of education (Helus 2008, 2011). Helus emphasizes the need to overcome the limited perception of education consisting only in the effort to make pupils acquire information and skills. He puts a particular emphasis on moral qualities and values which he considers to be the personality features playing a key role in its complex and multi-faceted development. He pays special attention to the importance of the individual's spiritual dimension. The emphasis on this dimension is rather exceptional in Czech pedagogy, even though it is certainly a necessary and important component of true education.

The author defines five ***qualities of the spiritual dimension*** and shows the possible ways which lead to their development (Helus 2011, p. 25-26). The ability to reach out and to *transcend* is one of the key qualities which should be developed or at least supported at school. This ability is understood as an attempt to overcome the strictly pragmatic life orientation and to respect the significance of acts reaching out beyond one's own self (Helus 2008, 2011). The work of Helus is followed up with the work of Noemi Bravená (2016), who urges school to also include this dimension of personality development in its content goals and to guide children towards reaching

out beyond themselves in an effort to lay the foundations of a "transcending sensitivity." As proven by research, such a transcending sensitivity be developed in a natural way as early as in kindergarten (Bravená 2016).

The identity orientation of one's personality and the way towards one's personal maturity are also important spiritual qualities which should be cherished and well-founded as early as in one's childhood. In this context, using the words of Helus, education which turns to the child is "in particular a service to the individual's development on his/her life path which he creates as his/her own original work for which he/she gradually bears responsibility" (Helus 2011, p. 26). The emphasis on the *spiritual dimension of the personality* which can be found in the education of turning to the child raises a topic which has long been a taboo due to the impact of the communistic ideology and atheism (Spilková 2018, manuscript). In terms of pedagogy, the educational paradigm of turning to the child – with its emphasis on complex personality development including the care for one's soul elaborated in the form of general guiding principles especially by psychologist Helus – takes the concrete form of child-centered education or education centered on personality devleopment. The following text will focus on these two concepts.

What kind of inspiration does the education of turning to the child bring to the transformation of the Czech school system? What does child-centered education mean specifically for a specific school's reality, for the way of teaching, and for the teacher's everyday work with pupils? Changes in the perspective concerning children and childhood have a crucial impact on the change of the perception of children as pupils, on the teacher's attitude to each pupil, and on specific forms of communication and interaction at school. The basis consists in a partner-like attitude towards the pupil, an attitude based on worth, mutual respect, trust, tolerance, an understanding of the child's needs, and on a sensitive response.

The teacher respects the fact that even as he/she has his/her "own world" with its truths, laws, experience, and viewpoints, each pupil also has "his/her world" with its feelings, opinions, and experience. To understand a child one needs to try to see the world from the eyes of a child and try to understand his/her perception and feelings. The teacher should be the one who is able to approach the child and ask himself/herself questions concerning the kind of child he/she is dealing with and concerning what the child possesses inside (i.e., inner life). Moreover, the teacher should try to understand what is important to the child, what he/she is trying to achieve, what makes him/her happy, those things of which he/she is afraid, and other similar questions. Only thanks to gaining deep insights into the pupil's personality can the teacher become a facilitator of the child's learning and development and a guide on his/her way towards knowledge which helps him/her to find his/her way both in the surrounding world and within his/her deep self and to understand the context and links; only then can the teacher become a guide leading the pupil towards values and boosting his/her feeling of self-respect and self-confidence and other characteristics (Helus 2004; Spilková 2005a; Spilková et al. 2015b; Bravená 2016; Lukášová 2003, 2010, 2013).

The principle of unconditional positive acceptance of the other person and the strategy of support and positive encouragement (Rogers 1998) which is based on trust

in the pupil's competence, creative power, and possibility of self-improvement are considered to be the key condition of *quality communication between the teacher and his/her pupils* (and the key factor of the pupils' personality development in general). As for the area of social relations, a great emphasis is also placed on building the teacher's internal rational authority (Fromm 1967), which traces its origin to the teacher's extent of powers (not only to his/her power over the child) and to shared responsibility. Setting limits and clear rules of life at school and in the classroom and consistency in their application are also considered important. To help pupils identify themselves with the rules, it is important to allow them to participate in their creation and thus understand their importance for coexistence in the classroom. Respecting the rules helps to establish order in the school community. This gives the pupils a feeling of security, stability, and safety, and it has a major impact on the quality development of their personality.

The humanistic, personal, child-centered education puts a key emphasis on the teacher's systemic care for a good social and emotional climate in the classroom. The school classroom is an important social organism and one of the basic models of co-habitation that provides pupils with an immense range of social experience. It remains a major importance for the pupils' socialization and their complex personality development, in particular regarding the cultivation of values and attitudes (Hanesová, Masariková 2017b, pp 3502-3511). From the perspective of emotions, a good climate in the classroom is an environment where pupils feel secure, safe, and happy. Concerning the social perspective, it is characterized by relationships based on mutual respect, esteem, trust, thoughtfulness, empathy, and cooperation. Regarding work, it is an environment which creates conditions for active and creative work that involves concentration and interest on the basis of internally-accepted rules and order. Many authors have highlighted the importance of a secure environment with a prevalence of positive emotions is also emphasized in connection with the close link between the cognitive and affective aspects of learning (Brown 1971; Havlínová 1994; Skalková 1995; Stuchlíková 2002; Lukavská 2003). The influence of positive and negative emotions on learning processes has also been proven by research (Stuchlíková 2002; Havlínová 1994; Helus 1991).

A change in the hierarchy of the goals of education is another distinctive feature of the humanistic, personal, child-centered education. The dominant target orientation towards a holistic complex development of the pupil's personality known as complex education care is characterized by an effort to achieve a balance between knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values within the intention of Delors' four pillars or four key goals of education (i.e., learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, and learning to live together – each of which should receive the same amount of attention at school) (Delors 1996).

From its very inception, the content of the curriculum places an emphasis on meaningful learning and on the explanation of the reasons why a content dimension is important for the development of the pupil's personality; in addition, the explanation of the meaning of the content for any further acquisition of knowledge in a given field or area is important. It is quality rather than quantity which matters most. The goal is thus to select category-based, representative pieces of knowledge which will

represent whole areas of knowledge by way of examples. Working with this selected information, pupils can truly penetrate, experience, and understand the meaning of what they learn and use it actively as a tool for their future development.

The above approaches concerning the goals and content of school education correspond with the constructivist or socio-constructivist approaches to the acquisition of knowledge and learning (Tonucci 1991; GFEN 1991; Štech 1992; Spilková et al. 2005b). These put an emphasis on a dialogue-based acquisition of knowledge which is always anchored in a social context (in particular the communication and interaction with fellow students and the teacher) and on the authenticity of knowledge ("me" as the subject of the original acquisition of knowledge"). Searching, discovering, and constructing knowledge on the basis of one's own activity, experience, actions, and personal interpretation of the world have a major importance.

Respect for "a pupil's close experience" is an important feature of the constructivist concept of education. Work done at school always departs from what pupils know in reality, what they can imagine, and what they have experienced. Learning is thus an amplification and reconstruction of what the pupils already know in some form. The key element is to overcome differences (between previous and current knowledge and between different opinions of individual pupils) and epistemological ruptures (leaving the existing way of thinking behind).

The pupil is put in the role of an explorer or researcher. The emphasis is on questioning, working with doubt, searching for answers, finding problems, and creating hypotheses. This is conditioned by the transformation of the traditional school classroom with pupils as passive recipients of information with limited abilities to use or elaborate on this information in a productive way into a "community of inquiry" that emphasizes the social dimension of learning. In a community of inquiry, "students listen to one another with respect, build together on their thoughts, express mutual doubts, help one another to formulate opinions…" (Lipman 1991, p. 15).

The constructivist concept of teaching necessitates the use of adequate teaching and learning methods. Activity methods are a preferred option, as they allow the teacher to create opportunities for pupils' independent and creative activity, for the usage of higher levels of thinking (in particular critical thinking), and for the creation of problem situations in which pupils look for solutions (separately or in cooperation with others and with a varying degree of help from the teacher), work with various sources of information, discuss, explain, and use arguments, etc. An emphasis is also put on experience-based methods which have a strong potential in the area of moral education and in guiding children towards the ability to reach out and to realize other similar abilities.

The key principles of the humanistic, personal, child-centered education also include the emphasis on **cooperative learning** (Johnson, Johnson 1994; Kasíková 2001). Pupils cooperate in achieving goals, while the results of an individual are supported by the activity of a whole group of pupils, and the whole group benefits from the activity of an individual. Pupils learn how to cooperate in an effective way, help each other, and give each other advice. They also learn how to debate, use

arguments to defend their opinion, how to listen to the other, accept the other person's arguments, and correct their original opinion.

Appreciating the key role of social interaction in education has a crucial significance in the Czech context, as the frontal, collective form of education with a teacher working with the whole class as a single group has predominated both in theory and in practice for many years. The cooperative form of education benefits from the potential hidden in the usage of the relations of cooperation among pupils helping them to improve the learning of each one of them. Using the words of L. S. Vygotský, "the child will manage to do by himself tomorrow what he/she manages to do in cooperation with others today" (Vygotský, 1976). An important role in the personal child-centered education is played by the method used for pupil assessment. Qualitative, formative, and individualized assessment is preferred to quantitative and comparative assessment (Lukášová 2003, 2010; Slavík 1999; Lukavská 2003; Spilková 2005a; Kratochvílová 2011). The emphasis on assessment open to development represents an important shift in our context. This is a continuous assessment focusing on the processes of learning (not only on its outcome) and on a regular provision of feedback on the course of learning. Based on a complex analysis (the collection of information documenting both the learning progress as well as problems and difficulties), the teacher considers broader perspectives, looks for reasons, considers the prognosis, and plans further steps in their individual development and specific interventions helping each pupil to be able to achieve success together with pupils and parents.

Individualization, one of the guiding principles of personal child-centered education, is reflected in the method of assessing pupils by using an individual relation-based norm. This type of assessment – one which reflects pupils' individual predispositions and abilities and their own previous performance – is a significant change, since Czech pedagogy has a deeply rooted tradition of assessing pupils by comparing them with each another. The individualized assessment method strives to provide all pupils with a perspective of success and to create a favorable relationship between the experience of both success and failure. The importance of positive assessment, encouragement, an appreciation of individual effort, and the emphasis on the pupil's success and progress (i.e., what he/she knows, manages to do, and is good at) are still strongly underestimated in the life of Czech schools.

What is considered important is the emphasis on the complexity of the assessment, the all-around assessment of the personality in its whole focusing on different aspects such as the quality and understanding of information, the level of thinking processes and learning strategies, the degree of independence, responsibility, work effort, persistence in dealing with difficult tasks, creativity, the degree of development of communication and cooperation skills, the ability to help others, and so on. More importantly, personal child-centered education is also characterized by the change from heteronomous assessment (the teacher has a monopoly on the assessment of pupils) to autonomous assessment (the emphasis on self-assessment and mutual assessment among pupils).

Noemi Bravená enriches these concepts of the education of "turning to the child" and of the child-and-personal-development-centered education, both of which

have greatly contributed to the transformation of the education paradigm in the Czech Republic since 1989. Her contribution is mainly realized in her emphasis on the spiritual dimension of the personality and on its cultivation in the context of humanistic and holistic education. Choosing from a range of qualities which characterize the spiritual dimension, Bravená deals with the phenomenon of transcendence and outreach which give life a higher purpose and meaning.

In her originally-conceived work which is based on activities in the area of theory as well as on research conducted for a number of years, Bravená carefully elaborates on the concept of transcendence from an interdisciplinary perspective that reflects on the turning points leading to the development of transcendence as a part of one's personality as well as on the factors that support or hinder this development. Her work is a major contribution to pedagogy, as it also provides various types of inspiration and specific ideas as to how to create and boost "transcending sensitivity" in preschool, kindergarten, and younger-school children and how to further develop specifically this transcending quality in one's own personality. Relying on empirical research of children's understanding of outreach-related symbols, Bravená urges schools to include the development of the spiritual qualities of the personality leading children to transcend (reach out), to be sensitive, and to be responsible to oneself, to others, to nature, and to the world in their educational goals.

Key concepts include personality theory in the humanistic psychology of Helus and the educational turning to the child, the emphasis on the spiritual dimension of education and on the transcending dimension of education of Bravená, the specifications of an education of turning to the child which explains transcendence and its application in relation to the child-centered education and education centered on the development of personality of V. Spilková and H. Lukášová. The trans-disciplinary perception of these key concepts and their blending into a single whole can be called a **pedagogy of "turning toward the child."**

This "turning toward the child" pedagogy is understood as a new paradigm of Czech pedagogy which can be considered to be a contribution to the world discussion concerning the meaning and purpose of education within the changing socio-cultural contexts of our modern world.

2 The Timeliness of the Term "Transcendence" (Overlap) for Czech Pedagogy

Noemi Bravená

Do we really need to understand the term overlap or its Latin foundation – "transcendence"? On April 18, 2014 a film critic appeared in a Czech newspaper saying, "*Transcendence* is nowhere to be found, the only thing left is a dreary romance."[1] It was obvious that this term is not only used in the philosophical-religious "genre" and that the concept had not been fulfilled by the content of the film. This means that even in our country there is a general awareness of how the concept is to be understood. The answer to the introductory question is "yes." In my opinion there are three current general reasons to explore this concept with regard to a person's upbringing and education:

- Understanding transcendence "from below" (among people) has various different and even contradictory forms;
- Understanding transcendence "from above" in the form of various thought streams has maintained a diverse and long presence here;
- Transcendence is anthropologically conditioned; it belongs in a certain way to every person (especially including his education).

In general the ideas of transcendence can be characterized by these terms: contrast, consistency, and contradiction. Each of these three areas has appeared in philosophy, religion, and religious pedagogy with a different focus on particular content. In recent years their positive significance has been discovered by psychology in connection with the emphasis on the meaning of life, man's higher needs, and his personality. Because each discipline has given a different emphasis to the notion of transcendence, the ordinary person has expressed his confusion and has been provoked to ask the characteristic question: **What is transcendence?**

In 2004 the psychologist Zdeněk Helus already identified our contemporary times as the appropriate and opportune time of this concept for Czech pedagogy. In his book *The Perspective of a Child as a Personality: Turning toward the Child as a Challenge and Task for Teachers and Parents* (*Dítě v osobnostním pojetí: Obrat k dítěti jako výzva a úkol pro učitele a rodiče*), the author attributes transcendence (reaching out) to every person as something as commonplace as basic characteristics or gender (2009a, p. 104–105). If transcendence is a given component as well as a potentiality of man, then man by himself is the most fundamental justification for reflecting the concept and the associated issues. This brings another important question: **What is the role of transcendence for a human being's personality**?

The timeliness of the term proves to be most relevant in the context of understanding the current childhood of Czechs. They are exposed to the influence of many external factors: consumer orientation (Helus 2009a, p. 81), postmodern

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[1] Transcendence, dir. Wally Pfister, Metro, 2014, 18. 4. 2014, p. 10.

diversity which does not refer to "superior wholes," (Gáliková Tolnaiová 2007, p. 19–20), media which present the child with new habits, a new perception of reality, the possibility to leave the boundaries in the virtual world (Helus 2009a, p. 77), and contradictory claims in many various areas of life. These and other influences of their immediate surroundings often result in emotional neglect, aggression, victimization, indifference, or resignation. This is related to the question: **What is the importance of transcending for a child?** The text of this monograph seeks to point out that taking care of this element of personality can positively influence childhood by creating a certain counterbalance to today's negative influences and offer a deeper motivation for life that is important for stabilizing the personality. However, this implies that one must first understand the particular terms.

Pedagogy itself calls for the presence of something transcendental (higher) in educational reality. How else can we understand the challenges of "learning to be" and "living together with others," which form the third and fourth pillar of 21st century education in the UNESCO document (Delors 1996, p. 37). How else can we justify the inclusion of ethical education into the Czech FEP EE?[2] This is not just a daunting challenge, but it has already become a direct demand for the theoretical background that offers a new paradigm for Czech primary education which is "future-oriented, humanistic, personality development-oriented, and pupil-oriented" (Helus, Kotásek, Štech, Skalková, Spilková, Lukášová, Koťátková, in Spilková 2012). Transcendence creates the basis of these "higher" education requirements. These are supposed to take care of the higher thinking of children, i.e., changing their minds in relation to themselves, to others, and to their ideals. This is related to the question: **How is transcendence related to the content of teaching and can it become a key competency**?

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[2] *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro základní vzdělávání* (*Framework of the Education Program for Elementary Education*) says that "the main reason for the inclusion of ethical education in the FEP EE is the fact that in our school system there is no subject that would systematically develop the moral aspect of the pupil's personality" (Jeřábek et al., 2010, p. 90). A child's transcending is related to the following topics: "Elemental pro-sociability," "uniqueness and identity of the human being," "respect for the human person," "initiative in difficult conditions," "application of comprehensive pro-sociability," "environmental protection," etc. (Jeřábek et al., 2010, pp. 92-93).

II THE CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

The Czech environment uses the terms *přesah* (*outreach/overlap*), *přesahování* (*overlapping*), *překračování* (*crossing over*), *přesažno (transcendent)*, *transcendence* (*transcendence*), and *transcendování* (*transcending*). None of the definitions are applied to children. For this reason, in this first part of the monograph I will focus on the importance of the primary Czech and Latin terms in dictionaries, in the philosophy of education, psychology, and religious pedagogy. The goal of the first part is becoming oriented with the terms.

3 Defining the Terms "Transcending," "Overlap," and "Transcendence"

First, I will briefly explain the Czech concept of overlap and the Latin concept of transcendence. I use these as synonyms throughout the entire text, even though they come from different conceptual contexts. The concept of a child's transcending derives from these meanings, but it does not appear as a general term in literature; I will develop it as a conclusion of the theoretical analysis. In the general sense it can be characterized as the process of realizing something transcendent (transcending the person).

3.1 The Czech Term "Overlap" and Its Meaning

The *Dictionary of Literary Czech for Schools and the Public* (*Slovník spisovné češtiny pro školu a veřejnost*) defines the verb "overlap/overeach" (*přesahovat*) anthropologically: "to go beyond a certain limit" or "to transcend one's abilities" (2001, p. 328). Here the term is defined with respect to the predetermined external and internal **boundaries of various types which a person overcomes by his activity**.

The *Dictionary of Literary Czech* (*Slovník spisovného jazyka českého*) (*v. II, n-q*) states only the literary and technical meaning of the term "overlap" (*přesah*). Furthermore, it defines the terms "to overlap" (*přesáhnouti*) and "to transcend" (*přesahovati*). The first one, "to overlap" (*přesáhnouti*), also includes the above-mentioned meaning, i.e., "to get over a predetermined limit or boundary." However, this dictionary raises man's behavior and thought activity one level further, because it speaks of the consequences: "to impact something by one's influence, by one's power." The terms "influence" and "power" may not always be positive, and thus the inclusion of negative overlapping activity can be expected here. The dictionary also uses comparisons of two subjects or objects because "to overlap" (*přesahovat*) someone or something means "to exceed someone or something in proportion, size, number, level, etc." The second term, "to overlap" (*přesahovati*), in our context newly defines the dimension of such activity (in space, in time) and its means (power, influence) (1964, pp. 1059-1060). **The concept of overlapping in the Czech language not only has an anthropological but also a universal dimension; it includes a reference to the consequences of such activity or an objective reality with regard to space and time. Therefore, given these explanatory definitions, the reader can recognize both positive and negative characteristics.**

3.2 The Latin Term "Transcendere" and Its Meaning

The *Latin-Czech Dictionary* (*Slovník latinsko-český*) defines the verb "transcendere" as "transcend, cross over, pass over something" (1926, p. 325). The activity of a person is accomplished by conquering something firm and unchangeable. The opposite is *immanence*, derived from the Latin "in-manere – to stay," which refers to facts that do not contain an overlapping tendency but remain within their defined space.[3]

Encyclopedia Britannica states that both the concepts of transcendence and immanence are "the most important concepts developed by theologians and philosophers in the context of interpreting God … each is designed to express the relationship between the divine and the ultimate reality." The term "transcendence" "means going beyond the highest limit or an unbeatable boundary; immanence means to remain or to exist within a limited boundary."[4] We can not find the term "transcendence" in the Bible, yet in the history of Christian theology it has come to be used as a synonym for God or the designation of one of his attributes (God is transcendent). In the three monotheistic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – the idea of transcendence is a characteristic of God the Creator, who is pre-existent (he "precedes the world and creation")[5] and always stands in contrast to all of creation by his perfection. God and his actions transcend his creation; yet instead of the term transcendence, a circumlocution can be used which refers to a person's "relating" to God – *Deus semper maior* (i.e., God is always greater than our human attempts at understanding him). **The transcendent is located outside of man as a self-existing reality or a supersensible subject. Newly, this term is associated with human activity beyond the boundaries of human experience** (see Brändle 1982, p. 137).

The *Small Encyclopedic Dictionary A-Ž* (*Malý encyklopedický slovník A-Ž*) presents a non-anthropological definition: "Philosophically, 'overlapping' means that which is, in relation to a certain thing or event, outside of this thing (event), that which goes beyond it." **Newly, in addition to boundaries or borders, a particular object or action appears** (1972, p. 1655). *The Dictionary of Contemporary Philosophical Terms* (*Slovník filosofických pojmů současnosti*), includes "the situation" and "the world" in addition to things and actions. It also mentions the Czech equivalent for "the overlapping reality" (*přesažená skutečnost*) which is defined as "the transcendent (the overlap)" (*transcendentno, přesažno*) (Olšovský 1992, p. 162). In this dictionary we also encounter an anthropological definition: that is, philosophy understands transcendence also as **"the creative self-overcoming of man"** (Olšovský 1992, p. 162).

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[3] http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/I27_INV/IMMANENCE_from_Lat_in_manere_to.html.
[4] "religious experience." In *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011. Web. 08 May. 2011.
    <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/497327/religious-experience>.
[5] "creation myth." In Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011. Web. 08 May. 2011. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/142144/creation-myth>.

From the linguistic meaning to the religious and philosophical ones, we arrive at the psychological concepts and their meaning. *The Large Psychological Dictionary* (*Velký psychologický slovník*) presents two meanings. It is "everything in human knowledge that transcends our experience" (2010, p. 621); i.e. here we have another new meaning for our consideration. Transcendence includes **all human knowledge, experiences, and attitudes which are not verifiable by our experience**. The second meaning in this dictionary speaks of "the raising of truth, aggrandization, exaggeration" (ibid). This definition is not quite clear to me, because the concept of "raising" can be a positive characteristic of transcendence, while the terms "aggrandization, exaggeration" refer rather to the negative characteristics. The lexical entry is so short that any further explication is not possible. Even though the dictionary presents the concept of "transcendent[al] therapy" (=spiritual, p. 611), it does not define the term "transcendent" (*transcendentní*). Instead, it presents the term "transcendental" (*transcendentální*) meaning "beyond reality, supernatural." The dictionary does not distinguish between the terms "transcendent" and "transcendental," which is why they may become confused.[6]

We will not find the concepts of transcendence and transcending in the presently available pedagogical dictionaries. The meaning of the Latin term is not stated in the Czech *Pedagogical Dictionary* (*Pedagogický slovník*, Průcha, Walterová, Mareš 2003), in *Basic Concepts in Pedagogy and Andragogics* (*Základné pojmy v pedagogike a andragogike*, Švec 2002), *The New Academic Dictionary of Foreign Words* (*Nový akademický slovník cizích slov*, Kraus 2009), *The Oxford Dictionary of Education* (Wallance 2009), *The International Encyclopedia of Education* (Husén 1994), or *The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* (Bank 2004).

3.3 The Identification of the Term "Overlap" with the Term "Transcendence"

The connection in content between both concepts can be found in theology and philosophy. The first explicit link outside of these disciplines can be found in the book *The Perspective of a Child as a Personality* (*Dítě v osobnostním pojetí*, Helus 2009a, p. 105). Overlapping (transcendence) is the eighth characteristic ("quality") of the personality, and the author defines it as a specific non-egocentricism: "man is not only concerned with himself and his own usual worries or joys; he also cares about something that transcends him, that it is greater than him, that gives his life a higher purpose and meaning" (Helus 2009a, 105). The author accomplished something truly unique by linking both terms and concepts.

- He connected the Czech concept of overlap with the Latin term "*transcendere*," giving it a terminological depth, an interdisciplinary touch, and a non-manipulative supersensory and spiritual dimension which is well-fitted for the secularized Czech society.

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[6] This, of course, is possible in some ways, but our research will use the term "transcendent" exclusively. I will leave the term transcendental aside as being specific to Immanuel Kant's philosophy.

- By defining the notion of transcendence without a theological or philosophical tone, he developed a novel approach without prejudices.
- By putting the two concepts into personality theory, he brought them down to earth; he brought them from science into every realm of study, from a vague impossibility of comprehension to a hopeful possibility of understanding them, and from indifference to the great need to engage with them.
- He associated the concept of transcendence with the daily action of people in society, giving it an anthropological dialectical character based on uniqueness and everydayness.

For me, the remaining question about this definition is the phrase "be concerned with." The necessary question arises: by what overlapping factor does someone fill his own life when he is not concerned with himself? This question will be the subject of my next reflection.

3.4 Conclusion of the Analysis: Transcendence (Overlap) and Transcending (Overlapping)

Transcendence (Overlap)
- Everything that is beyond the possibilities of man and not verified by one's own full experience.

Transcending (Overlapping)
- Exceeding physically (dimensions, size, number, level).
- Overcoming man's external or internal boundaries (in space and time), and thereby impacting a certain reality by influence or power.
- Overcoming something firm, unchanging, insurmountable.

3.5 Summary

This chapter focused on the understanding of specific dictionary terms which are available to Czech readers. In terms of content the Czech concepts of overlap (*přesah*), overlapping (*přesahovat*) and exceeding (*přesáhnout*) are connected with man's transcending (beyond his limits, possibilities, boundaries), with the effect of his activity (with influence and power), with visible or measurable characteristics (exceeding by the dimensions, size, number, level) and the activity dimension (space, time). The Latin term *transcendere* means to go beyond, to exceed, to go over something. In theology and philosophy this concept is understandable only on the basis of its relation to its opposite, i.e., immanence. In theology it is a synonym for

God, for that which is outside of man, for that to which a person relates by faith. In philosophy, except for the anthropological dimension, it also means a non-anthropological overcoming (things, events, actions, situations, and the world). In psychology it is defined as that which transcends personal experience. The terms are not to be found in pedagogical dictionaries. The concept of overlap was identified with transcendence in the theory of personality (Helus), which is the basis for this text.

4 Transcendence in the Philosophy of Education

Considering the diversity of problems with the specific content, I have chosen only a few ideas for the term transcendence which, according to my opinion, have the most significance for the current Czech educational reality.

4.1 The Idea of Transcendence as Part of the Ancient and Medieval Way of Thinking and Education

The Greek term *paideia* means to convey or to pass on knowledge and to take care of the human soul at the same time, which means to lead it to reach beyond its limits. Overcoming your own limits is stepping out of Plato's cave, following Agathon's journey of going beyond – stepping into the light and into the truth.7 But *paideia* may be "the movement within a person," which means we do not only witness an outer overcoming of limits but also an inner transformation which goes hand in hand with the outer one: the prisoner knows that the world inside the cave is different. As Pelcova explains, we can speak about *paideia* in this sense as "a conversion, a metamorphosis of humanity which expresses the Platonic term metanoia, a returning or awakening of the soul" (2004, p. 25). **This means that *paideia* was a real upbringing or education and care of human transcendence; its aim was not only an external overlapping but primarily an internal one which leaves a permanent change – an awakening (metanoia) right in the midst of everyday life** (thus a person is still living in the demi-monde as noted by Palouš 1991, p. 35).[8]

The term *techne* shows that the idea does not concern "any action, but the mastery" and mainly "understanding what is supposed to be worked out and created." The craftsman at that time mastered *techne* not only on the basis of mastering the tasks of his profession but also principally with a general insight into the problematics, by sensitivity, and with an open mind. E. Fink has called it a "faithful being with things" which was entirely commonplace for ancient mankind. This relationship between the master and his tools of action meant that he was simultaneously raised by "being" (Pelcová 2004, p. 25), which signifies that he was related to objectivity and truthfulness. ***Techne* like *aletheia* (truth, unveiling) was taking care of human transcendence during his everyday work, which continually referred to what went beyond or transcended him (the highest idea of the good).**

Judeo-Christian thought promotes a new definition of the boundaries of humanity. It originates from the first trespass or stepping *over* of God's commandment in the Garden of Eden. According to the myth of creation, man did not

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7   Palouš designates the movement of Plato's prisoner upward as "trans-cending." See 2011, p. 11.
8   The person who can be investigated and exhaustively understood "ultimately remains an inhabitant of the 'cave'": a person whose characteristic purpose is not dwelling in full light but in the midst, in the darkness, and in between the shadows" (Palouš 1991, p. 35).

yet know good and evil as wrong (i.e., eating the fruit was not yet actualized as evil), but he could have known that there was someone DIFFERENT (someone higher) who had given him a clear instruction.[9] He did not need to transcend, because there were not any boundaries, even the one between the creator and the creature was not a limit according to our meaning of the word (a human being who "lived from the center which was inhabited by God," Bonhoeffer 1989, p. 78); the border was only in the creation of humanity (the same one, p. 80). N. Pelcová notices this fact and says that the border appears as a border for a person when he crosses it (2004, p. 29). Our fallen condition only knows the boundaries which create an integral part of humanity and practically determine the whole of life and education. "A person is especially learning by life itself, experiencing his possibilities and his limits," (Pelcová 2004, p. 31) which certainly means overcoming them as well. **This is why human transcendence is a necessity for the process of education.**

Christianity provides new and substantial content to the term *educatio* which, like R. Palouš shows in *Educational Times*, mainly expresses the idea of "un-deceiving" a person from the excessive immersion in earthly life to the most original and the most important; education is a "turning toward God." This actually means that a person is changed during everyday life, and he is looking away from himself. This education is not the task of humans but of God himself (Pelcová 2004, p. 32), and that is **transcendental education** in the truest meaning. A transcending person, i.e., a human transcending himself, experiences *metanoia* (a return, a spiritual rebirth), the consequence of which is a turning to God or turning to non-egocentricity. Its demonstration is Jesus Christ as an *exemplum* (the highest example) who reveals himself as a vicarious sacrifice for mankind's first negative "overcoming" (John 3:16). Sinlessness takes upon [himself/itself] the sinfulness of humanity in the act of highest love—*agape* (Romans 5:18). This transcendence is not only beyond physical boundaries (e.g., sacrificing one's life for another person), but paradoxically to send ourselves beyond our spiritual possibilities vicariously for another person even to the point of separation from God (Exodus 32:32); [see Bravená 2010, p. 88-89). **To bring up or to educate means to lead a person from everyday life to the highest form of non-egocentricity and by so doing to change him on the inside – to lead him to overcome the inner disunity** (Kierkegaard, Bonhoeffer).[10] **The highest transcending of one's own self happens in immeasurable love as an active act of love toward another person (*agape*).**

Until now we've been talking about the term transcendence as a human activity. Ancient and medieval thinking knew the term **transcendental** (crossing over) very well. Ancient mankind understood it as the whole world (universe), while in Judeo-Christian thought it meant God. This distinction has had a huge influence on education, because this transcendental order which is above humanity is our motivation for making improvements.

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[9] In his interpretation of the two accounts of creation, Bonhoeffer considers what Adam actually knew at the time when he did not distinguish between good and evil. According to the author, he concludes that Adam had to know "the fact that¨he had an authority above him which limited his possibilities" (Bravená 2010, p. 69. - see Bonhoeffer 1989, p. 82).

[10] Bonhoeffer 1989, p. 82, 84, 95, 114-117 etc. – cf. Kierkegaard 1989, s. 38, 57 etc.

4.2 The Modern Paradigm of Transcendence and Its Influence on Education

The subject-object scheme represents an essential turning point for human overlapping (transcendence) and understanding of crossover (transcendence). A subject is identified by itself as a thinking creature (Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*) and "forms its own identity by distancing itself in relation to the Other." By subjecting that which is not myself (the Other), a person "pulls things out from their natural context" in order to examine them and deal with them according to his consideration (Pelcová 2004, p. 35).[11] There are enormous hidden possibilities for humans and dangers as well from which man cannot be protected. **It is possible to manipulate with the non-ego,** regardless if they are things, living or inanimate nature, a similar or higher principle.

By the independent thinking of a subject, "power/transcendence" is given into his hands. Even so, the valid ancient-medieval paradigm of transcendence has received a negative suspicion as an unhealthy dependence on an indemonstrable objective reality (the universe, God, a higher principle, etc.). Overcoming human boundaries in the interest of "science" or in a human being's own interests produced unmanageable dimensions (experiments on humans, killing animals for entertainment, the abuse of children, manipulation with mysteries, and others). The original positive meaning about overcoming boundaries for edification or for the truth became an overcoming of any borders with a leveling of values for the sake of progress. Ancient and medieval humans had some higher principle above him that was valid for everybody, and he was convinced about its existence and it was part of his everyday life. The relationship with the non-ego was not primarily given by "pragmatic using and optimal choice according to his necessities" (Pelcová 2004, p. 35). True and established principles were denigrated during modern times, and the term of world principle was replaced by the functional and measurable mechanisms, technique, and progress trends.

The idea of ancient overcoming has disappeared from the everyday life of individuals. *Techne* has become a "re-construction of the world conceived as a mechanism." Knowledge is not founded on being with things and on participation with them but on "distance," because that is what enables detachment (Pelcová 2004, p. 33) and the depersonalization of humanity.

Ancient and medieval persons had another perception of truth (*aletheia* as the idea of truth and *veritas* as God's truth). However, according to the modern perception, truth "is not a given assumption but originates in human knowledge." Because truth lies in the power of human cognition independent of "the ontological dimension of being," now there is a problem with "what is objective truth and how to

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[11] Technique is necessary, but it is not a universal means: "technology does not threaten man, but man is threatened by technique where he chooses it as the only means useful and beneficial to man" (see Michálek 1995, p. 15).

reach it" (Pelcová 2004, p. 34). Almost all of the "human interpretations are equally valid because they are all equally invalid." The basic criterion is functionality (Grenz 1997, p. 159) and belonging "to the community that avows it" (Grenz 1997, p. 23).

Descartes' *cogito ergo sum* took certainty – "the being, the whole world, the universe, and God" – and replaced it with the "human as a thinking subject, as a conscious Self" (Pelcová 2004, p. 34). The Self is the new Pantocrator with "unlimited dominion over the whole world mainly through science" (Pelcová 2004, p. 37, comparable to Palouš 1987, p. 264). The Self **decides the transcendental activity concerning that which is transcendent and how it is supposed to be educated. The Self chooses and determines the instruments for this exact purpose – education is conceived merely as a preparation for future employment.**

4.3 New Inspiration for a Contemporary Understanding of Human Transcendence

From all of the intellectual systems, I am choosing those which refer particularly to the Czech discussions and which contain modern distances in human relationships, in his upbringing, and in individuals. Distance itself is not considered as bad, but its danger is in its identification with true knowledge.

4.3.1 Transcendence as an Overcoming of Distance in Relationships

An object is "a physical subject of the surrounding world or a living organism from its lowest forms to human beings" (Hartl & Hartlová 2010, p. 356). A subject is "a carrier and a source of activity or of knowledge" (p. 559). Critiques of this definition are not terms like subject or object but that which may be hidden after this definition: for example, "wealth" (egocentricity), reification (Smékal), and "personal anonymity" (Michálek 1996, p. 36).

The distance in relationships is overcome by the philosophical personalism of Buber, which has left an essential trace in deliberations about upbringing.[12] Instead of the subject-object schema, he referred to **the relationship of I and You**. "The human being to whom I say You I do not experience. But I stand in relation to him, in the sacred basic word," because, "You is more than It knows. You does more, and more happens to it, than It knows. No deception reaches this far: here is the cradle of actual life."[13] Knowledge and true life occurs in a personal encounter with another person, that is, a person whose foundation consists of a "relationship" which is

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[12] The book *I and Thou* (1923) was the stimulus of many changes in philosophical, pedagogical, and theological thinking.

[13] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1970), 59-60;

"passive and active at once."[14] When I "meet" someone (*Begegnung*), this person is not for me one of many, but there is the foundation of a specific dialogue which originates and changes both participants (Pelcová 2004, p. 133).

In fact, Buber newly defines the term **boundaries** which are between me and the object of my interest (It). Overcoming consists in becoming aware that "It" is a real "You" (Buber 1995, p. 13-14). Human transcendence is related to the overcoming of subject-object schemes in the meaning of **recognizing the personality and individuality of another person**. This has essential consequences for upbringing because overcoming of my own Ego to You is a part of "the educational competence" which starts with a realization of the individuality of the other person in relationship to the self. "Expressed by philosophical terminology, a person is capable of transcending or reaching out when he cares for someone or something beyond himself at least to the same extent or even more than he cares for himself" (Pelcová 2004, p. 135).

Buber also speaks about a **transcendence** which is above humans when he says that "the human situation cannot escape the world of things, or neighbors, or the community, or the revealed mysteries found both in others and above himself" (Buber 1997, p. 113). This makes the new view of a new conception of the modern human world much more concrete. It does not directly relate to the ancient conception of the universe or of the world as created by God, but it is related to the knowledge that humankind is part of the universe **which overcomes it and which will always overcome it**. **Knowledge of modern astrology and astrophysics brings a new conception of transcendence** which, according to Buber, humans have not worked into their ideas of the world. He even offers a rationale why this is the case. Accepting that which is transcending means not having "any image of the world" (*imago mundi nova – imago nulla*, 1997, Buber).[15] Accepting and confessing this way of thinking means leaving "certainty," but it also represents a person's beginning (i.e., initial turning) which can overcome the distance in relation to the truth at the same time.

For our theme it means that modern humanity cannot avoid or remove the term *transcendence*, even when considering the precise meaning of the word. Our universe is different from the one which ancient humans experienced, but it is also capable of "going beyond," is unlimited, expresses order, and displays mysteries. We do not have to search for a transcendence that is acceptable for everyone; we are already a part of it! To admit this reality opens another way of questioning: **How much does the calculable transcendence which is unsubstantiated by personal experience (the size of universe, the quantity of galaxies, black holes, wormholes, and others) differ from the transcendence that is substantiated by the personal experience of an individual yet is not exactly calculable (cognition of the real world**, faith in a higher purpose of life, spiritual experience, and others)?

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[14] Ibid, 62.

[15] The image of the new world – no image.

4.3.2 Transcendence as the Overcoming of Educational Distance

Sophistication in the modern conceptual sense has a great influence on the perception of current education. According to Palouš' criticism, it is a main "tool – a preparation for the everyday procurement of something" (1991, p. 31). This is the reason of human distance from the inner meaning of education. According to Pelcová, the third (transcendental) extent of education may lead to overcoming, as she has found this concept in the following authors:

1. In the works of **V. von Wiezsäcker** these ideas are conceptualized concerning the relationships between people, even between therapist and client. The first one is in a vital bond (e.g., a bond between mother and child or between parents), the second one is a spiritual bond which results from different roles (parent, doctor, or priest), and the third one is a transcendental bond (between humans and God, Wiezsäcker 1992, p. 102). It can be generally characterized as a human being who "always surpasses his original human purpose" (Pelcová 2004, p. 151). At least in terms of education, a human being is supposed to be referred to as something higher in every relation with another person.
2. For **W. Flitner** transcendental facts are those facts which are outside of our experiences. Transcendence is that part or element of the world toward which the pedagogue should encourage his students to pursue. It is not "exclusively totalitarian" but "the part of the world beyond our limited experience" (Pelcová 2004, p. 152). Thanks to the pedagogue's realization of transcendence (i.e., the whole world), he is protected from an overestimation of his educational activity. Transcendental education "is opening itself to the world," and it allows room for the development of human beings (Flitner 1933, p. 50).
3. We can find a transcendental dimension of human beings in the thinking of **H. Nohl**. In addition to "*vita activa*" ("practical" education), "*vita contemplativa*" ("internal" education) is also needed – a component of education which goes hand in hand with the overall purpose of education. It leads a child to "the internal activity, ability of quietness, focus on the inside, concentration, internal observation." "Large conceptions of this component or element" originate from contemplation with the assistance of imagination and fantasy, "many questions are formed, ideas are lined up in certain forms, and individuality gradually develops from the inside" (Pelcová 2004, p. 151). Thus, transcendence is not only about knowledge but mainly about personal experiences.

Recognizing the higher aspect in relationships, in the particular aspects of the world, or in ourselves helps us to overcome distance in education. Its practical understanding can be psychagogy, which "can mediate and enable human orientation mainly by spiritual values and purpose." Its conception of holism does not consist in moving toward the isolated realities of life but in presenting every unique aspect of our relationships in life" (Gáliková 2007, p. 25), that is, escorting us into the presence of

every aspect or part of the world. Psychagogic guidance is necessarily bound up with being ushered into *homo transcendens*. Its basic element is *periagogé16* – a human turning from "busy everyday procurements to the responsibility in regard to the total claims of being alone" (Palouš 1987, p. 198 comparable to Gáliková 2007, p. 157).17

4.3.3. Transcendence as an Overcoming of Distance in Individuals

A human being is alienated from the world and divided within himself (Kierkegaard 1989, p. 38 and others); therefore, outreach alone will not help a person, but his own mind which has its own attitude to reach out ("to will one thing" – Purity of Heart, Kierkegaard 1989, p. 53n.) undergirds and stands behind the overcoming of distance in an individual.

Jan Patočka had similar thoughts about disunity. Human beings are connected to transcendence (he participates in his existential movements). A human being himself decides if his crossing over will be realized rightly (transcendentally) or in a distorted way (empirically, comparable to 1992, p. 57, 65, 69) if he realizes that he is a part of the transcendent movement of truth.[18] According to Patočka, the surpassing of the distance between transcendental and eidetic knowledge is in an attempt for clarity in a truthful awareness in art or in the boundaries of experience. Only this can lead to complete or holistic human turning—to *metanoia*. The most important challenge of Patočka for education[19] is leading others to knowledge of a truthful movement; this means leading them toward the realization of transcendence, to reckoning, to efforts of changing perspectives concerning the alter Ego, to knowing their surroundings and home, toward a revelation of the phenomenon of being, namely to let truthful movements rise before us as we co-create them (comparable to 1995, p. 107, 113, 110-111; 1990, p. 137, 141).

4.3.4 Homo Educans is Homo Transcendens

Homo educans should be led by education to clarity or "lucidity," i.e., to

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[16]   Plato's concept for the inner turning of a person.

[17]   "It is clear that psychogogically based education, respectively the kind of education with a psychogogical dimension of turnings and transformations (through conversion, *metanoiou* - N.B.) must not be dismissed, since they are essential elements" (Gáliková 2007, p. 157).

[18]   In his next creative period, Patočka places transcendence in the doctrine of kinesthesia which is realized by a person as the third existential movement of truth. Transcendence is the domain or realm of the whole to which the self relates and even forms. In essence, this means that a person goes beyond (transcends) what he sees in the world as an individual and has a relation which bears upon the world in its fullness. While the first early conception of transcendence allowed for consciousness on the basis of an act of attentiveness, the second concept of transcendence is presented as a completely new human being (*metanoia*) in surrender; here it is also reinforced that the person transcends, recognizes, and forms together along with the whole, but this is primarily himself and his meaning within the framework of the universe.

[19]   cf. Prokešová 2008, p. 286.

"illumination and clarification of the world" (Palouš 2011, p. 86). The basic presupposition of this agogic effort is the sympathetic understanding of human beings as transcending persons. By transcendence R. Palouš comprehends a human overlap relating to tangible realities including even mysterious ones. It is exactly a **human disposition** "to crossover and crossing everything which stands before him" (2011, p. 83). This is true even when we are speaking about human finiteness, because even human limitation does not contain the certainty of an absolute verifiable end (2011, p. 84).

Inspired by Patočka's thinking R. Palouš arrives at the conclusion that "human transcendence" doesn't necessarily have to be the result of **higher reflection,** but it is present here from the beginning and understood as ordinary being" (2011, p. 84). Patočka came to the persuasion that higher etic behavior "is possible" even without "a transcendental metaphysical idea [of the] world." We can label his ideas as a situational ethics of paradox. On one side it is an ethics of "orders, obligations, overcoming of myself, stringency, and sacrifices," but on the other side it involves "free creation, inventiveness, infinite flexibility, and a particular ethic which doesn't rely on forms or veritable imperatives and laws from which is possible to hide and which allow Pharisees self-satisfaction." It is an "ethics of risk and uncertainty but although internal necessity" (Patočka 1996, p. 234). The purpose of education is not to make children into *homo transcendens*, because a person already exists as *homo transcendens*; however, education should provide enough stimuli in order for a person to gradually discover the overlapping capabilities inside himself and practically develop transcendence, so that what he has developed will also become more deeply understood. E**ven exceptional human transcending is a disposition of every individual and it contains imperatives already given, but it also enables the creation of new factors according to particular situations. Striving for *homo transcendens* carries the desire to overcome the distance in relationships, in individuals, and in education itself.**

4.4 Conclusion of the Analysis: the Objective and Subjective Dimension of Transcendence

Transcendence (Overlap/Crossover)
- There are two extents of the concept of transcendence: objective and subjective reality.
- The overlapping may be the cosmos (a unit or part of the world), the subject itself in its thoughtful and cognitive activity, or an educational element which leads to a higher way of knowledge.

Transcending (Reaching Out)
- The ability of a subject to relate to the Non-ego and to observe "You" in it.
- The ability of a subject to understand entire units of the world and co-create it by its actions. It is also a characteristic of the world (of being) to reveal and mainly to reveal the essence of humans.

- Transcending is an activity that is: (1) permanent (a human being transcends himself in his every action and thought); (2) conditioned by *gnosis* (a human being is transcends eidetically (correctly) or doxically (incorrectly);[20] (3) conditioned by *metanoia* (an internal turning of the human); (4) conditioned by higher reflection, even though it is possible without higher reflection.
- It is a part of the educational aspect of playing separated from an excessive submergence within everyday life.

4.5 Summary

Overcoming or crossing over human boundaries and their limits (external and internal) and the concept of transcendence as objective being (the universe, God) are significant parts of both ancient and medieval thought. Modern humanity possesses new possibilities when each person is accepted as a subject that changes himself and the world and determines to accept the truthfulness of that which is transcendental. Humanity can overcome boundaries of various types without limitations. Transcendence stands outside of humanity; this fact provides the reason why it is possible to experience it, measure it, and weigh it. The regression to original thought of transcendence seems to be in overcoming the distance in relationships (Buber), in education (Pelcová, Palouš), or in an individual (Patočka, Palouš).

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[20] *eidos* = concerning essence; *dokein* = to appear, to accept.

5 Transcendence in the Main Psychological Issues

The Latin term *transcendere* entered the psychological debate in the second half of the 20th century. Its content became naturalized more than the Latin term itself. We will summarize some of the meanings here.[21]

5.1 Transcendence as a Human Need

Transcendence occurs as a concept related to the higher needs of man (Maslow, Fromm), which play their part after the individual is fully satisfied in the lower needs. They are even more important than basic physiological needs because they distinguish us as human beings from other creatures on the earth (Fromm in Coan 1999, p. 130). With few exceptions all of the lower needs must[22] first be fulfilled in

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[21] **In the psychology of religion**, the transcendent dimension is a part of people's experience: "confirmatory experiences" ("general experience of sacredness, for example in worship and in sacred places"), "experiences of answered prayers" ("conversion," "miracles," "experience of punishment"), "ecstatic experiences" and "revelation" (Holm 1999, p. 39). **Spiritual Psychology** examines transcendence from the point of view of the psychological development of human beings and its significance for forming the individual's own identity and meaning of life. It is focused on describing the "relationships" of man to the transcendent as well as "man's interconnection with the supernatural" (Oerter 2007, p.1). The most important topics are spirituality as "connectedness" with everything, "spirituality as a relation to God or a higher being," "spirituality as a connection with nature," "as a relationship to others," "as a self-transcendence," "as a relationship to self," "spirituality as a practice, especially – prayer and meditation," and "spirituality as a paranormal experience and abilities" (Bucher 2007, p. 26n). **The psychology of meaningfulness**, as the name suggests, seeks a broader connection to the meaning of human life, depending on external and internal factors. The active life of a person is not conceivable without personal involvement in specific life contexts which also include the concept of overlapping. This can be the very purpose of a person's life (Kováč, Křivohlavý 2006, p. 110). **The psychology of wisdom** sees overlapping as a consequence of "advanced personal development," and it can be defined as "the movement from an individualistic approach to a social or universal understanding of the world" (Ruisel in Křivohlavý 2006, p. 101, note 3). On the one hand the concept of overlapping means "what goes beyond our normal human dimensions" (p. 101), and on the other hand that which relates to the wisdom of human beings, demonstrating "deeper humanitarian and social concern, the joy of inspiration, the passion for a certain activity or the idea of joy and the beauty of nature" (Ibid, p. 132). Here, it is emphasized that the transcendence of a person evolves, matures, and is a manifestation of wisdom. **Developmental psychology** acknowledges the concept of transcending in the context of the "process of building and finding identity" in an adolescent who "is finding out what he can do ... how he can radically leave the consumeristic way of life to surrender fully to Christ, Buddha, or a political leader" (Říčan 2006, p. 222). While the young person is more involved in the general concept of overlapping, at a more advanced age the overlap is more associated with the spirituality and integrity of mankind. It helps the individual to cope with loneliness (ibid, p. 357) and failures and assists in forgiveness (ibid, p. 358).

[22] According to Maslow there are a few exceptions where the hierarchy does not apply. Our research is mainly focused on those people who "adhere to ideals and high values and sacrifice everything to them, which can be explained by high tolerance for frustration which can be given by the fact that for many years in their youth, their basic needs were satisfied." These are "strong people who swim against the stream of public opinion" (see Nakonečný 1998, p. 469). For Maslow the concept of overlapping was very important towards the end of his life; he discovered 35 different meanings of transcendence and 24 differences between "transcenders" and "merely healthy people" (see Maslow 1993, p. 259n).

order for one to seek transcendence.

A. H. Maslow sees overlap in connection with the need for one's own self-actualization, as well as the need to act "for others" and for their good. People are able to develop this further need even more "because they help others by realizing their potential" (Ward, Lasen 2009). For this reason Maslow divides self-actualizing, humane, healthy individuals into those who have "little or no experience of transcendence" and those "for whom the transcendental experience is important and even central" (1993, p. 280). It is clear from the cited source that the need for transcendence can have three forms of fulfillment: none, partial, or complete.

For Fromm transcendence means the need for active action that has its basis in human "self-awareness" (1966, p. 43) and is related to the individual's attempt to "overcome the fate of a passive creature" (Fromm in Coan 1999, p. 131). It may also have a negative aspect as well. Transcendence is an active behavior of man which is expressed in "creativity" but also in "destruction" (Fromm 1955, p. 35). It depends on the individual how he will satisfy his need. Fromm sees the result of not fulfilling the meaning of life in man's destructiveness: it is "the result of unlived life" (1997, p. 170).

5.2 Transcendence as the Essence of Human Existence

Transcendence also has its anthropological rationale, which means that it exists in a certain way in person a priori (before sensory experience), independent of age, gender, nationality, etc. Frankl says that "it is the essence of human existence" (1996, p. 147 - 1997, p. 103). It is given to man as a being that he is oriented on an object or a subject, that he is "devoted to a certain work on which he focuses, to someone he loves, or to a God whom he serves" (1997, p. 103).

The concept of transcendence is always associated with the constitution and realization of a person. This is always the case where one acts "in the service of some thing or in the love of another person." Frankl again argues according to the essence of humanity itself when he says: "In fact, a man is whole only where he is completely and comprehensively involved in some thing, where he is completely devoted to another person." This form of devotion is demonstrated by the preference of the Other: a person "overlooks himself" and thus "becomes" a person (1996, p. 147).

5.3. Transcendence as the Meaning of Life

The purpose of the individual is related to a "worthwhile goal" on which he focuses his activity (Křivohlavý 2006, p. 51). The psychology of motivation in the classical division of human efforts does not mention this fact, although according to the research it constituted an important part of people's responses to the meaning of

life: "transcendental goals."[23] These are "the furthest, the highest, or the deepest ever possible," "extremely distant," "the most important," "the most essential," and "the greatest." "Above" and "beyond" them "there is nothing else." There can be two types of these goals: (1) "secular" goals related to politics, art, sport, science, culture, and (2) religious goals (pp. 157-158). Man strives to reach these goals, and his effort carries a "desire to ... integrate into higher and more complex entities, e.g., humanity, nature, and the cosmos" (p. 160). In the transcendental goals the intentional and willful activity is connected with the inner intention of incorporating oneself into the supra-human whole. For Viktor Frankl self-transcendence means desiring the meaning of life and achieving it "over oneself" (1996, p. 148). Purpose is subject to change, but it can always be found by man in his activity and in experiencing value at the moment of suffering (1994, p. 73). In his logotherapy the author includes overlapping into the motivation of an individual who is not only interested in "delight or power" and not merely "about self-realization but also about the fulfillment of some purpose" or in the "will to meaning" (1996, p. 168). The opposite of such a life is the "existential vacuum" which brings man a feeling of emptiness (1996, p. 148).

5.4 Transcendence as a Value

The value in which the notion of transcending becomes the most apparent is love. Maslow in his psychology differentiates between higher and lower forms of this value. Love related to the needs of a given being: "being needs" ("B-love") stand in contrast to those needs that are related to deficiency: "deficiency needs" ("D-love"). B-love is "love for the sake of another person, non-requiring love, selfless love." On the other hand, "D-love" is "deficient love, selfish love." The author reaches ten generalizing theories, namely that the higher form of love "brings pleasure," "is the goal" of man, has "the same effects" as "aesthetic ... or mystical experience," has therapeutic potential, brings "a more valuable subjective experience," is not subject to "satisfaction," and has "only a minimum amount of anxiety and hostility." Love makes a person independent, autonomous, and less envious, so that he then perceives the other person in the truest and most complete sense and "forms a partner." Maslow believes that such love is necessary for the full and complete development of man (2000, pp. 68-69).

According to Fromm, love is explicitly associated with transcendence (1955, p. 36). It is possible only when I can "overcome self-care and see the other person from his own point of view" (p.28). For the individual this value solves a fundamental problem, because by fulfilling it he is freed from "isolation and separation" (p. 22), while he is at the same time given the experience of "union" and "unity" (p. 14). He calls this love "mature" because it alone retains the individual's "individuality" in paradox, since two people are united in this love and still remain themselves. It also has active components: it is the power that "breaks through the walls that separate the

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[23] The term "transcendental" ("transcendentální") in J. Křivohlavý covers the philosophical notion of "transcendent" ("transcendent").

individual from other people and unites him with others" (p. 22); it is giving, caring about the others, responsibility for one's own work, and a respect for others (p. 26). It carries in itself the knowledge of another type which "penetrates to the core" of reality (p. 28).

Viktor Frankl reflects on the love which transcends human existence. He speaks of a lover's love which also has a higher form. It is when "I treat the partner not only in his whole humanity, but above that also in his irreplaceable uniqueness as a person." By this, Frankl means that the partner is not just one among many, but precisely in that "he is different from everyone else," he is "unique." It is only at this moment that he really "becomes beloved for the loving You" (1996, p. 148).

5.5 Transcendence as an Experience

The experience of transcendence is by its nature referred to as "peak experience" (see Maslow, transpersonal psychology), "numinous" (Otto), spiritual (Bucher, Freudenreich, Nay), and religious (Bucher). One of its characteristics is the fact that it also interferes with the perception of human identity because it goes beyond the personal sphere of the individual to whom a "wider aspect of humanity, life, psyche, and cosmos" (Walsh, Vaughová, 2011, p. 23) opens. Such transcendence is experienced positively, and man desires it (Maslow 2000, p. 101) because it brings him "happiness and fulfillment" (p. 95).

There are various taxonomies for these experiences, depending on the occasion of their origin. The most important is Maslow (2000, p. 99): we experience them in parental/maternal, mystical or natural experiences, aesthetic perception, creative moments, in therapeutic or intellectual insight, orgasmic experience, and also in certain forms of athletic fulfillment.

Transcendental experiences of various kinds are accompanied by an altered intense inner experience, which according to the testimony of some people can be accompanied by visual as well as auditory elements. Here I will focus on what is common to all these experiences. The following quote expresses this briefly: "In those moments we are surprised by something powerful, mysterious, yet for a moment partly comprehensible; something endless, yet for a moment seemingly grasped; something completely different from us, but something that we appear to be a part of" (West 2002, pp. 158-159). The various general characteristics include various aspects of the definition of what this experience brings.

Peak experience – a conceptual definition:

- It comes to man as if from the outside and appears by itself, yet it is man as an individual who actively enters into it and is aware of the exceptionality of the moment as the two components are equally essential.
- It is "short, yet extremely intense, blissful, meaningful, and beneficial" (Walsh, Vaughová, 2011, p. 21).

- It comes spontaneously as a result of some border experience (close to death), contemplations or meditations, while its deliberate induction also occurs through the use of psychedelics, etc.
- It is very strongly connected to humanity on different levels. These experiences are referred to as "mystical, spiritual," "unification experiences," "stabilization," "knowledge in the sense of awakening or enlightenment." Their significance is underestimated and often identified with pathological manifestations (Walsh, Vaughová 2011, p. 21).[24]
- It is accompanied by a certain atypical inner feeling. Maslow speaks of this as follows: it has "the flavor of a spell, of fear, reverence, humility, and surrendering to experience as something great" (2000, p. 106).
- It can be characterized as follows: "holiness, sanctity, the feeling of being a creature, humility, gratitude and sacrifice, thanksgiving, fear of *mysterium tremendum*, consciousness of the divine and inexplicable, consciousness of one's own smallness before the magnitude of the mystery, a state of exaltation and enlightenment, awareness of limits and weaknesses, an impulse to surrender, kneeling, awareness of the eternal, and consciousness of blending in with the whole of the universe, and the experience of heaven and hell" (Maslow 1992, p.71).
- It can not be accurately described. Its verbalization does not correspond to the experience itself. Maslow even wants it to remain shrouded in some way because "the attempt to explain it diminishes its dignity and value" (2000, p. 99).
- A person experiences it emotionally (Maslow 2000, p. 106).
- Some have the form of ecstasy – "the extreme degree of elevated mood, exaltation, characterized by an influx of energy." They are accompanied by a deep concentration, characteristic of meditation and contemplation (Smékal 2004, p. 75).
- It brings man a "widening of his own identity" (Walsh, Vaughová, 2011, p. 21) in a certain paradox, because man relates to something which is not him but what he perceives as an essential part of himself.
- It gives a feeling of unity "with the whole universe" (Walsh, Vaughová, 2011, p. 21). This sounds very strange to those who have not had such an intense experience. According to authentic testimonies, it is a unity that gives a sense of interconnection and uniqueness and can be characterized by this testimony: "Even though the universe is so great (we feel frightened), I make up a small but substantial part of it, and by my being and acting I co-create it. I have deep meaning in it despite my insignificance."
- It is related to another form of knowledge of reality. Maslow spoke of a higher form of cognition ("B-learning") which allows us to perceive things and people

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[24] Transpersonal psychology reacted against the rejection or even labeling of all these experiences as pathological (Walsh, Vaughová, 2011, pp. 28-29). According to Wilber, the main reason for the rejection was Freud's identification of the transpersonal states with "prepersonal," i.e., "subconscious" (cf. Wilber 2011, p. 191) and basically with "pre-rational" experiences (Bucher 2007, s. 62).

"more sharply and more penetratingly" (Maslow 2000, p. 94). This knowledge causes the thing or experience to appear to man as the whole universe (p. 95). Whether it is some kind of ultimate experience for all, there is this typical "ability to perceive the whole and to rise above the parts" (p. 108). The person who receives knowledge in such an experience stops comparing, evaluating, and judging; he recognizes another person as he is (p. 96). Maslow's ideas can be supplemented. Man is in a state of certain contemplation of things from the outside, he is aware that everything is interconnected and that there is an answer for everything that he does not need to know individually. The question "why" seems to have lost its meaning. We could compare it to looking at a jigsaw puzzle: one sees the complex picture and knows that it is composed of individual parts that can not be omitted, but he does not need to examine one piece of the whole because it does not constitute a complex meaning of its own. He knows that this single specific piece exists and has its own specific place; by special insight he knows that there are answers for the questions about this piece, but he also understands they are not very relevant to him in full detail. The answers for the single piece (and at the same time for all pieces) are found in understanding the whole. After the peak experience this state of cognition subsides, and suddenly the small single piece becomes important for putting the whole puzzle together. However, a person is already being changed in his thinking by this state of reflection and cognition.

- It changes the human attention that is approaching "fascination or complete absorption." The participant then does not perceive the background of the given phenomenon, but the phenomenon itself (Maslow 2000, p. 95). An appropriate parallel may be the initial viewing of a 3D image. As soon as one first sees it, it begins to become a whole new and fascinating reality; the image "comes out" of the background, while the viwer is completely concentrated on it, literally afraid to move his eyes away so that the phenomenon does not somehow disappear.

- It is a value. Frankl speaks of the value of experiencing something: "Although it is only a single moment, the magnitude of life can be measured at the magnitude of the moment." "A single moment can retrospectively give meaning to life as a whole" (1996, pp. 61-62).

- It refines man. Thanks to the new perception, one becomes "more generous, noble, stronger, better, higher" (Maslow 1992, p. 77) and "is able to love more and accept more" (p. 82).

- The peak experience also includes the so-called "plateau-experience," which is not "penetratingly emotional" but is "quiet, silent, fear-provoking, sacred, unifying and having a B-value" (see Maslow, 1992, p. 15).

5.6 Transcendence as a Quality of Personality

Helus emphasizes in his personality theory that overlapping deals with matters

outside of the egocentric sphere of the individual; it is a very specific "personality trait."[25] It belongs to the complex of a total of ten individual aspects of an individual which he calls "the personality Decalogue." The notion of quality should point to the "importance" of all such areas for the development and socialization of man (2009a, p. 104). By integrating transcendence into a specific complex, which he calls the Decalogue, the author represents the development of the whole human being, including the direction of his own self, and the significance of the overlap for the concept of personality.

For Helus overlapping is directly connected with a person's journey through life which encompasses the decalogue of personality. The symbolic expression of the path includes three directions which are central to overlapping: (1) acting for another, a "devotion to a cause," a concerned activity of the artist, and the "humble man" (the "altruistic direction"); (2) the improvement of man (the "self-realizing direction") (Helus 2009b, pp. 51-52); (3) the work and effort of person to strive for values and bear the sufferings that reveal a deeper meaning of life ("self-transcending direction") (Helus 2009b, pp. 42-43).

5.7 Transcendence as Spirituality

Transcendence is also a sign of spirituality.[26] The essence of spirituality is "the specific experience of the relationship to a deity, to a supra-personal ideal, to a sacred congregation, to the universe, to the cosmos, etc." (2010, p. 234). Some even justify this on the basis of brain activity in sleep lobes (Zohar, Marshall).[27]

The desire to address the phenomenon of spirituality is marked in various research scales which measure and compare feelings, experiences, transpersonal trust, self-transcendence, etc: Hood (1975), Paloutzian and Ellison (1982), Elkins et al. (1988), Kass et al. (1991), Piedmont (1999), Kirk, Eaves and Martin (1999), Belschner (2000), Gomez and Fischer (2003), Hodge (2003), and Daaleman and Frey

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[25] See also the author's description of the "ten characteristics" of personality (Helus 2009b, p. 9n).

[26] The concept of spirituality (derived from the Latin noun *spiritus* – "air," "breath," "soul," "spirit," "enthusiasm," "courage," "sense") was first used for "ecclesiastical piety" (Bucher 2007, p. 22). For this reason, it has long been considered a sub-term of Christian religiosity and identified with the inner spiritual life of man. This direction was soon replaced by the idea that both concepts are parallel (Bucher 2007, p. 11, p. 50). At the end of the last century, this concept was extended to "New Age, Esoterics, Wellness, Ecology" and "Psychology." The term later became a collective term above religiosity, and so it became more popular for many people (Bucher, p. 22, cf. "I am not religious but I am spiritual" in Říčan 2007, p. 11). On the contrary, in religious (especially Christian) circles this change raised a wave of certain concerns (cf. e.g. Volný, p. 27), mainly because of its syncretistic tendencies (mixing world-view and religious perspectives). This is obvious because when the beliefs of any religion or worldview are precisely defined, the whole structure of beliefs are based upon those definitions. This is why spirituality must be distinguished as the universal relation of man to the transcendent (cf. Říčan "non-religious spirituality") on the one hand and as the piety of individual religions on the other. Thus, with a proper scientific evaluation of the two concepts, there is no need for any concern from either party

[27] See Zohar, Marshall 2000, p. 90: "When significant religious or spiritual ideas are evoked in healthy people, the activity of their sleep lobes increases to a level similar to that of epileptics during seizures ... maybe a brain apparatus devoted to religion is in the sleep lobes (of completely healthy people)."

(2004).[28] There is no model which is able to express the diversity of spirituality (see Bucher 2007, pp. 34-35).

The theistic model (Paloutzian and Ellison) replaced the model of a non-theistic concept of spirituality (Elkins et al.). It has evaluated not only spirituality in the sense of relationship with the deity but also with people.[29]

Transcending is the self-transcendence of man. It connotes the realization of self (*Selbst*) which is more than I (*Ich*). Self-transcendence relates to a "higher spiritual being, a god," "a transcendent principle," "to the cosmos," to the social environment (*Mitwelt*), and even opens spiritual realities. It is the opposite of egocentricity and the condition of experienced spirituality. An individual who is too focused on himself can not fully open himself either to the supersensible or to other people.[30]

It is clear from this that the concept of transcendence within spirituality is defined in two ways: objectively and subjectively (Valčová 2013). The objective is what stands outside of man and transcends him – "the higher spiritual being, god" (Bucher) or the "transcendental dimension" (Elkins 1988 in Bucher 2007, p. 33). The subjective dimension is the self-transcendence of which a person is capable and which is the condition of his spiritual relationship to someone or something. **The diversity of all approaches lies in what they prefer as a spiritual expression.**

For transcendence and spirituality, a certain type of mutual unification and relationship of the participants is important. Their difference will emerge in an contrasting example. A child can be a *transcendent* subject for his mother, but only their relationship can have a *spiritual* dimension. In relationship with a child, the educator overlaps into the future by his active love, educative creativity, etc. Overlapping may be what D. N. Elkins defines as "the fruit of spirituality" (Bucher 2007, p. 41). Transcendence is then the process by which one achieves self-transcendence in which I relates to, forms, and co-experiences You. "Neither the teacher nor the students come to the classroom detached from their personal lives, including the matters of faith (religion and spirituality). And yet, they enter the special educational space with rules and possibilities which all together create a very special dynamic which influences not only the lives of the students but the life of the whole society" (Valčová 2013, http://www.paidagogos.net/issues/2013/2/article.php?id=29).

If we define spirituality as the area of the "sacred" (K. I. Pargament in

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[28] In the Czech context, see the *Prague Questionnaire on Spirituality* (*Pražský dotazník spirituality*, Janošová, Říčan 2010, p. 4n).

[29] According to Bucher, its deficiency is that it presupposes a certain understanding of the concepts of transcendence and spirituality, and therefore it does not define them sufficiently (2007, p. 41). For this reason, Bucher deduces a pivotal category for spirituality, which is "belonging (*Verbundenheit*)" and "relationship (*Beziehung*)" – with that which is supra-human, with people, and with nature (Bucher 2007, p. 50n). In this respect even Bucher did not manage to avoid a certain one sided interpretation.

[30] This is proved by Bucher in an empirical study, for example, concerning a respondent's statement: "I think spiritual growth has opened the boundaries between me and others... So, as I understand the form of my spirituality, I accept the others much easier and I am more open" (see Bucher 2007, pp. 30-31). Říčan also speaks about this level of spirituality when he says that such relationships between people have a spiritual nature "in the sense of the natural or non-religious spirituality because their experience or feeling has a certain quality" which can also characterize spirituality (Říčan 2010, p. 234).

Křivohlavý 2009, p. 100), we can understand transcendence (overlap) as a concept that includes the area of religiosity, spirituality, and the area of everydayness, creativity, art, politics, value orientation, pro-sociability, socialization, etc. In the broader sense, non-religious spirituality can also be embraced, as Elkins might obviously object. As Elkins would probably object, in the broader sense, non-religious spirituality can also include all of this. However, I see the difference in the etymology of both words and in the approach of both "sciences" (spirituality and transcendence) toward understanding human reality. We can illustrate this reality in [this way]. While spirituality is concerned with a *genius loci* from which the individual building parts of the building are definitively derived, overlap (transcending) is focused precisely on those building parts which are the justification, cause, boundary, or goal of transcending, but only if *genius loci* is present in them. On the basis of this definition, the concepts of transcendence/transcending as we understand them in this text **are with respect to terminology more clearly understood in terms of education than the hermeneutically more complicated concept of spirituality. This can be compared with the issue of countries where spirituality as a term is a part of the requirements of general education. However, concepts may lose the character of the sacred – which is the primary source and "custodian" for the notion of spirituality.**

5.8 Conclusion of the Analysis: The Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions of Transcendence

5.8.1 Horizontal and Vertical Transcending

If we seek a common denominator for all of the above-mentioned overlapping characteristics in psychological issues, two orientations of active engagement and an individual's responsibility of acting present themselves.

The vertical direction in which one transcends his own self (towards "being," God, supreme meaning, union with the universe – towards that which is abstract for most people) is mostly accompanied by certain inner intense experiences, peak experiences (ecstasy, experience in clinical death, etc.), a sense of belonging, a connection with a god or being-in-itself, or an inner deep trust in the existence of something, that is, by faith. The advantage is that it is obvious to all of us that the transcending of our own *I* is really happening, and this is where the Latin term *transcendere* maintains its deepest meaning. However, due to the fact that overlap in the vertical direction is not tangible or understandable, many people inferr its non-existence. Individuals with such experiences have often been considered pathological; thus, adoration of all experiences is also not appropriate. Even the current discussion in religious psychology, psychiatry, and spiritual care admits pathological cases. We know very little about this direction of overlap, and we only rarely engage in impartial discussions of this issue, because it is only recognizable by

our own experience. Research is complex and often culturally conditioned (Asendorpf 2007, p. 431) because the respondents' statements are subjective, influenced by misunderstandings, and difficult to communicate; therefore, the question of how and what to teach children in the context of a complex and overlapping education has been insufficiently answered. It is an area which concerns the individual very intensely and is often even more intimidating than the sexual area. However, it is true that the conditionality of the environment does not annul the universal path which is reflected in all these experiences across humanity and has its essential influence on the socialization of man.

The horizontal direction of man's transcendence is explicitly related to his socialization because it is related to the self-consciousness of the individual who is discovering his *I* through overlapping with other people even so intensely that "one goes beyond his own shadow." It is a direction which is concerned with the good and the welfare of the other person, the creature, the nature, the state, or the group – an active deed of love or wisdom, the creation of a work, the struggle for ideals, the fulfillment of a purpose, helping another person in self-actualization, etc. The advantage of this direction is that it is commonly found in everyday life, we can actually imagine something under or behind it, and we can suggest ways to educate children. The disadvantage is that at first glance in most activities it is very difficult to distinguish it from the standard relationship with the world, even though it is a part of us. Horizontal overlap differs from standard behavior in a number of facts which make it clear that every person can perform this type of overlap. In addition to the external visible activity, the inner positive and conscious intentions of the individual appear in the transcendental act: one's free will connected with the joy of acting, the preference for the well-being of the other (which is also borne by a healthy love for oneself), a motivation outside of oneself, a self-commitment or surrender, a feeling of harmony with something higher and important, personal composure, seeing the consequences of one's actions for the future of mankind, and faith in the meaningfulness of concrete actions or beliefs.[31]

The two directions of human transcendence are dependent on each other, since they complement and influence each other. By engaging in the horizontal direction one also grows in the vertical direction, the height of which opens in slow progressive steps and sometimes in leaps. This is also true vice-versa: by recognizing the vertical overlap, man is being transformed towards his visible surroundings (e.g., the research of Maďarová, 2011). Even in psychological development it is important to support both directions in such a way so that a child is able to understand transcending in a manner appropriate to his age category. This enables the development of a complex overlap as an important quality of a mature personality. However, this does not mean

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[31] Palitzian and Ellison (1982) were the first to apply the concept of verticality and horizontality to define spiritual health (*spirituelles Wohlbefinden*). Verticality refers to the relationship with God (*religiöses Wohlbefinden*) and horizontality to the relation to "life goals and universal life satisfaction" (*existenzielles Wohlbefinden*). Bucher used these concepts in his psychology of spirituality to define a spiritual relationship and unification that is of a dual nature: vertical ("higher being, a spiritual transcendent principle") and horizontal ("nature, cosmos, and social peers [*Mitwelt*]") (Bucher 2007, p. 34n). This theoretical definition is also complemented by other aspects.

that one has to experience all of the relative aspects (especially in the vertical direction) and experience the ultimate experiences of the various types so that it could be said about him that he is mature in overlapping. Everyone has his own way of life which he forms as a personality and where he remains open for further growth in maturity. Rather than defining total development, the key aspect is knowing the importance of overlapping in both directions and also maintaing an attitude of openness and respect for this quality of personality, which precisely on account of its inner duality (i.e., spreading unity, complexity, and simplicity) is by itself one of the most remarkable areas of the individuality of human beings.

5.8.2 Transcendence and Transcending

- Transcendence is a multidimensional term and must be approached in this manner.
- There are two overlapping expressions in the relevant literature: self-transcendence (Bucher, Maslow) and transcendence (transpersonal psychology, etc.). The first one points to the fact that the overlapping activity is always related to a person, while the second relates to the phenomenon of overlap as such. The confusion of both terms as being equivalent is not an exception.
- Overlapping refers to an atypical reality (a state, a phenomenon, a consequence of an action) that occurs with a typical reality: the overlapping derives its meaning and only becomes more visible in this duality.
- It exists outside of a person as an option in potentiality, but it does not have to be realized through an action. There is also an *a priori* in mankind as a given, and a person transcends by all of his activity, the distinction of correctness or incorrectness of the overlap depends on the attitude of man.
- It is inherent within mankind; it differentiates mankind from the animals; therefore, it is a human need (Maslow), is associated with the essence of human existence, and is given biologically. Transcendence makes a person who he or she is (Frankl). Everyone needs to realize this part of his essence by prioritizing the non-ego to become a person and to think and act in a corresponding manner.

Transcending (Overlapping) – A Conceptual Definition

- It is a part of everyday human reality. It is associated with man as a personality, is directed towards him, and evolves in him (i.e., it is related to the cognitive, affective, and conative aspect).
- It has a varying outward quality; it takes place in seemingly insignificant and outstanding facts and also in spiritual and everyday activities (e.g., sacrificing one's time, money, comfort, or even life). It has a varying quantity: some people live more in overlap, others less, and according to Maslow, some people

do not live in overlap at all.

- Transcendence can be developed in a person's life; there are things which either support it or inhibit it (see Helus on "personality aiming at actualization," 2009a, p. 105).
- A person develops his transcendental dimension: insight into things (e.g., insight as a part of nature), religious practice (spiritual experience), meditation, breathing (transpersonal experience), acting for someone else, love for another person, one's own suffering, etc.
- It is perceived subjectively because there are situations where one person knows that he is participating in an overlap while another person does not know it (cf. Helus 2009a, p. 42: Only one of the workers interprets his activity as building a cathedral). It is also objective because a certain behavior is an overlap while another behavior is not.
- It does not necessarily refer only to the positive activity of an individual, as there is also the negative activity of a person (see Fromm concerning "destruction").

5.9 Summary

We find the idea of transcendence as a part of the psychology of religion, spirituality, meaningfulness, and the psychology of wisdom; namely, transcendence is identified with the needs of humanity, the essence of human existence, the meaning of life, values, experiences, qualities of personality, and spirituality.

6 Transcendence in Contemporary Religious Pedagogy

In this chapter I summarize a specific understanding of the concept of transcendence in contemporary and especially foreign religious pedagogy.

6.1 Transcendence as an External Objective Reality

One relates to transcendence as an external objective reality through faith. The concept of overlapping (outreach) is not commonly used in religious education or in theology. The concept of transcendence in relation to mankind appears for the first time only together with the psychological exploration of spirituality as a concept of self-transcendence (*Selbsttranszendenz*, Bucher 2007, pp. 30-31). Recently in the Czech Republic we encounter the anthropologizing tendency of this concept in children's theology (Bravená 2011, 2013, 2014a etc.) or in the concept of human morality (Lorman).[32]

In children a **cognitive problem** is associated with the perception of transcendence. Unlike pubescents and adolescents, in whose case the relationship with the supersensory is not questioned, a smaller child has a specific approach to transcendental reality which may not always be understood or considered important by adults.[33] The reason may be the fact that children tend to focus on only one particular detail, exercise a lower aptitude of expressing themselves, link their own "profane" fantasy heroes with religious ones, prioritize a practical problem before the testimony of faith, and draw pictures unrelated to a given narrative or story.

6.2 Self-Transcendence as a Conversion Experience of Children

In the Czech language we use the concept of **conversion** (*konverze* from the Latin

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[32] Jaroslav Lorman speaks of "taking responsibility" as a "step of transcendence" which is based on a critical view of one's own actions; this means that a person assesses his or her "planned behavior" whether it "matches the internal call for good and is a step towards future better" behavior (2013, p. 184). According to the author, transcendence is a part of "human action" and such self-transcendence means opening oneself to the "future," "a manifestation of confidence in the meaningfulness of at least the closest of the steps" and is "an overcoming of previous self-experience" (Lorman 2013, s. 180 n.).

[33] However, the trouble-free transition to the puberty period does not negate the fact that there are children in different churches who at a younger age (6, 8, or 10 years old) persuasively testify concerning their relationship with God and outwardly act as converted children, that is, children who have undergone an inner change. For example, the history of Církev bratrská (the Brethren Church) shows that they have accepted into the church those "converted children aged 8-9 years" who have experienced "profound encounters with Christ." However, it is not clear what is meant exactly by "profound encounters" in the context of the particular biological and mental age of the child. Quoted from *Teologická stanoviska a doporučení Rady Církve bratrské a Studijního odboru* (Theological Opinions and Recommendations of the Council of the Brethren Church and Study Department), p. 22.

conversio) to express a process of change from one reality to another (see Palouš's event of "self-transcendence" [*sebepřekročení*], 1987, p. 197). In religion, it is mostly identified with the concept of an initial religious conversion experience (*obrácení*).[34] In addition to the developmental factor,[35] the religious-socialization factor (i.e., the child's access to information and experiences of the given religiosity and spirituality) is also important.

Conversion is at the beginning of the transcending activity of the subject and is its prerequisite for entrance; it is the key to the door behind which the transcendent is found.[36] In religious pedagogy intense transcending of oneself in the life of a child means a fundamental change which happens suddenly and is accompanied by intense inner feelings or even external manifestations such as joy or new behaviors (see Maslow's peak experience). This also signifies a gradual change in the sense of the so-called "intensification, i.e., the radical reinforcement and deepening of religious belief" (Říčan 2007, p. 267). It is interesting that in the youngest and religiously socialized children we mainly find the second variety. An older child often remembers it retrospectively in this way: "I do not know when I came to faith because I have always believed."[37] Theology describes this reality by the Greek term *metanoia*, which in the most general sense is also used in certain philosophical systems (see Patočka, Palouš).

6.3 Transcending as Experiencing the Transcendent

Understanding a child's faith in the transcendent is primarily based on the research of adult converts who have experienced a spiritual experience as children. Retrospectively, they qualitatively associate and identify it with conversion (a spiritual transformation, an assurance of salvation, a supersensible assurance of the absolute presence of God, etc.); nevertheless, they are still evaluating the event from the point of view of an adult position. They use specific terminology which a child

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[34] Říčan, on the other hand, differentiates between the two concepts: "I see conversion [*obrácení*] as a theological concept and conversion [*konverze*] as a sociological and psychological concept" (2007, p. 266).

[35] The boundaries are approximately given by the **developmental** (age limit) **and the catechetical factors** (i.e., **the religious socialization**). From birth to the end of the toddler phase, the child is religiously educated especially in the family or in the framework of maternal education, that is, it is not engaged in a systematic work in the context of religious teaching. This model changes in the **pre-school aged children (3-5 or 6 years of age)** and is modified in respect to the child's school-age abilities (6-12 years, ibid, p. 145 and 149n). The upper limit of the child's age is related to the period of **puberty**, which is "localized between the 11th -12th and 15th year with a certain individual variability given ... above all genetically" (Vágnerová 1997, p. 107, p. 247n).

[36] There is an opinion that everything connected with faith until the conversion of the child is **religiosity** (Bucher 2007, s. 20). According to Bucher, this is not entirely accurate, and he offers the following division. **Spirituality** is the child's relationship to God, to others, to church practice and piety, the feeling of unity, and the ability of a child's self-transcendence (transcendence). By the term religiosity the author refers to what is connected with the faith being practised and what manifests itself through certain acts (church-going and other rituals, p. 28n). Conversion therefore includes both concepts.

[37] For additional insights concerning the conversion of children, see Bravená 2014a.

would never have used (Bucher 2007m s. 75-76). Although this is evidence of the existence of the given experience in the child, it is not the child's testimony of the experience. This has been the impetus behind specific research and targeted exploration in the new field of children's theology.

The upbringing and education of a child towards transcendence relies on the theology of revelation (i.e., the process of revealing and illuminating God's truths to man). Human beings encounter this process in two ways: through a specific experience and through reflection. Religious pedagogy calls this "the experience of revelation (*Offenbarungserfahrung*)" and "thinking about revelation (*Offenbarungsdenken*)" (Kropač 2006, p. 15).[38]

6.3.1 Experiences of the Transcendent

It is not only adults but also children who have access to revelation in the sense of **God's speaking** (*locutio Dei*) and of **God's acting** (*actio Dei*).[39] The act of revelation is accepted by a child **with unreserved faith**, but unfortunately it is often not taken seriously by adults. Young religiously socialized children commonly describe personal encounters with God, Jesus, the Virgin Mary or an angel. "Speaking" does not imply acoustic sounds in most cases nor does "acting" imply visible manifestations of God. It is a certain more intense form of perception or awareness of reality by the subject (cf. the definition of peak experiences) of things and facts that anyone else would leave unnoticed and which the child intensely associates with the transcendent, (i.e., with the activity of God). God's speaking can be perceived by the child as a part of the overflow of its own thoughts, fantasies, dreams, etc.; it is as an act which takes place in the consciousness of the child. The acting is sometimes associated with what many of us call an accident or by the phrase of "having good luck." This does not deny that there are both adults and children who describe the visual form of the characters or an acoustic form of the words. But here we also have to note that there are both standard and unusual experiences of faith. In my opinion, they are divided into the following categories:

(1) theologically justifiable (by Holy Scripture, tradition, and personal experiences of

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[38] According to the view of the German religious educator Kropač, this division was profiled already in the early church. Religious pedagogy is currently reevaluating this, and this division implies an important significance in the religious socialization of children.

[39] The *Dei Verbum* constitution states this truth as follows: "'The obedience of faith' (Rom. 13:26; see 1:5; 2 Cor 10:5-6) 'is to be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man commits his whole self freely to God, offering the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals,' and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. To make this act of faith, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind and giving 'joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it.' To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts." (Documents of the Second Vatican Council, 1995, Article 5, p. 110; First Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith, Chap. 3, "On Faith:" Denzinger 1789 (3008); Second Council of Orange, Canon 7: Denzinger 180 (377); First Vatican Council, loc. cit.: Denzinger 1791 (3010)).

other believers);

(2) theologically unjustifiable on the basis of contemporary scientific theology but not inconsistent with it (e.g., bound to a specific context);

(3) contradicting scientific theology (mostly based on a contextual analysis). Here it is necessary to establish the reason (ignorance, sectarianism, pathology, and so on).

Children approach the experience of transcendence ingenuously. When his parents find the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple after three days of searching anxiously, he is surprised: "'Why were you searching for me?' he asked them. 'Didn't you know that it was necessary for me to be in my Father's house?'" (Luke 2:49). We do not have the description of a child's inner experience, but we do have the articulated verbal surprise of the child which adults do not understand (i.e., for the child this is simply **a matter of course**, so he assumes that everyone of course has to see it in the same way). The aforementioned text points out that **the insight of a child into transcendent things** is simply accepted as a matter of fact, but for the parents it is something incomprehensible: "But they did not understand what he was saying to them" (Luke 2:50). A healthy parental approach should be sensible and should not silence a child on the sole basis of the fact that they consider his statements unreliable or that they do not understand them. Jesus' challenge and charge to "let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children" (Mark 10:14) must lead us to consider and evaluate what can be included under "hindering" children from accessing the transcendent.[40]

Palouš speaks of the possibility of **transcendence without higher reflection**; the biblical theologian A. Novotny also develops a similar idea. According to him, the Old Testament concept is already associated with "the belief that even a child may in some cases hear the voice of God, and thus they have the capacity of experiencing an independent religious life." This is true even if the child does not know God. A biblical example is when the LORD calls Samuel. Samuel thinks that he is being addressed by the prophet Eli. The inner condition of the child is described as follows: "Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him (1 Samuel 3:7)" (1956, p. 126). Despite the ambiguity of *Samuel's age classification, it is clear from the text that God can also reveal Himself to a child who is not yet rationally able to recognize that it is a revelation*.

The lack of information in the Old Testament and New Testament texts and the lack of a specific articulation of children's experience in the framework of research are evidence of the fact that we still know very little about the experiences of transcendence in children. Neither blind reception nor adoration of children's religious experiences is without difficulty. This is evidenced among others by Bucher

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[40] A four-year-old girl told her mother who was expecting a baby with suspicion of Down's syndrome, "Mommy, the mommy of the Lord Jesus came to me at night and told me that the baby would be healthy, that she would be a little girl, and that she would be called Julinka." The mother understood the depth of the daughters's statement only after the results of the genetic tests and the announcement of the child's sex. As a confirmation of faith in the revelation of God, the mother named the newborn by the name she would not have chosen for the child, as she said, but which was part of the four-year-old girl's testimony and faith.

and Fowler; they point out that "an experience with God or a magical reality of being can trigger **strong concerns** which the child may not be able to overcome rationally." For this reason, Bucher recommends that "**children's spirituality [should] be perceived by adults without prejudices (*Vorurteil*) as much as possible, and [it should] not [be] too quickly forced into theoretical concepts and step schemes**" (Bucher 2007, p. 78).

6.3.2 Thinking about the Transcendent

Thinking about the transcendent is not necessarily tied to the specific beliefs of a given child. Based on previous foreign research, we find[41] that there are more examples of children's reflection on vertical transcendence than of direct interviews about the experiences of the individual children, so transcendence remains a more personal sphere of the individual child; the child does not usually speak about it in public. Thinking about transcendence can be done in three different ways.[42]

In **theology for children** the emphasis is on the teacher as an actor or performer of teaching – someone who mediates the transcendental content to the child. Revelation then comes to the children through the word. However, in contrast to current practice, this direction emphasizes the fact that the so-called higher theology can also be taught. A good example is learning about the Bible in the context of archeology, history, and textual criticism. From a practical standpoint this means that in the textbooks of religion for elementary school children (5th - 6th grade) a part of the presented content is a photograph of a piece of papyrus with the Greek text; it is this basis from which the child learns the origin of the New Testament writings in a very rounded manner (Büttner et al., 2007, p. 67). Transcendental contents are presented as knowledge in the context of "tangible" artifacts.

Theology with children means a common discovery of transcendental content. The child and the adult contribute to the teaching to the same extent (see Zimmermann 2010, pp. 111-123). In this context, experts speak about the **method of theologizing with children in which the child is a active partner in the dialogue**. For example, a clear question is asked at the beginning of the lesson and a task is

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[41] For more details concerning previous foreign research, see any issue of *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie*.

[42] Children have always been asked theological questions in dialogues, i.e., questions related to God and the saving death of Jesus Christ. However, the deeper significance of the responses of children was discovered only in the 1990s. The Swiss psychologist and Catholic religious educator Anton A. Bucher first identified children's statements with the term "children's theology" and appreciated them as theologians (Zimmermann 2010, pp. 47-48), that is, those who present relevant and serious messages to adults. These impulses were followed by continuous publications from both Catholic (Anton A. Bucher, Rainer Oberthür) and Protestant religious educators (Gerhard Büttner, Horst Rupp, Petra Freudenberger-Lötz, Peter Müller, Mirjam Zimmermann, and Hanna Roose). Dana Hanesová in Slovakia is engaged in "teologizovanie s deťmi" ("theologizing with children") (2011, 2015). The **children's theology** originated from the connection with empirical research. Later, the practice of children's theology was combined with university reflection and became scientific in nature. Children's theology includes three thought streams which are firmly intertwined on one hand and three different scientific, research, and methodological approaches on the other hand.

given to lead the children to answer the problem and to follow up with a dialogue. Children use their knowledge of the subject and seek the proper reasoning for the question asked. The teacher enters the discussion by providing information about a subject which children can not articulate themselves because they lack knowledge.

The last direction is theology **presented by children**, which is essentially the most important, because the whole discussion concerning the new field of children's theology began on this foundation. Here the emphasis is on the specific understanding of biblical and ecclesiastical truths by a child who can interpret them adequately in terms of age and ability: the child himself is the **active participant (i.e., actor)** of teaching. He is able to think about the topic alone or through targeted questions from the teacher. It is clear that not every testimony of a child can be identified with the transcendent testimony of the child. This is true in the following cases:

(1) When the testimony is not meant seriously. As an example, the author lists "random statements, nonsense, or matter-of-factly distant provocative statements."

(2) When the child does not espouse the so-called "meta-level" (i.e., when "the process of processing and reflection of the thought is not documented by the artifact of speech" (Zimmermann 2010, p. 83). According to the author, in order for a child's testimony to be theological it is not enough when the child merely answers yes or no, but he should substantiate his statement.[43]

What gives the whole discussion of children's theology a foundation is the realm or plane where *the adult and the child are equals*. It is the **questioning** itself, because "every person is a being who asks and who in the act of questioning comes out of himself, that is, transcends himself." Therefore, this not only concerns the capacity merely to respond and provide answers, since the child and the adult will perhaps be equals in ability, but it also includes the vital responsibility to ask and seek. According to experts this determines the **theological ability of a child** (Zimmermann 2010, p. 95), **this is the reason why we can talk about the theological competence of a child** (for more see Bravená 2013a, 2014c), **why we can think of him as a little theologian**: a person who **understands and interprets** transcendental contents.

6.3.3 The Theological Competence of a Child

It has the following characteristics:

It is associated with a cognitive aspect. By this we mean how the child "asks and deals with theological questions," how he relates to "narrative and metaphorical thinking," and how he "processes paradoxes and hermeneutical" issues.

It includes an aspect of problem solving. This manifests and develops where

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[43] This is a common problem for small children. For this reason, experts on children's theology have developed a method of so-called **theologizing when certain types of open questions lead a child to substantiate and explain his thoughts**. Concerning the differentiation between theologizing and philosophy in Czech, see Bravená 2010a, p. 79.

the child's "individual approaches" to complex theological problems are articulated. This of course means that children are actually confronted with such problems. Thus, protecting children from certain issues and topics does not help them to develop this aspect of theological competence.

It is connected to discipline specificity. Theological competence is determined by the field of theology itself and its methods. "Learning and teaching do not happen in an abstract way," but the child copes with "subject-specific content" (e.g., the Holy Trinity).

An important characteristic of theological competence is the **possibility of learning it** and the **possibility of its further development**. Therefore, this competence is also permanent and verifiable, unlike the spiritual competence of a child (for this comparison, see Bravená 2014b).

It is related to the practical exercise of individual character traits. By this we mean that theological competence is "induce-able" (i.e., able to be induced) in a particular situation; this includes competence for taking action, the ability to communicate, and the ability of connecting the theological-content to practical problems and their congruous definitions (Zimmermann, ibid., Pp. 160-163).

6.4 Conclusion of the Analysis: Transcending and the Dimension of Learning

Transcendence (Overlap)
- An objective reality exists independently of individual persons; it is opened for a person through the revelation toward which he must take a stance and develop an attitude.
- Subjective reality (self-transcendence) is linked with the experiences of children who already believe or do not believe.

Transcending (Overlapping/Reaching Out)
- Transcending has its external and internal characteristics.
- It is a standard activity of children; it takes place in everyday life but with the awareness of exceptional situations and accompanied by fascination with those situations.
- It is also a non-standard activity of children which takes place under certain non-standard circumstances and is accompanied by certain verbal or emotional articulations of the child.
- It is subject to being learning in terms of descriptive expressions, realia, as well as training their abilities, skills, and rituals.
- It is not subject to learning in its spiritual dimension; it is dependent on objective reality and the experience of an inner conversion (*metanoia*).
- It can be stimulated by a range of activities in which the child by himself recognizes the descriptive and mysterious side of things.
- The facts which are dependent on religion can be expressed by the concept of

spiritual competence and the independent notion of the theological competence of the child.

- It is not completely dependent on theological knowledge, but it is dependent on the child's substantiation. The child provides the evidence to support and prove the truth of transcending.

6.5 Summary

The concept of transcendence has not been used in the history of theology for the human overlapping activity; it has been reserved exclusively for God and his attributes, only with a few exceptions. Reaching out, self-overlapping, or the self-transcending activity of man began to be discussed only on the basis of inspiration from spiritual psychology. In the case of children under the age of twelve, there is a tendency to problematize their experience of transcendence (they are small, imperfect, do not understand, are undeveloped, etc.). Nevertheless, on the basis of practice in children, the so-called conversions (both sudden and gradual) have been documented in them in the sense of higher perception (*metanoia*). This may be the beginning of a child's faith, but there are children who are not aware this beginning themselves. The experiences of children with revelation and education can be traced back to the so-called reflection on revelation which is done methodically in three ways: theology for children, theology with children, and theology presented by children. The educational goal is the theological competence of the child which can be learned.

7 Conclusion of the Conceptual Analysis – Definitions

It is clear from the previous chapters that the concept of transcendence has multiple meanings. The conclusion of the first part of this book is therefore a short summary in the form of a minor dictionary.

Transcendence (Overlap)

- (psychological) 1. a higher need of man, the essence of human existence, the meaning of life, value, experience, personality quality, spirituality, etc.; 2. It is possible to determine the targeting of man's transcendent activities: vertically and horizontally (see transcending).
- (philosophical) 1. standing out of experience; 2. the opposite of immanence; 3. overcoming certain things, events, situations, or the world; 4. the creative self-transcendence of man; 5. transcendence as the essence of man's being (consciousness, the existential movement of truth).
- (religious) 1. the supersensible reality (God) standing outside of man in which man participates by faith; 2. This term is not commonly used for human activity (unlike conversion, transcending, self-overlap, self-transcendence); 3. Understanding of transcendence by children is often disputed until about twelve years of age, but experience confirms such experiences in children; 4. Education develops their reflection on revelation as theology for children, theology with children, and theology presented by children; 5. The goal of education is developing theological competence, which unlike spiritual competence is able to be learned.
- (pedagogical.) 1. overlap: labeling of the ability of a person to put overlapping activity into practice or to be able to realize it as the essence of a human being; 2. transcendence as a part of *paideia*, *techné*, *educatio*; 3. It overcomes the modern distance within relationships, the science of education, and the individual; 4. *Homo Educandus* is *Homo Transcendens*; 5. It contains unlearnable and unteachable elements.

Transcending (Overlapping)

- Overlap or overlapping thought is man's conative or affective activity which goes beyond a certain boundary (external, personal, spiritual) and accompanied by inner experiences;
- The horizontal direction of transcending is the overlap of the self towards the good and well-being of others (fellow human beings, a group, animals, nature, the state); it is practically an act of love or wisdom, a creation of a work, a struggle for ideals, the fulfillment of the meaning of life, or helping another in self-actualization; it contains the positive and willful intentions of a person, a

free will, the joy of acting, and belonging to something higher;

- The vertical direction of transcending is the overlap of the self towards being, God, the highest meaning of the world (i.e., of one's own life), or harmony with the universe; it is practically the experience of the highest form of belonging, security, trust, hope, belief, surrender, and insight; it is accompanied by the inner change of man and his external activity;
- Transcending happens in both directions: they are interconnected and the one can be influenced by the development of the other;
- Transcending is both positive and negative. Negative transcending is the overlapping activity beyond the external, personal, and spiritual boundaries which has the intent of self-preference or harming oneself and others. Negative overlap is not a well-intentioned overlap which has practically failed, because the decisive factor is always the inner intent and the activity of the individual.
- Transcending is both visible and invisible: visible transcending surpasses (i.e., "goes beyond") everyday behavior and actions (a heroic act, the struggle for ideals, etc.), while invisible transcending is intentionally acting without the non-standard visible activity but always including a changed inner experience of the individual (i.e., an awareness of participation in something higher) which is free of egocentricism;
- Transcending is preceded by or accompanied by higher reflection, inspiration, *metanoia*, a bordering experience, conversion, or ethical behavior.

III PERSONALITY AND TRANSCENDENCE

In this second part of the book transcendence is presented as an ideally developed personality component, its manifestations in adults are noted, and the main development milestones are mentioned, namely what supports or hinders transcendence. In defining transcendence in the educator and in children, I rely on the relationship scheme *I-Thou* or *I-You*, which was described as one of the possibilities of overcoming the modern distance of subject-object thinking.

8 The Ideal *Homo Transcendens*

This chapter offers a description of the ideal type of a transcending person. Because of a lacking in relevant literature, it uses the synthetic method along with deductive logic.

8.1 The Development of the Transcendent Personality Component

The goal of the transcendental component of the personality is its development. It is not a fixed form of "stable situation, a state in which the individual will remain forever once he has attained it" (Coan 1999, p. 19). It is a psychological goal which we define in "ways of behavior and experience, from which we expect **rather occasional manifestations** instead of stable presence." That is why we perceive "the ideal state rather in the terms of growth processes and not in the terms of the final state" (ibid).

It is clear from the previously stated propositions that the development of personality in overlap **does not have its final form**, but it does have **the starting point** from which it unfolds: it is neither a biological nor a psychological but **rather a transcendental birth.** I mean the educative inner turning of man (*metanoia*, insinuation, intensification of faith, etc.) which is manifested by a change of thought and action. However, neither Christian conversion nor the Greek periagogue implies "any sort of finality of living in Agathon-Good or following an absolute challenge without stumbling" (Palouš 1987, p. 199). **Psychological, philosophical, and religious insights talk about the subject's ongoing efforts to overlap, which is manifested by external manifestations whose frequency does not necessarily indicate quality.**

Outer manifestations of overlap **are always subject to a subjective assessment,** which under certain circumstances (the experience of the same or similar overlapping activity) can cause a deeper understanding of oneself and of the world in two or more people. It may, however, lead to different interpretations. For this reason, the development of this personality component is connected to a process of continuous discovering and learning.

8.2 Paradox 1: The Ability and Inability of Maturing in Overlap

In a similar manner to any other personality characteristic, overlap (transcendence) must be subjected to maturation as "the innate sequence of growth and changes of the organism" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 297). It is also equally dependent on the stimuli of the outside environment.

The **inability** of fully maturing in overlap does not indicate nihilism or a

person's incompetence; it indicates openness to new realities and the possibility of change. It is also tied to the multivocalness of the concept of overlap, whose preferences vary from person to person.

The **ability** to grow in maturity means achieving a certain degree of internal readiness to realize a certain direction of transcendence both internally and externally. This ability is also a person's hope that despite the inability to mature in overlap fully, one can assert paradoxically that the overlapping still has its **mature manifestations**.[44] This still does not rule out the possibility of maturing and acting differently under similar circumstances.

8.3 Paradox 2: Age-Dependent and Age-Independent Development in Overlap

An individual goes through different periods in his life with the typical physiological, mental, and social changes. Depending on the age, these are called by different names: according to where the feeling of delight is located (Freud), which specific internal conflict is arising within the person (Erikson), how the cognitive development is progressing (Piaget), the moral development of man (Kohlberg), and moral development from a social perspective (Selman). Also dependent on age is the name for an individual's relationship to faith (Fowler) and religious judgment (Gmünder-Oser). Developmental theories help us to gain a better understanding of how transcending manifests itself and where its developmental boundaries are. In this sense, the sequence of developmental changes is **dependent**.

Experience shows that transcending is to some extent independent of age. The inherent predisposition is found in all individuals, and the external stimulation is so strong that the mature expression (conative, emotional, cognitive, verbal, creative, etc.) comes at an age when we would not usually expect it.[45] **Age is merely a clue, while the unique personality of each person and his specific life story is the reason why age and "perceived" abilities can be overlooked in the interpretation of overlap.**

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[44] The psychological term "maturity" may also mean an "adulthood" whose characteristics include "leaving the family control, choosing a job, building sexual relations, having the ability to use leisure time, identifying with self, and clarifying one's worldview" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 697). Even as it is possible to define the concept of adulthood, it is also possible to define the **adulthood of *homo transcendens*** and to connect it with the following attributes: getting rid of the opinion of the majority, choosing one's own life orientation connected with a responsibility for the whole, creating a relationship to the whole, the ability to use one's time meaningfully, identifying with one's own and other person's *I* and seeing *You* in them, seeing one's own worldview as one of the possible attitudes, the ability to see data from a higher perspective, the determination to do what I am convinced about, and having hope and faith in that which enriches me and makes me become a better person.

[45] For eaxmple, see the paintings of a five year old autistic British girl Iris compared to the impressionist Monet. http://irisgracepainting.com/.

8.4 Paradox 3: Development in Transcending Is Dependent on and Independent of Intelligence

Transcending is **dependent on intelligence** (i.e., task planning, problem solving, the use of experience and common sense, Sternberg in Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 224), as well as emotional and social intelligence.[46] Therefore, depending upon an individual's intelligence, the development of transcendence can be viewed in relation to the meaning of this ancient saying: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be required" (Luke 12:48). In general terms, everyone is capable of transcendence or self-transcendence. It follows from this definition that transcendence can not only be granted as the privilege of those of high intelligence. Vertical and horizontal overlapping is often questioned in mentally handicapped people, even though certain research has already shown results in favor of these people (e.g. Maďarová 2009, 2010). It is clear from practice that there is an inconsistency between the assessment of the manifestations and the actual experiences within an individual. Similar cases are to be found in the elderly who are suffering from dementia or Alzheimer's disease or in very small children who do not yet speak in the first person.

It is difficult for a person with a mental disability to engage in the world, since his mature manifestations of transcendence will look quite different and will have a different value for the majority of the population. But this condition does not alter the fact that he is able to be a **dynamic person who lives within "the transcending reality" and who exhibits occasional and significant manifestations of transcending;** indeed, because his intentions which are manifested externally are ultimately human, he can be an even more mature and more developed personality than a healthy and intelligent egocentric person whose manifestations are otherwise considered flawless.[47]

8.5 Paradox 4: Quality Is Not Always a Guarantee of Quality

When someone performs a distinctive act of quality (i.e., valuable, in Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 277), we have no problem identifying it with a positive overlap. If the transcending activity of the subject is negative (i.e., when its aim is to damage,

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[46] The intelligence that we are talking about in the context of overlapping is based on a general definition, i.e. the intelligence of a person which is manifested as "the ability to understand, generalize, come to conclusions, use symbols, learn from experience, solve problems, and evaluate and orientate in new situations."

[47] Even as low intelligence may prevent the practical realization of overlap, the same can be found in cases of high intelligence. Perhaps we have heard somebody use the phrase "He has a high intelligence for evil!" It does not describe intelligence as such, but the abnormal ability of an average or below average intelligent person to combine, plan, and innovate actions which damage the others (fraudulent behavior, theft, defamation, etc). It is basically a negative overlapping of *I* for the sake of one's own benefit, regardless of the particular way of implementation and consequences of such conduct.

harm, or stand out in what is condemned or sanctioned by the society), it is a negative destructive overlap that always indicates a serious personality problem, even if it is performed in a superior way. Even as a good external action does not have to be a guarantee of quality (something completely different can be happening within the individual), the well-done negative act does not have to be done in a worthy way (e.g., when an individual experiences remorse, and thus the negative overlap has a weakness).

As Rýdl points out, the word "quality" itself does not mean anything, since it arises only "in connection with another concept." "By quality, we understand a property or a state projected into an object (a thing, a phenomenon, a living being) that is subsequently observed (in order to assess a value judgement) according to certain criteria" (Rýdl 2012, s. 114). Because transcending is multivalent and can be judged predominantly by its visible side (i.e., the manifestations of transcending), the concept of quality includes a certain non-assessable dimension. The outward manifestation of one's transcending is not a guarantee of the quality of the transcending aspect of personality, but it always refers to the real individual: the act (*Akt*) "refers to the being (*Sein*)" of man (Bonhoeffer 1988, p. 53).

8.6 Homo Transcendens – Anthropological Typology

Smékal chooses an interesting procedure for discovering personality elements by beginning with the consequences (CREDO'S personality model). He says, "Studying the personality by the prism of this model means emerging from... the results of activities and from the traces left by the individual and his activity in his environment" (2004, p. 63). The author uses this procedure to offer a description of one of the ancient wise sayings: "You will know them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Basically, even Helus and R. W. Coan use this way of defining overlapping persons, because they notice the typical and generally acknowledged characters distinguished by **positive transcending**.

8.7 Homo Transcendens and Positive Overlap

R. W. Coan presents these "ideal personality models": "hero (knight)," "artist," "wise man" and "saint" (Coan, 1999, pp. 20-21). They are characterized by various "human fulfillments" characterized by the following characteristics: "efficiency," "creativity," "inner harmony," "human community" and "transcendence." Since Coan defines transcendence very narrowly as a participation in what goes beyond our "being," even as "the experience of dissolution of our separate individuality," it is not surprising that it is attributed only to the **mystic (wise man/sage)** and the **saint; it is** only on the vertical plane. For these people, their actions of giving wise counsel or living for others is equally as important as the inner experience of transcendence. In

the concept of transcendence defined earlier in part seven, all of the aforementioned can be certain types of transcending people, because the hero and the artist show overlap especially on the horizontal plane. According to R. W. Coan, transcending, is possible based on the following:

- **a plane beyond our being: t**ranscendence belongs to the **heroes** as well as to **ordinary people** who neither die for others nor save the world. This is the main idea of the typology of **Z. Helus**. The condition of overlapping activity is the liberation from egoism and the perception of the whole, i.e., it is an activity which serves a higher goal and purpose (Helus 2009a, pp. 265-266). According to Helus, transcending is possible on these planes (2009a, p. 42-43):
- **the plane of love (*agapé*):** a parent, a spouse, a friend, or a teacher.
- **the plane of creativity:** a sculptor, a poet, a scientist, the founder of a nation, a workman, an ordinary person who recognizes that he is involved in overlapping;
- **the plane of moral commitment:** an ordinary person who is facing a betrayal of ideals and values of truth;
- **the level of suffering:** the sufferer learns the meaning of life (e.g., "I am suffering, but I am happy because I see that it has a reason and a purpose" (Helus 2012b, p. 32).

Heroic and mystical types are captured in a parallel way in all of the fairy tales and myths in the world.[48] **C. G. Jung** used them to document the patterns of behavior in the individual archetypes that refer to the collective unconsciousness. They represent "the oldest, typical, and trans-structurally shared experiences of mankind." They are "the primeval patterns of human action(s), aspirations, feelings, and cognition" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 46). One of the archetypes is the "**wise old man**" who is "the personification of the spirit of a mature man." He is an "archetype of **wisdom and meaningfulness**" and "he appears in dreams as a figure who possesses authority (a physician, a teacher, a priest, a wise man)" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 549). C. G. Jung defined transcendence psychologically as a transference of unconscious elements into consciousness (i.e., transcending leads to a change in the individual's attitude).[49]

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[48] What we can say about archetypes are just "archetypal ideas," the "effects" of the archetype, because these are concretized in our consciousness, but the essence of the archetype is a matter of unconsciousness (Jung 1997, p. 126). Here, Jung strongly holds to Platonism, since the archetype is essentially Plato's idea.

[49] C. G. Jung works with the concept of transcendence in his interpretation of the theory of archetypes in an interesting manner. He perceives it as giving the necessary opportunity for the connection of conscious and unconscious elements. He does not refer to it by the word transcendence but as a "transcendental function" which is not "mysterious," "supernatural" or "metaphysical" – it is a "psychological function." It takes place between the unconsciousness and consciousness, and it "allows the transition from one attitude to the other organically without the loss of the unconsciousness." Unconscious elements transcend into the consciousness, but the patient does not understand them, so the "transcendental function" of consciousness and unconsciousness "is mediated to the patient by a sufficiently educated physician, which means that he is helping the patient to unite consciousness and unconsciousness and

Linking wisdom and meaningfulness with the concept of transcendence (overlap) as something higher can be found in Křivohlavý (2009, pp. 102-103, 2006, p. 108), although without an explicitly defined anthropological typology. However, on the basis of both authors, we can summarize that transcending can also happen on:

- **the level of wisdom and meaningfulness of life.**

None of the typologies mentioned here speaks of children. Still, it was Jung who grasped the transcendental characteristics of children, although he did not speak of them explicitly. A child is not just a "remnant of memory on one's own childhood." These are not just "images of certain things from our childhood which we have forgotten." It is "the pre-conscious aspect of childhood, of the collective soul" (1997, p. 287). Jung said, "A child is the potential future" because he "prepares the future transformation of personality." Thus, "in the individualization process, he anticipates the character which arises from the synthesis of conscious and unconscious elements of personality." Therefore, he is a "symbol of unifying the opposites" (1997, p. 288). He is even "the mediator, the savior, the one who creates the whole." He is represented by "a wheel, a circle, a sphere, or a quaternity" and points to a whole which "transcends consciousness" which Jung speaks as of "the essential self (*Selbst*)" (Jung 1997, pp. 289-299). In this archetype he defines "the motifs of abandonment, invincibility, hermaphroditism, and beginning and end" (1997, p. 292). Children have a privileged position in the myths of all peoples which is unrelated to his underdevelopment or height; such dignity relates primarily to positive childlike abilities that are associated with the idea of transcendence which is manifested in the following realms or planes:

- **the plane of heroism (the idea of invincibility);**
- **the plane of time (the potential future);**
- **the plane of existence (the beginning and end);**
- **the plane of mediation (the unification of opposites);**
- **the plane of the whole (the creation of a whole).**

8.8 Homo Transcendens and Negative Overlap

A positive overlap is a concern for the lives of others and my own and a concern for the world as a whole at the same time. There is no typology for describing the negative *homo transcendens,* except for the Christian doctrine of *in Adamo einai* – being in Adam (i.e., the status of being in a sinful condition) which

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achieve a new attitude." In Jung we will not find transcendence in the sense of spiritual psychology, because he does not see the term "numinous" as overlapping but as "the fascinating power of an archetypal image" (Jung 1997, p. 124). Thus, transcendence defines only the character of unknowability, namely that which is beyond the limits of human consciousness, which he even classifies as the essence of the archetypes (Jung 1997, p. 126).

contrasts with *in Christo einai* – being in Christ.[50] This phenomenon can be described by the words of Fromm as the **destruction of the life of another and my own or the destruction of the world as a whole**. Anti-heroes, certain political leaders, and certain people practicing occultism are popularly perceived in this way. Their definition deserves a special inquiry.

I deduce that on the general level there may be the following manifestations of this concept: a murderer, someone who commits suicide, someone who kills ideals or the meaning of life, someone who kills wisdom, a murderer of the soul, etc. A significant feature is premeditation and the awareness of the negativity of a given act. A mitigating factor is conscience. Is not an anorexic or a person with an inadequately low self-esteem a self-murderer? Is not an egocentric or a fanatical mystic a soul-killer? If this is the case, then the behavior is not only intentional but could also be influenced by illness, moral, mental and spiritual neglect, personality deficit, poor education and upbringing, genetic predisposition, and environmental impact. In the **negative notion of transcendence, the non-egocentric transcendence murders (destroys completely and willfully) or kills and tears down** (it also destroys unconsciously – see Kodrlová, Čermák 2009).[51] Because I focus more on the positive aspects of overlapping, I will leave this issue aside for further exploration and explanation in the future.

8.9 Summary

The ideal *homo transcendens* as a fully developed personality does not exist; but its origin is in transcendental birth (turning, *metanoia*, conversion, intensification of faith, etc.). The transcendental quality of the personality is characterized by the fact that it is both dependent on and independent of the process of maturation, age, intelligence, and ideas of qualitative overlap. There are anthropological typologies describing man's positive overlap (Coan, Helus) and the overlapping aspect of the child (Jung). Negative typology exists primarily in popular conceptions and is not the subject of my further reflection.

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[50] For more, see Ryšková, M. 1994, p. 17, p. 187n. - Bravená 2010b, p. 16.
[51] This issue is addressed for example in *The Suicidal Triad* (*Sebevražedná triáda*). In individual cases of suicidal behavior, "the power of I (ego-strength) is disturbed." This can be caused by disturbed interpersonal relationships already from the "mother-child" relationship period (Kodrlová, Čermák 2009, p. 53).

9 The Personality of Educators and Overlap

In this chapter I draw from the fact that both not-focusing and focusing on oneself is inherent to mankind (Helus 2009b, p.10); this also has a transcendental dimension (Bucher 2007, p. 26). The relationship with *I* is the basis for the realization of the relationship with *You*.

9.1 "Selfing" Is Both Evident and Transcendent in Nature

Selfing is evident (i.e., understandable) in its own theoretical definitions. The self (*I*) consists of:

- **The self discovering** (*ego*, "self-consciousness," "active I," "subject").
- **The self being discovered** (*me*, "self-understanding," "self-image," "object"). The two components are interconnected, but each statement about the active *I* is always carried out from the position of the image of *I*.[52] "Two selves" are actually three because we also have desires and hopes which we project onto:
- **The ideal self.** The differences in the individual concepts of self cause disparity and mental illness in some people (Rogers, in Fontana 1997, p. 248).

Fontana reflects several levels of approach which a person uses to describe his self, but which **do not completely express the uniqueness of I**. They are:

The present moment: here the problem of constant change exists, because the "body, thoughts and feelings are changing." Capturing this process is difficult and virtually impossible.

Experiences in the past: although selfing is defined with the help of experiences, fragmentation and the impossibility of recollecting all the activities of the past week (let alone previous years) are also evident; thus, it is a "fractional" description.

General terms: terms such as "name," "occupation," "family or society" are included, but there are parallels between people, and these facts do not suggest anything about the uniqueness of the individual.

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[52] The first way of defining is **the self** "as a factor" (*I, ego*) which "perceives, evaluates, decides, does." This self is also called "self-awareness" (Hala 1997, p. 27), "active" or "**recognizing**" self, and it is perceived in one's body ("in the middle of the head, in the eye level," "in the chest," "in the right hand," etc.); it is experienced as unchanging in time, and it "is the only recipient of events and the originator of actions" (Balcar 1991, pp. 152-153). The second way to define the self (*me*) is "self-understanding," (Hala 1997, p. 27), it is "an image of self," it is **I "being discovered,"** which is "perceived, evaluated, protected, perfected." The basis of the "image of self" is "the perception and idea of one's own person – one's own body and one's own personality in the world" (Balcar 1991, pp. 152-153, 155). For more about the division of the self on subject-object, see G. H. Mead in Fontana 1997, p. 247.

Descriptions of my personality: these are descriptions of behavior, assessments, attitudes. According to D. Fontana, "Even here, the descriptions are not really me, for they are the descriptions of me, not the expression of that volatile consciousness of experience which makes life mine and which probably can not be expressed in words." But they are important for psychologists and consequently important for educators also, because they "express how people experience their existence." These descriptions are intended to describe the person's image – the description of the self being discovered (Fontana, 1997, pp. 244-245).

The concrete and unmistakable self is of a transcendental nature, namely it is beyond any visible expression or description. Only on the basis of the relationship to *You* is it possible to grasp the uniqueness of *I*. Sokol writes that "although we are this self ... and we constantly use this word a number of times without any problem," we are able to describe the self only in distinction from an opposite, because "the self always exists only in a certain relationship as one of the poles of this relationship." The child also becomes aware of his or her self only on the basis of distinction from Non-self (Sokol 1996, pp. 68-69). The self (*I*) "cannot be accounted for without others" since the self can be characterized as "**being-together-with-others-in-the-world**" (Michálek 1996, p. 35).

9.2 "Othering" Points to the Overlap of Self

While psychology deals with the concept of selfing, we will not find the term "othering" in it. This is probably because *You* is actually another *I*. Martin Buber presented a gnosiological dual definition of You:

- **The You undiscovered** = He, She, It.
- **The You being discovered** = the real *You* unveiling the *I* in a new way.

The other person is the It ("the [eternal] chrysalis") which hides You ("the [eternal] butterfly").[53] To recognize You in the other person instead of It (He, She) means to approach the relation of I in a new way. The relationship reveals You, makes individualities (It) into persons (You), and changes the one being discovered.[54] "The person becomes conscious of himself as participat ing in being, as being-with, and thus as a being.The ego becomes conscious of himself as being this way and not that. The person says, "I am"; the ego says, "That is how I am." "Know thyself " means to the person: know yourself as being."[55] It follows that both You and I are a cognitive matter (i.e, related to knowledge), which also includes higher reflection.

Based on the deduction, we can still extend this theory of "othering." Each of

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[53] Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, 69.
[54] Ibid., 111-112. **The person** is a "human individual with both physical and mental aspects" (p. 372). **Personality** is "the whole of a person's mental life, and the most distinctive feature is **uniqueness**, exclusiveness, distinction from all others (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 373). **Individuality** is "particularity; the basic quality of personality given by the difference from others; the individual perceives himself as a **unique being**" (p. 219).
[55] Martin Buber, *I and Thou,* 113-114.

us knows that there is also another *You* in our mind:

- **The Ideal You** = that self which we wish to meet, to love, to acknowledge.
- **The Idealized You** = the current distorted idea of You.

Both of these selves are based on our ideas of somebody rather than on the basis of actual knowledge (see Emil Brunner's *Wahrheit als Begegnung*).

9.3 Getting to Know "You" in a Relationship Means Overcoming Reification

According to Smékal, in getting to know a personality we undertake a dangerous reduction under the influence of the technicized world. This is the "reification (objectification – NB) of the human personality." He very succinctly states that this notion of the other person "is so rooted in our thinking that even those who realize its danger are inadvertently subject to it" (Smékal 2004, p. 479. cf. A person "as an ideal raw material" in Michálek 1996, p. 49). The author outlined the problem of alienation in the subject-object scheme; he further presented Buber's idea of seeing the other person at a distance, and the fact that the reflecting *I* is subject to everyday thinking.

We recognize things (i.e., objects) from the outside, whereas the knowledge of personality is related to the personal sphere of an individual whose "private inner content can only be discovered in dialogue with the other subject and by mutual self-revelation" (Smékal 2004, p. 480). This happens within a **relationship**. It is characterized as "the action between two or more phenomena, objects, or persons; psychologically, it is accompanied by an emotional attachment and a certain degree of responsibility" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 678). It is not solely a loose connection between I and You, but a **basic socializing element**. In contrast to mere contact or connection, "the relationship has a binding characteristic" (Smékal 2004, p. 54). This can also be defined in such a way that the relationship is essentially an independent encounter between I and You, because it always has its own specific characteristics and is never identical to any subject (Aquinas).[56] It is given **geographically** (neighbourhood, city, state), **temporally** (long-term, short-term), **socially** (family, school, vocation, hobbies), and **personally** (people who connect either more or less easily).

Being in a real relationship with another "person" leads to overcoming the reification of personality. *You* leads *I* towards overlap and leads *self* to a true knowledge of the *other* person.

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[56] Such a characteristic or facet of relationships as we understand it today is based on ancient and medival philosophical conceptions. Aristotle already developed a category of relationship which characterizes every thing. The distinction between relationships and subjects is found in Thomas Aquinas: "The relationship itself (*relatio*) is not what relates (*relatum*), but that through which or thanks to which ... the subject relates to another." He distinguishes the "relationship entity" (e.g., parent), the "relationship term" (son), and the "relationship basis" (an act of procreation). A relationship is a "different being?" (Svoboda 2013, pp. 74-75).

9.4 Discovering "I" Means Transcending the Current Idea of the Self

The ancient Greek philosophers used the aphorism "*Gnothi se auton* (know yourself)" to express their commitment to and pursuit of self-knowledge. The mysterious character of the knowledge of that time has passed (see Palouš 1987, p. 138). To get to know is to "perceive, evaluate, and relate to cognitive processes" (Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 253), but since perception has been separated from the supersensible component (the mystery), the relation to cognitive processes (i.e., ways of knowing) has been neglected in our society. Some even associate the knowledge of oneself with wisdom; for example, Kant declarad that "self-knowledge is the beginning of all wisdom." This is not some sort of a fleeting observation but a **full discovery** that will give us a "solid foundation on which we will be able to build our lives," as we recognize our strengths, weaknesses, joys, worries, and that which needs to be changed or strengthened (Fontana 1995 , p. 247).

Discovering the self is influenced by several factors. Once a person recognizes the self, he is on the path towards overlapping his own self. The following are influential factors:

A meaningful use of time: For most of the day, a person is dealing with external things – those things "which serve us and make our lives more enjoyable," or by those which the individual himself serves. Cognition itself assumes "knowledge about man, his body, his development, his mental life, his position in nature and society, his status among people, knowledge about his behavior and actions, his upbringing, etc." (Bakalář, 1978, s 26); thus, cognition demands a sufficient amount of time.

Grasping the fragmentary nature of knowledge: Knowledge means "more or less complete and accurate images of the reflected world in consciousness; it is mediated through perceptions, memories, thoughts, and emotions" (Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 435). Even this psychological definition still allows for a certain incompleteness. What is meant by the phrase "*more or less* complete and accurate?" Does this not mean "approximately accurate, that is, subjective and influenced by pre-understandings (preconceptions)"?

Active self-awareness: Knowledge is related to "self-awareness," which is the "impulse to work on oneself." It is "what I have to do with myself, what I will strive for, what I will identify with." This "leads to accepting responsibility for what I am, what I could bem, what I should be, what I do, and what I cause by my actions, which means taking responsibility for my own professional development." Such a responsibility for oneself is "a prerequisite for accepting (the shared) responsibility for a child" (Spilková 2008 a, p. 41). I have deliberately chosen the term "active" because if the transcending self is to be truly self-conscious, a person must act on the basis of its discoveries. Buber says, "There is a perverse self-awareness that does not encourage a person to turn and does not lead him along the path" (1994, p. 3).

Comprehension of the pre-understanding of self: Knowledge of *I* is influenced by the context of the society into which I am born and in which I grow up

(I am "accepted," for more, see Patočka's first existential movement 1995, pp. 124, 1990, p. 45).

Efforts concerned with one's own being: It is supposed to create a counterbalance to the efforts for knowledge and it is related to "true experiencing of personal identity." Fontana defines this narrowly as an "area of self-understanding and emotions," but recognizes well that "most schools do not systematically and purposefully develop 'being' in children." Only this path leads to a "true understanding and acceptance of one's own self" (1997, p. 270). This was also the "cave" of *paideia* – "the self-image that is at the same time an insight into being" (Palouš 1991, p. 33). The same imperative for upbringing is also seen by Michálek, namely "to find a place of education as related to man's being" (1996, p. 16).

The transcending self (I) is the self that constantly reflects and does not flee from the inner struggle of accepting one's own responsibility; it is a self-assessing and self-conscious *I* which discovers and acts and continues in the learning process on the basis of acting. Every single day t**he transcending *I* yearns to penetrate into the deeper layers of self in order to transcend the current image of oneself, because it is a way of drawing near to the original as well as to the ideal self and the other person.**

9.5 To Transcend Means to Crossover Personal Boundaries

Self-esteem along with self-image is the basis of the teacher's professional identity (*onion model* – Korthagen 2004, Korthagen, Vasalka 2005, for more, see Spilková 2008b, pp. 90-91). Respect is "respecting the value of another person or object." "Pathology can go in the direction ... of adoring or degrading oneself and others" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 632).

The low self-esteem of an educator results from:

Personal trauma. According to Kodrlová and Čermák, these are the events of "loss, rejection, abuse, or failure." By these, the power of self which "helps one to maintain emotional stability and to manage external and internal stress" is impaired. It may lead to the disintegration of the *I*, which is "typical for the most extreme form of self-destruction – suicide" (for more, see Kodrlová, Čermák 2009, p. 51).[57]

Political pressure. According to Fromm, this leads to "suppressing freedom," and thus man "grows alienated from his own self, loses his potentialities to be who he is supposed to be" (Helus 1995a, p. 19).[58]

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[57] "Self-experiencing is … the basis for every suicidal activity, whatever the suicidal motivation is" (Viewegh 1996, p. 86 in ibid, p. 57).

[58] Nakonečný also speaks of a change in the self-respect of the individual in "totalitarian social systems" where "pressure is being exerted [which leads] to hypocrisy, lying, and collaboration that is experienced as a dishonouring," but still in some cases leads to "a compromise with the totalitarian power" (2009, p. 351).

The disintegrating climate of the society. The specifics of Czech society include the following:

- a susceptibility to dissatisfaction with everything that grows out of the tension between a strong, materialistic, post-revolutionary desire and the limited possibilities to satisfy it in a normative way;
- a resentful envy or even destructive thoughts desiring the frustration of someone else's success (through defamation, theft, hate, breaking of ties, etc.);
- a circumvention of rules with which the majority of the society still agrees;
- a hasty enthusiasm met with an immediate decline which is connected with a belief in a specific individual's own inability;
- an intentional unsystematic approach which masks one's inability or personal interests.

The professionalism of the teacher begins with the most fundamental elements – the **appreciation of his own value** and the acknowledging respect to himself and to the other person.[59] This means loving myself in a healthy way, being able to relax, to find time for what I really want, discovering new things in my role as an educator, and discovering my self in a new way. Some call it psychohygiene, while others call it soul care or a person's integrity. The aim is to look at one's serious psychic complexes such as inferiority or the smaller "Czech" ones. It is often an internal struggle (Helus 2009a, p. 266) that one has to go through to cross his own boundaries (complexes) in order to become a balanced personality.

9.6 Wisdom as the Basis for Homo Transcendens

Wisdom is "the ability ... to transcend one's own interests, to transcend one's own wishes, intentions, desires, etc." It is difficult to define, but it has its own visible manifestations. One of them is "respect for others and their good (altruism)." The concern is not only for one's own well-being but also for "the greatest number of people" (Křivohlavý 2009, pp. 16-17). It means being empathetic and able to go beyond oneself for the sake of understanding a particular pupil. There are situations in the classroom which are unambiguous, but there are also situations which may be confusing in various ways. Sometimes it is easier to render quick punishment and solve the situation with a greater measure of wisdom than to spend time finding out the causes and motives of the act which would help

Křivohlavý speaks of wisdom as a "tacit knowledge." Someone knows "what is wise in dealing with certain social situations characterized by unusualness, ambiguity, intricacy, and obscurity. It is related to a special concept of goals and values, that which it is wise to focus on (which specific goals to choose), and which values have a

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[59] The basic statement of Christian ethics to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:39) shows the depth of emotion but also the necessity of its boundary (*agape* loves both You and I – not less and not more).

higher or lower priority" (Křivohlavý 2009, p. 17). Sometimes wise behavior may seem strange. There is a story in which two women came to King Solomon. One woman lost her child during the night after birth and took the child from the other woman. Both claimed that the child belonged to them and quarreled about it (1 Kings 3:16-28). In order for the king to find out the truth, he made a decision which at first glance seemed entirely lacking in wisdom: he proposed that the child should be cut in half and divided between them. The woman to whom the child belonged immediately begged the king not to kill her son but rather to give the child to the other woman, surrenderin her own truth for a higher purpose. The king was not interested in killing the child or in the women's quarrel; he was only looking for the true mother who would protect her child in every circumstance.

We are not born with ideas of what is wise and unwise, but "we get them from the other people we encounter in the environment where we live during our life" (Křivohlavý 2009, p. 30). The problem arises when we become familiar with another culture. A certain British teacher behaved very unwisely in a certain situation when she allowed children in Sudan to name a teddy bear by the name Mohammed. Even though this name was suggested by most of the children, in order to prevent an unwise decision, the teacher should have been familiar with the country in which she was teaching and with its religion. Not labeling something by the name of the Prophet should have been a priority for her simply because it is a primary principle of Islam; she should have explained to the children why they should not have given this name to the teddy bear.[60]

In solving complex problems, it is important to "understand the essence of the issue – insight," as well as the golden rule: before considering the act itself or giving an answer, one must weigh the matter with wisdom and listen (Proverbs 18:13). The expression of interest and respect for man must remain in the foreground. Wisdom is characterized by the fact that a person "is able to practice what he knows, what he has discovered, and what he has come to realize in his considerations" (Křivohlavý 2009, pp. 23-24). The complexity of the individual situations is that they are not identical, and therefore wisdom does not apply as an unfailing ethical principle. On the contrary, at first glance wise behavior may be contrary to the actions generally accepted in the society. It is precisely the recognition of the uniqueness of each situation and the inner intent of doing something for the good of another which accompanies the overcoming of one's own possibilities, thinking, comfort, and time: it is a manifestation of transcending, i.e., true wisdom.

The general characteristics of the consequences of wisdom for others are presented by Křivohlavý (2009, pp. 26-27). Some of them are reformulated here with regard to the relationship between a teacher and a child. An integral part is the teacher's conscious intention, free will, joy, etc., as defined above (see the summary of overlapping).

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[60] http://www.novinky.cz/zahranicni/svet/127659-ucitelku-zatkli-dovolila-detem-pojmenovat-plysaka-mohamed.html

A wise teacher manifests overlap by the fact that:
- he leads children in every situation;
- he helps them look into obscure situations and helps them to see from a different angle;
- he points children toward order;
- he helps children to "get out of the clutches of uncertainty";
- he presents children with the experience of using "general theoretical knowledge in a very specific situation";
- he embodies a "crystallized set of moral values and moral aspirations" to children;
- he sympathizes with others and has a "kind relationship" to them (Křivohlavý 2009, pp. 26-27);
- he is "educated, ponders various things more deeply, has intuition, is sensitive, well-behaved, considerate, tacit, unobtrusive, judicious, and not overly condemning." He is "interested in other people, behaves righteously, is meek, is interested in amicable solutions of disputes, and he is good at listening" (p. 29);
- he is altruistic, receptive, and he loves others (*agape*), life, and knowledge;
- he provides children with relevant and objective information;
- he also accompanies and "goes along with" the children in certain ways which at first glance cause the children to not know where exactly the process in leading (see the story of King Solomon);
- he is wisdom personified;
- he is also educating himself in the issues of both horizontal and vertical transcendence;
- he seeks the general spiritual dimension and purpose of his own life.

9.7 Summary

The transcendental component of the educator's personality is related to his relationship with *I* and *You*. *I* can be defined by presence, past experiences, and general terms or descriptions. The transcendent nature encourages *I* to know *You* in relationship. At the same time, the teacher is discovering himself, i.e., he transcends his own prevalent idea of himself by using his time meaningfully, by recognizing the fragmentary nature of knowledge, by recognizing his own self and his presuppositions, by seeking knowledge and understanding of being, and by struggling with his complexes. The basis for the educator's overlap is the wisdom that manifests itself in relation to children, educators, the learning process, and the understanding of the world.

10 The Personality of Children and Overlapping

In this chapter I focus on the personality of a child who is developing towards transcending, namely one who bears specific abilities, encounters factors that support or inhibit the development of overlapping, and perceives its positive influence.

10.1 The Development of Children and Important Milestones for Overlapping

A child is not born with a fully developed overlap; he must develops towards i. This also implies important milestones that must not be neglected. From a wealth of information about human psychosocial development, I concentrate only on what forms the basis of transcendence and appeals toward upbringing – **overcoming distance to others, the world, and ones own self.** I will focus on this in the framework of the personal-social scheme of *I-You* relationships.

10.1.1 The Infant and the First Transcending of One's Own Self

Infants (0-1 year) experience many changes in life. The fact of the "psychological birth," leaving the "symbiotic *We*" (Říčan 2006a, p. 87), "personification" (Sullivan, in Drapela 1998, p. 59), "understanding the existence of self and of the mother as two different beings" (Mahlerová, in Vágnerová 2000, p. 64), etc., describe a significant phenomenon in a child's life, **the discovery of the first overlapping of one's own *self*.** A child (the subject of the activity) discovers the world outside of himself and somehow understands it as the non-self (the object of the activity) to which it may relate. We know this is happening, but we can not accurately determine the moment of the dissolution of the symbiotic bond. For this reason, Winnicott (1964) speaks of a "gradual differentiation of the boundaries of one's own being" (Vágnerová 2000, p. 70); we can even find a certain degree of symbiosis in the toddler (ibid, p. 85). Mutual participation and interconnection of a child with his parents remains, but the child's understanding changes. In other words, the infant is fully a part of the macrocosm (his mother's life), because there is no distinction between the subject and the object in the sense in which we understand it. This can remind us of the interconnectedness of ancient man with the cosmos.

From the beginning an infant does not need overlap; there is **only a hint of mutual relationship** because the infant forms *We* with the mother, that is, he exists unconsciously in an overlap as *We*. Thus, with some exaggeration we can that the child as an unconscious *self* is an overlap by himself. Mahlerová (1975) speaks about "almost a fusion of the child with the mother" (Vágnerová 2000, p. 61). But what do we actually really know about the experience of an infant when full self-

communication or later retrospection are not possible? This state of non-overlapping can be compared to Michálek's statement about a child born on the threshold of a cave. Phrased in Platonic terms, it is "free of handcuffs," and it depends on the upbringing whether "it will be pulled into the cave or raised in the neighborhood of being" (Michálek 1996, pp. 66-67).

The relationship of the child to the non-self is gradually becoming differentiated. The child distinguishes "known and unknown people" (between the 6th-9th months of life). Spitz calls this the stage "of a specific object" (in Vágnerová 2000, p. 62). **You has various forms.** The child also gradually becomes aware of what Piaget describes as perceiving the existence of an object independently of his senses (Atkinson 2003, p. 77), that is, a new concept of perceiving the **existence of You as something permanent**.

The child learns **to trust the non-self (his mother or a nurse)**. He trusts someone who transcends him in order to gain confidence later in himself. In essence, physical overlapping results in a relationship of trust.[61] This is the building block of the horizontal overlapping towards oneself and towards other people (see the positive and negative results of Erikson's stages, Pervin 2005, p. 148) and on the vertical plane, because on the basis of this trust, "the future openness towards the transcendental You is established (Streib 2001)." The mother embodies the cosmos for the child, this may later correspond to the notion of god (Vogel, in Holm 1998, p. 80). If this connection is not induced, as P. Říčan points out, then man is unable to "confidently and existentially relate to a transcendent Being or to highest values" (2007, p. 240). Patočka demonstrated this in a similar way and emphasized the first existential movement of "rooting," "anchoring" (1995, p. 124), and "acceptance" (1990, p. 45) in the defenseless newborn. This is of fundamental importance because it continuously determines the life of the individual, even in the context of other movements such as the movement of transcendence (1995, p. 105, p. 110): "this is the *a priori* framework in which all the possibilities of our experiences of movement happen." A person feels secure here, experiencing confidence and being accepted and evolving in that security; there is a ruling principle of delight and dependence from the perspective of the child (1995, p. 111); this is a safe and protective embrace from the accepting party (1995, p. 106). In this movement, a "grand-structure" of "You-I-common surroundings" is formed (1992, p. 237). There is also the "source of the structure of home-alienation" (1992, p. 237) and the foundation of the child's faith.

The infant **looks up to the non-self** from birth. Nonverbal eye dialogue is as important as the physical presence of the mother's breast. This gives rise to a unique connection but also to the future of the connection of man to someone who is above him, as "a human being will always be looking for someone to look up to" (2007, p. 240). Eventually, it overlaps beyond one's self to a non-self, which is a matter of course and an everyday activity for the infant. Looking upwards is the first vertical (above oneself) and horizontal (from oneself) overlap. With cognitive development

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[61] Trust is an essential element of developmental theories: the acquisition of a sense of trust against mistrust in Erikson (0-1.5, in Pervin 2005, p. 148 - Drapela 1998, p. 69), a manifestation of the stage of "undifferentiated belief" (0-2 years, Fowler, in Holm 1998, p. 87).

these two directions are split as it were in the development of a person, only to merge into a conscious and complex overlap later in adulthood. Looking up to a non-self symbolizes overlapping up to old age. It may even be the last possible overlap in a person's life when dying.

The infant experiences a change in self-image. The infant experiences what is pleasant or unpleasant not only in the oral areas (Freud) but also in the whole body (Říčan 2007, p. 240). With the help of all senses, an overlap is realized; with the help of the whole body, one can continue in experiencing and overlapping. Awareness of one's own body and the associated activities points to experiencing oneself (Broughton 1987), that is, a vulnerable little something becomes an **active self** who assesses the situation according to pleasure or unpleasantness. In interaction with the other non-self, a child gradually **understands "the permanency and continuity of his own existence"** (Vágnerová 2000, pp. 69-70).

This period is also important because it creates the "basis of higher emotions: emotional relationships." When the infant's mother or father give him their attention, they are "forming a relationship" based on pleasant feelings. Even the child can engage in creating such a relationship, for example, by "mother taking the baby's hand and stroking" her own face or the father's "face." The parents also act as mediators in the relationship to nature (doggy, cat, horse, etc.) and to things such as toys (Klímová-Fügnerová, 1974, p. 31).

10.1.2 Toddlers and the Announcement of an Independent Self

Toddlers (1-3 years) develop autonomy. The development of speech, fantasy, and the next steps in the socialization of children (2006a, p. 101) also contribute to this. With various toddlers this process of discovering the self is related to the fact that they recognize the underlying order in the family and in the world (p. 104n., p. 117); they recognize the fact that the *Other* has certain regularities and rules. A child receives this order and internalizes it: "he even becomes its watchful guardian" (Říčan 2007, p. 241); a child requires order from others and recognizes the requirements of the *Other*. In contrast to autonomy, shame, and doubt (E. H. Erikson), a toddler achieves "self-control" and the ability to choose (Pervin 2005, p. 148). This is essential for overlapping because a person in his everyday life has to take positions or stances which are sometimes contradictory to the order or the rules.

A child at this age acts according to the consequences of its behavior, i.e., it focuses "on punishment and obedience" (Kohlbegr's "preconventional level of morality," in Heidbring 1997, p. 72). The definition of what is good and bad is determined by what is being punished or required by the other party. It is a period which is especially important for the formation of the horizontal overlap as it is the time of forming the beginnings of ethical and aesthetic sensitivities.

On the basis of primary trust, an infant's undifferentiated faith forms an "intuitively-projective faith" (J. Fowler). Despite the limits given by cognitive egocentricism, this faith is "given by the gradually developing ability of imagination on whose basis certain images that orient the child towards the highest reality are

created. The danger here lies in the fact that images can be frightening and destructive or possibly impose subjection to the authorities who present a certain teaching and morality" (Říčan 2007, p. 253n).

Another development is experienced by the *I*. The resilient "no" points to another important overlapping milestone. This period is referred to by K. G. West as the "proclamation of independence" when the child "learns to stand its ground." In the differentiation between self and non-self, this has a significant meaning. Rejection of the opinion, advice, or recommendation of the other, in fact, implies agreeing with oneself. K.G. West expresses this concisely: "I have my rights," "I have dreams," "I have standards," "I know what is best for me" (2002, pp. 99-100). A child expresses this in two egocentric formulations. The first is "**I** [will do this by] **myself**," in which the child claims a personal solution of the situation; and the second is "**I want**," through which the child notifies the adult not only of his activity but also of his competence (Vágnerová 2000, pp. 86-87). The toddler begins to use "the possessive pronouns 'my' and 'your'" and "his or her name and the pronoun 'I'." This helps the child to discover the difference between the self and the non-self, "between one's own self and another's self" (Vágnerová 2000, p. 89). In spite of this differentiation, a child still "does not distinguish between its own and someone else's perspective," namely that the other person interprets the facts differently; a child "confuses nonobjective and objective aspects of the social world," and confuses "feelings and observable phenomena, intentional and non-intentional" behavior (Selman, Byrne (1980), in Heidbrink 1999, p. 45). This in essence means that a **child does not yet perceive an other self as as a true *You*, but he still has his own notion of the concept of You. The following discovery of mine offer valid proof of this assertion.**

A child discovers the linguistic concept of You. This is the linguistic foundation where the child becomes You for the adult, and this is reflected in his speech: "[*You*] go to bed," "Come clean *your* teeth," etc. The importance of this phenomenon was brought to my attention by our older son. At the age of two and a half, he began to speak using **singular second-person pronouns** in distinct requests or wish clauses as "negotiations." For example, when given the instruction to eat, our son was specifically asked, "Please, eat the porridge." Then an important sounding question came: "Do you want by car?" "You want on the gan, you want?" When translated, this meant: "If I eat the porridge, I would like to go in the car or in the toboggan as a reward." Our child who was still talking about himself mostly in the third-person had already listened to adult questions, and despite explaining that he was supposed to use the phrase "I want" or "I would like," he used the second person for more than half a year. Children learn by imitation, and they know from experience that certain sentences produce a targeted result, which is probably why the phrase "I want" was alien to him (i.e., the adult does not use it in speaking with the child for his benefit). A **child is addressed by others as *You*, and therefore he may include it in his own speech**. It was a very interesting discovery in our son's case that a child can speak about himself not only in the third-person and in the first-person at the same time, but that despite all of the distinct definitions, he can still include the second-person into his world as well. It is here where a child discovers the activity of giving,

which he recognizes by using the words "Do *you* want?" It is precisely this "intersubjective practice" that has a significant influence on the development of children (Hejlová 2010, p. 56).

The relationship of the environment to the new reality of an **independent "no"** can be threefold: prohibitive, supportive, or all-permissive. Both extremes have a fatal effect on individual development. The first leads to a "lack of self-confidence," to a "feeling of dumbfoundedness and low self-esteem," the third forms children into "despots" who relativize the needs of others. The first one will try overlapping oneself only a little, the third will only need to reach out or overlap if can get something out of it. K.G. West says very strictly: "For those who fail at the initial test of independence, no 'I' will appear" (West 2002, pp. 100-101). This statement can be slightly refined: there will appear no *I* which would naturally float into the waters of overlap, and it will encounter many obstacles.

Another important discovery of toddlers concerning the question of the *Other* is the finding that "**one object can represent another.**" For example, "a doll may sometimes be the mother, sometimes the baby" (Piaget's "preoperative stage," in Atkinson 2003, p. 77). As an individual matures, he loses this insight. However, I believe that a similar quality of this insight is present in the context of vertical overlapping. The dandelion is only a flower, but with spiritual insight it can be a macrocosm. Here, one object which is the same for everyone represents another object for a particular individual.

The development of fantasy is another essential phenomenon of this period. A child's fantasy influences his playing and future direction. Říčan sees the connection between a toddler's playing and the future creativity of the individual (Říčan 2006a, p. 104n), i.e., especially with horizontal overlap. Even for relating to the super-sensible, some form of fantasy is important. However, it does not have a vital but an accompanying function: every person has his own ideas about the super-sensible and modifies it in his own conception. Human beings often express this visibly with the help of symbolism.

10.1.3 The Pre-schooler's I Discovers the Inner You

The pre-school age (3-6 years) is characterized by the formation of the first idea about the world (Říčan, 2006a, p. 119) and death. Socialization goes beyond the family boundaries, and the rotation of roles leads to the recognition of leadership, competing, and cooperative roles (Říčan 2006a, pp. 124-126). All these roles are mainly applied in horizontal overlap.

At this age, **fairy tales** form a significant part of life. The individual stories represent "the touchstone of human destiny: to execute the superhuman task, to trust the unbelievable, and to prove the goodness of the heart" (Říčan 2006a, p. 132). The child is a hero struggling to save the world or a doctor who tirelessly helps others. The period of initiative (Erikson) is characterized by "enterprise, bold assertivity, vigorous straightforwardness, risk-taking and conquering" (2007, p. 242). These are the **characteristics of the one who transcends**, particularly because in the act of

achieving something, engaging in creative activity, or making a decision of faith a step into the unknown is being made. Development of fantasy helps to differentiate between the *Other*, which is **You (a human being) or It (other objects)**. The concept of heroism is reflected also in the understanding of God.

In addition to the **external, this period also has a new and internal boundary:** the warning inner voice of conscience. Morality is external in that "the fear of punishment becomes the primary reason for behavior choice" (Kohlberg, in West 2002, p. 145). Říčan draws attention to two extremes in relation to the inner boundary of man – an overly sensitive or a lax conscience. In his opinion, a strictly religious upbringing may markedly hinder a child's initiative in vertical overlap (Říčan 2007, p. 242). This is the case of a dogmatic or authoritarian upbringing that is removed from the latest approaches in religious and interreligious education, but it has often been applied in practice. For overlapping as a whole, the conclusion is that the pre-school period is very sensitive, and therefore an improper approach to human guilt and conscience influences the formation of human self-understanding, including the perception of self-worth, feelings of inferiority, and the perception of one's own guilt. Gestalt therapy, emotional intelligence, and other new approaches to interactive religious and philosophical education of children deal with this issue.

The **theory of religious judgment** is important for explaining the external supersensible limit. The preschool and younger school age is a typical stage which Osser and Gmünder call "*Deus ex machina*" ("god from the machine" – the ancient theatrical scheme used for a god who suddenly solves the situation of a certain hero). It is linked to the child's experience **in the family and the influence of the parents** (Říčan 2007, p. 255). God is perceived as "'an absolute subject' which directly intervenes in the world" of people. There is a typical development of activities such as "prayer and meditation" (Bucher 2007, p. 71). It can be described by the phrase "**God knows what he is doing**" (Garz 2008, p. 137).[62] The originality of the finding was in the fact that the authors realized that religious judgment was not a "learned 'structure of knowledge' (*Wissenstruktur*)." It does not follow in response to a specific query, but it is a "deep structure about [*sic*] unconscious identity models (*Muster*) with which we overcome critical situations of life." The difference between them is that we can easily change knowledge, while judgment is a more rigid structure of thought (Garz 2008, p. 133).[63]

For the preschoolers, **games** are an important factor (Vygotskij, Leontjev). This can be referred to as a "central psychological notion" as "an activity that promotes meaning, connects the individual and the surroundings, and also the subject and the

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[62] See also research of these degrees in Czech children in the dissertation of Ryšavý, 2005.

[63] However, the Austrian religious educator and spiritual psychologist Bucher pointed out that every faith is **individualistic**, so it is necessary to always have a "concrete child" before our eyes. The experts and initiators of the spirituality of children in England, D. Hay and R. Nye, are also critical of the faith-related degrees, calling them "dead stages" because "they do not fit the living experiences of children." The reason for this assertion is that "the spirituality of a child that is intensely lived inside is embedded into the form of immaturity and inappropriacy." In so doing, **the intense experience of the children is degraded in a certain way.** According to the critics, these graded models are focused on the "knowledge of religiosity/spirituality," but childhood spirituality is "closely related to aesthetic experience (d'Aquiat Newberg 2002)" (Bucher 2007, p. 78).

object into a whole" (Oerter, Montada 1987, p. 215). In this sense, games are used to develop a child's overlapping.

Thinking (in the age of 2-6, Piaget's "preoperative stage") is **egocentric**, and a child does not listen to others. According to the experts, Piaget underestimated the fact that children may experience genuine empathy (Atkinson 2003, p. 81). While Piaget maintained that it is "difficult for children to understand the needs or the views of another person," according to K. G. West, "they are able, at least occasionally, to understand the opinion of the other person" (2002, pp. 140-141). For this reason, in this age a child may already be a comforter to adults in border experiences. According to a social perspective survey (Selman, Byrne, 1980), a child aged 4-9 perceives "its own perspective and the perspective on the other person" either identically or differently. It recognizes that individuals' actions have identical or "different individual reasons or motivations." For the first time, a child "deals with the uniqueness of the hidden mental life of the other person" (Heidbrink 1999, p. 45); **for the first time, he discovers the inner life of *You*.**

10.1.4 School-aged Children, I-You Relationships, and Examples of Overlapping Outside the Family

For school-aged children (6-11 years), play is alternated by "**school work**" (2006a, p. 144), which gives the child a new impetus: "he has to learn to deal with obstacles and with failure," while he also discovers "friendship solidarity." In playing games, a child learns about cooperation, losing, and praising the other's character. **The teacher** surpasses the authority of the parents, and the result is that the schoolchild "accepts his values, desiring to resemble him" (Říčan 2006a, p. 152-156). The teacher also represents the concept of overlap to children. A child's learning and the balancing between "diligence" and the "feelings of inferiority" (Erikson) help him to engage in the world world outside of the family and find his place in it (Říčan 2007, p. 243). The family offers "reciprocity" (mutuality) to their child within the context of "truthfulness, sincerity, openness, reciprocity" (Říčan 2006a, p. 161). This is also important for the formation of overlapping. My *I* goes from the family where they know me to another unexplored *You*.

Some sources (Brophy, Alleman, Halvorsen 2013, Stará 2018) mention that it is important to help children of this age to empathize with other cultures, to teach them to perceive their situation in the context of place, and to see their activities as natural and sensitive adaptations to the contextual conditions in which they are living, and thus as intentional behavior. They state that in the process of primary education the perceptions of other cultures can change significantly, they can become more differentiated and objective (for example, children are already able to appreciate the positive and negative aspects of life in different cultures in the first grade of primary school).[64]

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[64] Children who are led to explain the causes and consequences of cultural specifics answer the questions in a more sophisticated way. It is important to provide information on other cultures as completely as

During this period ("with the onset of specific operations"), the "infinite imagination of the child in the preoperative stage" is disappearing, but the child still has a **problem with the distant future and the past** (West 2002, p. 143). Regarding religiosity, "his religious life is simple, sincere, and happy; it tends to be the basis of the positive development of personality and character and opens the future for the child" (Říčan 2007, p. 243). Říčan, however, draws attention to the "cognitive conflict" which is "given by the discrepancy between the mythological image of the world which is inevitably provided to the child through catechesis (religious teachings within the Church - N.B.) and the scientific knowledge he receives at school." Often, the role of the child is changing according to the group in which he is currently present (Říčan 2007, p. 244). This can also have a major impact on the formation of vertical overlap.

As children enter school they begin to "**think logically** about things they can see and reach but not about abstract things. They now understand the law of retention of matter. They are less tied to the appearance of things and can think through solutions because they realize that there are certain rules that govern life" (West 2002, p. 142). With the onset of logical thinking, on the one hand a child develops a complex understanding of transcendence, and on the other hand he tries to reorient the typical features of overlap which will be discussed below.

Freud did not value this period (6-13 years) and labeled it as a latent phase. From the point of view of overlapping, there are very significant changes. In these years (the "concretely-operational" stage, 6-11 years, Piaget), children are "less egocentric and begin to understand the opinions of others" (West 2002, p. 143). According to the social perspective acceptance survey (Selman, Byrne 1980), a child aged 6-12 years "reflects its feelings and thoughts" already "from the perspective of the other person." The newly created relationship between one's own and other's insights "enables the child to judge his or her own opinion and assessment of the other person's thoughts and feelings." This means that the child already perceives the other as *You*, namely that there is an equal relationship between them. Reciprocity in a relationship is based on ideas and feelings not just on reciprocal action (me to you, you to me), as was the case with the child earlier (Heidbrink 1999, p. 45). At this age an additional level or degree (9-15 years) may appear where it is characteristic that the child can "come up with ideas of interpersonal interaction and coordinate the perspectives of both parties." A child is therefore able to "take the perspective of a third person" which "leads to the awareness of the mutual human perspective and consequently to the awareness of the relationship between I (*Selbst*) and the other person (*Andere*)" (Heidbrink 1999, p. 45). In the case of this concept between *I* and the *Other*, **the relationship between *I* and *You* is in fact born in the true sense of the word: the humanistic-socialization scheme of the I-You relationship appears**.

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possible and not to concentrate on exoticism (Stará 2018; Brophy, Alleman, Halvorsen 2013).

10.1.5 Pubescents and the Critical Self Thinking about the Unreal

A pubescent (11-15 years) has a critical view of the world and of oneself (2006a, p. 169); he chooses a profession, asks various questions ("about the universe and human life, including death"), reflects issues critically ("the meaning of values"), and expresses doubts ("about God" or "about any worldview"). By considering "the unreal, the non-existent," he creates new approaches and creative ideas (p. 175). He loves mystery and symbolism and is interested in art. He learns to accept not only himself but is also interested in the other sex (pp. 177-178). His negativism is directed against authority and serves in emancipation from childhood (pp. 180-182) by building new intimate friendships (p.184). The milestone event for a pubescent is his dealing with **his own heart**: real independence and responsibility for oneself and one's own actions arise within his own intrapersonal dialogue,.

The "identity" stage (including adolescence – see Erikson) is associated with "abstract logical operations." A child thinks "of the content independently" by excercising "hypothetical judgments" and deals with deeper concepts such as "matter, time, cause, but also truth, righteousness and justice." Thus, "over time, the sense of one's own unique destiny deepens, just like with the theme of solitude, the existential Throwness into the world and death. There is a new wealth of experience in the sphere of religion, but there is also a new quality of doubt and resistance" (Říčan 2007, p. 245).

At the time of puberty a child's religious judgment is changing, which may also even be the case for younger children. Oser and Gmünder called this phase "***do ut des (I give in order that you give)***." It is characterized by the fact that "a child ... can influence the behavior of adults by merit, obedience, manipulation." This is also related to the fact that it is possible for God to be "influenced or "so that the individual can "achieve" whatever he wants – "health, wealth, a long life" (Říčan 2007, p. 255).

As for relationships with others, the self experiences another transformation where "subjective perspectives" are no longer only on the "plane of mutual expectations or shared self-conceptions." They are based on a wider concept of communication: "two people exchange superficial information, common interests, or also deep and nonverbalized feelings," and "the subject sees an interpersonal perspective as a network or system" (Heidbrink 1999, p. 46). For our theme this means that the relationship **scheme of I-You exists in many variations: while *I* is constant, the relationship with *You* changes and can acquire different dimensions. You is anyone in my environment and can enter into my relationship with another You.**

10.1.6 A Summary of the Personality-Socialization Scheme of I-You Relationships

The overlap of a person is directed from *I* as a subject of transcending toward

the other person (*You*) and to his surroundings (*It*); therefore, the most important subject is how this personal scheme is shaped. We have already placed this issue into a wider context for clarity, and now we will briefly summarize the main ideas, especially for the schema of I-You realtionships and their significance for overlapping. It is clear that the overlap is shaped by the sequence of psychosocial development, moral development, and is accompanied by a socialization process that exalts man over other creatures in the universe.

For infants, **the birth of an undifferentiated overlap of I-not-I** means leaving the symbiotic union with the mother. Something quite unique happens here, although it is not possible to describe it exactly or to say precisely when this moment happens, as we can only see the results. On the one hand, an infant leaves the state of unconscious unification as a kind of prototype of what man is basically progressing towards: a sense of unity, sacredness, reconciliation, harmony, certainty, and security. On the other hand, the journey of overlapping one's own I begins when the infant begins separating I from not-I in gradual steps. Firstly, it is a relationship to what is not me, so this bond can not yet be labeled as I-You but rather *I-Not-I*. For the child, only the feedback of the environment in the form of sounds, caressing, a calming embrace, and other expressions distinguishes persons (the future *You*) from the motionless things or animals (a later It). Here the journey to transcending one's own self (I) has thus begun.

A toddler experiences that *Not-I* has a different opinion and is asserting his own (i.e., an other) personality. For many, this is only a manifestation of egocentricism and the neverending and exhausting "me...me." This is another turning point for transcending. It consists in the fact that a toddler is aware of an I which has needs, truths, and abilities. A public demonstration of "No" is basically the beginning of leaving the relationship to Not-I, because by awareness of I (the self) the toddler changes his relationship with someone who is a contoured silhouette – *You*. Here, the **physical overlap of a conscious I-You** relationship is manifested. Only a self-aware *I* can fully experience and internally exert overlap later.

A preschooler learns how the unreal and the real world works. There are certain boundaries within it: external and internal (i.e., the beginning movment of conscience). This is also important for overlapping. These limitations tell the preschooler that there is not only a limit between your physical self but also the mental self which thinks and acts [*sic*]. This milestone is related to the next insight which goes hand in hand with it: for the first time, he discovers the psychological life of You: *You* has a heart! This is where the **mental overlap of I to spiritual You appears**.

Upon entering school, a child is already fully thrown out of the family where playing alternates with work. This adds another dimension to a person's creative activity. As for our issue, the school-age child experiences a further change. He discovers that *You* has many forms: You certainly exists in the family, but You is also everyone around me at school, participants in leisure activities, and those people whom we meet together with parents on the street. I and You are differentiated by creating another type of relationship between subjects which we call a mutual and fully conscious relationship. It is a great milestone for overlapping, because a solid

platform for overlapping as such is formed; a **personalistic-socialization scheme of I-You** relationships has been formed.

For the pubescent the image of You is still being formed: there are many of them and the relationship to them looks like a net. You has his ideas and truths and can communicate about both everyday and deeper topics. The pubescent's I is experiencing another change; he is starting to become even more intensely involved with his own inner self. Self-esteem and responsibility for his own actions and his position is further emancipated from childhood. While the self (I) internalizes the relationship with himself, the relationship with You is more mature and deeper, since the pubescent thinks symbolically and adopts the perspectives of the given social groups. The adolescent[65] is already wholly ready and prepared for transcendening (reaching out) in both the vertical and the horizontal sense. By fulfilling the conditions of the **personalistic-socialization scheme of a complex I-You relationship (with man) and a complex I-It relationship (to nature and things), the self is capable of transcending in both relationships.** A deep realization of overlap in various activities in both spheres still requires growth in maturity, yet still the personality is already displayed as being fully developed in transcending.

10.2 Specific Abilities of Children which Develop Overlapping

Children are spontaneous; they can exhibit a fullness of joy, enthusiasm, and zeal for any given thing. Sometimes we use the phrase "you rejoice like a child" to signify rejoicing genuinely, spontaneously, and truly. In contrast to adults, children have certain abilities which allow for a perception of overlapping in a specific way and provide a good basis for the development of transcending. Mostly, they are modified by growth in maturity. For this reason, even children can become teachers of adults.

Children concentrate on **the present experience** ("here and now") (Freudenreich 2011, p. 37); they do not focus on the past or the future. This is what we encounter already in the eighth month of the child's life (Donaldson). For this reason, they are more "intrigued by moments," and this is exhibited in peak experiences (p. 39) and in the "state of higher consciousness" (p. 43). In their research, R. Nye and D. Hay found that in certain children, there appears something which is described for example by "climbers or actors." They "merge actions and consciousness, thereby transcending I" ("flow"). This is confirmed by a Finnish study (Tamminen 1991, 1994) which points out that "children have more spiritual experiences than adolescents and adults" (p. 46). This ability to be in the present experience is very important for overlapping. In the horizontal direction, this is the moment in which I am engaging the world and helping others. For the vertical direction, it is important that it is *now* when I am relating to something higher.

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[65] According to developmental psychologists and most religious educators, the adolescent already has access to full-scale vertical transcendence and is not challenged by any one of the parties: "The adolescent is undoubtedly already open to the experience of the numinous" (Říčan 2007, p. 245).

Although Eastern concepts are much different, our Western mentality of pursuing the future and analyzing the past has a special problem with valuing present experiences. Therefore, it is desirable for children to further develop this concentration on the present moment at hand, as they move away from it through their psychosocial development only to rediscover it as overlap-capable adolescents.

According to Nye, children have a "**mystery sensing**" which is expressed through "fear," "awe and wonder," and "imagination." Here, **childhood fantasies** which are full of active heroes, struggling for ideals, and saving the world also plays an important role. They also have "**a sense for what is valuable (value sensing).**"[66] This is manifested also in the fact that they have "the hope that everything will end up well (ultimate goodness)" and that everything "has a purpose (meaning)" (Freudenreich 2011, p. 37). Children are also close to the **dialectical concept of the world**, which is typical for Oriental and religious thought (p. 47).

The astonishment and amazement typical for overlapping in childhood (Nay, Hejlová) is the "state by which one responds to encountering a new form of life, with new energy, or it is a reaction to a state when a new force moves in us to see the old in a new way. It stands for the creation of ideas about the world and life" (Hejlová 2010, p. 46).

Children are able to imagine the unimaginable in a very vivid manner. There is no need for spiritual and religious motives, although belief in guardian angels is widespread even in our country. Some preschool children have a so-called invisible friend with whom they communicate and play. It may be a person, an animal, a sprite, a magic fairy, etc. Despite some negative reactions (Ames, Learned 1946), most psychologists highlight the "positive attributes" of these invisible friends. These are "the ability to adopt the perspective of another person" (Tailor, Carlson 1997), "to get along with others well" (Winter, Singer 1990), "to engage in family activities" (Manosevitz, Prentice, Wilson 1973), and "literary creativity" (Schaefer 1969). This is one of the areas where a child can be hindered by the religiosity of his parents who interpret the child's communication with his friend on their own understanding; for example, fundamentalist Christians can identify the child's friend with an evil motif (the devil), or a Hindu may believe the friend to be "a memory of past identities" from previous lives (reincarnation) (Taylor, Carlson 2000, pp. 247, 249n). Here we see one interesting fact: a living fantasy which is important for overlapping for the reasons mentioned above can come into conflict with the adult's understanding of the visible form of vertical overlap.

A child does not simply **concentrate on or neglect certain thoughts**. This is

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[66] The interesting comparative research by psychologist R. Oerter on the concept of the meaning of life for children from several countries has shown a higher-order (way) of thinking about the meaning of life. In the age group of 6-8 years, the following responses appeared: the meaning of my life is to "help others," "to watch the world," "to conserve nature." In the 9-14 age group it was "not to live alone but together with others" (Oerter 2009, pp. 19-21). His research suggests that despite focusing on the present, children see the importance of something higher or future-oriented for their lives, even though they are only under the impression of what they are presently experiencing. My research on the symbols of happiness also shows that some children have a higher level of reasoning, and that the symbols are good and helpful tools in developing children's transcending. The meaning lies in their dialectical stance and the ability to lead children from the visible to the invisible content. For more, see Bravená 2011b.

described in the preoperative stage by Piaget. Limited thinking "is partly the result of their tendency to focus on one aspect of the problem at any given time (principle of centration)." Children "rely more on their perception than on logic, and therefore do not understand complex causal relationships" (West 2002, pp. 141-142). An alternative of such concentration and full perception is reflected to a certain extent in peak experiences. These skills are also important for children to maintain and develop.

The ability to console or comfort an adult often manifests itself where we would not expect it from children. Adults who were asked concerning a time when children perceived overlap, some respondents answered, "When I felt the worst in my life" (e.g., during a divorce, death in the family, child sickness, other border situation). Children also responded as psychological supports for adults in their worst moments. A hug was enough, or unproblematic behavior, good grades at school, and so on. Hart presents a story about a girl named Laura who gained and shared a very deep insight about life by dealing with the death of her dog Adam. According to the words of the little girl, she left her body and met the dog. He told her not to worry about his death and that if she wanted to help it, she could send "love and light" to it. When after a while she and her mother went to visit her aunt's dying child in the hospital, the mother expected the girl to break down mentally and cry. What actually happened was entirely unexpected. Laura embraced the dying child in her arms, remained calm and even-tempered, and was trying to soothe the child and give "love and light." According to her mother, she was a great support for everyone during that time (Freudenreich 2011, p. 375).

10.3 Factors Hindering the Development of Overlap in Children

There are several significant factors that impede the development of personality in overlapping. We will briefly characterize only some of them here.

10.3.1 Material and Spiritual Poverty

There are two kinds of poverty which can obstruct the development of overlap in children. a child. The first is **material poverty** where the parents are wholly occupied with everyday bare existence (West 2002, p. 98). This may have two kinds of impact on overlapping. The first is that the child will not seek higher values later; he will become material-focused or focused on the areas in which he experienced a lack of appropriate care. Or, on the basis of dealing with this fact internally, he will gain a certain sensitivity for this particular concern, and he can even take up the fight against poverty as his own mission in the world.

Spiritual poverty is the second kind of poverty which is also very serious for overlapping, The child does not have to be struggling visibly. K.G. West says this about a spiritually rich environment: "Most children, when they feel the hope and

fidelity of their parents, will acquire the opinion of the caregivers that this world and life itself are meaningful" (2002, p. 99). A positive orientation, a conviction about meaningfulness, and a positive affirmation of life borne by love and genuine interest are passed on to children from their parents with a feeling of certainty which is very important to children. On the other hand, K.G. West describes spiritual poverty as follows: "They lack any sort of confirmation about the value of life and they are predestined to share the cynicism of their parents." Such poverty can lead to a complete disruption of the person who "feels strong only when he destroys." However, K.G. West is optimistic about a child's resilience. He will have this as a certain handicap, but "life itself often heals the injured spirit" (2002, p. 99).

We can also include the opposite extreme to spiritual poverty. It is a **spiritual poverty found in an overspiritualized lack of freedom**. This is found everywhere in cases which spiritual violence is used. Říčan speaks about the fact that religion can be used "as a means of enforcing obedience" (Krejčířová, Říčan et al., 1997, 429). This can also be the case of parents who are a part of a religious sect who are approaching the acquisition of the child's basic trust in some other way (upbringing without parents); the same goes for the child's manifestations of autonomy (other concepts of the order), initiatives (everything is punished – a distortion of the view of religion or prohibitions of communicating with peers), etc. (for more, see Misauer, Vojtíšek 2006, pp. 8n, p. 11n, p. 14n). Spiritual poverty in these cases actually does not mean a non-spiritual environment; it is any spiritual environment devoid of freedom which makes the child an object of its own interests (It); any environment is also spiritually poor if it does not personify psychosocial development, growrh in maturity, socialization, and freedom of belief. This applies not only to sects, new religious movements, or traditional religions, but also to any other worldview. Leading children to the transcendent requires "openness to change" as a "personal competency" of the parents (Mauschwitz 2012).

10.3.2 The Lack of Encouragement for Children's Hopes and Dreams

Stimulating education encourages not only psychomotoric skills but also imagination and children's hidden desires and dreams, especially at the stage of initiative and activity. However, this encouragement is needed for the formation of the relationship to overlapping throughout childhood. K.G. West says, "Those who can encourage, listen to the dreams and hopes of their children. Then they affirm the desires in such a way that the children come to believe that everything is possible." It is obvious from this quote that encouragement has a dual function: it positively assesses the inner world of the child and at the same time it constitutes not only the child's belief in something heroic and important but also in his own abilities. Excessive criticism from the side of the parents and the desire for perfectionism in children's minds make them feel "not good enough." When combined, these will also affect their self-criticism, disbelief in themselves, the ability to "develop their talents" and the use of "opportunities around them" (West 2002, pp. 105-106).

If the parent responds to the child with inappropriate criticism, he not only

frustrates the initiative, but K. G. West presents one more serious fact: "When these daunted children grow up, they will not be able to stand for their own well-being, or even be able to recognize it. Many people can not imagine what actions could strengthen their lives or how they would fulfill their dreams, even when they get advice" (West 2002, p. 106). This is a serious fact for overlapping too. Not only is the person deprived of a gnoseological and conative component in the future, but it may also cause problems in working with the client as a part of therapy, if the individual will even try to find help at all. Encouraging the heroic image in children is very important. Heroes are not dependent on levels but on the formation of relationships and the common search for truth.

10.3.3 The Hurriedness of Our Time

Elkind speaks of "the hurried child" (West 2002, p. 102). Parents are still chasing after something. This "hurry sickness" is a "sickness of the soul," but the *Zeitgeist* and the media force us to perform in a certain way. The result is giving preference to anything but the child. K.G. West very critically states: "When parents constantly disregard or fail to meet their children's needs, just to meet the requirements of their timetable and personal goals, the dominating relationship is I-It." He reacts to Buber's personal "I-You" bond, which is an expression of "mutual recognition and respect." If this is not present in the relationship, then "the will of one person prevails over the will of the other" (West 2002, p. 189), and the child becomes the object (It) of the parents, namely not a partner in the relationship. This is evidenced quite often in the little things which children expect and gratefully accept from their parents. I witnessed the conversation of a nervous mother who rebuked her little boy who had hindered her by picking up two dandelions to give to her; because she was definitely pressed for time, he scolded him and told him to leave them in front of the building entrance. When she finished and left the building, she said, "Now you can give them to me." Although the boy was surely disappointed earlier, he now triumphantly picked them up at looked at his mom with a deep tenderness in his eyes. The question is a matter of how many more seconds would have been enough for her reaction to have been much different.

10.3.4 Media

Much literature has been written about the influence of media on children. In the context of overlapping, media can either be stimulating or destructive for children. Media can take away precious moments in which children can be children and develop their own imagination: "children need time to dream and explore their own world, not the world they are being supplied by the media" (West 2002, p. 107).

Media turn children into passive recipients and force them "into the adult world." I see this certain reality as very important for overlapping. K.G. West

mentions it in a specific example and says that the everpresent media "dangerously accustom us to poverty, hunger and violence," in the sense that they justify the inaction which overwhelms the future heroes who could change it (West 2002, p. 107). This is a very serious claim. I myself have realized how a person sometimes does not even notice the extreme violence when switching through the channels on television. The fact that someone can even reactin to a concrete situation or feel certain regret or emotion is somehow secondary. Of course, a role is also played by the fact that one can not save the whole world. But one must have some internal and external motivation to not only want to do something but also not to become internally callous. One way is to lead children and families toward joint transcendence. It is not enough merely to interfere and switch the media off, as that is only the first step. The second step is to fill this time for the child with substance and meaning.

10.3.5 Negative Attitudes of Educators and Peers

The attitudes of educators and peers are very important in the development of overlapping. Fontana defines attitude as the "fairly permanent focus" which one accepts in questions "which he encounters during his life and which he verbally expresses as his opinions" (Fontana 1997, p. 223). Attitude is therefore clearly based on experience. The problem is that the educator or the peers may not be familiar with many forms of overlap, especially with its vertical type. A person tends to treat that which he has never encountered before either with interest or (on the contrary) with a certain concern or with a pre-understanding mediated by others. This may be reflected in certain prejudices towards a child with these experiences who then suffers internally and solves this crisis by a dissolving of roles (Říčan).[67]

Negative Attitudes of the Pedagogue

Early horizontal overlapping (in terms of relating to nature, other people, saving lives, etc.) is usually appreciated and supported by educators. Difficulties can be caused by the **creativity of a child** who has the potential to overlap. This mainly happens in cases when a talented child with a colorful fantasy who "thinks differently, tends to express different ideas than what is usual, and complicates seemingly obvious situations," as it seems that "he knows the solutions before the teacher [assumes] it," and then he asserts them. Excessive promotion of such a child's

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[67] It is very difficult "in the younger school-age ... to replace the child's mythological image of the world with one that is consistent with science and at the same time psychologically functional for religious life." Different worldviews often bring conflicts with peers and changes in attitudes to the authority of the teacher who holds a different opinion. According to Říčan, the child may suffer a certain dichotomy: "scientific and religious doctrine" create two worlds for the child "which are passing away in its life." This has the effect of "learning to avoid – more or less inadvertently – the issues which they know are not welcome" (2007, p. 244).

creativity can be seen as "ingenuity, insubordination, provocation." The child may want to suppress such a feature (Helus 2007, pp. 78-79). At the same time, it is creativity which develops the personality, enables the path of innovation, and solves unresolvable situations. The educator primarily evaluates the result of the creativity which he identifies with the action but not the essence of the creativity. He who "creates something works for a certain purpose ... but his work is not the absolute purpose," because it is "the content of the act" (Aristotle, p. 151). Aristotle's idea has found its application in the personality-development education which "does not only evaluate the outcome" but considers the process as equally important (Spilková 2005b, p. 128), namely what led to the behavior and how the behavior looked.

Children encounter negative attitudes especially in **early vertical overlap**. Here the approach is problematic in its own right, and if ignorance or prejudice inherited from the families are added to it, it creates a breeding ground for prejudices. The pedagogue thinks that a child is making the things up, because it wants attention from the teachers or classmates, or that the child is just showing off. In most cases, the child will soon realize that the vertical type of overlapping is a taboo in the school. Říčan even says that it forces children to a certain disunity, especially when it comes to religiosity: the child "can pass from the role of a playboy in school and other groups to the role of a believer in a religious group" (2007, p. 244). Vertical overlapping is also problematic in the fact that pathological phenomena can be hidden behind it, and for this reason it is complicated for the unspecialized to treat the issue well. The teacher who is able to listen and who does not discourage the child in front of others will cause no harm.

A tactful act on the part of the teacher is certainly appropriate; here the concept of "pedagogical tact" as "a complex social skill" (Čáp 2001, p. 267) reaches another dimension. This statement is definitely not a memory of the teacher's tact: "Then they forbade religion, and I had to listen to my beloved teachers to describe how corrupt the Church was and how believing in God was foolish" (2007, p. 244). It is, of course, a testimony based on the given time-period, because after the Velvet Revolution more openness and freedom of expression in religious matters was respected even by educators. But in this example we see how the attitude of the authority contradicts the child's personal experience and even dishonors it. It may not only be true on the religious plane, but it can also be true for spiritual experiences and a special insight into reality. Vertical transcendence is very demanding on the judgment of the educator, but this reaction is tactful and neutral: "Annie thinks this ... Paulie described another personal experience which is also very important and it is one of the opinions, but we will focus on that experience which is visible to everybody." Here the teacher is says two things: he is positively evaluating the child's personal experience, but he is also saying that it is not possible for everyone to verify it. And the child who experiences overlap usually anticipates this.[68]

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[68] Often a teacher may encounter the view that the world was created by God in seven days. Here a fatal error often comes on the part of both religious and non-religious educators. First of all, this is a matter of worldview and consequent belief, and every belief in a certain meaning of life deserves respect (whether it is science or a supernatural being). This is also demonstrates a lack of understanding of the text about creation and its context according to the latest scientific discussions. The child is thus at an impasse; his

Negative attitudes towards the issues of overlapping are based on several fundamental mistakes on the part of educators. The first mistake of educators is that they are only a little empathic, yet according to K.G. West, the good teacher is to be a parent and "an expert who can always empathize with the child's position" (West 2002, p. 143). The second problem is that attitudes contain different degrees of knowledge (Fontana 1997, p. 223); therefore, educators should crave after new information and try to think through their attitude from a different perspective before assessing certain issues verbally.

In order for the teacher to fully understand the situation of the child, he must (according to R. Nay) be aware of all the testimonies of the child, and this includes even those which are not obviously related to the investigated issue; these can reveal more than we think about the child (Freudenreich 2011, p. 82). This is a very interesting impulse, because this also applies to the private observations of the teacher which can then prevent a negative evaluation of the child.

The third very frequent mistake of educators is not explicitly related to the question of overlapping but in the overall approach to children. However, it has a significant influence on the formation of the personality of the child, i.e., particularly in feelings of inferiority and insignificance. In practice we are still experiencing a certain "pigeonholing"[69] of children which contributes neither to the personal development of the individual nor to education in overlapping. In addition, in the case of a permanent negative attitude to the pupil's abilities, this can result in psychosomatic discomfort of the child (a fear of the teacher or a subject which leads to abdominal pain, morning vomiting, nausea, etc.) It is detrimental that teachers often do not even realize their own degrading statements anymore. On the basis of the following actual statement, we will show how praise and criticism (or dishonor) are intricately related for children. After learning the subject matter, two girls were

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innermost belief (belief/disbelief) is contradicted on the basis of an essentially secondary reality. The child must decide between a specific interpretation of the biblical text which is improperly understood by the pedagogue (a non-theologian) whose view contradicts evolution or the view presented by evolutionary theory which he deems to be correct because "in school we are learning what is right and true." There is no room for illuminating all the complex issues, so I will mention only one essential theological detail to point out the necessity of interdisciplinary dialogue. The report of creation in the Bible belongs to a whole hermeneutic context, for which it is characteristic that one day with God is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like a single day; according to this Middle Eastern symbolism, a day has no definite boundaries (it can last 24 hours but also millions of years). Most of the children do not learn this from their religious class, and usually the pedagogue who is teaching science does not even know this. Therefore, that which the child says concerning creation seems illogical to him. However, in the short rejection of the creation account, the teacher rejects the child's entire worldview because the child is not mature enough in the vertical overlap to discern that certain testimonies, interpretations, or convictions related to religious texts do not have to be comprehensively understood; on the contrary, they may actually contain a certain degree of paradox or maybe even contradiction, and this still does not affect their overall conception of faith or unbelief; since those convictions are based on a different foundation, a deeper understanding of the more complex issues is revealed more slowly (e.g., teenagers are able to fully distinguish and realized the distinction). That is why the situation is solved by the rejection of evolution, the loss of faith, or, as P. Říčan writes – by a changing of roles from the inner conflict.

[69] This term does not eliminate the teacher's normal and primary evaluation of a child, since it is a regular part of the cognitive process. I understand this notion as an unchanging attitude towards the abilities and personality of the child which is not subject to subsequent reflection by the teacher; it does not need to be altered to the detriment of the child.

"rewarded" by these words: "Our mathematical queens did a good job today! When the test comes, hopefully you will all receive an A." The child can be confused by this statement; on the one hand, she is being praised for learning something, while on the other hand, she is being ridiculed in front of the whole group – for "reigning" in the inability to learn the subject. The pedagogue himself is basically saying that the child is the best in being the worst. This is not in line with the idea of a learner-oriented teaching nor the new concept of assessment with respect to the abilities of the child; it is a residue from the pre-revolutionary thinking about the assessment of children in the context of the whole. In addition, such behavior is often a trigger for psychosomatic disorders (here at the "level of personality" because it relates to the cognition and assessment of the child. For more on psychosomatic disorders in children, see Říčan, 1997, p. 117). This statement is all the more serious in that it also affects the group's cohesion, because this statement also affects other pupils and exposes them to a psychological dilemma: to know the content or not to know it and "fall" on the level of the already stigmatized girls.

Negative Attitudes of Religious Educators

Although they have a different characteristic, religious educators are also not exempt from negative judgments, some of which include the following:

Questioning general knowledge: Strict religious educators can lead children into division and disunity when their rigid attempts to classify children into *either/or* categories create unhealthy limitations. Another error is using too much pedagogical tact. The solution is not found by concealing theological facts or their limitless use for the benefit of science; it is by gaining a certain understanding of the world of children who spend the majority of their lives within society rather than in the religion lessons. Instead of pluralism of opinion, the child is lead to the strict division of the profane and religious world, which affects his personality and can also have psychosomatic impact.

Challenging the child's belief in supersensible reality: Here "child" refers to a human being of healthy development at the age of about 3-12 years whose inner supersensible experiences are underestimated and sometimes challenged.[70] In terms of development, it is a rich period which includes the pre-school and younger school age. According to my experience, the questioning is based upon the following reasons: (1) He is still small and can not understand it;
(2) He answers inconsistently when I ask him; (3) He says something that is not in the Bible at all; (4) We do not talk about it, so he is probably not experiencing anything; (5) He has a wild imagination. A. Günther defines further reasons: "Children do not stick with anything for too long," "Children are easily influenced" and "Children can not understand the contingencies and experience them" (2007, pp.

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[70] The special pedagogue Adriána Maďarová is commited to the spirituality of children with mental disabilities, to the special work of catechists, and to the appropriate didactical principles in religious education (for more, see 2009, p. 53n).

11-12).

Such *a priori* approaches by educators are not appropriate; on the contrary, the following imperatives are presented here:

- never question the subjective experience of a child's overlap;
- examine not only the child's statements but all of his thinking (i.e., ask more);
- realize that children are bringing something which the adult does not have; strive to become aware of this truth: "Amen, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Mark 10:15);
- remember that the child also has childlike qualities which are subject to focused parenting/corrective education from the parent/*pedagogue* ("immaturity, imperfection, inadequacy, and undevelopment..." (1 Corinthians 14:20; 3:1; 13:11; cf. Hebrews 5:12-14, Novotný 1956, p. 126);
- children quickly get distracted, but they can live in the present experience (i.e., quantity does not say anything about the quality of their *experience*);
- do not assume misunderstanding on the part of the child, but assume that he does not have to understand your deep-rooted concepts and clichés and therefore does not respond to your question; explain even the concepts about which you believe that the child must have already understood them through years of religious socialization;
- examine your influence on the child and lead him to an unprejudiced approach toward happiness in the transcendent and to other experiences of spirituality;
- examine your own faith first of all and your relationship to the transcendent; however, do not generalize the child's experience on the basis of your own experiences;
- accept the child's experience, but in very unusual statements and manifestations, remember that there is also the notion of abnormalities of child development, states of anxiety, wrong socialization steps in religious development, etc. Therefore, seek professional assistance (a pastoral psychologist, a child psychologist, or a psychiatrist).[71]

Negative Attitudes of Peers

Peers can also make certain situations uncomfortable for children. While the **horizontal overlap** is accepted positively by the educator, it can raise either respect or envy in peers.

As for the **vertical overlap**, children talk about more things than they do in front of the educator. Peers might not understand the child's overlap, they interpret it by themselves, and they often sum it up with the words by saying, "It's not true," "You could not have experienced that." Unfortunately, they can react negatively by such mocking. A woman remembers retrospectively: "No one in the class was a

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[71] For children's clinical psychology and religion, see Říčan 1997, p. 423nn.

believer but me. They were laughing at me, especially one boy" (Říčan 2007, p. 244). The negative attitudes of classmates can then have an effect on the child's level of overlapping, but also on his relationships with others. A girl writes in a fictitious correspondence: "Dear God, if we are to be born again as something else, please do not let me be Jana Houdková, because I am not friends with her" (Marschall-Hample 2007, p. 22).

Also, in the non-religious spiritual overlap, the adults testify similarly: "I could not talk to anyone about it." "They either laughed at me or considered me to be a fool." These are not only Nye's findings, as many people share similar testimonies. They were convinced that nobody understood them. Therefore according to Nye, it is difficult for children to share about these realities in research, while "the specific complexity is different for each child." Children mostly know that "spiritual issues touch the boundaries of our thinking," which for some is a certain motivation to stick to the topic, while for others it is an impulse to avoid it (Freudenreich 2011, p. 82).

10.4 The Meaning of Transcendence for the Personality of Children

There is research focusing on the influence of positive thinking, spirituality, or religion on the mental and physical health of adults. Overlapping is also contained in these issues because transcendence brings man a purpose in life, a sense of security, and peace; transcendence causes the need to forgive and to be grateful, strengthens the tendency towards solidarity, gives a sense of uniqueness, awakens the perception of the meaning of a particular work, deepens the understanding of the meaning of art, and leads to an inner equilibrium and a positive assessment of self, of one's life, and one's surroundings. Transpersonal and existential psychotherapy, logotherapy, pastoral therapies, spiritual care, etc. focus on certain types of overlapping. Overlap of some sort is an important part of psychohygiene and psychotherapy, without always articulating the issue (Lohaus, Ball 2006). The reason is that overlapping creates the background of therapeutic thinking, which is not always reflected more widely, and the scientific discussion on this topic is still developing.

The positive influences of the transcendental dimension of mankind on mental and physical health are documented in humanistic psychology, positive psychology, the psychology of meaningfulness, wisdom, spirituality, and religion. All of these areas contain conclusions from research which confirm the positive effects of human beings relating to other people, nature, a higher being, the cosmos, the meaning of one's own life, etc.[72] Despite some criticism, we can summarize that in these studies

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[72] From a large enumeration, Maslow saw a great significance of peak experiences for their "therapeutic effects" which lead man to change attitudes towards himself, towards others, and towards the world (2000, p. 117). The importance of positive thinking in the treatment of depressive patients is evaluated in the Heindl study; Hertel; Schütz 2004, s.16n. The positive influence of spirituality on depression is noticed by Fleming 2001 in Bucher 2007, p. 121. The influence of religion on suicide is presented in a study by Kark et al. 1996: "For the members of the religious kibbutz, the likelihood of suicide is four times smaller than that of the secularized." In youth, spirituality is one of the "strongest protective factors

there are positive effects on adolescents and adults. We can distinguish:

The impact on mental health: this includes reducing suicide, relieving depression, anxiety and stress, developing life satisfaction (at work, in marriage, in family), looking for new hope and opportunities for new creativity, strengthening the ability to forgive and to be grateful, deepening the sense of meaning of life, understanding the meaning of suffering, and empathizing with the problems and difficulties of other people.

The impact on physical health: this includes the impact on the length of illness and the success of the treatment, on postoperative convalescence, lower blood pressure, etc. Here, transcendence is manifested especially as the ability to develop and maintain a stabilizing balance in difficult or stressful situations (Bucher 2007, p. 118). An interesting conclusion is made by Kazanijan (1997), who demonstrates the positive influence of spirituality in early childhood in conjunction with basic trust and the treatment of adult cancer patients (Haaseho et al., 1992): "the more people can look away from themselves when their life is acutely endangered, the more above the average their health condition is" (Bucher 2007, pp. 118-119).

There is not much research available for children, and it is totally absent in many areas (e.g. there is no wider assessment of the vertical overlap and its impact on the perception of diseases in children, see Benz, Largo 2005, etc.). In particular, we should not underestimate the influence of vertical overlapping in early childhood.

The development of overlapping can **have a positive effect** on wellbeing and fitness, the psyche (Faleide et al., 2010), strengthening of the individual (*"empowerment"*, Mitchell, Olbers 2010), "*flourishing*" of the personality (Seligman 2014), and maintaining good health ("*wellbeing*", Antonovsky 1985). Developing the overlap can increase the resilience of children, especially in post-traumatic personality stabilization. This is indirectly the result of the study by J?Mareš, which deals with the positive impact of negative events in the child's life. According to this author, children themselves may respond to distress with a greater tendency toward creative activity (Adler), or toward scientific activity in the case of very intelligent children (Aldwin, Sutton, cf. Mareš 2007, pp. 14-15).[73] Mareš's interpretation of Christopher (2004) suggests that in the treatment of trauma, the search for meaning plays an important role because the therapist is supposed to turn the child "from anxiety to seeking meaning." Thus, if "a socio-cultural environment" does not allow the child to find meaning, this is followed by a slowing down of the psychological development as "a pathological response to trauma" and "a biopsychosocial cascade

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against suicidal tendencies" (Stein et al., 1992) (see Bucher, p. 122). Schreier et al. (1988) asked 51 men a day before a surgery, a week, and a month after the surgery, and optimists showed less depression, greater "satisfaction with health care," and even "recovered earlier" (Heindl, Hertel, Schütz 2004, p. 18). There is also neurophysiological research (Rosenkranz et al., 2003) on the influence of positive thinking on immunity. From the result, it is clear that "positive feelings activate the left prefrontal cortex" (the front part of the brain), which affects the positive immune response; "on the other hand, negative feelings activate the right prefrontal cortex and are associated with worse immune defenses of the organism" (Heindl, Hertel , Schütz 2004, p. 19). For the influence of spirituality on prolonging life in HIV-positive patients, see Pargament et al. 2004; Adair et al. 1991, Woods et al., 1998 et al. (Bucher 2007, p. 102).

[73] The advantage of children is that they usually cope with the stressful situations more easily, and this is "one of the conditions for excellence in artistic or scientific activity" (Mareš 2007, pp. 14-15).

effect" in which pathology dominates a substantial part of the child's life and development (Mareš 2007, p. 25). Two key conclusions and challenges for our topic emerge from the above citations. The first is that overlapping has its place in increasing the endurance of children; the challenge is to specify all of its therapeutic options and boundaries. The second conclusion is that the environment: we are also responsible for the occasions in which children can discover the meaning of his own behavior and life. The challenge, therefore, is to offer more opportunities for developing children's transcendence in education, school activities, and leisure time pedagogy. According to Mareš, the specificity of the European tradition is related to the task of the experts "to involve people in life, to help them find answers to the questions of how to live, and to teach them what to do with their lives for them to be fulfilled and useful" (Mareš 2007, p. 28). Overlapping is an important basis in this perceived task.

Leading children in developing transcending as one of the personality qualities also has its "visible and quantifiable" (i.e., practical) justification, because it can help **in preventing morbidity as well as in alleviating pathological phenomena and bringing specific visible added values to the child.** These values include a unique feeling (e.g., when saving the life of another person), a sense of meaningfulness which helps the child to change attitudes towards himself and other people or animals; transcending transforms the child and forms him personality; it develops ethical, aesthetic and ecological sensitivities in him; it develops his creativity, extends his knowledge horizons, and always brings new experiences and a mutual exchange of information among children; it stabilizes personality, improves endurance, and also serves in intercultural learning (even in kindergarten - see Hoffmann's study 2009), helping the child to cope with ethnic and religious minorities, etc. It should be borne in mind that the positive side of the vertical overlap has its particular limits. Nye and Hay warn that higher spirituality experiences must be approached cautiously, because a wrong approach can also cause the "child's spiritual crisis" (Freudenreich 2011, p. 44). Also, in post-traumatic development, vertical overlapping can either help the individual in the situation or cause a spiritual crisis (see Hodačová 2007, p. 42).

10.5 Summary

In this chapter I focused on the constitution of the personality-socialization scheme of the I-You relationship in connection with transcendence from infancy to puberty. Unlike adults, children are disposed to realities which are more likely to be valorized in education (concentration on the present experience, specific erudition, a sense for the mysterious and the valuable, childhood imagination, imagination in things super-sensible, an intense observation of one thought, and the ability to comfort adults). Some factors that countered the personality development of a child in overlap and other factors that practically substantiate the development of the transcendent personality were also reflected. Transcending has an influence on physical and mental health, since it can enhancing both the child's immunity and his inclusion into society by developing a healthy view of self, the understanding of others, forming the meaning of life, intercultural learning, and encouraging ethical, aesthetic, spiritual, and ecological sensibilities.

IV CARE AND CONCERN FOR TRANSCENDENCE

Caring for transcendence in education is a concern for all who are involved in the educationa process - educators, pupils, and the content of the teaching.

11 Caring for Transcendence of the Individual Is Caring for the Whole Person and Moving toward Wholeness

The holistic care of a human being includes body, mind and soul (see, for example, Sha 2006). Due to the linguistic shift of the Czech notion of the soul[74] from a philosophical to a psychological conception, I have deliberately chosen the nuance between the notions of soul and spirit. The transcendent dimension can be found in all of these parts.

11.1 Human Beings as a "Whole"

- **physicality**, materiality (body): by his physicality, man carries out physical overlapping into the world and towards others; through it he is active; he exists in space and time; he is a part of the cosmos;
- **psyche**, mentality, mind, soul, (mind/soul), self, I, reason, intellect, thinking: "Relating to psyche, to psychological processes" (cf. "soul" and "mind" in Hartl, Hartlová 2010, pp. 111, 323). On this basis, the overlap is recognized, understood, internalized, experienced, applied in practice, and repeatedly reflected;
- **spirituality** (spirit): the spiritual life of man both in the religious and supra-religious sense can be designated as a manifestation of spirituality (Říčan 2007, 2010a,b; Janošová 2010b, Křivohlavý 2006, Bucher 2007, 2009, Hanesová 2015b etc.). Spirituality is a part of the psyche of man, but it always refers to transcendental phenomena standing outside toward which the individual takes a stance (cf. "the unique human consciousness beyond personal experience" see Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 111). In the context of this reflection, I am referring to the following:
- **phenomena that testify about a higher meaning of objects and things** – e.g., *genius loci* (the spirit of the building), symbols, rituals;
- **phenomena that testify about the higher sense of human activity** – stimuli which change the insight of the person on his own activity or the activity of others;
- **phenomena that testify about an ultimate authority** – e.g., fate, the highest good, the highest being;
- **phenomena that testify about the world as a whole** – stimuli which lead a person to illumination, *metanoia*, or harmony (with nature, people, or in

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[74] This is most evident from the term "mental development" (*duševní rozvoj*, literally "soul development"), which connotes "progressive development in the exploring, cognitive domain of man" (Průcha et al., 2003, p. 51); however, there is also a spiritual development (*duchovní rozvoj*, literally spiritual development) which is linked to the spiritual competence of the person (see, for example, Fossion in Bravená 2014b).

general).

11.2 The Transcendental Dimension of Caring for a Person as a Whole

Caring for an individual as a whole person and moving toward wholeness involves the following:
- leading to an insight into the transcendental dimension of physicality, psyche, and spirituality;
- leading to an understanding of the unique situation of the individual, his life story, and way of life;
- leading to an understanding of the interdependence of transcending with the whole person and with the world as a whole;
- uncovering the understanding of transcendence as a multivocal phenomenon;
- developing a deeper understanding of overlapping activities of man and his inner experiences;
- providing objectively and subjectively influenced information and creating space for dialogue;
- sharing life experiences, emotions, life struggles, failures, and victories;
- leading to the realization of transcending based on the basis of a personal pattern and a model of good practice.

The transcendent dimension of caring for an individual as a whole person always involves placing an emphasis on:
- **The uniqueness that** characterizes the personality and its development of transcendence (Helus).
- **Positive values** that are realized through transcending (Maslow, Fromm, Helus, Říčan, etc.).
- **The value of experience** that allows highlighting transcendence as caring for both the life and death of man (see Comenius in 13.5). It usually occurs in extreme situations (Patočka) but also educationally in hypothetical confrontations (Pelcová - the third dimension of education).
- **Gratitude** as an appreciation of the meaning of all the facts (even of the negative ones) that made the person who he is (Křivohlavý).
- **Hope for both the past and the future**. Hope is "a wish, a desire," "an optimistic expectation of a positive result" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 329) in the future. Yet, it is also connected to the specific pains and joys which have been experienced and make it possible to have value for another person in the future (for example, to sympathize in similar suffering or rejoicing, to strive for change, innovation, care for another, etc.).
- **The faith of a person:** I do not mean faith only as "emotionally conditioned beliefs about the existence and truth of a phenomenon that can not be

confirmed by unambiguous and clear evidence" (Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 661), but I also imply the **trust** of a person in himself (in his ability), in other people, in the world, in the transcendental meaning, in good, etc. This includes the element of relying on given facts, the element of certainty, and some sort of verifiability (one's own or another person's abilities may be confirmed by practice or the   also by the visible activity of a person which demonstrates his faith).

11.3 Summary

Caring for overlapping is a demonstrating and promoting a healthy concern for the whole person and moving toward wholeness (the physicality, the psyche, and the spirituality of human beings). In particular, it means leading to a higher understanding of all these elements and their involvement in man's transcending, namely in his interdependence with the world as a whole. It is related to sharing experiences and exchanging information. Caring for overlapping always refers to the uniqueness of personality, positive values, values of experience, gratitude, hope, and the beliefs of people.

12 The Transcendental Dimension of Caring for the Educator

Caring for the educators' overlap involves primarily leading the individual to recognize the transcendental dimension of his own personality.

12.1 The Transcendental Dimension of Physicality

The Greek educational *kalokagathia* emphasis drew attention to the harmony between the body and soul of man (Štverák, Čadská 1997, p. 11). The Christian tradition favored the inwardness of man and preferred spiritual values over vanity and deification of the body, which in many cases led to "contempt of the body, health and beauty, earthly goods and pleasures" (ibid, p. 22). The harmony of physicality with the soul, as well as the mortification of "vain" physicality for a time completely disappeared from Czech education. Caring for the body appeared in a more intense way only later in the the educational area of "*Health Education*" in response to children's relationship to diet, body, illness, addiction, etc.

Caring for physicality has two directions: care for the bodily component (sport, prevention, wellness, physical relaxation) and **care for the self's image of one's own physicality** (care for the image of corporeality in the form of self-reflection, therapy, mental relaxation, and meditation). Sport is still focused on performance in both children and adults, while the other aspects of meditation and relaxation are not reflected enough. The way toward attaining beauty dominates and exercises control over the all too lacking point of view of health. This is not caused simply due to fewer opportunities in our country or by a lack of time or finances. Our lack of understanding physicality and the accompanying restricted or limited care for the body is the **result of our neglect in caring for physicality as something which has a higher purpose and meaning (i.e., that which allows transcending).**

The care for the self's image of one's own physicality should aim at promoting a healthy acceptance of one's own body (which is beautiful by virtue of being unique); this aim also entails not pressuring oneself to fit the media's presentation of the perfect "body image"[75] It is not just a matter of pubescence, because the body changes with age; this brings the demand for continuous reflection and "the acceptance of one's own body as a value to be discovered, preserved, protected – to be cared for; but which it is also possible to irreversibly violate" (Helus 2009a, s. 250).

The transcendent dimension refers to both the corporeal aspect and to its

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[75] Since the 1950s, the term "body image" has been used for the way of perceiving one's own body as "an image of our own body that we create in our minds ... how the body seems to us." It includes "body size estimate," "attractiveness assessment," and "emotions associated with the shape and size of stature" (Grogan 2000, p. 14n). The media provide and determine the ideal body image, the methods and the intensity of weight loss and sport, and even the instructions on how to hide anorexia. Caring for overlapping is caring for a new body image.

image; it views them both as something which allows for life itself, the motion of life (Patočka),[76] and the enlightenment as a "reversal in existence" (Kouba 2003, p. 2). Physicality, together with "sensory facilities," is what is behind understanding the world (Hejlová 2010, p. 46); it is the gateway "to life" and "the goal of quality of life" (for more, see Hejlová 2010 p. 76).

12.2 The Transcendental Dimension of the Psyche

Self-respect, self-esteem, and self-confidence are important for a healthy relationship with one's own self. Since they originate from both one's own assessment as well as the assessments of other people, conflicts may arise in the area of overlapping. Somtimes the assessment of others may not even be known at all. **Caring for a person's transcending** in this area is therefore a concern for a genuine dialogue in the sense of "constantly verifying existing knowledge and comparing it with others" (Blecha 1998, p. 79) where similar experiences and emotions can emerge. Thus, the transcendental dimension of the psyche (I, self) appears to be primarily about the relationship to You, that is, a non-egocentricity which is also a healthy self-centeredness at the same time.

Self-respect in this context means "self-acceptance, being proud of oneself," and "assessing one's own value and the level of self-esteem" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 516). Leading people to a proper understanding of human overlapping in all areas can have a very positive impact on strengthening self-acceptance (i.e., also being accepted by others), not only in those who have been adversely affected by psychological or physical harm but also in those who do not see higher truths because of their own self-esteem.

Self-respect is related to one's **self-confidence**. "Healthy self-confidence" is "a reasonable degree of self-esteem, which is the basis of life balance; its beginnings are inherent in early childhood and in the assessment the individual receives from key people" (Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 516). A good question is, "What is the "a reasonable degree?" Offering a definitive answer is more difficult than a practical recognition of what this indefinable measure in our society is *not,* as the detector of proportionality is the relationship of I to You in a particular society. The pedagogue is a key person who has a positive impact on the self-esteem of a healthy child; it is actually one of the greatest and most often underestimated influences. There are pedagogues who "deflate" children's self-confidence without even realizing it. Is this not an articulation of low self-confidence in the pedagogue himself? On the other hand, those who support the child leave an indelible mark on the child.[77] Self-

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[76] "Our body is a life that is in itself spatial, it produces its placement in space, and it makes itself spatial. Personal existence is not existence as a thing, but as a relationship to oneself which must go through someone else's existence to realize this relationship. We relate to ourselves by relating to other people, to other things, and ultimately to the universe in general, and thus we are placing ourselves into the world" (Patočka 1995, p. 27).

[77] My own childhood experience: When I attended the eighth grade at the Peterson School in Chicago, I received three awards at the end of the year. I went to receive them in front of all the children of the

confidence as "the awareness of one's own value and abilities" is associated not only with "belief in oneself" but also with the "success of future efforts" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 516). This is very serious; belief in oneself affects my activity in the world and mainly including the relationship to You.

The third important concept is **self-esteem**; the relationship between self-esteem and self-confidence is one of "mutual conditioning" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 516). Knowing one's abilities and qualities still does not mean a belief in these abilities, especially with regard to crisis and stressful situations. The boundary between the awareness of one's own abilities and putting one's confidence in them is very fragile. This points to self-esteem that is very quickly shaken in our society. A number of educators encounters these feelings when they face a new class, new parents, new demands from superiors, etc. In this sense, psychotherapeutic support and coaching show themselves to be very beneficial (Dvořáková 2014, p. 67n.). Trusting in oneself also reflects the relationship to You. Disappointment in others is problematic when one loses trust in them. The reason may lie in approaching You as I in the sense of "*I judge you by the standard of myself.*" The other extreme is to approach I as You in the sense of "submitting to the pressures to be what *others* want *us* to be." Thus, "we are getting far from ourselves (we lose our authenticity)" (Rogers 1998 in Spilková 2005b, p. 55). Here, the transcendent dimension of self-esteem is neglected. It does not say that trust in oneself is the same as trust in You or that it should adapt to You. The individual has to get to know the real You because the real You points to the type of the relationship (friendship between the equal and unequal, see Aristotle 1996, 206nn).

12.3 Caring for Spirituality

The purpose is not defining what the area of spirituality is for educators, because this reality is subjective. Caring for the transcendental dimension of spirituality includes distinctly caring for optimism in life, hope, the meaning of life, and the role of the educator.

A pessimistic person is defined as "grouchy, full of hopelessness, seeing reality always worse than it is" (Hartl, Hartlová 2010, p. 401). The pedagogue may feel hopeless in the learning process because of certain pupils, parents, colleagues, learning practices, and so on. Taking care of **optimism in life** means providing enough opportunities to unveil (discover) the positive aspects of the individual issues,

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school. Until this very day, I really do not know what these awards were for. For a long time, I used to keep the purple ribbon with the word "perfect" as something of a magical value to me. Behind it, I saw my English teacher, who used to give me additional lessons every morning together with other children. I have not forgotten her until today, and she was the motivation why I was very happy to go to an unfamiliar environment and why I enjoyed learning in a learning style, which I in retrospect know did not really suit me as a child. Education in the US has a different approach to praise and commendation and thus to children's self-assessment. When a Czech says, "I can not do this," or "I can do it a little bit," but then is really good in the activity, we understand it, but why do we have to first hear an underestimation of one's own abilities?

to allow channeling the positive emotions, and also sharing them.

In Christian ethics, **hope** has always constituted the third element of virtues, along with love and faith. This theological and psychological triad is inseparable. Faith is necessary to keep this emotional attitude in man, and love as a "positive, strong emotional relationship to another person, idea, thing, and to oneself" (Hartl, Hartlová, 2010, p. 281) is a strong bond to the object of hope. When a teacher's pedagogical virtues are talked about, what mostly gets mentioned is "love," "wisdom," "courage," "credibility" (Helus 2009a, pp. 269-270). Since hope prevails in the very face of despair, caring for hope means teaching with a patient expectation and actively working at the appropriate time.

Everyone has a different **aim in life**. However, it is possible to take care of the educator in the broader sense of the word by providing access to information, interdisciplinary cooperation, unprejudiced sharing of experiences, and the reflection of one's aim in life; it also includes experiencing the educational environment as a community. Above all, this means taking care of the depth of [the educator's] purpose in life ("meaningfulness," "indomitability," "self-transcendence," see Křivohlavý 2006, p. 108).

Caring for the transcendental dimension of the role of the educator is neglected by our society.[78] More emphasis should be placed on the following areas:

- **Caring for the uniqueness of the role.** The teacher sees only the partial results of his work. Not seeing the result (an ironed dress, an accepted law, a new medicine, etc.) is frustrating and inefficient for society. From the perspective of "turning to the child" education (Helus 2010a), caring for the transcendent dimension of the role of the educator is an effort to grasp the higher level of this activity (and being) which rests in the term "vocation" and "mission" (Helus, 2012a, p. 39). To be called to something does not just mean to be able and available but also to internally hear that there my place in life exists in relation to my uniqueness. It is a kind of a **pedagogical *vocatio interna*** (internal calling, *Berufung*). The mission also refers to an "important task" (*Dictionary of the Literal Czech*, *Slovník spisovné češtiny*, 2001, p. 295). This is the opportunity to co-reside, co-labor, and co-create. It is not articulated, but every educator is intensively a part of many families for several years as an authority. The transcendental significance of the teacher's role is precisely the fact that he enters into a long-term relationship with You, and thus co-creates both *You* and *I*.
- **Caring for options.** Here, caring for overlapping manifests itself especially in the notion of professionalization, that is, the abandonment of so-called "doing the teaching" for the creation of "education." This is related to "systematic

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[78] On one hand, caring for the role of the educator takes place in an institutionalized way - in the form of educating the pedagogues, lifelong learning, supplementary courses, seminars, etc. It is also the work of the educator himself to take care of his role, namely to search for activities related to further education and the cultivation of knowledge and skills. Taking care of the role of the educator means pointing to the deeper meaning of the role of the educator in offering interdisciplinary dialogues, psychohygiene, team-building, and taking care of the environment of the teaching staff.

self-reflection," "co-responsibility," "flexibility in didactic decision-making" and the re-evaluation of the "social context" (Helus 2012a, p. 43).

- **Caring for the qualities and abilities of the teacher.** If self-conceptualization and transcendence are parts of every personality, then care for selflessness (the relationship to You) and dealing with oneself (I) should be one of the priorities. It is also important to support those areas in which each teacher is extraordinary and beneficial in teaching (e.g., the development of a new methodology, ideas for other concepts of textbooks, custom didactic aids, etc.). I think that the potentialities of educators which could make the educational process more diverse and effective are still generally being wasted and neglected.

- **Caring for a relationship with one's own teaching field.** Each teacher has chosen his field of study for a positive reason. It may, however, happen that in a few years that which he enjoyed merely repeats itself – the same practices, the same methods (see "routinely, practically oriented teaching," also Helus 2012a, p. 42). An important part is leading the educator to "self-reflection and self-improvement." The need to "think more about one's own work" can be related to "a problematic situation," "an evaluation of the results in a given period," "a new approach," "a comparison with a colleague," "encountering new knowledge" and "a calling to self-evaluation (when analyzing the class inspection report)" (Obst 2002, p. 108). The need to think about one's own work is also related to the transcendental dimension. This is given in the overcoming of the distance to one's own field, which is given in the context of the "broader dimensions of the overlapping border" of the basic contexts in the given educational area (Spilková 2005b, p.53). Caring for a relationship to one's own field means discovering new and different ways, exploring   the interrelationships with other subjects and other issues, and the being of man and the world as a whole.

12.4 Caring for Overlapping as Holistic Care

This subchapter focuses only on summarizing the possibilities of how transcending in an individual (the educator and also the pupil) can be developed in individual fields, while each emphasis can lead both to horizontal and to vertical targeting. In the following text, I follow the general definitions of the individual, and I systematize them in terms of thinking about the individual parts of the person as a whole. I did not find such a summary in any of the literature that was available to me.

Sports coaches, teachers of both contact and non-contact sports, dance teachers, and physiotherapists are not only to deal with the physical side of things, even though care for the adequacy of physical exertion according to the type and predisposition of the individual is crucial for them. At the psychological level, they care for better awareness and motivation for people to do sports and move their bodies. However, to a certain extent, we can also speak of the spiritual plane as the

care of a higher sense of corporeality that allows for life itself to be expressed in the relation to You.

Obesitologists and nutritional therapists take care of the physical side of the body by caring for proper eating habits and corrections appropriate to the type and predisposition of the individual. In terms of psychiatric care, they focus on better awareness and the motivation for eating properly, they provide information about the changing perspectives on food, and seek agreement with inner feelings and self-image. At the spiritual level, they take care of health as a higher value of mankind in regard to the unity of the world and the future of humanity. A responsible approach toward the selection of food (i.e., diet) is not only beneficial to individuals but also to the whole.

Psychologists and psychotherapists care for the physicality of the individual by motivating him to focus on it in a practical way in the context of their conversations. At the psychological level, they care for verbalization, better awareness, and motivation to learn and work on the individual's selfing as well as on the whole personality of the person. They help to find a way into the subject's heart and discover another subject (*You*). At the spiritual level, they care especially for what the given *self* (*I*) sees as overlapping, that is, they lead the self to an articulation and an understanding of the self's own conception of transcendence and transcending.

Pedagogues care for a healthy body image at the physical level by creating sufficient opportunities for sporting activities (sports days, joint activities with children, innovations in physical education, etc.). At the mental level they care for the personal growth of others through developing their own personal attitude (i.e., hidden curriculum), by transferring knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and by creating an environment which leads to the development of the whole personality of the individual (the educational dimension is linked to psychology, psychohygiene, coaching, etc.). At the spiritual level they care for awareness and motivate the reflection of the third dimension of education; they show a deeper understanding of creativity and critical thinking.

Philosophers, religious leaders, and theologians care for man's physicality by showing the necessity of caring for it but for reasons much different than those which the majority of society expresses. They reveal different insights into this relationship of physicality, psyche, and spirituality, as well as the interdependence of the individual components. From the mental point of view, they care for the inner experiences of individuals; they lead others toward deep communication and expression (i.e., articulation) through encouraging thinking about oneself and one's own place in the world (philosophizing or theologizing) through dialogue. They care for the spirituality of man in the sense that they point to different types of understanding transcendence and transcending in various philosophical, religious, and theological concepts, as well as the ability of human activity to overlap. They also point to the moral laws that are related to it and point to the most fundamental factor of *metanoia* as a break in human existence, which obliges us to engage actively in relating to and working for other persons as well as for the world as a whole.

12.5 Summary

Caring for the educator's overlapping means leading teachers toward the transcendent dimension of the realities the educator normally encounters (e.g., physicality, self-respect, self-confidence, self-esteem, the role of the educator, the meaning of life, etc.). Caring for overlapping is holistic. The physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of the individual are taken care of by sport coaches, teachers of contact and non-contact sports, dance teachers, physiotherapists, obesitologists, dietary advisors, psychologists, psychotherapists, educators, philosophers, religious leaders, and theologians.

13 The Transcendental Dimension of Caring for Children

Caring for children's overlapping includes all three of the same components as mentioned for adults (physicality, psyche, and spirituality). In this chapter, I mainly reflect on the possibilities of schools to encourage and develop overlap and ways to develop educational competencies related to transcendence.

13.1 The Transcendent Dimension of Schools

Caring for the overlapping of children means taking care of the school as a **place of comprehensive care**. This corresponds to the idea of the humanization of Czech education—the   turning to the child education in which the "integral development of the personality of a human being is understood as finding the relation of a person to himself, to other people, to society, and to the whole of the world" (Spilková 2005b, p. 49). This demands a constant reflection which requires constant self-assessment and leads towards specific people and specific problems and needs. This is mainly related to expanding the supply and professionalization of care for others, such as mentoring, coaching, team building, relaxation, etc. The school is supposed to be a place of transcendental care which is focused on perceiving the higher meaning of physicality, psyche, and spirituality and also aimed at overcoming the subject-object distance in education, in the individual, in the relation to the other, and to the world as a whole.

There are studies that identify school as one of children's stressors (Holler, Nowitzki 1994) which can be manifested by "unpleasant feeling in the stomach," "palpitation," "shaky hands," "headaches," "sleeping disorders," "abdominal pain," "using psychopharmacs," etc. (Winter 2000 in Zdražil 2012, p. 81). The transcendental dimension of schools is not primarily concerned about determining the pathological sources of the disease or the sources which lead to health but about **enhancing the powers of the individual (empowerment) that could lead to greater stamina and the ability of an organism to defend itself from unfavorable external influences**.

Overlapping in the sense of overcoming the distance in *I-You* relationships (even toward school) changes the perspective of a so-called "community." A school is not supposed to be merely a group of individuals but rather a real **community**. "In a child-oriented direction, teaching is understood primarily as a process of encountering, at the center of which is the human-human relationship as a process of mutual contacts" (Spilková 2005b, p. 56). An important role is also played by a closer cooperation with parents, which "is important for the creation and cultivation of human community, society and belonging within a given social group" (ibid, p. 60). **Caring for the overlapping of children also means taking care of the school community,** which certainly includes cultivating and sharing opinions, emotions, and

life itself. It is also a place where the satisfaction of basic needs happens; among such basic needs Maslow includes "community, affiliation, contact and grouping" (1992, p. 14). It is a place of "co-existence," "sharing" ("Fink") and "understanding" (Heidegger) of the meaning of life, because co-existence is "a life of learning" (Michálek 1996, p. 42).

13.2 School as the Place of Other Opportunities

Children receive the first opportunity to develop a mature personality within their family which they do not choose. Children also do not choose their second opportunities either, as it is the parents' decision of which school they will enroll their children; however, children should have the opportunity to meet with such an open market of possibilities and should be allowed to choose which one is the most enriching for themselves and their family environment. Thus, a school is the **creator of second/other opportunities** for the child, and it depends on each school whether or not it will create and cultivate such a space.

As intended by the purposes of my research, the phrase "school as the place of second opportunities" I understand it to signify the following:

- a created space which offers opportunities for dealing with certain physical, mental, and eventually even spiritual issues (such as sects) with which each child brings with him to school and toward the learning process in general;
- an open space for engaging the specific uniqueness of the child, his problems, and abilities;
- a place for new relationships that give the child a chance to start and experience social relationships in new and different ways;
- an educator who is a "guide," a "helper" and a "creator/co-creator of the climate in the classroom" (Spilková 2005b, pp. 57-58), who as a transcendent *I* knows the depth of relationships and the value of *You*;
- a world that wants to address each child and his specific story. Here, there "should" be time for developing the child's personality;
- a community in which a solid order is established and the rules offer understanding, cooperation, sympathy, humanity, solidarity, and belonging;
- a space to develop all areas of overlap and and the ccompanying correction where any serious deformation might occur;
- a place of virtue where trust and *agape* are present and hope for both the past and the future is given.

The overall goal of offering other opportunities ("giving second chances") is not an unrealistic possibility but involves the actual and active pursuit of "turning everything toward the child." Consequently, turning to the child education necessarily involves a change of thinking (a break in existence:

metanoia) in every educator which can be reflected only in the attitude and ethos of the school and in the hidden curriculum. The beginning of this turning is to recognize the uniqueness and value of each child and to perceive the tremendous possibilities to endow positive values in children, a view of the I-You relationship and the world as a whole. Thus, the concept of a school becoming a "second chance" is also always directed from the child toward the teacher. He must recognize the school not only as a space for second chances but also for third and fourth chances in terms of re-establishing the initial enthusiasm, expectations, and hope in his profession.

13.3 Key Competencies and Transcending

The pupil's key competencies (skills, attitudes, values, knowledge, activities, etc.) are the objectives of learning (Spilková 2005b, p. 104).[79] If we evaluate these competencies from the perspective of the current problem being solved, the terms **"competence to overlap," "transcending" or "the competence of transcendence"** are highly significant, even though each of these terms may perhaps be met with a certain degree of mistrust or seen as a kind of "charlatanism."

The concept of competence for higher-order thinking is also found in the current discussion of educational goals. It is already an integral part of the personality-developing teaching, because "the child-oriented concept of teaching places particular emphasis on higher levels of thinking – analysis, synthesis and evaluation" (Spilková 2005b, p. 49). These three categories are defined in the Bloom Taxonomy of Educational Goals (1956) as "Higher Order Thinking – HOT" (Steelová et al., 2007, p. 14 - Hanesová 2005, pp. 116-117). The criticism that led to the revision of these goals was that they "do not include critical thinking and problem solving, which is an important and emphasized target category of educational processes at present." For this reason, the "synthesis" category was renamed as "creative dimension" in 2001 and was given priority before "evaluation," that is, it held the highest place in all categories (Hudecová 2004, p. 277).

However, the notion of higher-order thinking which is found in educational realia is not totally identical to "transcendental thinking" (i.e, thinking about overlapping and toward overlapping – thinking which refers to the movement of truth). Michálek speaks about the fact that "modern man is on the run from thinking." This means that the modern "calculative thinking" dominates and the **"contemplative mind"** is missing (Michálek 1996, p. 50). Unfortunately, this very serious critique against contemporary society does not exclude those who are actively developing in the competency of overlapping, since even those people may also manifest a higher as well as a lower level of thinking. **The transcending of the subject is itself something higher in the life of the individual, but it is the individual who determines what value his activity will have and how it will be**

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[79] For their definition as the "sum of knowledge" or the "anticipated knowledge," see RVP ZV 2010, p. 14 and RVP PV 2004, p. 11. "At all stages, one of the objectives of education is to equip each individual with a set of key competencies at a level that is accessible to him," in RVP PV, p. 11, n. 16.

connected with a particular situation.

It is clear that the transcending of personality requires all levels of thinking including the idea of so-called "common sense," because overlapping is inseparable from its everyday, cognitive, affective, and conative components. However, transcending leads to **dialectical thinking. I can boldly express my opinion** that it should be afforded a higher place than the revised Bloom's "creativity," for whom it is characteristic that something which previously did not exist should "be created" (see the definition of synthesis in Steelová et al., 2007, p. 15). On the other hand, Hegel's synthesis arises from the hard conflict the thesis on the antithesis, which is similar to the idea of the deconstruction of reality in critical thinking. A third concept (i.e., the absolute) which involves both opposites in its own way was created from the two opposites of thought (i.e., the concrete and the abstract).

In the style of the revised Bloom Taxonomy, the term **update** offers itself for the top-tier (higher-order thinking). Typically, one encounters this term when updating programs on a computer. At the same time, it is replaced by something "new" and "higher." The program which works (thesis) shows in practice where it does not work (antithesis), and the new version (synthesis) should not only preserve the existing functions but also transform that which was not-functioning properly in it. Viewed from the perspective of educational goals, this means that the idea of "update" includes all three of Bloom's higher categories (analysis, synthesis/creativity, and evaluation). These are currently defined so that "analyzing means to look for components of a complex whole," to create means to propose the new, to evaluate means to choose "the best from the available," and to describe subjective reasons for this choice (Steelová et al., 2007, p. 15). **"Updating" also signifies includes all of these but in addition also means:**

- **seeking the components/aspects of the whole and the whole itself;**
- **creating things new, old-new, recognized or "incomprehensible" for most;**
- **choosing the best for the given reality and describing the reasons with regard to I, You, and the world as a whole.**

If the term "update" can be an educational goal for the competency of higher-order thinking (i.e., the competency of transcending also), its characteristic feature and main distinction from all the other Bloom categories is thinking which combines paradoxes and refers to the world as a whole.

In essence I have now reduced the competency of transcending to a cognitive expression, but it must be noted that there is a great need for synergy of thought, intuition, emotions, and actions. Perhaps it could appear to the reader that Maslow's notion of a peak experience as the highest transcendence has been excluded from this consideration; however, I have discovered that there is a so-called "plateau-experience," which unlike "peak experiences (predominantly emotional experience)," always has a noetic and cognitive element." The plateau is under "will control" and is subject to learning as a "long and hard work" (1992, p. 16). The author compares it to "quiet cognitive bliss" (1992, p. 15). For personality it does not mean an explosion of emotion or complete transformation as an internal "rebirth", but it brings ***eudaimonia***

in the sense of "experiencing pure joy and happiness" (1992, p. 16). Thus, **Maslow essentially answered the question of the attainability of this untouchable mystery in the process of education.**

13.4 Higher-Order Thinking Skills Competencies

Developing the higher-order thinking skills competency with regard to transcendence only makes sense as a complement to other competencies. This is due to two reasons:

- Every previously defined competence in the FEP also includes the component of transcendence – issues such as critical judgment, human values, pro-sociability, the rights of others, asking questions, answering, etc.
- Competencies are interconnected, since "they are not side by side in isolation, they are intertwined in different ways, they are multifunctional, they have a cross-subject form and can always be obtained only as a result of the overall educational process" (RVP ZV, p. 14).

Based on my previous reflection, I will attempt to define the key competeny of higher-order thinking skills for preschool and school children from a perspective of transcending, focusing only on the specifics which are not included in the already defined competencies in FEP.

A child completing pre-school education:
- is aware of the boundaries that are of a different nature in the family, in the nursery, and in a group of peers, and he knows what it is to crossover or go beyond them (mostly negatively); he also recognizes the sense of the positive crossing of borders or boundaries (e.g., by helping others);
- is able to identify appropriate, inappropriate, heroic, and anti-heroic behavior;
- distinguishes the visible and the invisible parts in a myth, a fairy tale, and a simple symbol, and he can find a connection between them;
- can use simple symbols for intangible facts;
- knows that he encounters simpler situations every day but is also aware of those situations in which he needs the help of an adult;
- is able to think and lead simple reflections about his own self (I) and about the other person as You; he is able to simply express what it means to have a positive relationship with oneself, with one's own body, psyche and spirituality, and with others;
- can describe the concept of personal well-being, joy and happiness, and ways how to achieve it;
- has elementary knowledge of the breadth of the suprahuman "world" (i.e., what goes beyond human thinking) and uses his experience, fantasy, and imagination;

- asks questions and seeks not only the answers but also other related questions;
- is aware of a variety of worldviews, their positives, and also the dangers of manipulative (unfree) behavior;
- is able to speak about the more complex issues of life (the beginning and end of life, pain, death, illness, injustice, etc.) in a childlike way;
- realizes that there are easier dilemmas based on his relationship to peers and the values of the society.

At the end of primary education:
- the child realizes that "boundary" is a relative term, and under certain circumstances, crossing it can mean saving a life, but that does not negate the responsibility of the individual for crossing it;
- realizes the broader definition of heroism and anti-heroism and is able to describe the external and internal heroicity; he can also see it in apparently ordinary situations – the child is also able to substantiate these statements;
- is able to distinguish the act and inner intent of an individual in a heroic deed;
- works independently with symbolism and understands its higher predicative value for human life; he sees symbols even in ordinary matters and submits them to hermeneutic criticism; the child creates new symbols and gives them a specific meaning;
- understands himself as part of humanity (i.e., the planet as a whole) and accepts responsibility for both the whole and the global issues;
- understands the knowledge and experience gained in the individual educational areas as one of the perspectives on the path toward further knowledge;
- names his own meaning of life, hope, and faith, and respects their distinctness in others; he understands the contents of the concepts: *agapé*, periagogé (*metanoia*), and psychagogy;
- understands his self-image and the image he has about the others as something partial, which deserves continual self-discovery and self-development; he perceives others as You and realizes the uniqueness of relationships;
- asks questions and articulates answers; he is able to subject these to further reflections and corrections, to express both the thesis and the antithesis of the given issue, and to propose an update;
- formulates his views on topics of horizontal and vertical overlap without prejudices; he understands the purpose of discussion and the importance of criticism;
- is able to define wise behavior and independently find a solution in a blurred situation and to argue both for and against views;
- understands the deeper sense of a dilemmatic story and always finds the pros and cons in individual solutions;
- understands positive emotions as a key factor in forming relationships with oneself, others, and the world as a whole;
- understands retrospective reflection not only from a time-distance position but also as a way of seeing facts from a higher perspective;

- is able to distinguish the higher and ordinary forms of reflection and realize them as certain needs may require.

13.5 Developing Key Competencies

Now let us consider several possibilities of educational development of both horizontal and vertical overlapping, because they are also included in caring for individuals.

13.5.1 Four Postmodern Approaches in Teaching Which Promotes Transcending in Children

The four postmodern approaches of C. Erricker can be regarded as inspirational for both directions of overlap. The pedagogue has several tasks:

- He introduces children to the "complexity, paradox, and irony of undecidability" (in Freudenreich 2011, p. 202). Paradox by itself does not mean the need to decide upon one answer; the essence of paradox is that it allows more possibilities which only make sense in a particular situation (e.g., Kohlberg's dilemmas, situational ethics). It is also typical for what fuzzy logic (hazy) describes – that the extreme possibilities have no strict boundaries. On the other hand, it is important to show children where a strictness of boundaries is a necessity.
- He is not supposed to espouse the role of a judge in clearly defining "what leads to wisdom." For this reason, it is important to leave the so-called field of options open to the child (ibid, pp. 202-203). This is perhaps still a little foreign to our thinking. We always feel the need to summarize any discussion and conclude it with one major truth. Postmodern times are characterized by the fact that "there is not one Platonic sun for everything and above all, but, instead, multiple various lights" (Michálek 1996, p. 81).
- He works critically with the didactic material, which is always conditioned with respect to history, situations, knowledge, and experience, that is, "timeless truths are true only to those who believe them to be true." The relationship between "authority, context and language" must always be examined (in Freudenreich 2011, p. 203). We can further add "between cultures and pre-understandings."
- He must allow the children to share the experience on which the acquisition of wisdom and understanding of overlapping is based (ibid, p. 203). The inability to have personal experiences with everything justifies dialogue as a mutual sharing, co-discovery and cocreation.

13.5.2 The Importance of Symbolism as a Path from Immanence to Transcendence in Teaching

Our world is full of symbols (Berg 2004, p. 126) without us sometime even realizing it. The concept [of a symbol] is derived from the Greek word *symballein* ("blend, join, merge") and carries "a shape and an idea, a foreground and a background, apparent and hidden, conscious and unconscious…" (Muchová, 2005, p. 10). L. Muchová draws attention to the power of symbolic reasoning that is found in a certain **duality** which is contained in a given image or subject (cf. Berg, 2004, p. 126). We can still develop this idea in such a way that the symbol exhibits certain characteristics on the outside, but in the longer study it also reveals the facts which it represents to man by means of **representation**. Muchová unambiguously connects symbol with **transcendence**, because the symbol per se "transcends its own subjectiveness" and "opens up a different givenness" (2005, p. 10). Hermeneutics and didactics of the symbol inherently belong to transcendence as well as to personal-developmental education.

Symbols are **crucial** for children.[80] Therefore, they are helpful in discussing values, they help in expressing ideas and wishes, they lead children from the visible to the invisible, and they help them to develop their own overlapping and a deeper insight into our reality. K.H. Berg summarizes the methods of working with symbols and emphasizes the perceptual point of view which is in particular related to understanding in small children:

- the children's interaction with the symbol through all of the senses;
- a creative approach towards the symbol ("verbally, shape-wise, musically, motion-wise – the symbol is deepened and becomes more rooted in its own existence and internalized. The ability to use fantasy, to dream, and to hope play a big role.");
- a meditative approach to the symbol;
- an experiential and life-based approach;
- understanding the symbol – emphasis on the cognitive dimension, that is, "ambivalence of symbols, dialogues about the children's experiences acquired during meditation or creative activities." This prevents the use of a symbol in an educational environment ("manipulation with symbols" Berg 2004, pp. 132-133).

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[80] They understand their dual character and can give specific meanings. As far as **hermeneutics** is concerned, symbols lead to a more plastic view of reality and promote understanding the timelessness of certain considerations and relativity and transience of the phenomena. The symbol acts as a representative for value, abstract, and supersensible realities (for more, see Bravená 2013, p. 53).

13.5.3 The Importance of Philosophizing as a Path to Unity in Teaching

The question "why" is a natural expression of the child's desire to philosophize. There are two possibilities in developing the philosophizing method in the classroom – the layperson and the professional. The laic path is based on the teacher's ability and self-study. In practice, the teacher acts as a moderator. Professional philosophizing is based on a Socratic dialogue with a clear method and goal and comes with a certain kind of "leading" toward discovering our reality. It has been further developed as a philosophy *for* children, *with* children, and philosophy presented *by* children. Each of these streams offers a different emphasis in working with children.

The educator's preparation for philosophical dialogues and dialogues which develop critical and dialectical thinking is real work, not a hasty writing of questions and outlining of pertinent issues. If the teacher does not think through the particular issue or the text before the child does, how is he supposed to lead the child in thinking it through creatively? Professional philosophizing, (i.e., developing and educating a child through a philosophical dialogue) is not a sequence of consecutive questions without a goal or intent; it is a thoughtful structure which leaves room for the child's self-expression and the spontaneous reactions of the teacher. Open and adequate opportunities for the method of philosophizing is found most often in classes where ethics is taught, although ethics is only a complementary educational subject of the elementary school. Like any other didactic method, it can be used in kindergartens and in any other kind of elementary school subject. The main problem remains the ignorance of the teachers concerning such dialogue and the fact that it is usually considered superfluous.

Philosophizing can also be used with children in the teaching of religion. If the conversation contains a testimony about God, then we are talking about the method of theologizing. Religious education as a subject is optional in Czech elementary schools. It is included in the ecclesiastical schools, but in other schools it is rather rare. Insufficient provision of material both for and by the teachers, insufficient didactic material, religious insularity, and insignificant interest of the pupils and schools are all connected to this. Theologizing can be perceived more widely as including any dialogue about God even within Judaism and Islam. In one of my research papers, I prove that it is possible to theologize even with religiously non-socialized children (2014a). Faith is not a prerequisite for such a dialogue, but when children show deficient knowledge, it must be supplemented by the teacher so that the conversation becomes possible. There is, therefore, a greater difficulty in preparing the teacher so that he does not relegate certain concepts and content to the realm of "obvious knowledge," but he should present them in a new, parabolic, non-prejudiced way and always with regard to the educated children and their world.

Philosophizing is crucial for children because it develops philosophical and

theological competence in them, and these are related to higher-order thinking.[81]

13.5.4 The Importance of Myth and Fairytales as Directing Oneself towards Truth

Myths (considered from the meaning of the philosophical term *mythos*) and fairytales not only develop the imagination and expressive abilities of the child, but according to Palouš, they also lead to a "directing oneself towards truth (*aletheuein*)" which modern man seems oblivious to seeing and accepting.

The authentic path to truth is like the sermon on the mount, namely higher education. In addition to leading to awe, another purpose includes eradicating foolishness. This is related to the fact that modern man does not admit that myths can actually speak to the situation of a person and "his place in the world." This is the unfortunate consequence of the domination of man over nature and not his solidarity with it (2011, p. 25). Part of such education is also leading a person to [having an] "open soul" in philosophizing. Only in this way is a person capable of "general understanding" (2011, p. 83). Such education is "a path to what is essentially not available; it is looking up to an authority which goes beyond human relativity" (Palouš 2011, p. 93). Education on the mount is not meant to "solidify and raise but to make more **sensitive**," because such education "disarms and exposes the heart to the surrounding realities, to those surrendered and surrendering" (2011, p. 91). Higher education leads **to imagination**. It also leads to children's **self-gathering** – "the message of a fairy tale requires silence and participation; argumentation in the way of rational logic moves in a completely different environment. The individual pieces of the mythical story are not associated with abstract consequences; they flow and only present their teachings, they do not prove or impose them" (Palouš 2011, pp. 131-132).

The Czech nation has a very positive relationship to fairy tales. Thus, it is a pity that fairy tales are not used to encourage and engage in philosophical discussions more often, perhaps because we are too focused on the visible content rather than on the invisible meaning and its application (generalization) to our particular life.

13.5.5 The Transcendent Dimension of Art

Children learn about art on the basis of history, art and music education, excursions to theaters, museums, galleries, etc. A child acquaints himself with the

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[81] The **child's philosophical competence** is described in foreign literature as a "methodical competence" and these characteristic actions of the child are related to it: "watching and describing something exactly and extricately"; "understanding someone as to how he understands and perceives a certain reality"; "conceptually and argumentatively verifying how someone understands a certain thing"; "arguing against and together about individual claims"; "involving fantasy and mind; [perceiving] how someone could have understood and/or wanted to understand something" (Alberts, Gläser 2006, p. 76). For the theological competence of the child, see chapter 5.

creativity of others and he is also able to create by himself. In practice, children are led more technically than transcendentally. But this element is an integral part of the artist's invention (Zlatohlávek 2013, p. 85)[82] and is an individual experience of truth (Patočka in Škutil, 2008). Art is the medium of "spiritual content" which is expressed through the senses. It creates a sense of beauty that is "infinite" since "the effect transcends the cause," it "represents the infinite in the finite (Schelling)," it is "the creative preservation of truth in the work (Heidegger)," and it "presents being in existence (Jaspers)" (Anzenbacher 1991, p. 29–30).

Caring for children's overlapping lies in discovering this transcendent dimension. Working with philosophers and real artists may be helpful in such a discovery. One classic example of a good practice of discovery is "The Art Peace Project" in Hamburg, which is suitable for children from the age of ten. This is a connection between the **child's work and artistic photography**. G. Mitchell, the author of the project, developed a philosophy with children based on the deeper witnessing of and participation in the arts. He invited two Arab brothers, Hasan and Hussain Essopa, who studied art at the University of Cape Town and soon exhibited their photographs in all of galleries in South Africa to join him. Their patent photos use a specific background as a scene on which a certain story takes place. The author of the photo appears on the scene in various positions and self-expressions. It is not only the composition but the whole message that is important. In particular, we can imagine this in one of the first works of the two mentioned brothers. The photo is called "Fast Food," and the story takes place "on Clifton Beach in Cape Town at sunset during Ramadan." One character is squatting down and is literally "gorging himself on" a hamburger and fries, another one is white-dressed and is praying towards Mecca, while another character presents the Bollywood character with his groomed look and dark sunglasses, etc.[83] Primarily, such a photo does not focus on a religious subject, but on the **self-expression of a person** – who he is, what he fears, what brings him pleasure, etc. Four pedagogical paradigms stand in the background of this project: "Intercultural learning," "Education for Peace," "Education in Human Rights," "Empowerment" (education aimed at internal empowerment of the individual, Mitchell, Olbers 2010). Transcendent contents are not the primary goal, but they play an important role in the self-expression of the individual. They can also contain spiritual content that is not presented in isolation from reality but directly in the world of a man eating a hamburger.

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[82] Even in 16th century texts, we find references to transcendence – to the artist's invention (*designo*). It is a "dimension beyond human abilities and possibilities" and "the power which is inserted into the creator-man from the dimension which transcends him, that is, it has a transcendental plane" (Zlatohlavek 2013, p. 85). It appears in all of the arts (painting, sculpture, poetry, music). It refers in essence to ancient *techné*, because "*designo* determines the ratios of the individual parts to each other and to the whole, and that not only in human and animal bodies, but also in plants, buildings, and artwork" (ibid, p. 96).

[83] The Bollywood character refers to the center of the Indian film industry based in Mumbai. Such a person is presented as young, beautiful, perfectly dressed and successful. It can also be captured by the youth's choice of words – "cool" and "trendy" and "keeping an eye" on fashionable things.

13.5.6 Drawing and Overlapping

In the Czech environment, drawing is perceived as a natural part of the life of children up to 10 years of age, then it is viewed as a "measured" product of the subject of art education. Only rarely is it treated as something that has its own transcendent dimension.[84]

This transcendent reality can be expressed in children's drawings both **directly and indirectly**. For this reason, it is always necessary to talk with the child about the drawing. From the description of the picture, the teacher will understand the context into which the child has situated the transcendental content. Philosophizing turns the drawing into a didactic aid about the life of the child.[85] The transcendent reality of the composition may not correspond to reality. It is more about the imagination and creativity of the drawing, the presentation of knowledge in the picture, and the interconnection of the transcendent contents with the real world of the child. The concern is especially about how the child chooses to name his drawing, how he describes the individual scenes in the picture, and how he explains the relationship of self (I) to these facts. **The child is put into the role of an expert – an artist who presents the unrepresentable – and he transcends our static and objectivized concept of transcendence even by just painting differently** (for more, see Bravená 2013, 2014c).

A **truly artistic drawing of transcendent contents does not just mean that the child is put into the role of the artist. It also lies** in what Schuster characterizes as the modern concept of art: the message, the sensitivity, and the innovative concept (Schuster 2010, pp. 91-92). **For drawing it means a new grasp of transcendent contents, ideas, and everyday issues.** According to my findings, we can summarize the basic manifestations of the artistry in drawing with transcendent content in children under ten years old as follows:

A child does not always have to paint nicely, but his drawing must include a deeper message or answer on a subject (i.e., a non-egocentric orientation).

A child is able to use the well-known contents and to put them within his own understanding of the functioning of the world and to express even supersensory ideas and represent the incommunicable (in terms of color, composition, relationships, symbols, etc.).

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[84] The reason is either a lack of scientific reflection, a lack of interest, or a lack of time. Questions: Why did you draw this? Why did you use these colors? Why do you present this subject? Where did you get inspired? Children, what do you think little Paul drew? Sometimes children are criticized for the way they drew the image or used the colors without the teacher knowing why the child did what it did. It often happens that the smallest children do not have to draw a picture at all connected to the subject; it depends on a perceptive educator and on how he treats the child's innovation. When my brother attended kingergarten, he coloured a whole paper with a black wax pencil. The teacher asked him, "Where's the Christmas tree?" My brother promptly replied: "It is in the dark, and therefore can not be seen." The teacher's approach was perceptive. What comes to one's mind when looking at a black-colored paper?

[85] It is not an exception that children draw pictures of a special subject under the influence of events that have taken place in the recent past, and therefore may at first sight seem quite illogical to adults. For example, in kindergarten the ritual of the first "dubbing as a knight" (i.e., admission to the kindergarten) took place. That's why a man with a sword appeared in a picture on another subject.

Individual contexts of supersensory content can be described verbally; that which is decisive is not correctness (a child does not have all the information), but the ability of the child to link the individually drawn phenomena and to explain their meaning.

13.6 Summary

Care and concern for the transcending of children takes place on the physical, psychological, and spiritual plane. The school should be a place of an over-arching comprehensive care in all of these components and in all of the participants in the educational process. The child should perceive the school as a place of different possibilities (i.e., second chances) where there is an open market of opportunities and the space to experience other realities than those in the family. Caring for the overlap of children means developing their competence to transcend, which I call the higher-order thinking competency in this text because of its practical pedagogical use. Synergy with all of the other competencies is essential for its development: using philosophical dialogues, using symbolism, discovering a higher sense of myth and fairy tales, and leading them to express transcendent contents through creative activity (e.g., art, verbal articulation of myths, etc.).

14 Caring for the Educational Content

The educational content is to be thought through and modified according to the latest scientific discussion and preferences for education in the given nation. This corresponds to the requirement of a "comprehensive quality of the curriculum" (Helus 2012, p. 29). In this chapter I therefore intend to link the overlapping matter to the curricular documents. Due to lack of literature, I use deductively-synthetic method in subchapter 13.1.

14.1 Reasons to Care for the Transcendent Dimension of the Educational Content

After reading the definition of overlapping, certainly the reader will ask the relevant question of whether or not such a multivocal issue can even be included into the teaching content at all. These are the pros and cons:

- A human being is cultivated by humanity, and that is why this element is already present in his understanding. This, however, does not exclude the natural self-centered orientation of man, the hastiness of our era which "does not have time for anything," and a man's technicalized thinking.
- Although overlap is defined rather broadly, it does not mean that it is impossibile to understand; it simply means higher demands on educators and the educational content, including its didactic processing.
- It is impossible to learn everything. Although certain concepts of psychology, holism, and cross- curriculum are drawn from different patterns of thought, at the same time each clearly speaks about the interconnection of individuals and the whole without knowing all the details but knowing how the individual issues are related to the whole.
- Content should be aimed at desirable goals not unrealistic ones (utopia). This does not mean realization per se, since the emphasis is not placed on the ultimate goal, which in itself is an open issue in the question of overlapping (we may even call it utopia in a certain sense); the aim in approaching the goal is allowing personality to be gradually developed in overlapping.

What are the main reasons why good intentions exist but in practice there remains a reticence towards them?

- the human tendency toward egocentricism;
- thinking imprisoned in the subject-object scheme (personality reification);
- surviving tendencies to embrace the transmissive concept of teaching;

- a practical underestimation of child-oriented learning;
- the "we don't have time" argument;
- inconsistent concepts of the educational system that drain the strength of those who "want to promote change";
- typical Czech characteristics and continuity with the past (suppressed and anarchical freedom);
- post-revolutionary materialism and an attribution of value to brands, trends, and that which is considered to be "in";
- the concept of outcome being an economically measurable reality;
- a lack of restraint in judgment or clear judgment in addition to personal burnout or resignation;
- the ability to be easily influenced by the media and others;
- the fundamental fact that thinking "hurts" and that "non-quarrelsome" discussions take years to cultivate.

However, the practical realization of change may require decades rather than merely a few years; therefore, from the point of view of the market mechanism, it is a non-economic matter. However, even economic thinking can be related to the transcendent dimension of human personality and can be linked to philosophy, myth, art, and religion, as T. Sedláček points out in the *Economics of Good and Evil* (*Ekonomie dobra a zla*).[86] But it is a matter for the individual to see these things and to prioritize them.

14.2 Overlapping Material and Its Place in FEP PE and FEP EE

The overlapping material is incorporated into the FEP PE[87] and FEP EE in a different way which corresponds to the character of both documents and to the age-group being educated. Even though both documents are only fragmentary in the issues of overlap, PE (pre-school education) is more positive about the issue, even though one tends to associate the topic rather with ethical or personality education in the FEP EE. Where is the reason for this phenomenon from my perspective?

It is found in Michálek's thesis about a child sitting on the threshold of Plato's cave (1996, pp. 66-67), where childhood itself points us to the proper way of education. FEP PE writers work with a child who are still looking out of Plato's cave, while the FEP EE writers work with a child who has already embarked on a journey to the kingdom of shadows (younger elementary school) and the child who is sitting in the cave, still thinking about the journey, but also waiting for the shackles at the same time (older elementary school). The problem is that it we, the adults, who take the child further into the cave, because we are convinced about the correctness of our

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[86] http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1i2N_JUn1s.
[87] *Rámcový vzdělávací program pro předškolní vzdělávání (Framework Educational Programme for Pre-school Education)*, FEP PE. (2004). Praha: VÚP, 2004. 48 p. [online]. [cit. 2014-03-01]. Availiable at: <http://www.vuppraha.cz/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/RVP_PV-2004.pdf>.

approach to their path. It is we who change their childhood because we consider our true knowledge about it to be flawless. Personality-development education turns against these stereotypes in education because it calls for a discerning approach to the child – both to the one on the threshold of the cave and to the one waiting for the shackles.

As a result of the Czech curriculum reform, FEP is very inclined towards overlap by its openness and complexity. The demand for "concentrating" subjects was already presented by Příhoda; he saw in it a connection with the "complete and global perception and thinking of children, especially till the age of nine" (Spilková 2005b, p. 107). The question is how this openness (both the school's and the educator's possibilities) and also concentration that refers to the whole are being used in practice.

The Reasons for the Greater Openness for Overlapping of FEP PE Rather Than FEP EE:

- There is an enhanced integrity and interconnection of learning areas.
- All components of overlapping are represented in the following sequence: physicality (body), psyche (psychic), and spirituality (included in the terms of "the others," "the society," "the world"). This is not totally identical to the concept of spirituality as used in the preceding chapters, but since there is not a direct spiritual dimension in the FEP PE, I am looking for it in the terms linked to the horizontal direction of the overlap, namely in relation to the visible, because these components are contained as potentiality even the invisible.
- The possibility of a wider interpretation of the term "world." By identifying an area or place as "a man and his world" in the FEP EE, the term "his" world already reduced the notion to a particular or specific idea. This should be bridged by cross-cutting themes; the main question concerns the aspect of practical appropriation by the teacher.
- The overlap is formulated not only positively but also negatively as a certain deficit identified as a risk in each educational area, so that its explanatory base is broader.
- Overlapping themes are evenly distributed despite their fragmentation.
- It does not contain additional education areas, since everyone "learns" everything (in the FEP EE, according to the type of school education program, emphasis is placed on other cross-cutting themes, and this may be more or less timed more effectively for the development of overlapping).
- There is a greater emphasis on the interconnection of knowledge, moral behavior, and creativity in different areas, fantasy, and games.

14.3 Caring for the Transcendental Dimension of the Teaching Content

Care can be realized in two directions:

1. A cross-curricular understanding of transcendence appeals to all educators to link individualities and higher units within their subject matter and to be more interested in the topic of overlap.

2. It is not realistic for transcendence (overlap) to form an area of separate learning by itself, but it can serve as a **connecting link of subjects which are not part of larger teaching units.** According to the character of the Czech curriculum and the intentions of the philosophy of education (lifelong learning), it could bear the name **HUMANITY AND LIFE**. This could include the issues of personality education, ethics (the right to life, respect for life, a positive assessment of oneself and others, role-models, prosocial behavior, ethical values), and also the philosophical and supra-religious/spiritual themes (the meaning of life, the importance of higher meaning for a person's life, the afterlife, human values, seeking wisdom, the search for goodness, truth and beauty, and good and evil).

14.4 Risks of the Czech Curriculum for Overlapping

- Progressing from more complex teaching to more specialized teaching carries a parallel impossibility of perceiving overlap as a whole. With older children, this increases the requirements on the teacher's competence of higher-order thinking, his preparation, his practical teaching, the integration of his field into a wider whole, and the use of all possibilities of cross-cutting issues;
- The uneven and fragmented distribution of the individual components of the overlap in the curriculum (physicality, psyche, spirituality, horizontals and verticals, I-You relationships, the world as a whole, etc.) poses a risk;
- Another risk is the disappearance of a platform for the development of a holistic concept of spirituality and the practical reduction of the spiritual dimension of the transcendental dimension of the personality to humanistic values, the moral aspect of the individual and his relation to others, and nature and the world under the influence of personality reification (subject-object understanding of the world);
- For certain topics there is the risk of struggling to identify ethical education and personality development as legitimate categories of education. Also, the separation of ethics from philosophical systems and religions in which the ethical conceptions originated may pose additional risks.
- Ethics and artistic subjects are complementary subjects; they are not absolutely necessary for certain people, but the value of ethics for overlapping is essential; however, art is equally necessary for the development of overlapping (it expresses the invisible, leads to creativity and discovery, it is the overlap of a

person, it can lead to a self-healing activity of the child in difficult situations). When the children do not actually experience and discover its depth, how are they then supposed to understand it and seek it?

- Multiculturalism is somehow marginally perceived in connection with worldview and religion. This occurs in places where there is talk of intolerance, respect, and tolerance. However, these can not be elucidated without the wider context of the worldview of a particular nation (RVP ZV, 107n.). The anthropological plane, not the "higher" facts themselves lies behind a number of world conflicts and misunderstandings. In addition, this is addressed in the problem of multicultural education in practice (Průcha 2001, p. 136).
- The emphasis placed on sharing life is inadequate.
- The privatization of a platform for the deeper formation of any human worldview (i.e., even the knowledge about other worldviews) is lacking:
    1. Philosophy is not a part of the curriculum until high school.
    2. Ethical education is a complementary topic, since it is only optional (i.e., an elective); the spiritual dimension of a person is only one of the application themes, and the philosophical context is fully given over to the knowledge and approach of the educator.
    3. Religion is a "non-compulsory" subject, it is not a part of the RVP, and it is treated with distrust ("it is not one the favorite subjects" in Hanesová 2006, p. 48).
    4. Do we consider ourselves atheists, humanists, communists, or believers in something? In the curriculum, there is no room for answering this question.
    5. We are inadequately protecting children's mental health. Non-awareness can lead into sects and poor understanding of the spiritual dimension of man as a necessity of addiction, intolerance, extremism, terrorism, etc. In addition, ignorance leads to a confusion of concepts: *peak experiences* and a pathological condition, sincere faith and calculated "holy" behavior, spiritual theory and practice, soul care and psychotherapy, Satanism as a form of drawing attention and Satanism as a personal conviction, confusing religion and piety in historical information, etc.
- Spirituality as a personal higher dimension of each person is a far wider concept and can be worked with in cross-curricular materials. The problem is that its content is loaded since it mostly associated with negative religious characteristics. However, if today the internet is considered by some to be a new religion, then also the concept of religion has a much broader explanatory base. **Being a spiritual person thus means having an intense and emotional relationship to one's own supreme transcendental reality. For example, this relationship can be to the Internet, football, mathematics, etc., because it gives a purpose to life, makes life worthwhile, and prepares someone for the retrospective act of balancing life (i.e., not living in vain but striving to live fully).**

14.5 Overcoming the Risks in Understanding Overlap as a Preparation for Life And Man's Finiteness

The internal power of the Comenius' education system was that it naturally combined education and both the horizontal and the vertical direction of overlapping.

J. A. Comenius speaks of "the three natural demands upon mankind": "education, virtue or honorable morals, and religion or piety." These are the three basic stages of preparation for eternity. They are expressed by the verbs: "to know, to rule, and to lead to God." Knowledge must lead to the cultivation of the intellect; power to being competent to "rule" over the creation and oneself; the third direction is transcendent. The power of human cultivation in the realm of education resides in the connection of these three demands (Komenský 1958, p. 70).[88]

The first and second degree are obvious. However, the most problematic is the third degree because it is colored by personal conviction and Christian terminology. By removing the third dimension from Comenius' ideas, they are greatly reduced, as they form the basis for his worldview. Even the author calls for the "spirit to be educated in science and art" (Komenský 1958, p. 95), since the horizontal area is not solely dependent on the vertical; moreover, this applies both ways.

The appeal of Comenius can also be understood in **non-religious language**. All three levels (education, virtue, piety) are "a preparation **for eternity**." Christian theology refers to the concept of eternity as that which is the **last** thing in one's life, after which nothing follows in time. In most non-religious beliefs, the final balancing of life and biological death is considered to be the last thing. For this reason, this three-stage education is an integrated one.

Comenius calls the third degree "**religion or piety**" (i.e., transcendence). Modern Czech society is much different from that of Comenius, and the fundamental human freedoms guarantee not only freedom of personal religious belief but also the possibility of being without religion. However, Comenius' thinking in general terms contains something timeless for everyone: the three degrees of preparation for life (and also for death) include the concept of the relationship between the person and the whole; they emphasize what distinguishes a human being from the animal realm, and lead to respect for something higher which is to be the motivation for life and especially for the successful completion of "the last thing." **These emphases prepare a man's education for what is most important in his life now but also for the last things in respect to time. Thus, education and upbringing are inherently and closely intertwined with thanatology and man's finitude, that is, with the care of life and death that reveals the meaning of the whole of human life. It is a lifelong effort, because "everyone can judge their own actions now and seek**

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[88] "The excellency of man lies in this triad, because it is the only basis of present and future life; health, strength, beauty, wealth, dignity, friendship, happy achievements, or a long life are nothing else but the benefits and outer adornments of life when God grants them to some people. They become futile and worthless things, useless burdens, and harmful hinderances when anyone covetously craves after them, seeks them by himself, uses them, and then wastes them while neglecting those more important values" (Comenius 1958, p. 70).

reconciliation and atonement" (Palouš 1987, p. 204).

14.6 Summary

Caring for the teaching content starts with understanding the reasons for caring about the transcendental dimension. For this, space is provided in the contemporary curriculum documents (openness and complexity). FEP PE is more inclined to overlap than FEP EE; it has greater integrity and interconnection of educational areas, a more uniform representation of all human components such as physicality, psyche, spirituality, and it includes the possibility of a wider interpretation of the concept of the world. Caring for the curriculum can be cross-curricular or focused on creating a new subject of teaching. The risks of the Czech curriculum are mainly related to the unequal appraisal of the transcendental dimension of all human components (physicality, psyche, spirituality). Overcoming the risks can begin by rediscovering the transcendental dimension of Comenius' educational system as a preparation for life and the finitude of man which counts with the constant balancing of life connected with possibilities of change.

Conclusion

Finally, I will try to briefly answer the questions from Chapter 1 of this book.

What is the role of transcendence for human personality? Transcendence or the transcendent dimension is an aspect of every human being, and despite the diversity of psychological approaches, they have a unifying idea, and it is to cultivate and strengthen one's personality both internally and externally. The philosophical-religious concepts also uniformly refer to something that relates not only to man but also to something which transcends him and which he only knows in part, and that is why illumination is necessary. This is not only associated with a certain mystery but above all with a **higher thinking which goes beyond the existing way of thinking of the individual.**

What is the importance of transcending for a child? Transcending as a non-egocentric orientation of the subject is present in society, but the concern is developing it in various directions. The primary importance is related to the strengthening of the individual's abilities, developing his thinking, and the incentives to act in this sense if he has the opportunity. For the education process, it means enriching the child and at the same time perceiving the mystery in him/her which leads the pedagogue and child to transcendencing.

How is transcendence related to the content of teaching and can it be a key competence? Framework education programs work with this concept to a certain degree, even though it is not explicated. The problem is rather on the part of the individual, of practice, and didactic materials. It can be a key competence, but given the specific grasp in terms of ideas the transcendental dimension is closest to the competence of higher-order thinking which prepares the child for life and also for his/her own finitude.

What is transcendence? It is a multivocal term which has its specifics in every field, and these must not be conflated. However, it is possible to think of a unifying platform: aiming for the inner change of the individual (*metanonia*, turning, conversion). In this way the concept of turning toward the child education is given a new characteristic: this turning is experienced not only as being *towards* the child but also *in* the child and *in* the pedagogue. What does the phrase "in the child" mean in relation to **turning toward the child education**? It means any educational effort which takes into account the relationship of I and You and to the world as a whole; it is an endeavor which is continually reflecting, which is not afraid to express emotions, and which positively affirms the physicality, psyche and spirituality of others and one's

own.

The transcendent dimension of pedagogy is always interconnected with personality-developing education which sees a unique *You* in each child; it always recognizes the unique abilities and specific possibilities of development for all; it offers help even where there might be a possibility of any kind of neglect of personality of the individual. This transcendent dimension of education is complex and lifelong, is directed towards the visible and towards that which transcends the human eye and mind, and aimed towards both the current and the ultimate. **The transcendent dimension also aims to become a science and has the potential to become an interdisciplinary platform, a unifying and diversifying idea, to become a neutral overlap in itself which with the same intensity strives to crossover the boundaries** of science, technology, life, the one being educated and the one educating, the visible and the invisible, and both the everyday and the extraordinary. The transcedent dimension of pedagogy strives to be cross-curricular in the most unique way in that it does not see itself as an educational target or pedagogical goal, but it always acts as a part of the educational whole. Its key competence only sees its meaning in synergy with others and is never a goal by itself; it is the lifelong desire and aimof a personality which is always proving itself in a particular situation as a real concern and non-concern about oneself.

THE EMPIRICAL PART

The empirical part of this monograph provides a connection between the theory and the underlying ideas, deals with the specifics of the selected methodology, and subsequently with the pre-research and research design. The final evaluation is presented using certain pre-selected criteria.

15 The Subject of the Empirical Research and Its Relation to the Theoretical Conclusions

Are children, depending on their age, capable of transcending? How do they approach specific types of operationalization and what other phenomena do they describe when speaking about transcending in their lives? These were the questions that were treated in the empirical part of the research. The subject was further narrowed down based on the four main areas which happened to be important when dealing with children's transcending in the theoretical part of the study.

- Overlap as a multivalent phenomenon (chapters 3-7) is conditioned hermeneutically. My question concerns how children interpret the horizontal and vertical content of outreach. Is it possible to find certain types of conduct showing a lack of credibility (authenticity) of a child's statement (similarly to the nonsensical statements about transcending in M. Zimmermannová, chapter. 6.3.2) (Chapter 20)?
- Other children of the same age represent a major factor supporting and preventing the development of a child's personality in the area of transcending (chapter 10.4.). Therefore, when considering outreach, I am asking about the role of schoolmates and of the entire group (chapter 21).
- Overlap involves not only knowledge but also emotions and experiences (chapter 5). Are children able to articulate their transcending experiences, and do they talk about their emotions (chapter 22)?
- Overlap can be connected with an improvement in one's resilience and does not exclude implications for one's health (chapter 10.4). Do children describe this in any specific way (chapter 23)?

Summary

To narrow down the topics dealt with in the empirical part, I selected four serious issues that had been discussed and analyzed in the theoretical part. These include the selected aspects of hermeneutics, socialization and forming, emotions and experiences, and empowerment.

16 The Research Method and the Connection between the Subject and the Current Research

In light of the fact that this area has to a large extent not been explored thus far, especially in the Czech Republic, the research on children's transcending is conceived to be quality research. There is no information on how children understand the term *transcending (outreach)*. Therefore, the main objective of a smaller explorative research was to discover children's sensitivity to outreach as a multi-meaning term and about their ideas articulated in this context. This chapter provides a detailed description of the data collection method used and its limitations. The method relies on group interviews involving certain elements of focus groups.

16.1 The Group Interview Method

Group interviews have become more and more important in research concerning children in recent years (Przyborski, Wolhtrab-Sahr 2014, Heinzel 2012, Hanesová & Kasáčová 2017a). For the moment, they are not used as frequently as "in young people or adults." Nevertheless, some foreign researchers offer "systemic analyses of group discussions" with a focus on the "reconstructive research of childhood" (*rekonstruktive Kindheitsforschung*, in Przyborski, Wolhtrab-Sahr 2014, p. 102). This method is also mentioned by J. Einarsdóttir when dealing with children aged two to six. According to the author, what is beneficial about this method is that "children are stronger when they are together with others" and in addition to this, "they are more spontaneous when they are with their friends than when they are alone with adults." This is thanks to the group, as it allows the children to "discuss questions together, help each other to find answers, draw the attention to details and accept answers as true" (2007, p. 200).

When choosing the method, I was relying on individual research in the area of philosophy, ethics, and spirituality in children (Brüning 2015, Petermann 2009, Nevers 2009, Zimmermann 2010, Büttner and coll. 2014, Bradňanská and Hanesová 2011, Muchová 2013 etc.). Group interviews based on the philosophical interview method are frequently used in these areas in empirical research (see the different methods of group philosophical discussion in McCall 2009, p. 93n). The method is frequently combined with individual interviews or observation. The interview does not only consist in asking questions about the subject but also in using symbols, narration, artistic objects, other artifacts, photographs, and children's drawings (see any empirical study in the book periodical JaBuKi[89], Zimmermann 2010, p. 176, for pedagogical research, see e.g. Einarsdóttir 2007, p. 201).

In recent years, **the stimuli and barriers** regarding outreach-related subjects

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[89] JaBuKi – *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie.*

have started to be treated using three different perspectives: The findings of developmental psychology (Hay and Nye 1998, Büttner and Dieterich 2013), hermeneutics (Zimmermann 2010), and multicultural learning (Hoffmann 2009). One can summarize that the stimuli and barriers are created not only by the anthropological, ethical, philosophical, spiritual topics, but to a highly significant extent they are also formed by the group and the individual. Therefore, many times it is not the topic itself, but rather a lack of comprehensibility, a lack of understanding, or fear on the part of the researcher or children (having certain types of pre-understanding) which represent the crucial barrier. The limits to dialogue are not only inside *Me* or *You*; they lie especially "in relationships to others" (Bakhtin in Marková and coll. 2007, p. 8) which involve the mutual relationships between adults and children and the relationships among children. For this reason, it is considered optimal to make a video-recording of group interviews. This practice may reveal not only phenomena relating to the topic, but especially the mutual interactions among the participants.

Dealing with available methodologies, one should not omit the focus group method that regards the group and the interactions within the group as a pillar which is just as important as the topic itself. The topic is defined rather loosely (a focus) to open the room for a wider discussion (Švaříček, Šeďová and coll. 2007, p. 185). When used exclusively, it is recommended working with "at least three to six groups" (Miovský 2006, p. 187). Some authors talk about mingling the FG method with the group interview method one of the main differences consisting in the emphasis on group interactions (Švaříček, Šeďová and coll. 2007, p. 184). Foreign literature defines the FG method by saying that it is applied "when used for data collection," when used for "interaction within the group," and when used for "taking an active role as a scientist" in order to form the discussion (Morgan 1996, p. 130). The approach to the two above methods can be both inclusive and exclusive. This means that the FG can be regarded as one of the options which can be used during a group interview or as a separate method. Frey and Fontana (1991) say in their typology that one cannot claim using the FG method in the case of "informal meetings," questions without "a specific direction," and using "unstructured questions." This typology is overcome (Krueger 1993, Morgan 1988, Stewart and Shamdasani 1990 in Morgan 1996, p. 131), as it is always necessary to keep in mind the specific research project. Given the methodological diversity, the FG form can be unstructured, partly-structured, or structured. The former requirement that the FG participants should not know each other has been lifted and the FG method can also be applied in groups existing prior to the research (Morgan 1996, p. 130-131). Moreover, this wider criterion is even required to create "an atmosphere of trust" in group interviews about vertical overlap (compare the "real groups" requirement in Zimmermann 2010, p. 175).

While in the Czech Republic and Europe research concerning children conducted in the area of philosophy, ethics, and religion mostly describes the group interviews method, research in the area of medicine, psychology, and Anglo-American pedagogy uses the term FG more frequently even in children under the age

of fourteen (starting with two-year-olds). Yuen's study (2004), for example, focuses on the analysis of the meaning of the drawings of eleven-year-old children using the FG method; however, dealing with the content, the author in fact describes a group interview. Dixey and coll. (2001) say that using the FG method in children is "a relatively new phenomenon … and the development of this methodology can be regarded as part of the effort to study topics together with children rather than to study children themselves." They also emphasize the need to "disregard observation, measurement and evaluation" in an effort to "try to understand children's knowledge and their views" (Dixey and coll. 2001). Both these and other authors use the terms *FG* and *group interview* in parallel; the method description remains individual, which again shows the ambiguous approach within the qualitative research.

In my research, I used the group interview method along with focus group elements. Two required criteria were not fulfilled, thus a declaration should be made that the method was not applied fully.

1. M. Miovský defines rules to be met by an FG. The groups that I chose did not meet these rules, as it was not my objective to meet them. In particular I am referring to the following rules which were not met: "There may not be any side conversation between neighbors, all the participants who are present participate in the discussion, none of them has a dominant role" (2006, p. 183). My objective was to find out whether children would react to the subject in any way at all and whether their reaction could be identified with outreach. Furthermore, I wanted to find out about the manner in which children would deal with topics within a group, that is, whether the group understood the subject and whether their reaction to the content was adequate. To a certain degree, I even expected the research participants to exchange their views among themselves and to interrupt each other as they were talking.

2. The FG method was created to improve interviews with adult respondents and was subsequently used with good results to make interviews with upper primary-school children (aged e.g. between 14 and 15 - Starry 2006, p. 142) who are expected to be able to talk spontaneously. Preschool, kindergarten, and lower primary-school children only learn how to discuss things. For this reason, Hoffmannová (2009) does not refer to a discussion but rather to an exchange of information among respondents. In preschool and kindergarten children this information is very heterogeneous, and the ideas are frequently unrelated due to the children's egocentrism. A real discussion could only be expected from a respondent's sample consisting of third-to fifth-graders.

Using the group interview research method for my enquiry, I applied several principles described as part of the focus group method:

- the emphasis on social interactions, knowing that they may take a different form in individual age groups;
- the aspect of checking the possibility of introducing a new teaching element in practice;
- the emphasis on the subject but also on the interactions within the group;
- the aspect of a broader definition of the subject (focus);

- not regarding the "question-answer" model (Švaříček, Šeďová and coll. 2007, p. 185).

Now I will offer several remarks concerning the form of group interviews:

1) The size of the group: In my pre-research, I interacted with the whole class; however, in the final research, the numbers varied from six to twenty children. The higher number of the respondents in the final research was chosen especially in order to allow drawing clear conclusions for educators. For the most part, these work with a whole class of children, that is, with children in numbers greater than those defined as ideal for the use of the above-mentioned FG method. The numbers of children were "compensated for" by a greater number of the groups. Miovský, for example, says one should use "three to six" groups to use a focus group as the main tool of the research. In my research, I worked with eighteen different groups.

2) Homogeneity versus heterogeneity: Unlike the pre-research, the research put a greater emphasis on the variety of the groups, so some of the groups of the children were put together based on their sex; mixed-age classes from a Montessori type of school were also included.

3) Materials for discussion and evaluation: In my pre-research, I used sheets of paper for children to write on, and I let the children write down their answers to the researcher's questions themselves. This turned out to be time-consuming and unsuitable for the evaluation as the answers were brief; in addition to that, I extended the researched category also to preschool and kindergarten children who were not yet able to write. During my research, I used stories with illustrations as the basis for the discussion. The written record was made immediately after the discussion, and in one school I also made an audio-recording. At the end of each meeting, I asked the children to draw or write down what was "the one most important thing in the world" to them. This part was not analyzed in detail; nevertheless, it served as an illustration of the children's world.

4) The role of the presenter: My role during the pre-research was rather passive. I paid attention especially to the subject and to the predefined questions. My role during the research was more active in the work with children. I intentionally addressed even taciturn or quiet children, my questions were targeted in order to encourage the children to talk particularly about themselves and their experiences, and I reacted more to children's replies by asking further questions.

16.2 The Specifics of an Interview on Outreach

The interview on outreach was designed in several stages.
1. I started out using the definition of a semi-structured in-depth interview (Švaříček, Šeďová 2007, p. 160, Hanesová, Kasáčová 2015), and I formulated questions about selected outreach-related topics (see below). The pre-research showed that questions by themselves might not provide children with sufficient impulses to communicate.

Therefore, the questions were supplemented with a story.

2. Stories play a key role in the philosophical interview within the framework of the Philosophy for Children Program **(P4C).** The role of a story is to stimulate questions and to serve as a guide throughout the whole interview with children. Unfortunately, in my research I could not take over any of the novels written by the program founder, M. Lipmann, nor any other available stories (e.g., Sharp 2010, Muchová 2011). Therefore, I created my own stories consisting of thirteen topics with texts and illustrations. Given the research purposes, they are stories "involving a philosophical dimension" rather than "philosophy for children type of stories" (i.e., methodical guidelines, compare Macků 2010, p. 9).

3. The questions defined during the first stage of my work on the design of the interview were included to follow the text of each of the thirteen topics with texts and illustrations; some of the questions were reformulated to serve as a follow-up to the story and its ideas. My goal was to read or tell one outreach-related topic at a time and show children the relating drawing. Unlike under the P4C program, for the sake of time, children did not formulate their questions after I read the story out to them; rather, they answered my own questions.

4. Using the thirteen topics with texts and illustrations, I counted on the possibility of using a non-structured (narrative) interview with children. I expected to use it when "asking questions based on information provided by the participant" (Švaříček, Šeďová 2007, p. 160); for example, I used it when asking a child to tell his/her experience or describe a specific event mentioned during the interview.

16.3 The Limits of the Group Interview Method When Discussing Outreach with Children

Some of the limits of the method that I used are described by Švaříček, Šeďová, and coll. (2007, p. 191).
Their list is mentioned below:

- There is a time limit for children to answer each question.
- **The presenter's personality** and his/her ability to involve all children (including those who are less prone to talk) in the conversation is important;
- **The children's fear** of receiving a negative reaction to their views if different from those of the majority is described;
- A group consisting of participants who know each other does not need to be suitable for the interview.

Another limitation of the group interview method consists in children mutually influencing each other during the research. The possible "data contamination" may be caused by a child's desire to have his/her answers "accepted" by the others, through some bias, or similar scenarios (Vaughn and coll. 1996, p. 152). In young children,

there may also be factors such as poor skills of expression, imperfect vocabulary, and an insufficient understanding of certain questions. This limitation is closely related with the fact that respondents do not have a clear idea about the subject and that they "clarify their opinions throughout the interview" (Vaughn and coll. 1996, p. 153, comp. "children's collective experience" in Heinzel 2012, p. 107).[90] This is something that each researcher must keep an awareness of at all times.

16.4 Children, Outreach, and the Current Research

Although this monograph perceives *transcendence (outreach)* as a wide and multivalent term which we intend to study, there is a number of partial studies relating to our particular problematic. In my opinion, all these qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods types of research can be divided into three groups. The list offered below is only exemplary.

Research focusing on understanding a specific topic involving outreach
This research focuses on a single partial issue involving vertical or horizontal outreach, frequently without explicitly connecting the issue with the term *transcendence*. Conclusions of empirical studies serve to achieve a deeper understanding of a specific subject by children, which can then serve as the basis for a new teaching material or for a new teaching method. This type of research can include basically any research from the field of philosophy, ethics, spirituality, and pedagogics aiming to understand a specific issue by children (Wartenberg 2014, Hermann 2004, Hoffmann 2009, Zimmermann 2010, Bradňanská, Hanesová 2011).

In the Czech Republic, for example, this type of research includes a study called *Taking a Look into the World of Childhood* (2013). This study presents the results of a quantitative longitudinal survey on pupils' values conducted by J. Uhlířová in 1994, 2000 and 2012 (p. 55) and a mixed methods survey conducted by H. Hejlová using a questionnaire among fourth-and-fifth-graders in 2011 (p. 164). Furthermore, there are the conclusions of the qualitative group philosophizing interview on the symbols of happiness with lower-primary-school children (Bravená, p. 42). One can also mention the group philosophizing interview with children on the subject of Christmas (Mojžíšová 2012, Bravená 2011c). Generally, one can summarize that the use of a group interview as a research tool among lower-primary-school children and preschool and kindergarten children in the Czech Republic is not as frequent as in other foreign countries.

Research focusing on understanding a specific area involving outreach from the perspective of psychology of religion and spiritual psychology
Unlike in the cases above, the emphasis here is put on the personality of the

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[90] The positive potential of this idea has been grasped by the above P4C program by putting an emphasis on the "philosophizing, truth-seeking community," which "serves both to study philosophical questions together and to develop the thinking of individuals" (Macků 2010, p. 22).

individual which shows certain characteristics regarding the perception or experience of outreach. The conclusions of empirical research can confirm or revert the existing theories; a benefit can also consist in a specific suggestion reflecting the child's personality perspective, which can then be applied in psychotherapy or education.

One can list several directions of empirical surveys (the examples below are merely illustrative):

1) Research dealing with the understanding of a specific term from the perspective of the transcending characteristic of an individual: This includes, for example, research on the relation between children's religiosity (spirituality) and the terms such as "well-being" (Holder 2015) or "happiness" (Holder 2010, Oerter 2009).

2) Furthermore, there is empirical research aiming to specify the definition of *children's spirituality* as a term. This is well-illustrated by a qualitative survey which was conducted by English psychologist R. Nye and was the first study of its kind. According to her, for a long time it had been believed that "pupils needed spiritual guidance…; no one had even tried to support children's natural spirituality using psychological theories" (Nye 1998, p. 123). Psychologist R. Nye conducted individual interviews with thirty-eight children aged six to seven (18 children) and ten to eleven (20 children); four of these children were Protestant, two were Roman Catholic, four were Muslim, and twenty-eight were unaffiliated with any church. (Nye 1998, p. 180, 183).

3) There is also research verifying a model described in literature in another social and cultural environment. In the Czech Republic this involves the verification of the Freiburg School religious judgement model of Gmünder and Oser among Czech pupils and students aged seven to twenty-two (Ryšavý 2005, p. 68n.) and a quantitative study (Říčan, Janošová 2010) which verified Ralph Piedmont's spiritual transcendence model among adolescents with a view to specific Czech concerns (e.g., by reformulating traditional religious clichés, p. 4).

Research focusing on developing overlap in children

These surveys put an emphasis on the verification of a method which can lead to the development of outreach, although this is not defined by the study explicitly (Bucher 2006, Hermann 2004, Hoffmann 2009 etc.). The conclusions of these studies can serve to pinpoint the existing teaching methods or to create new ones. For example, an insightful undergraduate thesis entitled *Philosophy for Children as a Method of Personality Development in Children* (2015) by Lenka Doležalová is worthy of attention. In the research part she uses the method of a partly-structured group interview with children aged fifteen to eighteen to ask them about the their own understanding of the importance of a philosophical interview.

In my explorative study. I focused on outreach (transcendence) as a

multivalent phenomenon which is articulated by an individual but also within a specific group with specific interactions.

16.5 Summary

The research on children's outreach is designed as qualitative and possesses an exploratory character. In certain aspects, the group interview method overlaps with the focus group method (the emphasis on social interaction and on the topic and its broad definition, without regarding the question-answer format). The interview is designed so as to contain a story, an accompanying illustration, and questions which are asked at the end of blocks that are bound by meaning (at the closing of the presentation of each of the thirteen outreach-related topics). The limits of this method consist in the amount of time, the ability to lead the interview, children's fears, and the group as such. The current literature studies outreach partially from the empirical perspective trying to understand a specific subject, a specific area from the position of psychology of religion and spirituality, or from the position of an outreach-developing method. The research presented in this monograph studies outreach (transcendence) as a multivalent phenomenon articulated by an individual within a specific group.

17 Pre-research Enquiries and Their Importance for the Precision of the Guiding Strategy in the Final Research

The pre-research enquiries can be divided into two groups: enquiries emphasizing the interview method (how to ask questions) and enquiries focusing on the content of the questions (what to ask).

17.1 The Pre-research Enquiries Precising the Method (How to Ask Questions)

The conclusions of the pre-research enquiries helped to emphasize the way in which to ask questions. They concerned the following imperatives:

- **It is good to combine the real world and the world of imagination:** Children's pre-concepts (pre-understanding) of overlap and imagination are interdependent. This is based on the theory that "imagination only works with what you have previously seen, experienced, or known" (Matějček 1986, p. 124, for more see Bravená 2010c)[91].

- **It is good to use symbols:** The child's brain perceives the visible form and associates it with the invisible content based on similarity. A symbol helps to preserve the continuity and depth of an interview as it captures certain transcendent phenomena better than words (Bravená 2011b, 2013)[92].

- **It is important to choose the right medium in order to support the interview:** Some questions are difficult for children to answer. The reason is that they may not have the necessary knowledge or terminology or that the formulation of the question is defined by the researcher's pre-understanding. Therefore, when not knowing the basis, one can frequently hear the respondent saying, "I don't know" or "I haven't thought of that in this way." This leaves no room for further research. In that situation, if the researcher uses a medium such as a text, story, or picture to support the interview, the missing terminology or knowledge can be partially made up for and the interview can continue (Bravená 2014d).[93] The medium creates a context which can help the child's development (Vygotskij). It is not the correctness of the answer but rather the child's correct understanding of the question which is important in order to analyze a statement.

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[91] See "Philosophizing about Christmas Characters." This research dealt with children's hermeneutics regarding Christmas characters.

[92] See "Children's Understanding of Good Luck." This research dealt with the hermeneutics of good luck symbols (a ladybird, a chimney sweeper, a piglet, a coin, a gold fish, and a gold fly).

[93] See "Theologizing about Angels with Non-religiously Socialized Children." This research verified the possibility of a dialogue about vertical outreach with children.

- **It is necessary to put an emphasis on the operationalization of the content:** The linguistic term is secondary; it is the word content that is important in outreach. A beautiful person, for example, is defined by children as *good-looking;* however, talking about someone who is beautiful inside, children use the word *nice* (Bravená 2015).[94]

17.2 The Pre-research Enquiries Focusing on the Content of the Interview (What to Ask)

The final research strategy could be adjusted by excluding or confirming some of the pre-research interview content.

17.2.1 The Pre-research among Adults

The goal of the semi-structured in-depth interview (2013, see appendix 1) with ten respondents[95] was to obtain answers about how an adult population sample understood transcendence (outreach) subjectively, in which way they connected outreach/overlap with their own childhood retrospectively, and what was their perception of overlap in their own or other people's children. Regardless of their gender, to take part in the interview the respondents had to be between eighteen and eighty years old and had to meet the three requisite criteria below:

1) the ability to understand the meaning of *transcendence (outreach/overlap)*;
2) the ability to describe their experience and feelings connected with transcending in their childhood retrospectively;
3) they either have children or work with children so they are able to understand this matter.

The conclusions of the pre-research among adults (for further information see appendix 2) helped to detail the content of the final interview as follows:

- **Neither terminology nor any specific content could be used to divide the interview into a general, philosophical, and spiritual area.** In fact, the division was disturbing to the respondents.
- **The following interviews with children had to reflect a variety of opinions.** In fact, the respondents were unable to agree on a single general

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[94] See "Beauty in the Eyes of a Child." The enquiry focused on children's perception of visible and invisible beauty.
[95] The interview was conducted with seven women and three men. The age brackets of the respondents were as follows: One respondent aged between 21 and 30, seven respondents aged between 31 and 40, and two respondents aged between 41 and 50. One respondent provided his answers by e-mail.

operationalization, so it was desirable to include several of their answers: Outreach / transcendence as a life direction, an act, the existence of an objective reality, a subjective fact, a phenomenon which is impossible to understand, a value, supra-religiousness, a person's ability, etc.

- **The interview had to take into account the first hints of outreach in one's childhood as described by the respondents** ("a deeper perception," "fascination with life," "the meaning of life," "nature," "accepting one's own limitations," "going to church just to sit down for a little bit," "longing for other people's well-being," "a relationship to music," etc.). When asked about the age of children in connection with the child's ability to experience outreach for the first time, the respondents provided different answers. All of them, however, found the first hint of outreach in children who were under ten years of age. Also, they all associated outreach with the manifestation of a conscious lack of egocentricity (helping others, wise conduct, faith).

Overlap in children is a mystery even to the respondents themselves, and even their own retrospective analysis did not provide an answer to the question of "when it comes" and "where it comes from."

17.2.2 The Pre-research among Children

The goal of the group interview with children (2013) was to find out about the children's reaction to a specific topic involving several overlap-related characteristics and to specify the content of the enquiry using the results.

Regardless of their gender, to take part in the interview, the respondents had to be between five and eleven years of age (kindergarten and lower-primary-school children). The topic of the discussion was "talking about heroes" using pictures.[96] Children took part in a group interview in their classroom and subsequently drew a hero or described a hero in writing referring either directly to themselves or to other people who had been able to do something important.

This precision was necessitated for the reasons mentioned below:

1. The operationalization of outreach involving both external and internal heroism: This interconnects both typologies of Coan and Helus; it is part of Jung's archetype of a child.

2. Heroism involves both the positive and negative forms of overlap.

3. The attractiveness of the topic: One can expect children to respond to the topic in a positive way.

4. The suitability of the subject: Even Piaget emphasized the importance and influence of heroes in early childhood (as early as four years of age). This subject is present both in the media and in the society, so the child is surely able to understand it and has enough information.

The interview with the children included three internal parts characterized by a

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[96] The pictures are not included due to copyright reasons.

certain hero typology. This typology involved fiction heroes as well as heroes associated with horizontal and vertical overlap.[97] Altogether, there were eighty-seven children who took part in the pre-research. Sixty-two of these were second-to-fourth-graders and were attending the Petrovice elementary school; twenty-five of the children were attending the Hurbanova elementary school.

The conclusions of the pre-research among children (for more details see appendix 3) showed that including heroes[98] as children's models[99] in the interview was a good idea. Nevertheless, this approach had the following limitations:

- **Fourth-graders and older children preferred friendship to heroism.**
- **The descriptive character of heroes prevailed:** Instead of explaining the reasons for the heroes' acts and their consequences, the children focused rather too much on the heroes' visual appearance, such as their clothing, looks, conduct (he is good), abilities (e.g., that he can fly, do magic, walk up and down walls, save the world, figure out a strategy, fight), and their courageous actions.

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[97] A **fiction hero:** This type was used to establish a connection. Children themselves talked about their favorite fiction heroes such as Superman, Ironman, Spiderman, and Catwoman. Using the **horizontal hero as a type, I focused on A) Animal heroes: A dog** is a man's best friend and is used in various rescue operations. A **horse** serves for work, but can also be used as a way of relaxation. An **owl** is a symbol of wisdom from the realm of animals and can be encountered by children at an early age (see "The Story of Krtek" by Zdeněk Miler). My focus was on the non-anthropological idea of heroism. A fox was used as a type when talking with upper primary-school children. I used the fox character from the story of *The Little Prince* (focusing especially on its discourse on mystery). Furthermore, I focused on **B) An ordinary adult hero:** I wanted to know which professions children associate with heroism, which is highly important. I expected to be provided with names of occupations such as a doctor, a firefighter, and other similar jobs. Moreover, I analyzed the importance of "ordinary" occupations/roles such as a painter, an inventor, a sculptor, a singer, a lady using a computer, a gardener, a teacher, and a parent. **C) A child hero:** I wanted to know whether children regarded themselves or other children as wise or heroic. Using the type of **vertical hero, I focused on A) An anthropological hero:** Dealing with the "ordinary" man type, I analyzed the children's ability to react to vertical overlap in connection with hope, faith, and the meaning of life. B) An **anthropological hero whose historical existence can be proved:** All the types had one thing in common, since they involved sacrifice for another person. I selected a saint and a wise man as symbols which should be known to children from art. Furthermore, I selected a praying child, since Judaism perceives prayer as a "sacrifice of the lips" to God. In today's world we can regard practicing religion as a sacrifice of time to something "higher" or "beyond us." **C) A hero whose existence cannot be proved through any exact science:** I selected an angel and baby Jesus as two popular religious symbols. Dealing with them, I studied the phenomenon of helping others, which is connected not only with imagination but also with faith in destiny or in an extra-sensual (i.e., supernatural) being.

[98] A more detailed understanding of the different heroes was presented in a foreign article entitled *Philosophizing and Theologizing with, for, and by children as a Path toward the Integrated Development of Children's Transcending in a Post-Communist Society and Its Place in the Reform Efforts of the Czech Educational Approach of Turning to the Child* (Bravená 2014).

[99] For the topic of heroes and their impact on children's values, see the comparative study dealing with a quantitative longitudinal enquiry that was conducted by J. Uhlířová among fourth-graders and fifth-graders in 1994, 2000, 2012 (2013, p. 93nn). Children from my sample preferred heroes from films and TV series; heroes from literature or real heroes (such as an artist) were brought up only exceptionally (similarly, see Uhlířová 2013 p. 92). In particular children like film heroes such as Superman, Spiderman, Ironman, and Harry Potter.

- **A lack of female heroes** both in the media and in real life resulting in a limited basis for the debate with girls[100].
- **The attention is turned to the hero not toward the child as such.** With only few exceptions, children perceived their own heroism in terms of mere hypothetical significance and meaning; they wanted to be heroes, but they hardly ever said that they considered themselves heroes and that there was a specific reason for this assumption. Many times, they even said that they were "not good at anything."

Using a single basic subject (the heroes) turned out not to be really suitable. Therefore, the research focused on overlap as a multivalent phenomenon not presented primarily by "characters" (a typology) but rather by a complex of reasoning including though not dominated by these characters. Some terms used in the pre-research were taken over (for the reasons see appendix 4).

17.3 Summary

The purpose of the pre-research enquiries was to find out about what to ask and how. The reactions revealed that a reasonable method consisted in combining the real world with the world of fiction, using symbols, choosing a good medium to facilitate the discussion, and dealing with the operationalizations of both terms and content in greater detail. One of the enquiries showed that the medium (the text with the pictures) helps to overcome a lack of knowledge on the part of the children, as it clarifies the context of the question asked by the researcher. Therefore, the researcher has to primarily assess the child's ability to work with the information rather than the correctness of his/her answer.

As for the content, it is advisable not to make a distinction between the understanding of the general terminology and the philosophical and spiritual understanding of transcendence (outreach/overlap), to maintain the multitude of the meanings, and to include the operationalizations involving a conscious lack of children's egocentricity mentioned by adult respondents. The content of the enquiry has to reveal the child's subjectivity more than the pre-research. It turned out that the possible operationalizations did not consist in separate words; rather, they involved general umbrella terms (see for example the division of the respondents' statements into groups in appendix 2). None of the respondents mentioned Buber's understanding of the universe as a natural way of human transcending meaning that overlap/transcendence and the cosmos are also a possible type of operationalization. Therefore, when creating the research tool, it is advisable to take into account not

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[100] This is probably also a consequence of the traditional division of roles between a man – who is regarded as a protector – and a woman who is regarded as the one taking care of her family and trying to stay attractive. As a result of this, Czech girls tend to identify themselves with princesses or female characters from foreign film productions (such as Bella Swan from the Twilight Saga) and with real people whom they like because of their appearance, qualities, or things they do (such as their own mother, singers Lucie Vondráčková, Ewa Farna, etc.).

only the results of the pre-research enquiries, but also the conclusions of the theoretical part.

18 The Design of the Research Concerning Outreach in Children

This chapter presents the participating educational facilities, the selection of the respondents, and the research tool which was "tailor-made" for this research.

18.1 The Participating Schools and Educational Facilities

Given the specific character of this research as well as the differences in the pre-understanding of outreach (transcendence) as a term and in people's attitudes, I only addressed educational facilities in which I either had personal contacts or those in which I had been provided with a contact, so that I could expect a positive reaction from the teachers. This approach reflected my previous experience when I chose schools at random, and the schools either did not react at all or were unwilling to cooperate. Therefore, using the deliberate selection method (Miovský 2006, p. 135-136), I first addressed teachers or schoolmasters who would allow me to come to their school or kindergarten. Altogether, I pre-selected fifteen adults and received a positive and prompt reaction from six of them. Three of these were able to help arrange an interview in a kindergarten and the other three in a primary school. The research was conducted in May and in June of 2014. A brief description of the participating institutions is given below. (For purposes of clarity, the quoted websites have been inserted as footnotes).

Dětské integrační centrum a mateřská škola, s.r.o., a children's integration center and preschool located at Hurbanova 1285, Prague 4, is a private facility for children aged three and over providing "complex care in the area of education, teaching, rehabilitation, and social service. It has several years of experience in integrating children with disabilities and impairments. The facility operates six classes and supports an environmental-friendly approach in children." They organize events for children, parents, and the public. The classes involve rehabilitation and oriental meditation.[101]

Banbin: Active Kids, a Czech-English sports preschool and kindergarten located at U Krčského nádraží 38, Prague 4, is a private facility for children aged two and over. The education provided by this institution involves "elements of alternative and innovative teaching such as *A Healthy Kindergarten, Starting Together, Reggio Paedagogics*." Its curriculum involves "complex personality development" and an emphasis on sports ("a healthy, fit, and strong body"), working with one's own body ("good posture"), and an emphasis on a "natural relationship to a foreign language (English)." It aims to create a feeling of happiness and to build healthy self-confidence in children.[102]

Mateřská škola a základní škola sv. Augustina is a preschool, kindergarten, and primary school located at Hornokrčská 3, Prague 4. It was established by the

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[101] For more, see **http://www.dic-saop.cz.**
[102] For more, see http://www.banbin.cz/o-skolce.

Czech Province of the Order of St. Augustine. "Involving the use of all senses, reason and the heart," as it says in its title, the school mainly aspires to become an educational and spiritual community. The relationship of "partnership" and the creation of relations among its staff, parents, and pupils, including former ones, form the basis of its philosophy. The facility "tries to teach children self-discipline," and instructs the children to "take responsibility for their actions" and "to aspire to conduct themselves virtuously." It emphasizes freedom also creating a sense of obligation.[103]

Základní škola Meteorologická, a primary school located at Meteorologická 181, Prague 4, is a public institution providing both a standard and Montessori type of education. The applied teaching system involves neither religious nor secular education. "Help me, so that I can do it myself" is the motto. The emphasis is put on "binding freedom" (choosing a task and completing it"), "confidence in the child's inner resources," the child's interest in learning (leading pupils to autonomy), and learning in mixed-age groups to facilitate learning from others.[104]

Základní škola Járy Cimrmana Lysolaje, a primary school located at Žákovská 164/3, Prague 6, is a public institution. Its goal is, *inter alia*, to be "an open school, a school open to initiative, cooperation, new trends, and experience from the outside." The name of the fictive "Czech genius" is a sign of the school atmosphere, which is further supported by its premises being located in a quiet environment in a forest. Moreover, the school places an emphasis on "children's complex development, with the main objective being to raise independent, responsible and creative individuals." Their education promotes "respect for other people's opinions and needs" and "the child's individuality."[105]

Základní škola Mikoláše Alše, a primary school located at Suchdolská 360, Prague 6, is a public institution bearing the name of Czech painter Mikuláš Aleš. Its curriculum is called *Education with a Smile*. The school puts an emphasis on the methodical and personalized creative approach of its teachers using "group and project-based teaching" and leading pupils to team work, mutual help, solidarity, and mutual respect." During classes, they use "elements of experience-based pedagogy, critical thinking, and certain elements of the *Starting Together* teaching program. Great attention is paid to reading literacy."[106]

18.2 The Selection of the Respondents and a Characteristic of the Groups

The deliberate selection method was used to select pupils both during the pilot survey as well as during the research conducted among the first four groups. This means that children who took part in the interview were selected deliberately on the

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[103] For more see http://www.skolasvatehoaugustina.cz/pedagogie.
[104] For more see http://www.zsmeteo.cz/cz/montessori-1404041486.html.
[105] For more see http://www.zs-lysolaje.net.
[106] For more see http://www.zssuchdol.cz.

basis of a pre-set criterion. This criterion consisted in the child's sensitivity to overlap ascertained on the basis of his/her answers to my opening questions. This approach was partially limited later on, as I expanded the sample to obtain a broader perspective on the subject due to satisfaction. As a consequence, each further group of children was arranged in a different way. The respondents were selected either by myself or by teachers and were divided into boys and girls; some groups also included only those who were not taking a test that day. The size of the groups varied from large to small. In some of the groups there was a teacher, while in other groups no teacher was present. Two of the groups (Montessori-type classes) included mixed-age respondents.

The goal of this diversity, deliberateness, and randomness of the selection of the respondents was to guarantee a variety of the groups and of conditions for data selection. This turned out to be highly appropriate, since it revealed a number of specifics of the group interviews. Even the pre-research showed that my "selection" of responsive children was connected especially with their ability to quickly articulate answers to my opening questions. This helped to eliminate taciturn children or children with disciplinary problems. The goal of the research was to confirm sensitivity to overlap, regardless of these facts, the selection method, and the number of the children within a group. My assumption was that "a small group … accompanies a man his whole life" (Nakonečný 1999, p. 217) and that a pupil is also educated at school within "a small group." My intention was to draw conclusions for teachers who do not select the pupils to attend their classes and have to integrate every childr even when working in small groups.

Altogether, there were 18 groups taking part in the research. These were made up of 186 children - 83 girls and 103 boys. Each of the groups can be characterized by the total number of its participants, the number of the girls and boys present, their age, and the presence of a teacher (see the tables).

A group interview was conducted with five pre-school and kindergarten groups. These were made up of children who were aged between three-and-a-half and five. The groups included a total of 20 girls and 22 boys. All the respondents came from three different preschools and kindergartens. The research lasted on average between 45 and 60 minutes. The interview about the Araxan character took approximately 30 minutes. The remaining approximately 15 minutes were spent drawing a picture and commenting on the outcome. The research was once interrupted by the children's leaving for a snack. Only on one occasion was the teacher not available, while for all of the other groups the teacher was present in the classroom; however, he/she was not part of the group. All of the interviews took place in the children's "home" classroom, so they knew the environment. I had not seen the children before the interview, so I also expected that they would remain silent. However, this only happened in one case.

Table 1: Pre-school and kindergarten groups

Group code	Girls	Boys	Children total	Age	Teacher present
PKG01_1	2	5	7	4-6.5 year-olds	Yes
PKG01_2	4	3	7	5-6.5 year-olds	Yes
PKG01_3	5	3	8	3.5-6.5 year-olds	Yes
PKG02_1	6	2	8	4-6.5 year-olds	No
PKG03_1	3	9	12	5-7 year-olds	Yes
5 GROUPS	20	22	42	3.5-7 year-olds	
Percentage	48 %	52 %			

The interview was conducted with thirteen school groups and the children were six to twelve years old. The groups included a total of 63 girls and 81 boys. The respondents came from four different primary schools. On average the research lasted between 45 and 55 minutes in each group. The interview about the Araxan character (first-to-third-graders) and about Johnny's dream (fourth-to-fifth-graders) lasted approximately 30 minutes. The remaining estimated 15 minutes were spent drawing a picture, commenting on the outcome, or writing a short essay on the subject (fourth-to-fifth-graders). Pupils usually turned in their work within five minutes. Most of the interviews took place in the children's "home" classroom in the presence of their class teacher; in the case of five groups which consisted of fourth-and-fifth-graders, the interview took place in a separate room without the presence of an adult. In two groups the teacher was sitting together with the children in a circle on the floor; however, he/she did not interfere in the research. I had not seen the children before the interview so I also expected that they would remain silent. However, this only happened in one case.

Table 2: School Groups

Group Code	Girls	Boys	Total Children	Age	Teacher Present
PS01_1	8	4	13	6-8 year-olds	Yes
PS01_2	9	11	20	7-9 year-olds	Yes
PS01_3	5	6	11	8-10 year-olds	No
PS02_1	10	6	16	6-8 year-olds	Yes
PS02_2	5	8	13	8-9 year-olds	Yes
PS02_3	3	6	9	8-10 year-olds	Yes
PS03_1	0	11	11	9-10 year-olds	Yes
PS03_2	8	5	13	9-12 year-olds	Yes
PS04_1	0	9	9	9-12 year-olds	No

PS04_2	7	0	7	9-10 year-olds	No
PS04_3	2	4	6	10-11 year-olds	No
PS04_4	4	2	6	9-11 year-olds	No
PS04_5	2	9	11	11-12 year-olds	No
13 groups	63	81	144	6-12 year-olds	
Percentage	44 %	56 %			
Total Respondents					
18 groups	83	103	186		
Percentage	45 %	55 %			

18.3 The Content of the Interview

The pre-research revealed that unrelated pictures were not suitable for an in-depth interview. Therefore, I decided to use a story which could serve as a medium in a few ways:

- **A connection between the researcher's and the child's** thinking which points to the area of questioning without giving an answer;[107]
- **A connection between fiction and reality** which shows the child a fictive world and asks him/her to verbalize his/her perception of the world and subjectivity;
- **A connection between what is said and what is studied** which turns the children's attention to the story and allows room for the socializing elements and formative influences to stand out without any corrections by the child face to face with the researcher.

Before creating the first story, I defined four important topics from the theoretical part. This was done based on the different degree of difficulty in a child's verbalizing the subject going from ordinary to extra-sensual phenomena. The topics can be summarized as follows:

- **Cosmology:** a phenomenon which is naturally beyond a person's reality (Buber).
- **Anthropology:** *bios*, *thanatos*, *aeternitas.*[108] Life (physicality, personality) allows reaching out (Helus, Coan, Zohar, Patočka, etc.), a person's finality is a

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[107] This allowed studying overlap as a scientific term. I was inspired by the idea of L. V. Vygotsky, who had discovered that "the evolution of scientific terms goes ahead of the evolution of spontaneous terms" and demonstrated that they involve "a higher level of understanding than ordinary terms." This means that "the level of the evolution of the *scientific terms* is manifested as a zone of the closest possibilities in relation to ordinary terms, it paves their way and is a kind of propaedeutic of their evolution" (2004, p. 74-75).

stimulus to outreach (Patočka, Comenius), and eternity is for everyone veiled in mystery as an unverifiable form of outreach (Palouš).

- **Relationships: the relationship to the world, to others, and to oneself:** as an important element between *I* and *Thou* (Buber, Aquinas), a relationship determines the direction of a person's overlapping activity. It also refers to both poles (*Me* and to *Not-Me)* and includes the one that is superior (Říčan, Janošová), which inevitably leads to a change in one's thinking and activity as well as to a new value orientation.
- **The future and the meaning of life:** a person's outreach takes place in the present; however, its motivation lies in the near future (the meaning) or in a far future (retrospective evaluations in old age). Finding meaning in life is a type of overlap in itself (Frankl, Křivohlavý etc.).

The next step consisted in compiling a story using these topics. The story line turned out to be a priority, so the different topics were literally scattered throughout the story and did not follow immediately one after another (see appendices 5 and 6). First, I wrote a story about a hero from another planet and called it the "Tale of the Araxan." The pilot enquiry revealed, however, that the story for fourth- and fifth-graders would have to be different, since these children were able to go even deeper during the interview. For this reason, I wrote a second story called "Johnny's Dream*."* Instead of heroism, this story emphasizes friendship and the relationship to another person. To test the two stories, I made an individual pilot interview with a preselected child from each of the age categories.[109] The two stories contain both differences (the main character, the texts and pictures regarding the thirteen outreach-related topics, the symbols, the character of the narration) and similarities (the four topics mentioned above). To facilitate the evaluation of the research, I included both stories in this monograph.

18.3.1 The Tale of the Araxan

"The Tale of the Araxan" is a story meant for four-to-nine-year-old children. Araxan is a hero who comes from the universe. He lives together with other Araxan males and females on a planet called A2. The goal of the story is to present children with a world which "can" exist as reality providing them with a supply of creative stimuli. The story was intentionally situated in our universe rather than in a parallel world outside of our reality; this is contrast to the case of Harry Potter, as children associate this world with unreal phenomena (magic) and sometimes even with an escape from reality. This story of the Araxan offers a sort of "ideal life" within our

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[108] I.e., life, death, and eternity.

[109] Both of the stories were created for research purposes. Therefore, certain changes would be required to use them as teaching material. This involves, for example, a different order of the topics. To establish a relationship and to catch and keep the children's attention, the topics do not follow in the order specified in the table; see appendices 5 and 6. For example, when talking with little children the topic of mortality was included as number five, despite the fact that it could have been included earlier considering the context.

universe. Given the children's knowledge, the story takes place outside of our galaxy. Children are first presented with the context of the overlap-related subject and the way things work on another planet. Subsequently, they are asked to compare this situation with our world and to describe their experiences. Inspiration for this story was drawn from the *Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

The Tale of the Araxan (four-to-nine-year olds)

This is a story for four-to-nine year old children. The story has to be cut shorter for pre-school and kindergarten children. Other questions can also be asked about each of the pictures in direct reaction to the children's answers. "Listen to the story of the Araxan people and how they live. Now tell me what it is like where we live."


1.
The Araxan hero lives together with other Araxan boys and girls on the A2 planet far away in the universe. Do you know what the universe is and how big it is?

Feeling good and having nice clothes is the most important thing to them. What about us? What is the most important thing to you?

2.
Everyone on this planet has a round house. Outside this house, there is a little blue tree which has to be taken care of every day or it will would die. Every day when the tree bursts into blossom the Araxan people rejoice. By the evening the tree bears fruit: The red fruit serves as food, the green fruit can cure diseases and the yellow fruit provides for a very, very long life. Do we have any such tree or fruit?
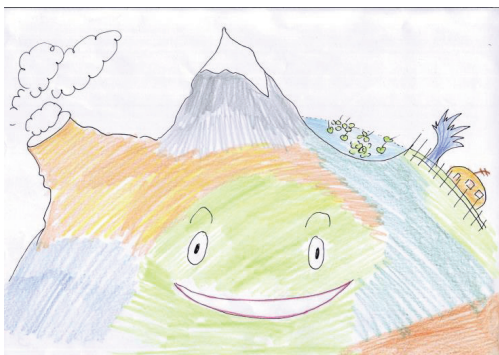
3.

Everyone has to take care of the planet. Every day the planet says what needs to be done: It wants to have clean volcanos, lakes without leaves, and nicely cut lawns in the gardens. Planet Earth is really big! How do people take care of it? And does the Earth tell us where it has got pain or where it hurts? How can we tell that the Earth needs our help?

4.

Each Araxan is good so he does not need to be a superhero on his planet. Our Araxan character has also other work to do: He grows little blue trees and gives them to the others, so that they can plant them outside their homes. Is everyone on our plant as nice as him? And do our heroes also have other work to do?

5.

Sometimes, however, a tree dies because someone forgets to take care of it. If that happens, the Araxan also have to leave the planet. A spaceship comes and takes them away to a place where they do not have to worry about anything. Do you think that we also have such a place here?

6.

Araxans have a wise sun which gives them advice and tells them what is good; everyone enjoys obeying it. Do we have a sun like that too? How do we people know what is good and what is bad? Who will tell us? Who will tell us what life is and how we should live it? What is wisdom and who is wise? Can a child be wise?

7.

Araxans like each other. If one of them has a problem, the others will help him even if this may cause trouble for themselves. Is there anyone for whom you would do anything? What does it mean on planet Earth to love someone and to show concern for others? Have you ever met anyone really mean or really good? What bad things and what good things have you ever done?

8.

The Araxan like drawing and listening to music. He can draw anything there is in the world and in the universe, and he can use any colors he likes. He also has a favorite song, because that is beauty. He also likes making sculptures for those who do something good or beautiful. Why do children like drawing and singing? And who do we make sculptures for? What is joy and beauty?

9.
Everybody has an invisible friend. The Araxan can talk to him and play with him. Do children have such friends too? Is your invisible friend different from or similar to your friend at school / kindergarten? In what way? Why do we have such friends?

10.
Araxan saw a girl talking to an angel on planet Earth. The angel came to help her when she needed him. Is the angel a superhero? Do angels exist (have you ever met an angel)? What does it mean to believe in angels?


11.
Each Araxan feels that he/she is quite special and that the universe would not be the same without him/her. Do children also feel that they are special? For whom are they special?

12.

If Araxan could choose, he would not be a superhero on the Earth; he would rather do something that people do. People have really interesting occupations and do really interesting things. Would you, for example, like to repair cars or train horses? What would you like to do when you grow up? Why would you like to do it? What is the reason/purpose?
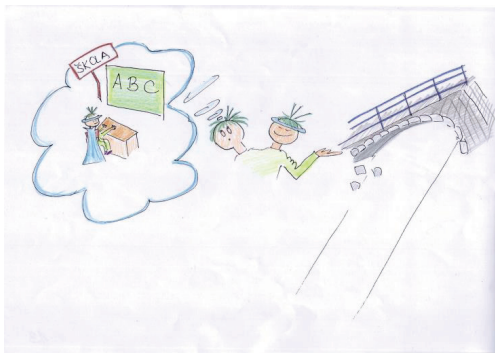
13.

If an Araxan were in kindergarten or at school with us and if he did ordinary things just like anyone of us, would he continue to be extraordinary and interesting? As a superhero, the Araxan can lift a falling bridge; however, would he continue to be a superhero if he were in kindergarten or at school with us? And what if each child can become a hero? What is it like for a child to be a hero?

Please draw a picture showing what the most important thing to you in life is.

18.3.2 Johnny's Dream

The story entitled "Johnny's Dream" is meant for children aged ten to twelve. Johnny is a typical Czech hero full of intelligence and ingenuity. Johnny is a schoolboy attending the fifth grade. He has a dream; the content of the dream is intentionally left open. The story was inspired by Carl Jung's thoughts about the importance of dreams and archetypes for mankind as well as by creative and critical thinking. The story brings the child to the boundary between reality and fiction. The child's reality consists in the fact that each of us has dreams and thinks about them. The lack of reality consists in the fact that the situations which occur in dreams can be totally unrelated. Dreams both represent and do not represent a person's everyday life; dreams are both phantasy and fact. Unreality is followed by reality. I know in a dream that it is still really *my own self*. Unlike an "ordinary" tale, a dream is perceived by children with greater respect. As in the "Tale of the Araxan," the children's task consisted in acting as an expert interpreting the dream and confronting

it with his/her own life.

Johnny's Dream (ten-to-twelve-year olds)
This is a story for children aged ten to twelve (fourth- and fifth-graders). Depending on the maturity of the children, one can elaborate on individual topics by asking further questions.
In ancient times when there was no one living in our country, there used to be nations that could interpret dreams. Can you do that too? Listen to Johnny's dream and interpret it.
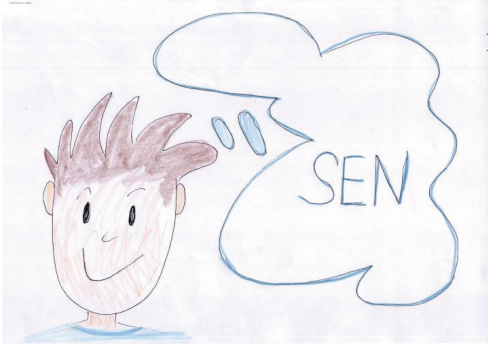
1. Johnny is a fifth-grader. One day he had a dream.
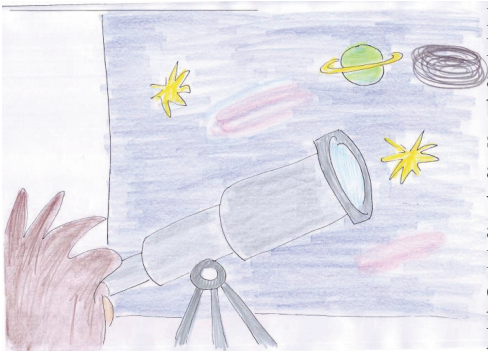
It was early morning just before dawn. He could see all of the planets, galaxies, and even black holes by using his binoculars. It was strange to be able to see so far. In his dream, Johnny was asking himself whether what he could see was truly real. How big is the universe and why is there no other planet like the Earth? Why is a human being so little compared to the universe? And why do human beings exist only on a single tiny planet if space is so huge? How did the universe and mankind come into existence? Isn't it possible to see more than we actually think?
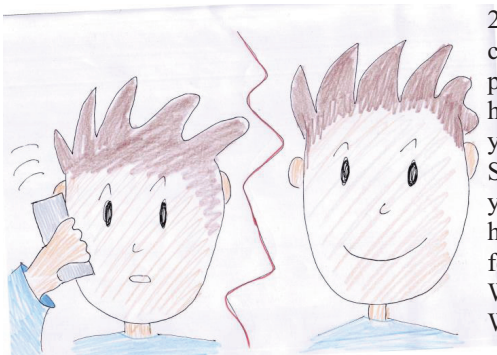
2. All of a sudden, there was a ring of a cell phone. Johnny got up looking puzzled. On the other side he could hear his own voice: "Hey, Johnny, how are you doing? This is Johnny, I am your real Self. I am not what people see. I am what you really are and want." Understanding himself in another way was a strange feeling. He got frightened and hung up. Who do you think Johnny was talking to? What is a Self and what does it look like?

3. The sun was rising. The sun looked gorgeous and like a gate into another world. What did Johnny think about this? Have you also ever felt the same while looking at the sun?

4. "Johnny," the plant on the window said, "Why don't you like me"? "What do you mean? Why should I like a plant"? Johnny answered. "Because I have nice flowers and grow nicely …. and … you should take better care of me."
"That's a strange plant," Johnny thought. "Any tree or blade of grass could say that too and, if that was the case, the whole planet would be whining and I wouldn't do anything but take care of all of them, water them, and who knows what else. I wouldn't be able to take care of everything so I better not take care of anything at all." What does it mean to like (and to take care of) the environment and the planet?

5. The plant frowned and continued, "You are not really a hero." "What's so heroic about watering a plant?" Johnny asked. But the plant did not answer. Why did the plant talk about heroism?


6. All of sudden, a veiled person appeared in the window. "Who are you", Johnny asked. "You know me well enough. You shouldn't have talked to the plant like that, beccause it didn't deserve it. You should be nicer. There are times you need to be able to make a sacrifice for someone else." "But it was picking on me," Johnny replied. "A plant is not a person whom I can like and respect. A plant is not alive and does not talk. I like my friends and parents. Why should I like a plant?"
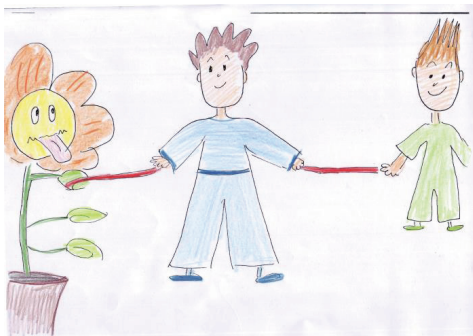
"I would do anything for a friend and he would probably do anything for me. In fact, thinking about it, I guess I like this plant too. If it was not here, I guess I'd be sorry." The person suddenly disappeared. Who was the veiled person? What does it mean to have a relation to someone else? Why do we do nice things for some people and deliberately refuse to do nice things for other people? What do you think is the meaning of the red lines?
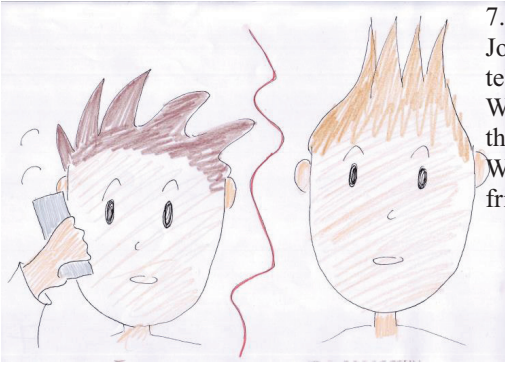
7. The cell phone rang again. It was Johnny's friend Peter. He asked Johnny to tell him what he really thought of him. Why do you think he wanted to know that? What have you done for a friend? What was the most important thing a friend has ever done for you?

(There is no illustration for this part. Johnny could not see anybody so children only hear spoken words).

8. "Johnny, you should think more about your life, about what you do, and about what you want." Johnny looked around but could not see anyone. He was puzzled and thought, "How do you think about your life? Who can tell me what life is and how I should live it? Where does life begin and where does it end? And is there really an end to life?"


9. Suddenly, he saw an old man in the mirror. "You simply start asking questions and looking for answers," the old man said. "Look at a picture, statue, book, or at a beautiful building," he continued. Why do you think the old man is talking about this? Why do we have such things around us, and what do they tell us? Is there a world behind the picture?

10. All of a sudden, his schoolmate Klara appeared in the window and said, "Everyone is really special, but he/she has to find out in what way, how and to whom he/she is special. It is about your ability to be happy with yourself, to see what is behind you and to step over your own shadow." "To see behind what? You mean behind me? To step over my own shadow…? What is Klara talking about?" Johnny mumbled. What do you think Klara had in mind?

11. There was a rustling of wings. Johnny turned around thinking it would be their neighbors' parrot. "I am your guardian angel," a quiet voice said. It had been the first time Johnny could see an angel. It was different than what he saw in pictures. He could hardly see him. "Since you are my guardian angel, where have you been when I needed you?" "You haven't seen me, but I have always been with you. It all depends on whether you believe this or not," the angel replied. What is the kind of belief which the angel was talking about in the dream? What is the difference between believing in oneself and believing in something that's above us?
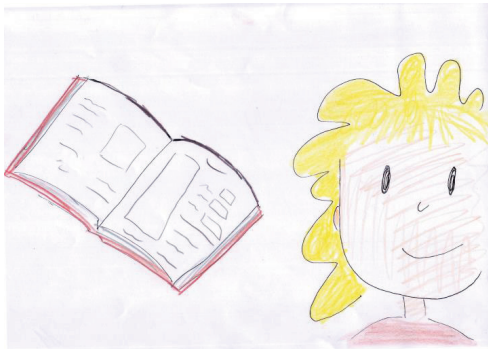
12. Suddenly, Johnny's Mum entered the room. She was bringing a glass of juice for him. Johnny knew he would do anything for his family. "When you finish your juice, go do your homework please," his Mum said. "Oh boy, what a stupid dream," Johnny thought. "I have to do homework even in my dream. That's really no fun at all." He opened his exercise book and his textbook. All of a sudden, everything seemed to make better sense. He did not know why and how it was possible, but he managed to do everything really fast. He still had enough

time left to do what he really wanted. Have you ever felt like Johnny too?

13. Johnny looked out of the window. He could see the garden. It was an extraordinary sight. He had never looked at the trees in the garden the way he was looking at them at that moment. He felt like he was a part of them. At the same time he knew that there was something higher above us, something that gives our life meaning and a goal. He knew he could become anything in life and yet, this feeling would be the one most important thing to him. What did Johnny mean by this? What gives meaning and purpose to your life?

Draw a picture of what is the one most important thing in life or write it down.

18.4 How Stories Lead a Child to Understand Transcendence (Overlap)

Using the description of a "transcendent" world (another planet/a dream), we allow children to talk about the real world, their past or current experiences, and about what is connected with their experiences in the future. The story works not only with several "worlds," but also with "times" and with the "non-existence of time," (i.e., with a person's "pre-existence" and "post-existence"). Paradoxically, unlike the pre-research enquiries, this method does not lead the child from his/her reality to overlap but rather from the presented ideal-symbolic overlap situation to the child's reality. The child subsequently articulates himself/herself, whether he/she understands this reality as overlapping. The story itself leads the child to an understanding of overlapping (providing him/her with a meta-level, using the terminology of M. Zimmermannová) and asking: "Do you know this from your own life? What does this mean in your understanding? Have you ever had any such experience yourself? Do you see this the same way as Araxan or Johnny?"

18.5 Summary

Altogether there were eighteen groups of children from six schools participating in the research. The research used a tailor-made methodology. The main tool of this methodology consisted in the use of a story which served as a bridge between fiction and children's reality. The "Tale of the Araxan" was written for pre-school, kindergarten, and lower-primary-school children from up to the third grade. The tale called "Johnny's Dream" was written for fourth-graders and fifth-graders. Both of the stories include homogenous internal elements (cosmology, anthropology, relationships, and one's relation to the future and to the meaning of life). These allow for a comparison of answers regardless of the age of the respondents.

19 Analysis and Data Collection

This chapter first presents the analyzed aspects that were defined prior to the research and that were subsequently used to divide the collected data into meaningful units.

19.1 The Analyzed Aspects

Below are the analyzed aspects (*Analyseeinheiten*) that served to achieve the research goal. These were adjusted during the analysis; nevertheless, their broad definition remained constant (cf. Mayring 2010, p. 603).

1) The hermeneutical aspect
- I studied the connection between the child's linguistic and interpretative task with the individual terms used in the narrated story and in the illustration as well as the child's drawing or written expression.
- I studied the relevance to the child's life, that is, the way in which a child understands the general overlap-related content in his/her own situation.
- I observed the content of the overlap-related blocks (cosmology, anthropology, relationships, the relation to the future and to the meaning of life).

Objective: I studied the linguistic role of interpretation with the terms used in answers to the questions, in their own stories, and in the drawings or written expressions. I studied whether the child really associated (horizontal or vertical) overlap with the different terms or whether he/she explained the terms in a completely different context. If the child really saw a higher activity or meaning in an operationalization, I analyzed the extent of the associated verbalization and the points involving a typically childlike expression.

2) The socialization and formation aspect
- I observed the importance of overlap as a socializing element (positive and negative elements).
- I observed which type of group was good for the development of overlap.
- I observed the classmates' reactions to an interview on the subject of overlap with another child.

Objective: While conducting the interview, I studied the way overlap contributed to or prevented a child's socialization (in his/her family, in a group, at school). I studied whether children would react to specific statements (whether they considered them pointless, would not react at all, would come up with their own experience showing that they understood their classmate, gave a specific example involving other classmates, etc.) and whether there was any visible influence from other integrated pupils.

3) The experience-and-emotions-related aspect

- I observed whether children verbalized any emotions associated with overlap (happiness, anger, fear, sadness, guilt, shame, and pride) and the meaning which they attributed to these emotions.
- I focused on children's feelings connected with everyday occurrences and also special events (holidays, the birth of a sibling, the death of a close one, higher-order experiences, etc.).

Objective: I studied the connection between an experience involving overlap and emotions, including the child's verbalization and their ascription of importance to their emotions.

4) The child's empowerment aspect

- I observed whether the child could make a connection between overlap and his/her feeling of distress (physical or emotional) and see transcending as a way out of his/her situation.

Objective: I did not study this influence specifically; nevertheless, I tried to react by questions whenever it was articulated by the children.

Using these perspectives, the goal of the analyses was to ascertain individual elements and to formulate hypotheses to the meaning of such findings (even if not numerous) for the teacher and for the teaching process as such.

19.2 The Collection of Data

Given the specific character of the research, the data collection required parental consent. This need arose as early as during the pre-research so an audio-recording was only made in one of the schools above; in the remaining cases, I made a recording immediately after the data collection. The recording was facilitated by the fact that I was working with a story rather than with isolated questions and that the audio-recording could be made in the first school where I visited. This audio-recording was transcribed immediately after the survey so that I had a clear idea of what I could gather from other groups. The transcription report consisted of the sheets with the stories onto which I noted three types of information:

1. The paraphrased interviews, the understanding, and the interest of the subject;
2. Interactions among the pupils;
3. Interesting stories or children's statements pertaining or not pertaining to the subject, emotions, and other important facts (e.g., an interview with a teacher or with a child following the survey).

Whenever possible, pupils' statements, and drawings were identified by gender using the letter G to refer to a girl and the letter B to refer to a boy or as the case may be using a number showing that there were several participants. In cases where this

was not possible, I only used P to refer to a single pupil or Ps to refer to two and more pupils (cf. Gavora 2000, p. 172). If possible, the text gives the age of the respondent. If the age could not be determined, the text only states the grade attended by the pupil. The letter N refers to the author.

19.3 The Analytic Procedure

Having collected the data from all of the groups, I started to work with the pre-selected aspects using continuous reading and various analytical approaches. I proceeded as follows:

19.3.1 The First Reading of the Collected Material Applying the Epoché Perspective

The goal of this first stage of work with the material was to let the data work and affect the author in a neutral way. Referring back to the phenomenological tradition, in this context Miovský uses the term *epoché*, which means "abandoning any quick and rash judgment, prejudice, previous knowledge and experience" (2006, p. 49). During the first reading, I deliberately omitted anything that I knew about the subject or research. This can be described as concentrated reading aiming to let the phenomena present itself to the reader, and deliberately shun any idea relating to free association and analyses. The reader thus also avoids underlining parts of the text or making notes on the side. This is a hard task practically, as conducting research as a scientist requires one to have formed a theoretical pre-understanding which may take several years to reach. To carry this out practically, any time that I thought of the theory while reading, I stopped reading, shifted my attention to another activity completely unrelated to the research, and returned back to the text later.

19.3.2 The Second Reading from the Position of the Pre-analyzed Aspects and Collected Material – a Summary Content Analysis

The goal of this second stage was to realize which of the contents from the pre-defined aspects above can be found in the collected material. During this stage, I went through the data that had to some extent already been edited (the pupils' output was transcribed word by word in only one school). Most of the times, I made a partial summary content analysis (*Zusammenfassende Inhaltsanalyse* – Zimmermann 2010, Mayring 2010) immediately after the survey using a report sheet. The content was, however, reduced spontaneously in order to put down as much information as possible.

In this stage of the work, I intentionally tried to look at the collected material

from the four perspectives and to reduce it accordingly to see what the material revealed about the hermeneutic aspect, the socializing and forming aspect, the experience-and-emotions-related aspect, and the child's empowerment aspect. Despite talking about a "second reading," in fact, I read the collected material about four times, each time from a different perspective. (In my preceding research projects, I did not have a good experience when taking notes on several aspects at a time). This allowed me to select the material for my further work (cf. "explizite Struktur des einzelnen Textes, Vorform der Kategoriebildung", Panke-Kochinke 2004, p. 61).

19.3.3 The Third Reading Based on the Pre-selected Criteria and the Use of Various Types of the Statement and Context Analysis

This stage turned out to be the most difficult. Given the nature of the different perspectives, it had been obvious since the very beginning that the procedure would have to be modified. The second reading did prove that the data were related to the pre-selected aspects; however, the data and the relations were rather heterogeneous. For this reason, and for the sake of clarity, I will elaborate on each of the aspects separately.

The hermeneutical aspect
To define the background of the statements, the author used an analysis relying on the idea of "objective hermeneutics." The goal was to "discover or, as the case may be, reconstruct the meaning of the latent structures behind the words or behind the text" (Zimmermann 2010, p. 184-185). In this stage, I analyzed individual sequences in the reports and not categories (compare the difference between objective hermeneutics and other content analyses in Oevermann 2002, p. 6 – for "working with short passages " see Skutil et coll. 2011, p. 220). Several secondary findings (the broader context of the statement) were taken into account when available. These involved "information about the respondents" from teachers and about "their social and cultural environment" (Zimmermann 2010, p. 184), including religious socialization.

To deal with the individual outreach-related topics, the author used a qualitative analysis of the statements involving two techniques. The first one was a "summarizing content analysis" (involving in particular the generalization and selection of the children's ideas that were similar). Using induction, the outcome served as the basis for the creation of sub-categories or sub-terms referring to the individual topics and pertaining to the children's cosmology, anthropology, relationships, future, and the meaning of life. I studied both the recurring as well as the singular answers that had been provided by the children. The study did not focus on their number in the individual groups but rather on the range of the terms used.

The socializing and forming aspect

The basis for this analysis consisted of two levels of equal importance. The first one relied on the children's statements about outreach. The second one consisted of the narrow context of the children's statements. This context was provided to the researcher by the respondents themselves (the information about their conduct during the survey and their mutual reactions during the discussions). Kühn calls this "the group dynamic" (*Gruppendynamik*) and defines it as the "atmosphere, interactions, and body language" (2011, p. 194-195). The children's statements about outreach along with their other utterances that were unrelated to the research – including non-verbal communication (mimics, gestures, differences in the tone of their voice) and interactions within the group – served to make an inductive judgment concerning a proper discovery of the terms that are described in the final assessment such as heterogeneity and homogeneity, integration, and openness of the group to outreach.

The experience-and-emotions-related aspect

In this qualitative analysis, I analyzed the children's statements and their narrow context the same way as I described above. I was focusing on what was expressed by the children non-verbally (e.g., lowered eyes, a change in the tone of the voice, gestures) or on what was not said at all in cases where I was expecting a reaction. Focusing on the "non-verbal information," I also used the objective hermeneutics approach (compare the term "implicit text structure" in Panke-Kochinke 2004, p. 61) .

The empowerment aspect of children

Given the character of a group interview, I was not expecting the children to tell me any "tailor-made stories" or to say anything like "this really helped me" or "I had an extra-sensual experience." Using the collected data, I analyzed the connection between the children's positive statements and the terms pertaining to an individual's empowerment ("empowerment" in Mitchell, Olbers 2010) and to the increase in the children's resilience ("resilience" in Mareš 2007). Making a qualitative content analysis, I benefited from the words of M.D. Healy who said says that empowerment is "a process consisting in leading children to a feeling and a belief that they are strong" (Healy 2009). My focus was on *who* and *what* made the children believe that they were *strong* in situations connected with fear, concern, or uncertainty (e.g., loneliness, illness, sadness, or death).

My content analysis focused on three requisite criteria at the same time:

1. the empowerment agent (who or what was at the root); this agent is, however, not one of the standard agents (a parent, a sibling, a child of the same age, a teacher, a psychologist) and can also be formulated as being impersonal;

2. a positive relation to the agent's presence;

3. a difficult situation settled or mitigated thanks to the agent.

As for the analytical approach and its type, I chose the technique which consisted of an analysis explaining the content of the children's statements as well as the technique that utilized an inductive creation of the resulting categories contained

in the final assessment. The positive relation and child's distress criterion were supported by the narrow context of the child's vocal comments (shown by the child's keenness or emotions during the discussion).

19.3.4 The Fourth Reading from the Perspective of Unique Phenomena or Facts Unrelated to the Subject

The goal was not omitting any phenomena important to the assessment of the material that had been "put aside" as unnecessary after the second reading. Therefore, in this stage I focused on the selective reading of what had not been analyzed in detail until then and what could have had an impact on the final assessment in view of the conclusions of the conducted analyses. This was achieved using a qualitative analysis of the content of children's statements including their narrow and broad context. This stage gave rise to the sub-chapter entitled "Emotional Solidarity," a phenomenon which I had not considered important until that time. In this stage, I also familiarized myself with the children's drawings and statements. Their significance in the data assessment is, however, rather illustrative.

To give a summarizing conclusion, the data analysis had two directions: One going inside the material collected from the different groups (by sequence) and the other going across the groups (by category). I did not try to formulate an empirical generalization such as "the greater the x, the smaller the y," nor did I strive for a "structural generalization" resulting from the full "sequence reconstruction" as emphasized by objective hermeneutics when comparing its effort to molecular biology (Oevermann 2002, p. 12-13). My goal was to capture certain issues pertaining to children's sensitivity to transcendence (overlap) as a variety. The children's statements were used in the final assessment as "an illustration of the important points that the researcher wishes to emphasize" (Marková et coll. 2007, p. 34).

19.4 Summary

The study analyzed four aspects: The hermeneutical aspect, the socializing and forming aspect, the experience-and-emotions-related aspect, and the child's empowerment aspect. The data were collected using audio-recording and note-taking. The material was read through and analyzed in four stages.

20 The Hermeneutical Aspect

The goal of the analysis:
I observed the relation between the child's language and interpretation and the individual terms used in the narrative, the accompanying illustrations, and the child's drawings and written texts. I analyzed the child's understanding of general overlap content in his or her situation as well as of the content of outreach units (cosmology, anthropology, the relationship to the future and to the meaning of life). In the case that the child saw a higher activity or meaning in the given operationalization, I analyzed the extent to which this was reflected in his or her formulations and to what extent this was reflected in a typically childlike way.

20.1 The Unexpressed Notions behind a Child's Statements May Reveal the Child's Transcending Process

Dealing with the analyzed sample, I encountered certain phenomena with the potential to refer to the speaker's intention.

20.1.1 Authentic Transcending

An authentic type of transcending refers to children's statements containing a highly probable correspondence with the children's real experience, emotions, and attitudes. Regarding horizontal outreach, an authentic statement can be accompanied with imperfect vocabulary, pauses, straying from the subject, and illogical connections (especially in preschoolers). These do not decrease the credibility of the statement.

Given the lack of complex research based on the age of children, the question of authenticity is hard to answer in particular when it comes to verticality. The researched sample revealed three factors which might support the authenticity of a statement if all are present at the same time.

1. The child does not connect his or her experience with any concern or anxiety; rather, he/she takes it as something helpful and positive (feelings of happiness and joy) and something of which the child is personally convinced regardless of an adult's differing opinion.
2. The way the child described his/her experience is not important. It is the child's articulated conviction of the experience that matters. In fact, many times they were looking for a rational explanation themselves: "It couldn't have been the light from a lamp" (an angel – NB), because I looked out and there was no light outside." (A ten-year old boy).
3. The less the child is able to describe his/her experience using visible signs, the closer the statement can be to the real experience. A detailed description can be a proof of imagination, which is usually inspired by a film or by a

picture (the tooth fairy, a goblin, an angel, and so on). The children forming the researched sample mentioned positive feelings and light in connection with a figure (usually that of an angel), or they only expressed their belief in the fact without being able to verbalize what they had seen. In religiously socialized children, one needs to distinguish between the terms *to see* and *to believe.* Some of the children said that they had not seen an angel (he is "invisible" – an eight-year old boy), but they believed in his existence.

"N: Has any of you ever seen an angel?
Boy: Yeah, about eighty-eight times.
Girl: I think I have only seen a statue of an angel, but I have not seen a real angel.
N: I would like to know what the angel looked like. You were the only one to see him.
Boy: I don't remember.
N: Are there any people who have seen him?
Boy: Me, for example."[110]

The boy above may have had a "peak experience" (Maslow). The term "angel" may only substitute for something that the child is unable to describe with a name.

20.1.2 Alternative Transcending

The statement may conceal another intention of the speaker.

Positive transcending – substituting for a long-term problem. The statements of one child attending kindergarten (PKG01) clearly did not correspond with his inner feelings. During the interview, the child talked about love for his sibling, lack of egocentricity, and prosocial behavior; yet, in reality the child seemed to be deprived in the relationship with his sibling both physically and emotionally,[111] which could be

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[110] PKG01_2.

[111] Talking about super-heroism, i.e., what they liked and what they were good at, the children reacted in a way adequate to their age in mentioning the activities that they liked and enjoyed doing. One of the above children (PKG01) reacted by defining the things that were dominant in his life. At that moment, the teacher intervened in the research emphasizing the main dangers of downplaying violence, which could be observed in the child's statement. This makes me believe that the teacher had not encountered this phenomenon in the child for the first time (which was proved to be true in our subsequent conversation). For confidentiality reasons, the statement cannot be specified but can be generally summarized as follows: During a group interview, the child designated himself as a hero since he was able to stand his sibling's "teasing" which was pleasant to him (!). The child was probably right to say that he was a hero, because he was able to cope with what he considered physical but perhaps unarticulated psychological suffering too. Motivated by love for his sibling, the child did not tell his parents in order not to lose the sibling's "love." The negative relation was thus verbalized as something that he enjoyed and that he paradoxically seemed to consider a sign of true love between siblings. The unregulated understanding of emotions (love) among siblings may strengthen other attitudes in children and become an obstacle to the individual's socialization required by the society.

the basis for certain behavioral patterns towards others involving bullying. Another child demonstrated great maturity in transcending in his statements (PS03, the child actively participated in classes and reacted in a very prosocial way). However, according to the teacher, the child had been deprived by one of his parents for a long-time as a part of the post-divorce climate in the family. Despite the fact that information provided by the teacher is only secondary in terms of data analysis, it may reveal serious issues. Regardless of its intensity, a child's long-term discomfort may result in a positive articulation of the child's deprivation. The statement itself can be identified as maturity (positive transcending); however, paradoxically, in the context of the given personality, it can refer to a destructive type of overlap experienced by the child outside of the school environment. In fact, besides the positive and negative overlap, the destructive type of transcending which is articulated in a positive way during the interview represents a third type of overlap. In my opinion, this type is more serious than negative transcending due to its bipolarity making it hard to read the signals. The experience is verbalized in a positive way, but the feelings and reality may be negative. For example, when dealing with his/her parents, siblings, teacher, or researcher, the child demonstrates positive outreach; however, when being out of the reach of these authorities, he/she does the very opposite whether it is himself/herself or others who are concerned.

Negative transcending – substituting for a short-term problem. What I mean here is a child's statement (the sex is not stated on purpose, PKG01) uttered to conceal a momentary emotional discomfort. I encountered a highly intelligent child in kindergarten who said several times during the interview that he wished to die in a specific way (being killed by an animal). According to the teacher, the child was not neglected, victimized, nor emotionally deprived. His words were most likely a reaction to a change in his family which involved moving to a new place and the relational lack of time on the part of the child's parents. Although secondary from the perspective of data analysis, this information probably clarifies the reasons for the child's statements. The subject of death can incite awe and interest in children.[112] A similar situation occurred when interviewing a third-grader who suggested his own death as a way to deal with a specific problem. I do not have enough information to tell what the main reason was; nevertheless, judging from the statement, I assume it was the fear of leaving a well-known place and breaking ties with his friends (the child elaborated on the idea by adding, "I don't want to pass the high school entrance examinations," PS03). **Resuming the subject of overlap, one can conclude that even serious negative statements may not necessarily reveal suicidal tendencies (or attempts to deal with finality); rather, they may be used to verbalize and draw the attention to the child's inner insecurity in a specific area.**

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[112] During the research, the child used that same statement to also answer completely different questions. The child even put his wish on paper by drawing a picture showing the thing having the greatest importance in his life. Discussing the picture together, it turned out that the child did not define "death" as non-existence but rather as "being left alone." The child said that he wished he could die to be able to "sleep for life." Death would thus relieve him of the problem of existence.

20.1.3 Requested Transcending

Frequently, the child knows very well the "right way" he/she should be answering the questions which are asked (i.e., "what the other person wants to hear"). The lack of authenticity may not necessarily be caused by the child's attempts at lying; rather, it may be caused by not understanding what he/she may or must not say" (cf. children's fears; see Švaříček, Šeďová et coll. 2007, p. 191). In horizontal outreach this can be connected with a tendency to please a person in authority or to look interesting to one's schoolmates (older children).

In vertical outreach, the transcending may have a connection to the dogmatic background of the individual's worldview which determines what is and what is not true. Even outside of religious education classes, Christian-socialized children have a tendency to use three or four sorts of answer to any question. These include God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. In children raised as Catholics, you can also find the Virgin Mary. If none of these applies, they argue using their knowledge of the Bible. This phenomenon was proved not only by this research, but has frequently been observed also in children who were raised as believers. Their teachers are well-aware of this and correct it.

"N: How long do we live for?
Pupil: Nobody knows.
N: For about one hundred years?
Pupil: Well, for example, in the Old Testament they say …
V (teacher): Could you please not think about this? This lady is asking about people who live today.
Pupil: Between seventy and ninety."[113]

20.2. Cosmology and Overlap

The subject of cosmology was narrowed down to the notion of space as a person's reaching out to the universe (Buber).[114] The knowledge of the information that was adequate to the age of the children was presented using a description of specific concepts (nebulae, planets, black holes, a parallel universe, the sun as a red dwarf, and so on).

"N: What is the universe?
Child 1: I will say it. There's dark everywhere and there're stars. The stars are suns and they are planets."[115]

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[113] PS02_2 – A paraphrased interview.
[114] I did not focus on researching into a single item (see e.g., the Earth in primary school children - Vosniadou 1994).
[115] PKG03_1 – A paraphrased interview.

Asking more questions, however, younger children were unable to explain these notions. Furthermore, it turned out that missing knowledge also limited the imagination and creativity of fourth- and fifth-graders. Nevertheless, there were children who were able to answer even complicated questions (such as why the sun should turn into a red dwarf, the difference between a black hole, and worm hole), which was probably due to their personal interest in the subject.

To describe the totality of the universe, children used the word "infinity." Children in kindergarten have a linear understanding of the universe, which means that they say that the universe has no limits but when asked about what is beyond it, they do not hesitate to say that there is a "hole" or something else.

"N: Do you know how big the universe is?
Pupil: Infinite.
N: What does infinite mean?
Pupil: It means that it has no beginning nor end.
N: What do you mean by this? Things always have a beginning and an end. Do you think that there can be anything outside the universe?
Pupil: Yes, but I don't know what it is."[116]

Another way of reasoning was used by a ten-year old boy who offered a cyclic solution. "There's no end to infinity, so if you fly there, you'll keep on flying and when you reach the end, you'll start all over again" (paraphrased). The understanding of infinity was also reflected in the interpretation of the expansion of the universe. While kindergarten children were able to talk about both of the two at the same time, school children using logical reasoning preferred either the expansion or non-expansion (and thus infinity) of the universe.

20.3 Anthropology and Overlap

20.3.1 Life

Kindergarten and primary school children (approximately up to the second grade) describe life by referring to the body and to the elements that keep it alive (water, air, food, and so on). Frequently, they have wrong ideas about which purpose the individual organs in the body serve.

Fig. 1: Life and symbols: The symbol of the heart was drawn by a girl attending kindergarten. Describing the picture, she only explained two motives: "The heart is important for breathing and the sun is important for sunbathing."

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[116] PKG01_3. A paraphrased interview

Older children put life into correlation with a reason for **existence and experiences**. "Life is that you experience something, a good experience that you like, although not always, you know" (a second-grade boy). "Life is the time that you spend on the earth"(a fifth-grade boy).

Fig. 2. Life and Me: A boy drew himself giving the following comment: "Life is the most important thing because otherwise there would be nothing" (paraphrased, an eight-year-old). Other eight-year-old boys said that life was the most important thing "because otherwise I wouldn't be alive" or "because I wouldn't be here."

What is important for children to be able to reach out/overlap (i.e., transcend) is to have an idea of lifespan and thus of the finality of life, though far away in the future. Older children also defined some factors which make life shorter (a disease or an irresponsible attitude towards one's health).

"D: We could live longer, but it's up to everyone what he does with his life. If you smoke or drink for example, mainly if you drink alcohol, you'll die a bit earlier of course. And if you don't do that and simply keep yourself in good shape and if you're healthy and don't do anything like smoking, you'll live a long time."[117]

Children want to live long, probably under the influence of fairy-tales and the media. They believe that life can be extended by medication, transplants, hibernation, and healthcare. Older primary-school children also realize the disadvantages of old age (having nothing to do, the continuity of suffering, losing one's family members, and similar problems).

"N: How long does a man live?
Pupil: For about a hundred years.
Pupil: Some can live for even a thousand years. If I could make a wish, I would wish that I could live forever …He was interrupted by a schoolmate.
Pupil: That would be bad.
Pupil: He'd feel pain forever because his relatives would keep dying.
N: What does it mean to live forever/eternally?
Pupils: The children remain silent.
N: Are there any advantages?
Pupils: Yes, there are.
Pupils: No, there aren't.
Pupil: There are and there are not."[118]

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[117] PS01_3.
[118] PS03_1 – A paraphrased interview.

20.3.2 Death

On one hand, the **problem of death** is a taboo in Czech society. On the other hand, however, it is omnipresent in the life of children thanks to the media (films, computer games, etc.). This destructive role of the media was also proved during the research. This is well reflected in the words of a kindergarten boy saying, "I'd kill everybody." There has been a shift in children's understanding of the seriousness of the word *to kill*. In young children, this understanding is further amplified by the pre-operational stage (Piaget in Thomas, Feldmann 2002, p. 187). This can be observed when confronted with hero-related subjects: if a hero dies, you can play the game or the film again, and the hero will live again. Thus, children find themselves between the hammer and the anvil:

- **The world of media** talking about death but at the same time also not teaching the child to understand the seriousness of fatality and of the risk of death in general, and
- **The real world** where people really die but where you hardly ever hear anyone talking about death, about what it means, and about the value of life which is a related subject.

Violent death (killing, being shot dead, being killed by a falling brick, etc.) predominated in   all answers regardless of the age category. Dying of old age was brought up less frequently.

Children perceive death as:
- Non-existence ("death means you stop breathing" (a second-grade girl);
- fatality ("we will never see the world again," a second-grade girl);
- a phenomenon involving vertical transcendence (life in another place – in heaven);
- a phenomenon involving horizontal transcendence (the consequence of a sacrifice – "you die so that other people can live" (a second-grade girl).

Looking at the picture of the Araxan leaving the planet, the children in kindergarten and several first-graders mentioned death as the first explanation. Second-graders and older children, on the other hand, first looked for another logical solution (the planet is in danger so he has to leave it – a risk of fire, the burning sun, etc.); death as an explanation was only brought up later on during the discussion.

20.3.3 Post-existence

Children did not use the term *eternity* (it was used only once); rather, they described eternity with synonyms such as heaven, clouds, up there in the sky, and life enduring forever. The answers to the questions about the overlapping of life revealed

differences in the degree of the children´s socialization. They were answering as follows:

- Life outside the Earth (heaven or hell): in religiously-socialized children;[119]
- Ageless life on Earth: in most children;
- Reincarnation: this opinion occurred only once. Nevertheless, it is frequent in today's teen-agers and young adults. It is therefore possible that there were more respondents of that same opinion, only the opinion was not articulated. In my sample, one could observe a certain mixture of the philosophical and religious concept of reincarnation and of the idea of creationism (the body is created). In one boy's understanding, reincarnation involved not only another body, but also another place (here on Earth or in the universe).

"N: Do you think that there is life after death?
Pupil: Yes. I think that a human is recreated again.
N: You mean that he is reborn?
Pupil: Yes, in another world or in the universe.
N: Do you think that a human reappears as an earthworm?
Pupil: No.
N: Or as a man?
Pupil: I mean in another meaning of life. And then in other creatures."[120]

20.4 Relationships and Overlap

Relationships are important to children. Overlap is related to a certain type of fascination (cf. Maslow's cognitive euphoria "plateau experience"). While some of the children mentioned their fascination with nature or art, none of them expressed their fascination with themselves or with another person.

20.4.1 The World

The relationship to the world included the relationship to the planet and to the outlying world.

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[119] Religiously-socialized children see eternity in a dual way – heaven or hell. People will enjoy themselves in heaven but, according to a boy (a second-grader), there will also be sadness. This emotion stems from the knowledge that some of his close ones will stay on earth. Nevertheless, one of his classmates (a girl) reacted to this using simple logic, "Well, but then there will be someone else flying in as he dies." According to some, people in hell will be alive. According to a boy, however, they will no longer be alive in hell. The biblical theology admits both of these concepts: after you die, you either live separated from God (in hell) or you also die spiritually ("a second death").

[120] PS03_1 – A paraphrased interview.

The relationship to the planet

Being asked about what we can do for our planet, all children reacted in a way which was adequate to their age and knowledge: they mentioned the protection of the environment in their immediate surroundings. The relation between such conduct and human needs (plants provide us with oxygen, there is no life without water, and so on) was also mentioned.

Fig. 3. Relationship to the Planet: According to a boy, it was a "machine which multiplies animals in Africa and can protect them from those who want to kill them" that was the single most important thing in the world.

In my opinion, several children showed a **higher way of reasoning** in the following areas:
a) Global problems: the logging of old-growth forests, "we will give everybody something to eat," a fifth-grader;
b) Anticipation of universal well-being: a picture by a five-year old boy – for further information on the subject, see also Oerter, Bravená);
c) Indirect destruction of nature: Talking about an act of terror, a second-grader also mentioned his surroundings. The terms he used were inaccurate (the understanding of the words *thief* and *atomic bomb*, but I believe that the information value of his statement remains clear. The pupil stated, "I would like to put all thieves in jail, those who use dynamite, because when they use it, they destroy almost half of something and everything is destroyed by fire. For example, when they throw down an atomic bomb, it exploded and destroys everything in its surrounding."

Transcendence in children

In the analyzed sample, children had to deal with six types of a "functional" approach to the world that is beyond them **and which supports values:**

- **The virtual world:** An Araxan has many interests and loves art. Dealing with this part of the story, children made a list of their favorite activities. Unfortunately, their computer, tablet, and the internet were among the main items mentioned in each of the groups. Being asked about the "benefits of using a computer," a thoughtful eleven-year boy answered "blindness."

- **The world of mysteries:** A third-grade boy used the term "black magic." The child was apparently making fun of it by using the term repeatedly in reply to various types of questions. The child adopts not only the world of charms and mysteries, but without even knowing it, they also

adopt the world's spiritual content and particular values.

- **The arts and sports:** These two subjects were mentioned in connection with overlap only exceptionally. Talking about something reaching "beyond" the arts, the children remained silent or argued using the story of *Alice in Wonderland*. Only one girl described the arts as something creating a connection between one's own emotions and the emotions of an acted role (see the girl dancing as a frog). The arts were mostly brought up by girls (dancing, singing, and drawing); on the other hand, sports predominated in boys (soccer, athletics, etc.). Unfortunately, sports are not at all regarded as an overlap activity which refines both the body and soul. It is strictly performance that matters, and it is only "the best one" that is deemed as "good." Only one girl mentioned basketball in connection with relaxation and rest (a fourth-grader).
- **The extra sensual world:** In Christian-socialized children, the extra sensual world represents a natural part of their perception of reality and was mostly described as one of the most important things in life, together along with the child's parents, brothers, sisters, and friends. Nevertheless, even here it is possible to observe higher-order thinking, which means that not every religious statement or drawing necessarily involves a higher-order skill of reasoning.
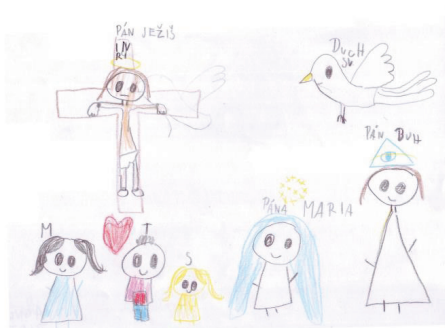

Fig. 4. The extra-sensual world: higher-order thinking: Based on the composition, I consider this drawing by a seven-year-old girl a representation of higher-order thinking about overlap. Jesus is not smiling in the picture. The child is aware of a deeper meaning of Christ's death, which is also supported by the use of the word *kyrios* (Lord), since it has a confessional character, and it is common for children to write only "Jesus"). The other two persons making up the Holy Trinity are smiling. God the Father is depicted with a symbol of God's eye (omniscience) and a triangle (the Holy Trinity). The question is whether the girl understands these symbols or whether she knows them from Christian art. Nevertheless, this was not dealt with during the enquiry. The representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove is very typical of children. The motif is located in the greatest distance from the family (although theologically speaking, it should be the closest). This is not unusual, however, since the Holy Spirit is the least understandable entity from a child's perspective and an entity which is much omitted in religious education at the same time. The girl is a Catholic, so the Virgin Mary is also present in the picture. Unlike the majority of children who drew themselves in the picture together

with their family, the girl did not draw herself. The explanation can represent a certain ethical and spiritual meaning that she gave priority to others over herself. Yet, one can also ask critically whether this may be a sign of her inability to find her place among the characters.

- **The world of destiny** which is not governed by any logic or any other system but rather by pure coincidence. Some children attribute this same quality to angels (the child does not have to believe in God). It presents the child with limitations and logically-unexplainable facts which allow him/her to highlight emotions and matters that are important in life (life, health, success, etc.).

- **The world of dreams and imagination:** A child's dream involves elements of reality, imagination, horizontal and vertical transcending, as well as coincidence, a lack of logic in singular phenomena, and a string of events (the event has a beginning, evolves, and has an end). Even though a child imagines things while awake, a child's conscious experience is usually positive; however, when talking about typical dreams, children mostly verbalized bad dreams.

"Girl: I was staying overnight at my Grandma's, and I dreamt that they were making a ring for me, and when I woke up I stayed in bed for another thirty minutes, waiting for them to bring it to me (paraphrased, a fourth-grader)."

"N: In his dream he was in space? But now we are talking about reality.
Boy1: A dream can also be **reality**.
Boy 2: A dream is often **real** (paraphrased, a fifth-grader)."[121]

20.4.2 The Relationship to Others

The following phenomena were observed when dealing with the relationship to oneself, one's parents, friends, and other people:

1) Negative transcendence as a norm (standard pattern):
- **Part of the You-address** (third-graders and older): Talking with each other, the children frequently used expressions such as "you goofball" or "you idiot" in my presence. This shows a shift in the understanding of abusive language.
- A synonym for expressions such as *to convince someone of one's truth* or *to scold someone*. The children were using expressions such as *shoot, I'd shoot him dead, I'd kill him,* and other similar expressions. This is probably a reflection of the virtual world in which these words lack a ominous value. The

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[121] PS04 – The group is not stated on purpose. A paraphrased interview.

phrases were used by the children to be "funny," since using them provoked laughter in some of their peers. What is serious is that the destruction (negative outreach) has become a type of norm basically acquiring a new meaning. Children use these terms not only to refer to others, but also to refer to themselves (*I'd kill myself)*.

- **The attitude toward people of whom they have heard.** The way most of the older pupils talked about politicians or the president was negative or even derogatory. This attitude comes from the family or from the media ("he is stoned", "he falls down the stairs", "he is well-known, he steals pens," and so on). Being asked whether we have a wise sun or someone who is wise, a third-grade girl answered, "The president," and most of her schoolmates broke out laughing. Given this reaction of lower primary school children, one can only wonder what their specific relationship to politics, elections, and their citizenship in general will look like once they become adults. (See the questions about education and citizenship in Stará 2005). Unlike an adult, a child cannot understand a combined lack of contentment along with respect and acceptance. Therefore, for children these people represent anti-heroes.
- **The approach to stealing.** Children know that stealing is bad. Czech society, however, has a specific approach to syphoning off money from companies and to procuring public contracts which are too expensive. The fact that a child comes up with a phrase like "I'll be a thief" (a preschool boy) shows a positive interest in the question, regardless of the fact that he is not serious.

"N: Why do you think thieves steal?
Boy 1: Because they are homeless.
D: Because they want a gift.
Boy 2: Because they want money.
Boy 1: When I grow up, I'll be a thief.
N: What would you like about being a thief?
Boy 1: No, I'm just kidding."[122]

2) Positive overlap in relation to others:
- **A sacrifice involving things, money, or time:** Children in kindergarten and lower primary school mostly mentioned sacrificing one's life and possessions. Sacrificing one's time was mentioned spontaneously especially by older children. In general, the children would sacrifice their money and time for another person.
- **A human sacrifice:** This sort of sacrifice was mentioned by children as something that existed; nevertheless, only one boy said explicitly that he would do anything (including dying) for his mother.

"Boy: I would be ready to sacrifice myself for my Mummy.

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[122] PKG01_2.

N: What does it mean to sacrifice yourself?
Boy: Because no one or hardly anyone wants to die except for suicide. Sacrificing oneself means when we save someone and die ourselves (a second-grader)."[123]

- **Part of family relationships**: Talking about their parents, children appreciate their care and skills (they can fix broken things, arrange things, cook a good meal, etc.); they also value the factors directly related to overlap such as positive emotions and the ability to cope with suffering (illness, the dentist); the act of having offspring (verbalized only by one respondent during pre-research ("Mummy did something heroic by giving birth to me " - a third-grade girl).
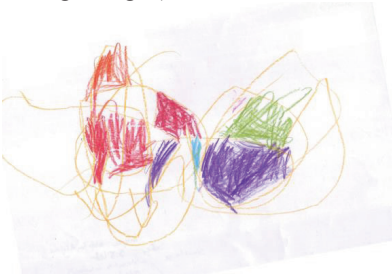

Fig. 5. A map: The children drew their family as the most important thing in their lives. A three-and-a-half-year-old girl approached the task in a very specific way: She drew a map explaining that she drew it "to get to Mum." Unlike the other children who drew a heart as a symbol of positive emotions, she was the only one out of the whole sample who drew another reason for a parent's existence: to be here for one's child as a source of security and safety (a fixed point defined on her map). I do not know whether the drawing reflected a specific experience or some sort of information about maps (and the teacher did not know that either). One way or another, given her small age, the girl approached the assignment in quite an original way.

20.4.3 The Relationship to *Myself*

The higher-order of thinking was linked with statements about one's uniqueness, truthfulness, and ability to reach out (i.e., overlap).

The unique (irreplaceable) *Me*:
- The study focused on the connection between heroism and the young children's feeling of uniqueness. The children gave the following types of answers:
    a) They did not give any argument at all.
    b) Their position was negative. (I cannot be a hero. I am not important in any way).
    c) Their position was positive but hesitant.
    d) They saw themselves as heroes while mentioning what they were good at

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doing. (Extraordinary situations such as helping someone as well as everyday activities such as doing their homework and helping their parents were noted).

- Only a few upper primary-school children were able to deal with the question of "who am I." In my view, the following answers are very mature: "It is only you and nobody else" (a four-grade boy). "That you are irreplaceable" (a four-grade girl). Girls in one of the groups gave the example of their classmates who were twins and said that they looked quite the same from the outside, but inside they were different (one of them was shy).

The real Me: This statement was only observed in one boy who was a second-grader: "When I was little, I thought that I was the only guy that was real and that the others were just fake robots." This is an interesting reflection, especially considering the fact that according to the boy, it happened in the past and it clearly describes his awareness of his own personality as something indisputable (within the meaning of Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*).

Me **reaching out:** Dealing with the tale of "Johnny's Dream," we investigated the subject of stepping over one's own shadow. Below is a list of the ways children understood the phrase:
- physical stepping over (the ability to step over one's shadow on the road);
- overcoming suffering;
- improving one's performance in an activity or in one's school work;
- overcoming fear.
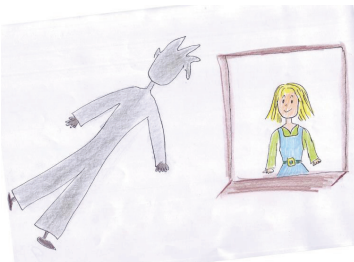
"Boy 2: Stepping over one's own shadow means that if you run over someone with a car, you are extremely sorry until the end of your life.
Boy 1: But it was his fault because he was drunk.
N: Let him finish what he wants to say, please.
Boy 2: I don't know anything else. I mean, when you overcome suffering, you are on the right path in fact" (fourth-graders).[124]

20.5. The Future and the Meaning of Life

Although human beings "reach out" in the present moment, the act of transcending itself has justification in the future or in the meaning of life.

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[124] PS04 – This group is intentionally not specified. A paraphrased interview.

20.5.1 The Future and Overlap

Preschoolers and lower primary school children connect their future with activities which they like at the time of the enquiry. Their reaction is better if you introduce the question with explanatory linguistic triggers such as "when you are as old as your Mum and Dad," or "when you are as old as your parents." This shows that children do not perceive the future as a time but rather as an anthropological dimension. Their ideas become clearer from approximately eight years of age; nevertheless, they still do not talk about an open future connected with possibilities. They do not "reach out beyond reality" (Vágnerová, 1996, p. 250) which is connected with formal and logical operations.

Employment is connected with the question of "what you would like to become." During the enquiry, however, it was easier for children to react to the question of "what would you like to do when you are as old as your Mum/Dad). The choice of their future occupation was justified as follows:

1) No explanation or one or two different explanations for choosing a job: "I'd like to be a firefighter because I like that job, and a medical doctor, because my Mum is a medical doctor, too" (a ten-year-old boy).
2) A positive attitude to the job and its attractiveness (horse-riding, soccer-playing): "I'd like to be a confectioner, because I like baking" (a second-grade girl); a positive attitude to the attractiveness of specific things and facts (the attractiveness of a fire truck, the ability to look after someone).
3) An activity which the child can do: "I can play soccer so I want to be a soccer player" (a fourth-grader).
4) An admired model or a model from among the members of the closest family and friends (a firefighter, a policeman, a soccer player, a dancer, a medical doctor, a parent, a teacher, a well-known person, etc.).
5) The material significance of employment (some fourth- and fifth-graders): "I don't really care, but I have to make a lot of money" (a boy).

An explanation showing horizontal overlap in a young child:
6) A positive emotion towards oneself and others: I definitely want to do what makes me and other people happy, namely what brings me inner contentment.

Explanations showing horizontal overlap in older children:

7) A deeper knowledge of the significance of human activity "I would like to be someone who is able to do something" (a third-grade boy); a specific job (a paleontologist – see the extract);
8) A positive emotion towards a specific *You* (a specific and justified case of altruism – see the extract).

"N: What would you like to do when you grow up?
Boy: I would like to be a scientist, an archaeologist. I would like to do science.
N: Why would you like to be an archaeologist?
Boy: It is interesting, they go to other countries. **They try to understand things, you know** a third-grader)."[125]

Fig. 6. A scientist/archaeologist: Describing the picture, the boy also said that "there are many things people have not clearly explained so far" and that if he managed to figure out those things, he "could tell it to someone." When I asked him about the benefit of his becoming a scientist for the others, his answer was that he would tell them for example which animal was dangerous and in which ways (a nine-year-old boy).

"N: What would you like to do when you grow up?
Girl: I'd like to make books for blind children. You know, the books that you make and the kids touch it.
Boy 2: The touch alphabet.
Girl: The touch alphabet, but also with pieces of plush for example.
N: Why would you like to make books for blind children?
Girl: **So that they can have at least some fun** (a third-grader)."[126]

20.5.2 Do Children Have a Meaning in Life?

Lower primary school children were asked about their meaning of life in connection with the Araxan's activities (fig. 12), and upper primary school children were asked directly about what gave our life "a higher meaning and a purpose" (fig. 13).

According to children, the meaning in life consisted in the following:
1) Living (having a body: "staying alive," "living," a deeper meaning: "having fun" – in   older children).
2) Doing good things ("being good," telling the truth," "going to school").
3) A sense of belonging ("being with one's family," "being with friends").

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[125] PS02_3 – A paraphrased interview.
[126] PS02_3 – A paraphrased interview.

Explanations showing overlap in older children:

4) Finding the meaning of one's own life ("Well, life doesn't have a meaning, but we can give it a meaning. I think for example that having fun is the meaning of life – a fifth-grade boy).

5) A conscious lack of self-centeredness ("giving time to someone else, not to myself," a fourth-grade girl).

The meaning of life as described by lower primary school children is identical with what they considered important at the time of the enquiry: their family, friends, and favorite activities. A non-standard reply was given by a first-grade boy who expressed his dream. A similar reaction could be observed in an older girl who gave a list of the most important things in her life that included "the pursuit of one's dreams," which I interpret as her reference to the meaning of life.
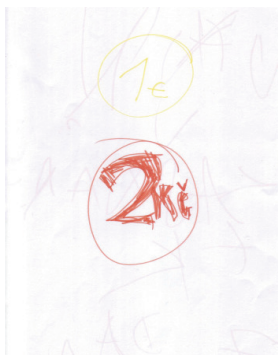

Fig. 7. Coins: A first-grade boy drew coins giving the following explanation: "I would like to be a euro coin, so that I could travel to different parts of the world" (a seven-year-old).

Fig. 8. The most important things to me: The girl drew several perspectives of the most important areas of her own life. It is interesting to observe the way she deals with global issues (the environment) and the pursuit of her dreams (an eleven-year-old).

20.6 Summary

Children's statements reveal their way of transcending: an authentic (positive, negative) or non-authentic (a required overlap, positive-negative, or a destructive type of transcending. The children's perception of overlap varies. They were more or less successful in recognizing overlap in the area of cosmology, anthropology, relationships, and in the future and the meaning of life. The greatest problem consisted in understanding outreach in relation to *life* and *Me.*

21 The Socialization and Formation Aspect

The goal of the analysis:
I observed the importance of overlap as a socializing element within a group (positive and negative elements), namely the type of group supporting the development of overlap and the types of schoolmates' reactions (they consider it useless, do not react at all, come up with their own experience and understand their schoolmate, give the names of their schoolmates with a typical conduct, etc.) and the visibility of the impact of the presence of integrated pupils.

21.1 Heterogeneity versus Homogeneity

The study showed that heterogeneity can both support and prevent the development of overlap in pupils, and it can even be hurtful sometimes. It supports the development by cultivating sensitivity to various overlap-related topics and even a certain form of diplomacy (topics you can talk about with the others and topics you cannot bring up because they would not understand). The climate in the classroom which does not allow children to verbalize certain phenomena can hinder or prevent development. Therefore, homogeneity (such as division into boys and girls) can in fact support overlap as it allows the child to elaborate on a specific overlapping concept or activity audibly for all to hear; nevertheless, it does not prepare children for harsh rejection or malice from certain people in the society. The development of overlapping is conditioned by experiences from both of the groups.

21.2 Integration and Overlap

Overlap is an argument in favor of inclusive schooling.
- **A disabled child urges others to be more sensitive** to horizontal overlap, which was already observed during the pre-research. As regards the dog-hero, in the second grade, the need to help ill (blind) people seemed more important than the need to help those threatened by some other momentarily dangerous event (a fire or a crime). Interviews with teachers revealed that a disabled child was neither scolded nor ridiculed by other children. It was a natural part of the school environment and encouraged the sensitivity to help others. Integration promotes overlap by living the experience within the meaning of *learning by doing* or *learning by living* (in accordance with Delors' "learning to live together with others").[127]

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[127] This also shows the lack of literature and films on the subject in the Czech Republic, as children with disabilities are usually not depicted as a natural part of the group. While visiting abroad, I watched a story for small children showing a girl in a wheelchair. She was depicted as part of a group of children without being in any way excluded or subject to excessive care or attention. She was simply part of the group and

- **Children of immigrants (**Vietnamese children) included in the studied sample practically did not communicate. Their integration has certain specifics and would merit further study.

21.3 The Group and Overlap

Depending on their ability to verbalize overlap, the participating groups could be divided into the following categories:

a) **Groups open to overlap support:** Each child had a chance to talk without being subject to ridicule regardless of whether the teacher was or was not present.

b) **Groups partially open to overlap support:** These groups included one or two troublemakers who, nonetheless, did not have the power to manipulate the whole group. At the same time, there were pupils (both boys and girls) who were rebuking those who disturbed others. Talking to these groups, some topics provoked enthusiastic associations and a cheerful mood; nevertheless, there were also topics which really gripped the children's attention, and some of the replies were really profound. This also concerned those who had previously disturbed and ignored other subjects by responding and making apparently nonsensical comments.

c) **Groups closed to overlap:** These were mostly groups consisting of upper primary school children (fourth- and fifth-graders). The reasons for their reaction were as follows:

- A strong star of the class who made fun of everything influenced almost all of the other pupils, ridiculed all their answers, and did not have a counterpart who would have been able to serve as a counterweight to his conduct.

- Wrong timing (e.g., classes with a rather loose atmosphere or at the end of the school year); this was also characterized by children showing a significant lack of concentration.

In the sample, there were two large groups of this type. There were children who were very sensitive to overlap. Their schoolmates, however, did not give them a chance to express themselves and some even "plugged" their ears to show in a nasty way that the child was not talking to the subject and that they were not interested. This shows not only the vital impact of a group of peers and of the "stars" of the class who are able to carry along or influence even those who would normally cooperate in another environment, but this also demonstrates the fact that it is already the preschool age which is ideal to elaborate on outreach-related topics, since in preschool the exchange of experiences is usually not accompanied by ridicule or pejorative remarks.

participated in all of the activities in the same way as the other children. (I have not been able to trace the story back).

21.4 Summary

As a socializing element within a group, overlap is supported by the experience of several types of both heterogeneous and homogenous groups and by the presence of integrated children. Groups can be open, partly-open, or fairly closed to overlap. The time in preschool and kindergarten is ideal for group work.

22 The Aspect of Emotions and Experience

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The goal of the analysis:
I was observing the way in which children articulated their emotions (happiness, anger, fear, sadness, guilt, shame, and pride) in connection with their experience of overlap and the importance attributed to these emotions. I focused on both everyday and important events in a child's life (anniversaries, the birth of a brother or sister, the death of a close one, higher experiences, etc.).

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22.1 Emotional Solidarity?

The study of the sample revealed a phenomenon which I decided to call *emotional solidarity* and the dependence on a specific overlap-related subject. A kindergarten boy reacted to the questions raised in connection with Araxan's fruit of long life by saying that his uncle had been killed. The other children also reacted by giving a list of their close ones who had passed away. Within a few moments, however, the discussion turned to the existence of heaven (as a place allowing human post-existence in non-religious terms) and to the life of our loved ones there. A breakthrough in the discussion of overlap-related subjects came in some of the groups once the researcher asked whether there was anything after death or when one of the children made a link between death-related issues and post-existence by saying "someone dies and goes to heaven" or "someone dies and goes to hell."

I do not know whether the boy needed to hear about post-existence or whether there was another reason for his reaction. Nevertheless, after the discussion he came up to me and asked me sincerely, "Are you coming again? I like you a lot." Without thinking, I answered, "So do I." I had encountered such a reaction neither from a child nor from myself before. This phenomenon reveals a certain mutual emotional solidarity, the feeling of joy over meeting another human who shares one's own emotions.

22.2 Overlap and Ambiguous Emotions

Children were asking me why the Araxan man and the angel were laughing in the picture, as the Araxan man had to leave the planet and the girl was sick. As this turned out to be an obstacle to further questioning, I gave them the following explanation: the Araxan man knows that he does not need to worry about anything anymore and is leaving for another planet which is even nicer. The angel is happy to be able to help the girl by getting her tea. This shows that the child perceives a discrepancy between the emotion and the content of the drawing. The child is very sensitive to the wrong presentation of any emotion relating to overlap.
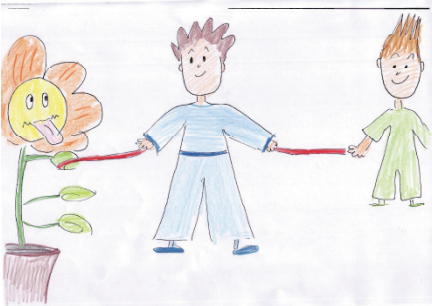
One sensitive girl from a group of fourth-graders asked me a similar question asking why the plant was sticking out its tongue at him (Johnny) and whether it liked him or not. I answered by asking her whether she thought that the plant really did not like him. The girl figured out herself that Johnny and the plant had a good relationship.

The enquiry newly shows that overlap in children can be connected with an emotional context other than the one that the child is accustomed to encountering.

22.3 Intense Experiences

Children experienced overlap in connection with nature, probably in the sense of Maslow's "plateau experience" (cognitive bliss experience). All the children who expressed themselves on the subject experienced a mixture of fascination, amazement, and intense inner positive emotion which they were unable to describe in words regardless of their age. Interest could be observed in all the groups, even in those where they interrupted each other and had ambiguous remarks.

"N: Have you ever had a feeling that you were special part of nature?
Girl: Yes.
N. And what kind of feeling was it?
Boy: It felt awesome.
N: Why awesome?
Boy: I felt as if I were in complete harmony with Nature."[128]

Possible reasons for the brief description of this experience:
- The inability to find other suitable words (if provided with a terminology list or a description, it would have been easier for the children to find the right words):

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[128] PS02_2 – A paraphrased interview.

- the intimacy of the experience;
- an attempt to conform to their group of schoolmates;
- the number of overlap-related topics dealt with during the research (a specific time limit).

Children verbalized the consequences of their experiences using phrases such as "I felt good" and "It is awesome" (an unarticulated feeling of happiness, joy, and fulfillment) when faced with two phenomena:

1) Unity with nature (being outdoors);
2) Their fascination with a sunrise or a sunset.

One of the fourth-grade boys mentioned that when he was flying on a plane, you could see the sun up in the sky while down on the ground it was dark already.

His schoolmates reacted by words like "great," "awesome," and "cool." The reason for their fascination involved not only the natural phenomenon, but also the physical existence of the space above the clouds exceeding humans. In one of the groups, the discussion over the subject diverted to 3D pictures, which stirred similar emotions in some of the children. It was interesting to observe that they were more fascinated by the pictures than by classical art, probably because this was the first time that they saw such a picture and were astonished.

22.4 Creative Work and Emotions

Small children associate creative work with what they like and enjoy doing. They do what they like (they draw, create things, build structures from Lego, etc.). Older children such as fourth- and fifth-graders are able to make the correlation between the author and inner emotions, as illustrated by the following conversation:

"N: What does a painting or a building tell us? Do they tell us anything at all?
Girl: I'd say that they don't, but the painter was expressing his emotions and the architect wanted to create something really beautiful to bring joy.
Boy: I thought the same about the painter, but as for the architect, the one who built it, that he liked it so he wanted to show how he was feeling … happy (a fifth-grader)."[129]
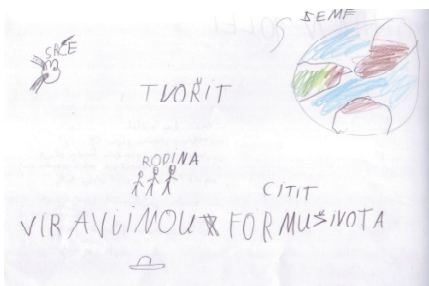

Fig. 9. Feeling and creating: A ten-year old boy drew what he considered to be the most important thing in his life. He was the only one to mention "feeling" and "creating." This picture deals with several issues. Below are the boy's comments on the individual items: He drew the Earth "to have a place to live," the family "to have

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[129] PS03 – Group intentionally not specified. A paraphrased interview.

someone to live with," the heart "to ensure blood circulation and to be able to live with others." The word "feel" was included to be able "to feel joy" and the phrase "belief in another form of life" was used because he "believed that we are not alone in the universe."

22.5 Positive Emotion Towards Oneself

The children were intentionally not asked about whether they liked themselves. Rather, they were asked "what they were good at or the best at and to whom they were important." I intentionally avoided emphasizing their abilities to see the importance attributed to them by the children themselves (happiness with themselves).

Feeling important and giving a reason for their positive relation to themselves, the children did not mention their existence (the fact that I exist and I am myself); rather, they brought up some particular activity:

1) n activity which they like doing;
2) an activity which they like doing and which is appreciated by their environment
   (a sports, artistic, or school performance);
3) an activity reserved for adults but which the child is able to do.

During the interview, I modified the question. Instead of asking "what" are you good at doing, I asked "to whom" are you important and special. All the children were able to answer this question. None of them, however, said that he or she was important to himself/herself. The question is whether this was because the question was too intimate or ill-formulated or whether it was the emphasis of the society on expressing one's feelings towards the others. Another person (*You*) is a confirmation of the child's value and the reason for loving oneself. The research showed that the verbalization of the emotions towards oneself was not sufficient.

22.6 Nonverbalized Emotions

What I mean here is expressing sadness or sorrow over the death of close people or pets during the interview. This was implicitly contained in the attempt to find a "solution" consisting in meeting the close ones again (see the resistance aspect of improvement). Phrases such as "I was really sorry," "I was sad," and "He/she meant a lot to me" were not uttered during the interview. Only a few preschool children verbalized their emotion using a phrase such as "I will cry if my dog passes away." Older children showed their emotion only by changing the tone of their voice or by lowering their eyes. In our society, we have no time to share joy, let alone sorrow. The reaction could, however, also have been caused by the presence of the researcher.

Fear was another type of emotion which was not verbalized. The feeling of fear raises the importance of the existence of invisible friends in the darkness (young children) and is also associated with bad dreams (older children). Children were also afraid of verbalizing their emotions at school (young children were afraid of not being able to answer my questions in the right way).
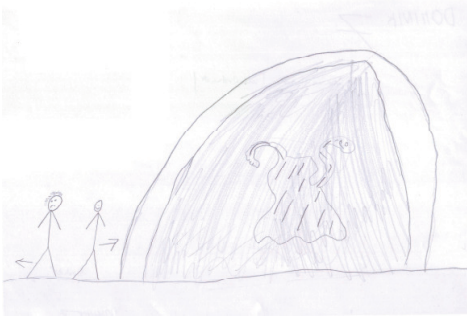

Fig. 10. Fear: Only one child drew a picture showing him as a hero able to overcome his fear (the laughing "fear fighter" by a seven-year-old boy).

22.7 Summary

The research revealed the occurrence of overlap-connected emotional solidarity in the studied sample. The children reacted to drawings showing confusing emotions and verbalized their emotion during intense experiences and creative work. Fear, sadness, and love of oneself were not verbalized.

23 A Child′s Personality Strengthening Aspect

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The goal of the analysis:
I was observing whether the children were able to create a connection between overlap and their own physical or psychological distress and to regard transcending as a way out of their situation.

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Analyzing this aspect within a group was not quite convenient, because the enquiry revealed certain facts which have an impact on the child's emotional stabilization of personality and are related to overcoming fear, anxiety, and insecurity.

- **Invisible friends** are associated with help, mostly at night time. Many children associate the night with fear, anxiety, and some sort of mystery (compare Specht-Tomann 2011, p. 57). According to an adult female respondent, when she was little this extra-sensual relation helped her to cope with anxiety not only during the night but also during the day (a fifty-year old woman). Plush toys which can be touched can have a similar function. An invisible friend always deals with a child's specific problem:
The tooth fairy comes and helps when you are in pain.
An elf comes and helps when you feel lonely (you have someone to play with, talk to, or spend time with).
Unspecified creatures, plush toys, angels, and God help you when you are lonely and afraid (you have someone you can trust and ask for help). Older children (approximately ten years old and older) do not talk about invisible friends actively, with the lone exception being God and angels.

"Girl: I can simply hear somebody and I start talking to him.
N: Do you know who you are talking to?
Girl: No (second-grade)."[130]

"Boy: I have seen him (the angel) on my bed, he was alive (PKG)."[131]

"Boy: Some people believe in God or in angels and then they, like, see him. If we don't believe in him, we can′t see him. And, I mean, when we need him, he'll help us, and when we don't need him anymore, he disappears (fourth grade)."[132]

- **A specific member of the family – a pet.** Pets need care. Dealing with pets, children learn that having a relation also involves caring (compare Krowatschek 2011). The child clings to the pet emotionally and the pet

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[130] PS02 – Group intentionally not specified, a paraphrased interview.
[131] PKG01_2.
[132] PS03 – Group intentionally not specified, a paraphrased interview.

returns the child's feelings. This happens also when there is a sort of imbalance in the family.

- **A specific member of the family – God.** "My Dad and God are heroes" (a second-grade boy). As confirmed by Bucher (2007, p. 90), the child perceives God as someone surpassing the others by "his actions." Believing in God, the child also experiences positive emotions and a feeling of security and safety. This emerges from several adults' retrospective memories. During my research, I did not encounter any explicit statement on the subject uttered by a child.

- **The importance of an internal dialogue** was proved only in one respondent (a fourth-grader). The one she talks to is not herself, but her twin that died at birth. ("I imagine talking to that twin"). The girl thinks about the missing sibling (the emotion was impossible to decipher for me and was not articulated by the girl herself). Internal dialogue is her way to deal with the loss. (Compare some people talking to their close ones at their graves).

- **The importance of post-existence.** "My dog is in heaven." These statements by the analyzed children reveal not only a child's imagination or belief, but also his or her way to deal with a tragic event. The spatial-temporal overlap of human existence (he is somewhere else) allows them to overcome their sadness. This was well-described by a second-grade boy saying, "… some people believe in heaven; it means that they continue to live, only they are up there." Regardless of their affiliation, this kind of explanation is also frequently used by parents when they talk to their little children. Frequently, however, they do not talk to their children about the implications of the fact that the dog lives "somewhere else" for the child.

"N: What happens if a dog dies?
Girl 1: We will cry.
N: Is there anything in the dog that continues living?
Girl 1: No.
Girl 1: My friend told me that someone killed their neighbors' cat.
N: That's very mean.
N: And what is heaven?
CH: That he is dead.
Girl 1: My uncle lives in heaven.
N: Do you think he feels good there?
Girl 1: Yeah.
Girl 2: One of my great-grandmas lives in heaven and one of my great-grandpas lives in heaven and the other one too, so I only have one great-

grandma."
"N: How can you get to heaven?
Girl 1: You have to die.
N: If you wanted to go to see them, how would you do that?
CH: I'd take a spaceship.
Girl 2: By plane."[133]

> A fourth-grade girl expressed a similar idea: "What encourages me in life is that in a dream I saw a big giant and that giant will wake up when I die."

Summary

The children verbalized the following items helping to improve an individual's resistance: invisible friends, specific members of the family (pets, God), internal dialogue, and belief in post-existence.

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[133] PKG01_2.

24 The Conclusions of the Analyses: A Child's Personality and Transcending

As my research did not consist of individual interviews with respondents, it was not my objective to prove that each child was capable of overlap; rather, I wanted to show the children's potential to understand transcending when dealing with specific subjects. Explicitly or implicitly, children touched on certain phenomena not concentrating on their self (compare Helus' understanding of overlap in the theoretical part of this monograph). This involved a potential for both vertical and horizontal overlap which can be described by the word "to be" (cf. Delors' pillar consisting in "learning to be together with others").

Phenomena which may reveal the transcending dimension of a child's personality:

- **Being a hero** means standing up for one's schoolmate and even fighting for him/her, sacrificing one's time and money for him/her, standing up even for a person in authority, and helping an adult as gladly as another child.
- **Being a superhero** does not depend on physical heroism; it is demonstrated through the attribution of a deeper meaning to one's activity or to ordinary situations.
- **Being a caring hero** involves associating value with continual and intense help for other co-creatures.
- **Being someone who thinks about fanciful notions** involves great imagination and the ability to imagine the unimaginable and the ability to argue and come up with an inexhaustible number of ideas.
- **Being a dreamer** means treating one's dreams as real images with which one can communicate.
- **Being a mystic** means being sensitive to extra-sensual issues and having the ability to identify them using certain emotions.
- **Being a "little wise man"** is characterized by the child's saying "I think I was acting wisely." Usually, this involves helping his or her schoolmate or parents in a way exceeding the standard and taking the form of a practical deed or advice.
- **Being a misunderstood sufferer** involves strongly prosocial behavior which is for one reason or another externalized (such as deprivation).
- **Being a misunderstood saboteur** combines negative conduct with an articulated desire to achieve something intensely positive.
- **Being a little enthusiast of "standing in wonder"** means showing amazement and fascination with both mystical and ordinary phenomena. The child may not be able to articulate or describe the phenomena, but he/she shows jubilant joy upon seeing them.

- **Being an inventor** involves the passion and desire to understand everything; the goal of everyday consists in discovering and creating new things and looking for new ways to deal with both visible and invisible phenomena.
- **Being a creative expert** involves the presence of innovation in one's creative activity.
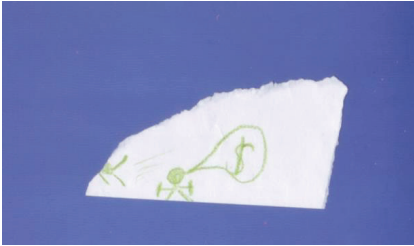

Fig. 11. An original piece of work: Having received an A4 size sheet of paper, a first-grade boy (aged 7) only turned in a scrap sized 7x4 centimeters showing the one thing most important to him in the whole world: two people, the headless one on the left kicking the other one for being a thief.

25 Conclusions of the Analyses for Educators

Using an explorative approach, the goal of the empirical part was to open the discussion on the subject of children's transcending. The conclusions of the analyses outline hypotheses which require further precision and empirical research. The data analysis reveals that we are only at the threshold of understanding this particular aspect of a child's world, and in many aspects this area still remains to be explored in more depth and detail.

Each chapter of the empirical part contains a summary. Therefore, this part only provides a summary of the conclusions for educators. They are formulated as practical suggestions for education according to the way in which they resulted from the above findings and in the sequence which corresponds to the theoretical part of this monograph.

- **A child's transcending** means in particular a non-egocentric (cognitive, conative, and affective) activity aiming in two different directions: the horizontal direction from a person towards what is for the most part visible (such as people, the state, nature, and things) and the vertical direction from a person towards what is for the most part invisible (such as the world as a whole, a higher meaning and order, and extra-sensual phenomena). A child's transcending can also be referred to as *reaching out.* The person's ability and characteristics relating to it are referred to as **transcendence (overlap)**. The higher-order thinking competence represents a specific educational goal which can be transposed into the reality of education. This competence develops through dialogue and common work with children. Its development goes hand in hand with strengthening the ability to think using thoughtful reflection and the child's intuition as well as to share information, emotions, attitudes, experiences, and values. Overlap is developed through dialogue, through the creation of the right climate in the classroom, by following the teacher's example, and by being provided with a vast array of options (school activities).
- **Every child** in the classroom has the ability to reach out and transcend at least verbally. Overlap depends on the child's cognitive development and has its specifics relating to each age group. Preschool children have the ability to accept the uniqueness of certain obvious phenomena and believe that they are real. They have the ability to accept the unacceptable as well as the unbelievable as a possible answer. School-aged children's perception is not based on a visual image. This allows them to develop both types of overlap better hypothetically and practically. The educator should use these positive abilities which are specific to each age group in order to develop transcending in children.
- The teacher should be able to distinguish between the linguistic and the hermeneutical part of an overlap-related statement by understanding that a child only presents partial information about his/her self. Based on the type of

the statement, a child's transcending can be positive or negative, and the verbalized statement and the inner emotions can be in balance. Negative statements (e.g., about death or killing) may not necessarily reveal a tendency for suicide; nevertheless, they can reflect a specific problem being dealt with by the child at that given moment. There is, however, even a third type of a child's transcending. This type can be designated as destructive, since the internal impact can be negative while the external verbalization can be positive. In the case that a child's statements and behavior show a lack of balance, one needs to study the specific causes. Many times it can be a form of the child's cry for help.

- **A child's overlap-related statement** which aims to please the teacher also has a positive potential consisting in audible verbalization. One needs to ask the children not to give answers that would please the teacher but rather to say what they really think of the given overlap-related subject. This shows the irreplaceable role of philosophical discussions with children creating a counterbalance to discussions about their knowledge learned-by-heart , which can give the unpleasant impression of sitting for an examination. Leading children to overlap means providing enough freedom for overlap-related debate in classes as well as defining the boundaries of such a discussion, that is, the appropriateness of bringing up certain issues.
- **The development of overlap within a group** depends on the climate in each classroom and can be supported by a sensitive approach of the teacher, his/her healthy knowledge of the children, and by a good choice of the subject and method. Therefore, while it is possible to give a recommendation as to teaching materials, it is not possible to prescribe the depth and intensity of working with these materials. This shows the need for the teacher's good assessment and creative abilities. The success of education in overlap depends on the quality of the assessment of the group and of its possibilities. Groups can be open, partially-open, or fairly closed to overlap. It depends on the teacher to deal with this situation properly. Forcing children to talk about everything in front of the others at any cost is not desirable and can even cause psychological and spiritual harm to the child. The choice of an appropriate subject goes hand in hand with the assessment of the limits of the given group and with the selected methods and depth of the discussion.
- **Working with a group which is rather closed to overlap** does not exclude dividing the group into smaller subgroups which share the results of their discussion. This leads pupils to selecting information and teaches them that their transcending does not mean revealing or concealing everything, but rather sharing what I can or should share at a right moment. This also develops other competencies (such as problem solving).
- Dealing with overlap, the child should experience both group heterogeneity and homogeneity regardless of the number of classes taught. In the case that a pupil is part of a class fairly open to overlap, he/she should also gain certain experiences from a group including pupils with other reactions. This shows the

importance of inter-class projects, groups consisting of randomly selected children and the inclusion of undisciplined or problematic children.

- Dealing with overlap-related topics, it is necessary for the teacher to present children with transparent emotions. This may not be regarded as crucial by a teacher who considers the topic from different angles.
- Children perceive the world around us with great intensity (a walk through a forest, the space curvature, 3D images, the flight on a plane, etc.). One needs to find the time for them to also articulate this kind of experiences (e.g., during a school trip or outing or at the end of the school year when the atmosphere becomes looser or more relaxed).
- The teacher always selects the overlap-related topics carefully by taking into account the climate in the given class and carefully prepares himself/herself for the presentation in a thoughtful manner (thinking over the methods and didactical materials to be used). He/she creatively presents the topic in a way different from the ordinary way and can organize competitions or give a reward for information relating to overlap-related topics. He/she should, however, not hastily judge any child's opinions which may seem strange to him/her (unless they are contrary to children's rights and freedoms and unless they cause damage to the school's good reputation).
- Given the potential positive consequences both for the child and for society, it is **desirable to achieve an even more intense development of overlap.** Increased resistance (e.g., as a consequence of achieving greater happiness and finding meaning in life) can thus create an added value for both the children and their teacher.
- The question of "where to start" is quite appropriate. It concerns not only the teacher's education but especially involves each educator's effort to think in a new way and to regard oneself, the children, and the world as a whole and his/her class from a new perspective. It also makes one think about that which is able to transcend me as a person and what can make me understand that life is unique, special, and meaningful.

26 Conclusion

This monograph maintained two research objectives. Given the extent of the complexity of the subject, these objectives were fulfilled main in two primary areas. Our goal was to introduce a fairly new term in the sphere of education and to inspire further discussion about this term, which is distinctly appropriate considering its complexity. Transcending (outreach/overlap, transcendence) was defined theoretically as a term, and its significance for the development and formation of human personality in connection with education was analyzed.

Using a specific sample of respondents, the goal of the empirical part was to show that children were able to discuss overlap-related subjects depending on their cognitive processes, their ability to verbalize thoughts and their personal willingness to talk about the subject. The research showed a degree of variability regarding their approach to the content of operationalizations; nevertheless, there was also an agreement concerning the typical signs of a child's development.

A research tool which is tailor-made for understanding children's transcending is one of the important results of this work. This tool has not evolved from a pre-determined terminological operationalization; rather, it is a path from a symbolic, fictive description of overlap to the child's subjective understanding of this term. It is a path from transcendence to immanence.

Referring back to the questions posed by this monograph in the introduction, the following brief answers are provided:

What is the meaning of transcendence for human personality? Transcendence or transcending is an aspect of every individual person. Despite the differences in psychological approaches, there is a unifying idea consisting in the cultivation and strengthening of the personality both internally and externally. Both philosophical and religious concepts refer to phenomena relating not only to a human being but also to something which is beyond him and his full understanding; therefore, illumination is necessary. This involves not only a mystery but in particular the activity of reasoning, which is a higher way of thinking that reaches beyond the existing way of thinking of an individual.

What is the meaning of transcending for children? Transcending as a non-egocentric activity is present in society; however, its development needs to be supported in all directions. The main objective is to empower the individual and to develop and stimulate his/her thinking, so that he/she would be able to act responsibly when provided with an opportunity. In the educational process this means enriching the child and perceiving the mystery that shows the existence of overlap to the teacher.

What is the relationship between transcendence and the curriculum, and can transcendence be considered a key competency? The structure of educational programs depends on the content of this term to a certain extent, despite the fact that it is often not explained. Problems may arise or mainly be found in its practical application and in the specific teaching materials. Transcendence certainly can be

designated as a key competency; however, considering the comprehensibility of the term, it is the higher-order thinking competency which is the closest to the transcending dimension, as it prepares the child both for life and finality.

So what is transcendence after all? It is an equivocal term which has its asymmetrical (i.e., noninterchangeable) specifics in each field. These thought concepts, however, can be interconnected using the Greek term *metanoia* (change, turning, conversion). This gives "turning" education a new characteristic that consists not only in turning *towards* the child but also in a change *within* the child and *within* the teacher. What do I mean by "turning" education which involves a change within the child? It is any educational effort which takes into account the I-You relationship and the relation to the world as a whole; it will be characterized by a continuous reflection that is not afraid to show emotions and by a positive attitude to one's own and other people's physicality, psyche, and spirituality. The transcending dimension of education is always connected with the specific teaching that involves personality development. It is the kind of teaching which regards each child as a unique *You* with unique abilities and distinct possibilities of development. It is a comprehensive and life-long type of education aiming towards both the visible and towards that which is beyond human sight and comprehension.

About the Authors

PhDr. ThDr. Mgr. Noemi Bravená, Ph.D., Th.D. studied theology, psychosocial sciences, applied ethics, ethics, philosophy, religion, and pedagogy. Based on these studies, she is dedicated to exploring interdisciplinary themes. She is presently at the Hussite Theological Faculty where she focuses on religious pedagogy, catechetical, and religious inclusive education. Since 2018 she has been working at Saint John's College in Svatý Jan pod Skalou, where in addition to coaching and instructing the teachers of nursery schools in pre-school pedagogy, didactics, and child diagnostics, she also guides the professional experience of students. She is currently engaged in religious didactics and hermeneutics, general and performance pedagogy, research into children's transcendence, and the problem concerning the migration of Christian refugees. She is a member of The Child Theology Network and has published in the *Jahrbuch für Kindertheologie* periodical. She is one of the most prominent representatives of empirical theology, philosophy, and ethics in relation to preschool and school-aged children. She has participated in the development of didactic materials and expert activities for various churches.

Prof. PhDr. Vladimíra Spilková, CSc. Due to her theoretical, pedagogical, and research activities she ranks among the most important representatives of pedagogical science in the Czech Republic. She has played a major role in the transformation of Czech education after 1989 and in the development of the sciences of education and training. Her work has contributed significantly to the formulation of conceptual bases for the transformation of Czech education. She has participated in a number of specific reform proposals as well as the investigative verification of actual their practice in schools. She is one of the founders of the field of primary education as a new scientific field in the Czech context, which has been critically delineated from the beginning of the nineties to the traditional so-called childless pedagogy as an anthropologically oriented one. By placing an emphasis on the personality-developing concept of education, Professor Spilkova has impressed this field with a distinctive seal of humanistic child-oriented pedagogy. Another key contribution to the development of education and educational sciences is her work in the field of paedeutology, which concerns the theory and research of the teaching profession and of teacher education. Her original and pioneering work concerned the development a reformative concept of teacher education for primary schools in the first half of the 1990s, which has now become the common basis for transforming the education of this category of teachers in all of the pedagogical faculties in the Czech Republic.

Prof. PhDr. Zdeněk Helus, DrSc. (1935-2016). Even though he is not the physical author of this book, without his trust, kindness, passion for pedagogy, erudite scholarship, and his pedagogical legacy, this book would have never been written. Professor Z. Helus is one of the most prominent Czech psychologists with an

international renown whose humanistic conception of the subject with an emphasis on the personal development approach of education has fundamentally influenced the intellectual basis for the transformation of Czech education after 1989. He convincingly formulated the leading idea of the transformation of training and education by emphasizing and reinforcing the anthropological orientation understood as "turning to the child" as an increased awareness of the specific needs and interests of children and the possibilities of their holistic personal development. Helus calls it the "pedestrianism of the new generation" because the ideas of early pedocentrism are updated from the point of view of contemporary contexts. This is seen especially in terms of the concept of a child as a dynamically formed personality, which has his own direction, is capable of self-regulation and personal transcendence; the concept of childhood understood as "a treasure of potential growth and development" which is an increased demand for "the ethics of adulthood regarding childhood" and the changing circumstances of a child's life (changes in family structure, the influence of media, the lack of original and authentic personal experiences, the disturbance children's attention, etc.)

Z. Helus emphasized the importance of a wholesome and healthy childhood for the quality of adult personality, and in the spirit of Comenius's idea of "school as a workshop of humanity," he repeatedly urged that the school be understood as a service to children in order to support their development into true humanity. He emphasized the development of humanity and the "concern for the individual person" in the sense of caring for the development of the personality in all of its complexity and in all its qualities, since care for the soul is at the heart of the concept of the so-called "turning" education. In the Czech context, this concept represents a paradigmatic change in perception concerning the meaning and purpose of education. Helus appealed to the need to overcome the reductionistic concept of education whose aim is only preoccupied with knowledge and skill development. Among the qualities of the personality which form a substantial part of its comprehensive, full-fledged development, he emphasizes moral attitudes and values.

In his work he pays special attention to the significance and importance of the spiritual dimension of mankind, which presents a distinct emphasis in Czech pedagogy, but surely necessary in view of the past. He defines the core qualities of the spiritual dimension and elaborates the paths necessary for their development. He admonishes schools to establish the aptitude of transcendence in children – a transcendence which he understands as a sincere effort to overcome the purpose-built orientation of life and to realize the superficial meaning of human actions. This challenge is offered in order to nurture and establish other important qualities of the spiritual dimension as early as childhood – qualities such as personal identity and the journy toward personal maturity. In this context, education is in the words of Helus "first and foremost serves in the development of a man during his journey in life – a journey upon which he fulfills his own creative work and a task for which he gradually assumes responsibility."

The work of Z. Helus has significantly influenced other fields, especially pre-school and primary pedagogy, general didactics, and paedeutology, that is, the theory

and research of the teaching profession and preparation for it. As the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Charles University, he made a fundamental contribution to transforming the concept of future teacher education. In his studies, he critically analyzes the political, socio-cultural, and spiritual context of contemporary teaching. The current situation is called a crisis of teaching, but at the same time he offers a foundation for overcoming the situational crisis in the form of an education of "turning."

In connection with the concept of an education of turning, Zdeněk Helus emphasizes the anthropological aspects in the teaching profession: teaching as a helping profession should be primarily concerned with the whole person. He reflects on new demands placed on teachers, draws attention to the inadequacy of mere knowledge-based skills, and emphasizes the importance of personality, especially moral qualities, integrity and personal transcendence. He understands the moral qualities of a teacher as an important element of his or her professional tool kit and calls them "pedagogical virtues." He characterized the four key virtues of a teacher: a pedagogy of love (meaning feelings, an understanding, and right ethics towards the child), wisdom (based on scientific knowledge and a reflection upon practical experience), courage (the teacher's decision to defend the child's right to his own personality development and to demand appropriate conditions for him), and credibility (the persuasiveness of the teacher's conduct in terms of offering reliable support along the path of personal development).

The works of Zdenek Helus are extraordinary; they yield a treasure trove of original ideas and theories that provide inspiration and insightful suggestions for the development of many disciplines and fundamental themes of society. With its main emphasis on promoting the overall flourishing of humanity, enhancing the spiritual dimension of personality, and cultivating its importance in humanistic education, the education of "turning" is an important contribution to the transformation of the paradigm in Czech pedagogy as well as in other international contexts. Professor Helus has been honored many times for his work, not only by faculties and universities but also by the National Pedagogical Museum, the Library of J.A. Comenius, the Ministry of Education Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic, and the Hlávková foundation. He suddenly passed away on October 17, 2016.

Appendix 1 – A Partly-structured In-depth Interview with Adult Respondents

Each question can be followed by complementary questions aiming to elaborate on the statements. The different formulations and the order of the questions can vary; some of the questions may be skipped.

Questions:
1. If the Latin word *transcendo* means *reaching out* or *crossing over*, what comes to your mind first when you think of its correlation with the life of a human being?
2. Do you think that there is a difference between a person's everyday reaching out to the world and transcending (outreach) within Helus' intended meaning: "the man does not only focus on himself/herself and his/her everyday worries or joys…" (Helus 2009, s. 105)?
3. If outreach represents a feature which is a sign of a mature character, what do you think is the age when we can find it in an individual?
4. What do you think could be called *overlap* or *pre-overlap* in your childhood?
5. As a child if you had a transcending experience, what did you think about it, and what was the reaction of the others around you?
6. What were the situations and circumstances which provoked overlap in your childhood, youth, and life in general? What were its manifestation and consequences?
7. If you experienced transcending repeatedly, what was the earliest experience you can remember?
8. As a child did you assist with anyone else's transcending experience? If so, how did you feel about it at the time?
9. What do you think are the things you can call a child's outreach today?
10. Can you remember a child whom you have met in person, read about or seen in the media and who definitely experienced transcending / overlapping?
11. What do you think is the relation between overlap and a child's conduct?
12. What do you think is the relation between overlap and the formation of a child's character?
13. What supports and what hinders the development of outreach in a person's life?
14. What do you think is the impact of outreach on a child's socialization?
15. What do you think are the ways to cherish outreach in children? Who should cherish it and how?
16. Is the tendency to outreach desirable? To what extent? Why?

Appendix 2 – Adults' Understanding of *Outreach* / *Transcending* as Terms

General understanding	Statement
Physical outreach	"Some people are big, others are small."
Mental outreach	"Acquiring experience," "reading a lot," "thinking about the way *someone* behaves"
Aim in life (focus)	"A search for quality life," "going beyond one's own possibilities"
A deed	"Doing something that has a deeper meaning," "service to another," "acting in a fair, wise and sensible way," "a sacrifice," "devoting one's life to an activity"
The existence of an objective reality	"An answer to the secret of life"
A subjective fact	"An inner voice which is beyond my possibilities," "deep peace and an unshakeable hope that everything is the way it should be," "not submitting to one's human nature," "special human abilities," "another dimension in a person"
Impossible to understand	"Dreams come true, a feeling of *déja-vu*"
Education	"A goal of education which is beyond our existing abilities"

Philosophical and religious understanding	Statement
An extra-sensual relation	"A relation to God," "faith in God," "Religion"
Values	"Love," "hope"
Extra-religiosity	"A spiritual level"
An eschatological dimension	"Life after life"
A person's ability	"The ability to think about God "

Appendix 3 – Talking about Heroes: A Brief Content Analysis of Children's Statements

The research included 62 second-, third- and fourth-graders attending Petrovice elementary school and 25 children attending Hurbartova elementary school. Altogether, the research involved 87 children.[134]

The horizontal non-anthropological hero

The interviews show that boys prefer phantasy heroes, while girls prefer animal heroes. The preference, however, is not determined by the heroism itself but rather by the possibility of having a relationship (care-taking) with such a hero. Both boys and girls regard animal symbols as heroes, especially because their deeds are performed for the benefit of people.

A dog hero guards the house, helps firefighters and policemen, protects people, etc. The number of answers saying that a dog helps blind people was higher in classes with integrated children.

An owl guards the forest and is clever. Children associate wisdom with cleverness. Young children know the owl character from "The Story of Krtek" ("The Little Mole"). The influence of films turned out to be crucial in facilitating the understanding of this abstract term.

A winged horse (Pegasus, according to first-to-third-graders) helps people, looks nice, "saves good people and can do magic tricks" (a nine-year old child).

A fox (according to fourth-graders): Children do not associate a fox with heroism; some children do not know the story of the Little Prince. This is determined by the family and school, as this book is part of the compulsory reading list only later. The interview therefore concentrates on the fox' activity which is summarized by the following statement: "Goodbye," said the fox. "And now here is my secret, a very simple secret: It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eyes." Children aged nine to eleven considered life, friendship, air, love of their parents, helping others, and studying to be the most important things in life. This shows their preference of relationships.

The horizontal anthropological hero

Young children mostly focus on the description of the hero's outward appearance; they usually employ only one word to talk about his/her activity. Older children, on the other hand, mostly focus on the activity of real heroes using clear examples and describing specific situations. People who are considered real heroes by children include policemen, firefighters, and medical doctors (emphasizing that a doctor saves people's lives).

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[134] A more detailed analysis of the philosophical understanding of the individual heroes was presented in a foreign article entitled *Philosophizing and Theologizing with, for, and by children as a Path toward the Integrated Development of Children's Transcending in a Post-Communist Society and Its Place in the Reform Efforts of the Czech Educational Approach of Turning to the Child* (Bravená 2014).

According to children, the heroism of unreal characters consists in helping others by using supernatural powers. The heroism of real people is, on the other hand, differentiated and specified by older children. Heroism means saving someone's life, solving an unsolvable problem ("my Dad made the computer work again"), or enduring pain ("my sister survived an eye surgery," "my Dad survived a tooth extraction"). One child mentions the garbage collector. This does not seem to be a heroic occupation at first sight, but the child explains that the garbage collector's heroism consists in taking away garbage so we do not drown in it." The children cannot find other professions involving the element of overlap apart from medical doctors and scientists. It turned out, however, that adult people could not see the importance of an administrative worker for the well-being of humanity either. Generally, they do not realize that if everyone were a medical doctor, there would be no one else to do the other jobs.

Children associate their own heroism mostly with the possibility of saving someone's life or becoming someone important; they do not associate it with everyday life. Children who did not consider themselves important at all were found in all the three groups.

An ordinary person

As children do not associate heroism with everyday life, they were offered a synonym: the "importance" of a person or of a deed. The children state three reasons for the importance of people's occupations:

a) The creation of some particular work: "He writes books for children" (a seven-year-old girl); "because he makes medicines" (an eight-year-old girl).

b) The person's abilities: "Because she is creative" (a nine-year-old girl); "he can do it" (an eight-year-old boy).

c) One's own profit and benefit: "So you can see" (a seven-year-old girl); "because he wants to get really rich" (a nine-year-old boy); "to get trophies from ballet competitions" (a nine-year-old girl); "because she likes it" (a seven-year-old boy); "so that people would like him" (a seven-year-old boy); "he is interested in it so he does it," "because he wants that" (an eight-year-old girl); "because he can do it and he likes it" (a nine-year-old boy); "it is his interest" (a nine-year-old boy).

d) The benefit for another person: "Because we like it" (an eight-year-old girl); "to be able to get the Czech Nightingale Mattoni Award" (a nine-year-old girl); "to get something new" (a nine-year-old boy); "he wants to become the best scientist" (a nine-year-old boy); "to find out new things you can do in life" (a nine-year-old girl); "so that he can invent antidote" (a nine-year-old boy).

Some of the children did not answer why the hero did something but rather said what the hero did instead.

Children do not associate heroism with specific people. However, they are able to react when being asked about the aspect of importance in specific people. The following types of people are examples:

A person appreciated by the society

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A wise man: Children usually associate wisdom with intelligence or education: "You can tell that a person is wise from the fact that he/she wears glasses. The reason is that he/she has read a lot and impaired his/her vision." "A wise person has a mega-brain" (a fourth-grader). "An owl is smart too because you can find it in fables" (a third-grader), "because it guards the forest," or "it can give you advice" (a third-grader). Most children agree that a child can be wise too. They also agree that a child can be "a little bit wise" because he/she is only little. Some say that a child is unwise because he/she is not adult (a fourth-grader). If a child is wise, he/she is "wise in being naughty" (a second-grader). The children differentiated between wisdom and wise behavior. They associate wisdom with ingenuity, fun, and generosity. Younger children, however, associate wise conduct with helping others. A seven-year old girl gave a clear example of a child's wise conduct: "I think I was acting a bit wisely when we were on a playground and a friend got stuck in a climbing frame, and I went to get his parents." Children also mention Gandalf in this connection: "He was important because he can do magic tricks and helps hobbits" (a third-grader) "and he is wise." The visual appearance of the old man archetype is also perceived by children.

The best teacher: The teacher should be a model of overlap for children. Children, however, perceive the teacher's overlap as a trait of his/her character as a whole. Most children answer that their class teacher is obviously the best teacher. The reason for this consists in their positive emotions ("she is nice, she likes us") and experience ("she teaches us various things," "she wears glasses"). She is wise because she "helps children," and "she can make us laugh when we are sad" (a second-grader).

A loving parent: Parents can also do something special and important. This involves overlap in relating to the child himself/herself. The answers included statements such as "parents do something special and important because they take care of us," "my Mum did an important thing because she gave us life and survived the delivery" (fourth-graders), or "she cooks meals for us" (a second-grader). Caring for someone else stirs positive emotions in children.

A best friend: Children have good friends (both boys and girls). When talking about best friends, they also mention animals such as a "a firefighter's dog" or a "police dog" (second-graders) and Jesus (religious children).

The vertical hero

Choosing among three pictures, most of the children chose the angel. An angel is supposed to "protect and bring good luck" (an eleven-year boy) and "look after me" (a ten-year boy). A guardian angel "is with us all the time and guards us" (a nine-year girl), "turns evil into good" (a nine-year girl), "helps children and people and wears pajamas" (a nine-year boy), "can guard us when the devil wants to take us to hell," "can fight" (a ten-year boy). Those who decided for baby Jesus gave the following three types of argument:

1) Tradition: Christmas and presents (a nine-year girl), the reason to celebrate Christmas (a   nine-year girl);

2) History: "He was at the beginning of time" (a ten-year old boy);

3) Ethics and religion: "He helps" (a nine-year-old girl).

Only a few children chose the praying person, whose important activity consisted in the fact that the person "was able to pray" (a nine-year-old boy; a ten-year-old boy; a nine-year-old girl).

A wise man or a wise child: Children (even unbelievers) usually know the wise men characters from the Christmas story. The role of the wise men (magi) is to protect baby Jesus and give advice. According to children, Jesus can be a wise man too. One four-grader said that he is the stone (meaning "the philosophers' stone"). "Wise men looked like people," "they knew everything and were able to find their way by looking at the stars," "they are just," and "they helped baby Jesus" (second-graders).

A saint: Children know saints mostly from art including pictures and statues. They are usually able vaguely suggest vaguely that they did something special and important. Only religious children associate one's importance with faith and an exemplary life of faith. Most of the children associate a person's importance with his/her aureole: "The aureole means that he was saint and good" and "that he was in heaven" (fourth-graders). There was one child who suggested that the aureole with stars was a sign that the saint had bumped his head. The saint was the type of hero involving the closest correlation between vertical and horizontal outreach in the children's statements.

Appendix 4 – The Inputs from the Pre-research among Children Used for the Creation of a Research Tool

Certain motives turned out to be good, so they were kept and further developed during the research.

1) The Phantasy Hero

The phantasy hero is a key subject in young children. In older children, however, it appears only as a symbol of the ideal serving for the confrontation of one's actions.

2) The Horizontal Hero

The animal hero must be extended as the outreach towards one's surroundings is symbolized not only by animals, but by the whole cosmos. In addition to this, the universe combines both types of outreach: horizontal (because we are part of the universe) and vertical (because we are transcended by its mysteriousness). This natural outreaching character of the universe was also highlighted by Buber.

The ordinary adult hero must be further extended to make it a dominant motive. This is a reaction to the answers which were provided by the children during the pre-research and which related to the hero's activity: some particular created work, certain abilities, one's own profit and benefit, and another's profit and benefit.

The interviews show that children do not perceive themselves as heroes or as important people. Nevertheless, drawing a picture, they all showed that they had ideas about their heroism or importance. Neither their surroundings nor the society support their dreams using supporting activities, and sometimes they even hinder their existence. The question is how to deal with a child's importance in a new way. One question that could be asked is the following: "Who am I important to and what for?" As for older children, one can focus on the term "Self" and the relation to other people; in this case the question "What is a Self?" is quite appropriate.

Family and friendship turned out to be strong and attractive subjects. In fact, they are a key subject for all of the children. This also covers terms such as sacrifice for another person, which was brought up during the pre-research in connection with saints and which provoked hardly any reaction or response on the part of the children. In fact, two girls from the second and third grade said the following: "He has stars around his head because he bumped it" (a symbolic folk description of a headache caused by impact); and "it is a symbol of the European Union." Dealing with older children, one needs to focus more on the meaning of friendship and on the dilemmas faced when dealing with *You* (e.g., should someone tell a friend everything or not?).

3) The Vertical Hero

The anthropologically and historically documented type of a hero stirred only a minor reaction in children. I left out the symbol of a saint from my research. I only kept the symbol of a wise man; however, it is necessary to replace it with a term which is easier to understand. The symbol of an owl or of the sun seems to be appropriate. Children know the wise owl symbol and have an idea of what wise conduct is based on the Czech children's "Story of Krtek" ("The Little Mole"). The personified sun symbol, however, incorporates a greater deal of mysteriousness. Wisdom can be emphasized by the use of glasses, as children tend to associate glasses with wisdom (see the appendix). Older children can be inspired by Gandalf, a film character from the *Lord of the Rings*. As for older children, one can also personify conscience using the form of a mysterious character.

The scientifically impugnable hero: With the exception of religiously-socialized children, baby Jesus remains to be perceived as a symbol of Christmas and Christmas gifts. More children articulated their experience with an angel and, especially thanks to his guardian function, the angel tends to represent a stronger motive than baby Jesus. The guardian angel terminology plays a significant role in their understanding. Due to the fact that even religiously non-socialized children believe in his existence, the angel seems to represent one of the main vertical-outreach-related subjects. Of course, talking about an angel, religiously-educated children also mention God as the One who reigns over the angels. Children's invisible friends (such as the tooth fairy, a dwarf, etc.) represent another topic that would be worth studying in more detail. One of the reasons for this is that there has been international research conducted on the subject, so the results could be compared and confirmed. Most young children are convinced of the existence of invisible friends, yet while dealing with a phantasy hero they know that he/she is not real. Based on the children's understanding, I do not classify invisible friends as phantasy heroes.

Appendix 5 – The Story of the Araxan: The Internal Text Division

Unit	Topics: Horizontal Outreach	Topics: Vertical Outreach	The Story of the Araxan	Number in the Text
Cosmology		The universe (what is it? Expansion vs. infinity, a beginning and an end, man as part of the universe)	The Araxan live far out in the universe on the A2 planet.	1
Bios, thanatos, aeternitas	Responsible concern for one's own life (the blue tree)		Three kinds of fruit: Red fruit = food Green fruit = a cure against any type of illness Yellow fruit = longevity, immortality	2
		The end of life	If the tree withers, the Araxan have to leave the planet.	5
		Life after life	A spaceship comes and takes the Araxan to a place where they do not need to worry about anything any longer.	5
Relation to the environment. to others, and to oneself	Caring for planet Earth		The planet speaks and tells its inhabitants when it is in pain and where it hurts.	3
	Sacrifice for another person		They would do anything for each other. The Araxan boy in the picture offers the Araxan girl a piece of yellow fruit which was meant for him.	7
		An invisible friend vs. a visible friend; the relation to such a friend	Each Araxan has a secret friend (a dwarf, the tooth fairy, an angel, baby Jesus, God, etc.).	9
	Who am I important to? What makes me the most special? What can I do best?	The feeling of unity with the cosmos	Every Araxan believes that he/she is the most special and important being in the whole universe.	11
Mankind's values	Art and its beauty, joy from art; Why is it here?		Araxans like drawing, singing making statues, and the like.	8
	The source of wisdom; wisdom; What is life and how are we supposed to live it?		The sun is wise.	6
	Good and evil: where do they come from?		The sun gives advice.	6
	Who is good and who is bad?		The relations between Araxan men and Araxan women	4,6,7
	Love		The relation to another person and to the family	7
Future and the meaning of life	What would I like to be, what would I like to do?		Araxan is a superhero, but he also has an everyday occupation: he grows blue trees.	2
	Does heroism depend on anything higher than supernatural powers? Can a child become a hero too? If so, in what area?	Is there anything higher or anything of importance to our life?	Araxan would like to be like another person. If his wish came true, would he still be a superhero?	12,13

Appendix 6 – Johnny's Dream: The Internal Text Division

Unit	Topics: Horizontal Outreach	Topics: Vertical Outreach	Johnny's Dream	Number in the Text
Cosmology	Is what we see real? How can we tell that it is real?	The universe (what is it? Expansion vs. infinity, a beginning and an end, man as part of the universe)	Using his binoculars, Johnny can see all of the planets, galaxies, and black holes.	1
Bios, thanatos, aeternitas	Responsible concern about one's own life		The old man tells Johnny to think more about his life.	8
		The end of life	How long does a man live? (the infinity of the universe vs. the finality of a man); The old man tells Johnny to think about his life. Where does it begin and where does it end?	1, 8
		Life after life	The dawn: the sun looked like a gate to another world.	3
Relation to the environment, to others, and to oneself	Caring for planet Earth; Is that heroic?		Johnny addresses the plant and tells it that he should take better care of it.	4
	The relation to a friend			7, 10
	Sacrifice for another person		Unlike the plant, Johnny would do anything for his friend and family.	6, 12
	The relation to the family		The mother character.	12
		An invisible friend vs. a visible friend; the relation to such a friend	Johnny can see an angel.	11
	The relation to *Myself:* Who is the real *Me*?		Johnny can hear his own voice talking on the cell phone and saying, "I am your real Self. I am not what other people see; I am what you really are and want."	2
	Satisfaction with oneself		The dialogue with his schoolmate Klara	10
		The feeling of unity with nature	Johnny and his looking into the garden	13
Mankind's values	Art and its beauty; joy from art; why is it here?	Art and the invisible world	The dialogue with the old man	9
	Wisdom and the source of wisdom; What is life and how are we supposed to live it?		The old man character (with an intentional similarity to Gandalf)	8
	Conscience; good and evil		The veiled character	6
	Love		The relation to another person and to the family	12,6
Future and the meaning of life	School as a way to the future (showing a positive motivation for studying)		Johnny has to do his homework fast. When can you experience this?	12
	Going beyond one's shadow		The dialogue with his schoolmate Klara	10
	Occupation	Something higher above us, something that gives meaning and purpose to our life	Johnny thinks about his occupation and about the meaning of life	13

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This interdisciplinary book sets forth the goal of introducing and critically addressing a new paradigm of thought based on the concepts of transcending, transcendence, and overlap as well as defining these terms in reference to children, their personality, and socialization. For many readers the concept of transcendence is mainly identified with the fields of theology or philosophy. This book seeks to demonstrate that the concept of transcendence is intricately connected with psychology, the philosophy of education, and general pedagogy. It aims to discover unity in plurality and to define the term "transcendence" in relation to the educational process. The author raises the question whether transcendence ("not being con cerned o nly with one's own self") is a concept of cross-curricular education and whether every school subject is able to develop the transcendent dimension of children, an important dimension which the author calls the competence of higher-order thinking. Here a new pedagogical paradigm is defined with the support of some Czech authors (Helus, Spilková, Patočka, Pelcová, etc.) and several quotations from the Czech curriculum; thus, a careful reflection upon this significant work will allow the reader to recognize that this new paradigm is applicable in any country of the world where the state has a primary interest in promoting the flourishing of human values and pursuing that which is considered good by society. Religious pedagogy is embedded in the entire array of fields aimed at developing the transcendent dimension of children, and therefore it plays an equal role within the overall framework of the education of children.