Recent Research Approaches in Anthroposophic Music Therapy

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Oral presentation: content

- Short historical background of anthroposophic music therapy
- Basic principles, formulated in conceptual research (Odulf Damen)
- Treatment program, formulated in Delphi research to professional experiences (tacit knowledge, best practice)
- Effectstudy: Changes in respiration, heart rate and state of mind while hearing live music (Viola Heckel)
Introduction: short historical background

- **1920:**
  - First concepts, formulated by Steiner (1920, psycho-physiological background), Werbeck-Svärtström (1925, singing therapy) and Pracht (1925, development of a new kind of lyre)
  - Aim: to apply spiritual insights in professional healthcare
- **Since 1950:**
  - First educations in Germany and The Netherlands
  - PhD research: Lievegoed (1983)
- **Since 1980:**
  - Private educations in Germany, Switzerland, America, Ukrain, Russia; stately recognised education in Holland (since 2006)
  - Recent research: Bieligmeyer e. a.(2014); Heckel (2015); Damen (2014)
Basic principles

• Formulating coherences between musical and humanly processes, based on the view of the threefold and fourfold constitution of the human being
• Phenomenology of musical experiences and processes as a base for the therapeutic process
• Salutogenetic concept of the operating mechanism: supporting the ability to adapt and self manage in the face of social, physical, and emotional challenges (Huber e.a., 2011)
Threefold model of coherence between musical and human processes

• Musical experience is above all an activity of feeling and emotion.
• This emotional experience is directly connected with blood circulation (the musical pulse) and breath (the musical phrasing).
• The element that immediately touches our feelings is harmony with its different colours of major-, minor- and dissonant chords. It is also related very close to timbre, which is a mean for expressing feelings and emotions.
• From this point of view you can say: musical experience starts ‘in the middle’ of the human constitution. (Ruland, 1990; Damen, 2014).
Threefold model of coherence between musical and human processes

- Melody is connecting feeling with the activity of the nerve/sense system.
- It is built of clear lines: musical motives, thoughts, sentences and structures of clearly defined pitches.
- One could say: Melody is the activity of thinking without thoughts, thinking in tones and feelings (Ruland, 1990; Damen, 2014).
Threefold model of coherence between musical and human processes

- Rhythm is bringing us into movement, is connected directly to pulse. It is able to activate.
- Rhythm brings the energetic flow into music. And rhythm has a tendency to dynamics.
- One could say: Rhythm is musical willing (Ruland, 1990; Damen, 2014).
Threefold model of coherence between musical and human processes: overview

**Functional system**

- nerve/sense system (thinking and perception)
- rhythmic system (feeling)
- motor-metabolic system (willing)

**Musical elements**

- tone, melody
- sound, timbre
- harmony
- expression, dynamic
- rhythm
Consequences of the threefold model for application in music therapy

1. The threefold model of music and the human being can be a help for interpreting musical behaviour
2. It can be used in formulating music therapeutic goals, for example:
   – Melody: activating concentration and remembrance, processes of reflecting and contemplating
   – Harmony: stimulating expression and consciousness of feelings, exploring contact possibilities
   – Rhythm: movement stimulation, experiencing willpower, acting together
**Music therapeutic treatment program for mentally handicapped children with attachment disorder**  
A Delphi study of best practices (Damen & Szabo, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music therapeutic treatment goals</th>
<th>Phase of treatment/Important musical mean</th>
<th>Observed results</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I  Sense of security</td>
<td>Stabilisation &gt; Harmony</td>
<td>Engagement with the therapy and contact with the therapist; engagement with the residence</td>
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<td>II  Self-awareness; bodily experience; inner calmness</td>
<td>Stabilisation &gt; Harmony, melody</td>
<td>Letting go of dysfunctional behaviour patterns, like overly controlling situations</td>
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<td>III Self-confidence; motivation for action</td>
<td>Stabilisation/ Processing &gt; Rhythm</td>
<td>Motivation for learning and exploring new activities (instead of rejecting)</td>
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<td>IV Recognize feelings and emotions; mentalization</td>
<td>Stabilisation/ Processing &gt; Harmony, expression</td>
<td>Awakening of self-consciousness; possibility to speak about (difficult) situations</td>
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<td>V Exploring contact possibilities</td>
<td>Stabilisation/ Processing &gt; Rhythm, harmony</td>
<td>Pleasure in musical interplay; adaptation</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI Handle with structure and boundaries in behaviour/Acting according to rules and respecting boundaries</td>
<td>Stabilisation/ Processing/ Integration &gt; Rhythm, melodic patterns</td>
<td>Accepting rules and authority; participating in group activities</td>
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<td>VII Coping with stress and emotions</td>
<td>Processing/Integration</td>
<td>Declining aggression and other behaviour problems</td>
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Literature