

ABSTRACT

Pirkanmaa Polytechnic
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TYNYS, SAMI: Symbolic language in music therapy of psychiatric client.

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The function of this qualitative study is the study of signification of symbolic language in music therapy of psychiatric client. The study brings out the usefulness of methods such as improvisation and listening to music, brings out how symbolic language appears in music therapy process. Further, study aims to develop methods put into practice. Material of this study is a supportive music group therapy in psychiatric outpatient care. In period of four months twelve clients took part in complementary group.

The study is based on the assumption that the psychic state aroused by performing and listening of music seems to accelerate the individual's psychic, symbolic working and bring forth such unconscious information that could otherwise remain unattainable in verbal treatment. The symbolic language is considered as communication which is manifested in symbolic play in potential space between client and therapist. Music offers a parallel reality in which it is possible to achieve different views on time, offers client a possibility to become aware of and express inner feelings. Music therapy aims to reduce psychic affliction and produces positive experiences.

The researcher took part in the therapy group and collected material by observing the clients. Methodological instrument was thematic classification. The results show that the therapist and music can both be a source of structure and sense of security. These elements allow the symbolic play in the potential space between therapist and client. The symbolic play is threatened by client's inner impulses, motivation, engagement and group pressure. Verbal and musical communication on therapists behalf is required for the play to succeed. In the reality of music it seems to be possible to raise memories, deal with the present and outline the future. Music was found to accelerate client's psychic and symbolic working, also it increased verbal communication between client and therapist. Therapist can increase verbal communication by his/her images from music produced or selected by client. Using different media, therapist was able to establish an overall idea of psychic world of a client. Client could express inner feelings or ideas that couldn't be expressed verbally through music. Also, the client was able to attach music, lyrics, sound and images to his/her experiences, thoughts, problems, goals, emotions and body.

Keywords: Symbol, psychodynamic, music therapy, play, thematic classification, communication.