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THE USE OF MUSIC THERAPY STRATEGIES
TO ENHANCE THE GENERAL MILIEU IN A
REHABILITATION CENTRE.

BY

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ABSTRACT

This research focused on how music therapy strategies could be used to improve the milieu in a rehabilitation centre in a New Zealand city. Residents in the rehabilitation centre had difficulty interacting with each other. I planned to use a Community Music Therapy approach to address residents' social needs. The research methodology was Action Research which involves the study of one's own practice. Cycles of learning led to the introduction of more 'open' groups and the use of the 'sharing concert' as a vehicle for promoting interaction between residents, staff, and family members, and staff and children at an early childhood centre. I examined the group dynamics, encouraged residents to move from small groups to bigger group or even open groups, and began to challenge them to take responsibility for individual tasks for their own and others' benefit. Through interactive music making, the residents improved understanding about conversation courtesy; their motivation for active participation increased as they developed a sense of togetherness, and appreciation for their community. They enjoyed interacting with the wider community also, and had the wish to 'branch out'. Further, the action research changed my understanding and leadership style: I learnt to gradually move from an aesthetic focus and into a supportive role as residents prepared for "their own concert".

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1. BACKGROUND	1
1.1 RESEARCH QUESTION	3
1.2 AIMS OF THE THESIS	3
1.3 LAYOUT OF THE THESIS	3
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	4
2. INTRODUCTION	4
2.1 MUSIC THERAPY	4
2.2 COMMUNITY MUSIC THERAPY	4
2.3 GROUP MUSIC THERAPY	7
2.4 MUSIC THERAPY FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE PHYSICAL OR NEUROLOGICAL DISABILITIES	8
2.5 COMMUNITY MUSIC THERAPY AND ACTION RESEARCH	9
2.6 SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEW	10
CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND METHODS	11
3. INTRODUCTION	11
3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	11
3.2 METHODOLOGY-ACTION RESEARCH	12
3.3 ACTION RESEARCH-DESIGN AND METHODS	13
3.3.1 Ethical Issues	14
3.3.2 Recruitment	15
3.3.3 Data Gathering	15
3.3.4 Data Analysis	16
3.3.5 Researcher’s Personal Position	19
CHAPTER FOUR: MY STARTING POINT	20
4. INTRODUCTION	20
4.1. CATEGORIES FROM THE FIRST CONCERT	20
4.2 SUMMARY OF THE FIRST CONCERT	25
4.3 CATEGORIES FROM THE FIRST INTERVIEW	26
4.3.1 Introduction	26
4.3.2 Categories from the First Interviews	26
4.3.3 Expansion on the Categories for the First Interviews	26
4.4 SUMMARY OF THE FIRST INTERVIEW	29
4.5 SUMMARY OF THE STARTING POINT SECTION	30
CHAPTER FIVE: FINDING FROM ACTION RESEARCH CYCLES	31
5. INTRODUCTION	31
5.1 CYCLE 1: PREPARTION FOR ECC CONCERT	31
5.1.1 Planning	31
5.1.2 Action	32
5.1.3 Reflection	34
5.1.4 Things to Improve	36
5.2 CYCLE 2: PRACTICE FOR ECC CONCERT (SECOND CONCERT)	37
5.2.1 Planning	37
5.2.2 Action	37

5.2.3 Reflection	38
5.2.4 Things to Improve	41
5.3 CYCLE 3: ECC CONCERT (THE SECOND CONCERT)	42
5.3.1 Planning	42
5.3.2 Action	42
5.3.3 Reflection	43
5.3.4 Things to Improve	44
5.4 CYCLE 4: PREPARING FOR THE PRE-CHRISTMAS CONCERT, AND RE- GROUPING	45
5.4.1 Planning	45
5.4.2 Action	45
5.4.3 Reflection	48
5.4.4 Things to Improve	50
5.5 CYCLE 5: OPEN GROUP	51
5.5.1 Planning	51
5.5.2 Action	51
5.5.3 Reflection	54
5.5.4 Things to Improve	55
5.6 CYCLE 6: PRE-CHRISTMAS CONCERT (THE THIRD CONCERT)	56
5.6.1 Planning	56
5.6.2 Action	56
5.6.3 Reflection	58
5.6.4 Things to Improve	59
5.7 SUMMARY OF ACTION CYCLES	60
CHAPTER SIX: FINDING FROM SECOND INTERVIEWS	61
6. INTRODUCTION	61
6.1 CATEGORIES FROM THE END INTERVIEWS	61
6.2 EXPANSION ON CATEGORIES FROM THE SECOND INTERVIEW	62
6.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE SECOND INTERVIEW	65
CHAPTER SEVEN: ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	66
7.1 WHAT MUSIC THERAPY STRATEGIES DID I USE	66
7.2 HOW DID THE MUSIC THERAPY STRATEGIES IMPROVE THE MILIEU	66
CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION	68
8. INTRODUCTION	68
8.1 DISCUSSION OF FINDING IN RELATION TO THE LITERATURE	68
8.1.1 Music Therapy Strategies Empowered the Institutionalised Adults	68
8.1.2 Open Groups Can Help the Residents to Adapt To Changes in the Milieu ...	70
8.1.3 Group Dynamics Was an Important Part of Working with Music Therapy Groups	71
8.1.4 Music Therapy Strategies Improved Sense of Belonging:	72
8.1.5 Recreation of Community	74
8.1.6 Traditional or Community Music Therapy	76
8.1.7 The Research Changed My Thinking	77
8.1.8 Summary	77
8.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS	78
8.2.1 Research Design: Action Research	78
8.2.2 Limitation On Data Collection: Interview Participants	78
8.2.3 Limitation on Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis	78
8.2.4 Peer Debriefing	79
8.2.5 Re-define the Word Milieu during the Research	79

8.3 FURTHER RESEARCH.....	80
8.3.1 Data Collection: Systematic Observation and Reflection.....	80
8.3.2“Real Life Music” Re-wires the Brain.....	80
8.3.3 Milieu Music Might Be an Interesting Topic in Further Research	81
8.4 IMPLICATION FOR OTHER MUSIC THERAPISTS.....	82
8.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH	82
CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION	83
REFERENCES.....	84
Appendix 1 Advertisement to staff members.....	90
Appendix 2: Information sheet for staff members	91
Appendix 3: Consent form for staff members.....	94
Appendix 4: Interview guideline for staff interviewees.....	96
Appendix 5: Information sheet for residents.....	97
Appendix 6: Consent form for residents	99
Appendix 7: Interview guidelines for resident interviewees.....	101
Appendix 8: Authority for the release of transcripts form for staff and resident interviewees.....	102
Appendix 9: Example of Observation and Reflection	103
Appendix: 10: Examples of Interview Transcripts	104
Appendix 11: Examples of analyzing Observation and Reflection	105
Appendix 12: Examples of analyzing Interview Transcripts	107