

Abstract

Music Therapy in the Faroese Child Protection Services

This thesis is about an internship in Tórshavn in The Faroe Islands, and about music therapy with children and young people at risk.

A close cross professional collaboration between the primary contact persons and the music therapist has ensured partly transparent boundaries between music therapy and the child's every day life

One of the three children participating in a combination of individual and group therapy was 12 years old X. He was referred to music therapy because the professional caregivers felt they were losing contact with him. Nothing seemed to interest him.

X was happy with the sessions of individual music therapy, but initially he did not feel like participating in group therapy. But although he expressed that to the adults at the orphanage before every group session he showed up anyway. Why?

In individual therapy as well as group therapy there were no verbal interventions but a lot of communication music based on both a recreational- and a improvisational music therapeutic approach.

In this thesis musical material from 4 individual sessions and 1 group session is selected for micro analysis through a modified version of Tony Wigram's Event Based Analysis (EBA) combined with syntactic descriptions and illustrations of notes from selected cuts from the improvisations. New knowledge is demanded to reveal whether these analyses of the musical improvisations can reflect a development of X's way of participating and relating to others.

The infrastructure model was a contributing factor to enable the combination of individual- and group based music therapy with these very vulnerable children. In this predominantly musical and none verbal therapy, feedback became an important benchmark tool to describe, how the musical processes in therapy reflected X's life outside therapy.

Musical data were discussed, based on a developmental psychology concept, related to Bruce Perry's theory of six interdependent core strengths. These first three core areas: Attachment, Regulation and Participation in a group, are central concepts in this investigation. Here the question is raised as to whether these areas can develop in music therapy sessions, primarily based on improvisational music. And whether the combination of individual- and group music therapy can be an attractive offer to a boy so vulnerable that, as a starting point, it would not be logic to expect, that he would profit from this.

After the termination of the internship, responses from questionnaire filled out by the two primary professional caregivers were analyzed, from a phenomenological, inductive approach, and used for triangulation of data of the results from the musical analyses.

There was a very high correspondence in the findings of the musical analysis with the changes that the persons around X had observed, since the beginning of music therapy.