CORE ELEMENTS OF THE BONNY METHOD OF GUIDED IMAGERY AND MUSIC

Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) is a music-assisted integrative therapy which facilitates explorations of consciousness that can lead to transformation and wholeness. It evolved as a method through the research and practice of Helen L. Bonny, Ph.D. In its one-on-one application it is known as The Bonny Method of Guided imagery and Music.

CONSCIOUSNESS

Consciousness, the totality of thoughts, images, perceptions, emotions, etc., available to human awareness, can be experienced through many phenomena. Intentional exploration of these phenomena can lead to expanded self-awareness, healing, transformation, spiritual growth, and lasting positive changes in behavior.

In The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, explorations of consciousness: are music-activated journeys through sensory, biographical, somatic, symbolic, and archetypal imagery experiences; expand the individual’s perception of wholeness by affirming the sense of connection to realities which transcend the personal; require that a trained facilitator refine intuition, openness, clinical skill, musical awareness, ethics, and spirituality in order to respond to the dynamics of these explorations; provide the context in which integration of complex inner experiences can occur.

ALTERED STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Altered states of consciousness (ASC), the varieties of perceptual experiences, such as meditative states, hypnotic states, and dream states, are qualitatively different from normative waking state experiences. These states, when induced and experienced with therapeutic intent, can serve positive functions within the healing process.

In The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, ASC experiences, induced and supported by trained facilitators: enable a multidimensional connection and interaction with music and imagery; facilitate the emergence of both positive and problematic aspects of the individual psyche; provide access to peak experiences containing healing processes not available in waking states; engender a unique and insightful rapport between the individual and the trained facilitator.

MUSIC

Music, the dynamic art of sound in time, is capable of engaging the total being of the listener as it enlivens the realm of inner experiences. Intentional listening to music in an altered state of consciousness can bring about an internalized sense of order, balance, and harmony, as well as a sense of connection to the pulse and movement of consciousness.

In The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, specifically chosen classical music is utilized to:
initiate movement within the individual psyche;
provide structures for therapeutic work;
evoke and support varied responses and reactions; 
support and sustain ASC experiences.

**METHOD**
The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music is identified by the use of specifically chosen classical music programs within a one-on-one session, or series of sessions, conducted by a facilitator formally trained in this method. These sessions are characterized by a patterned progression of components which give shape, continuity, and a sense of safety to the therapeutic process. A session in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music includes:

**PREPARATION**
The facilitator and client engage in a preliminary discussion which may include biographical information, goal-setting, and current concerns or feelings. The facilitator provides verbal suggestions to relax the body and focus the mind of the client, thereby assisting the client’s entry into an altered state of consciousness. The facilitator chooses a music program appropriate to the client’s readiness to pursue therapeutic process.

**INTERACTIVE MUSIC EXPERIENCE**
The client listens to the music and expresses the imagery evoked by it. The facilitator interacts verbally with the client in ways which support and enhance the client’s music and imagery experiences.

**CLOSURE**
At the ending of the music program, the facilitator assists the client’s return to a waking state of consciousness.

**INTEGRATION**
Integration of the session experiences proceeds through reflective discussion and/or expressive activities immediately following the music, as well as throughout the period of therapeutic process.
CORE ELEMENTS OF TRAINING IN THE BONNY METHOD OF GUIDED IMAGERY AND MUSIC

Training in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music is designed to provide persons with the concepts, applications, skills, and ethics necessary to become facilitators of this method. The curricula of the diverse training programs are based on a common understanding of The Core Elements of The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music. Through a combination of didactic, experiential, and evaluative components, each training program prepares persons to develop the knowledge and the skills necessary to implement The Core Elements.

METHOD

Training in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music:
depthens persons’ understandings of The Core Elements of The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music; provides opportunities for persons to experience, identify, demonstrate, and practice the concepts, skills, processes, and ethics unique to this method;
prepares persons to apply these concepts, skills, and processes ethically in a variety of therapeutic settings; motivates persons to continue to explore the potentials of this method.

CONSCIOUSNESS

Training in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music: assists persons to broaden their therapeutic paradigms; increases persons’ comprehensions of the significance of imagery experiences; encourages persons to acknowledge the integrity of ASC experiences;
challenges persons to recognize the diversity of explorations of consciousness provided by this method.

MUSIC

Training in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music: expands persons’ perceptions of music as a therapeutic agent and an activator of imagery experiences; instructs persons in the use of music appropriate to The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music; enables persons to develop a knowledge base in classical music; allows persons to explore all aspects of the healing potentials of music.