

THERAPEUTIC MEDIATION
AND EMOTIONAL RELEASE

**The Power of an Artistic Mediation
in the field of Psychotherapy
and Personal Development**



by Chantal Desmoulins

Author, trainer, lecturer

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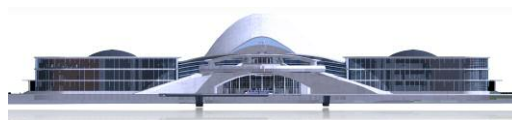
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Table of Contents

1-2 | — **Introduction**

3-9 | **Chapter 1 — Music & Art as Medicine**

- I - The impact of music on the human psyche
- II - The role of music in Antiquity
- III - The use of music today
- IV - The role of art (drawing, painting) as a tool for a psycho-emotional balance

10 -15 | **Chapter 2 — Restoring Emotional Balance**

- I - Etymology of the word emotion
- II - Memory and Emotions
- III - Emotions and the brain
- IV - Relationship between cognitive and emotional brains
- V - The emotional short-circuiting
- VI - The emotional basis of cognition

16-18 | **Chapter 3 — Therapeutic Mediation**

- I - What is an artistic mediation with a therapeutic purpose
- II - Therapeutic mediation with a traditional psychoanalytical orientation
- III - Therapeutic mediation with a Jungian orientation
- IV - When to use therapeutic mediation

19-23 | **Chapter 4 — Clinical Benefits of a Therapeutic Mediation**

- I - Who can benefit from therapeutic mediation
- II - How works a therapeutic mediation
- III - The different type of care (individual, group, couple, family therapy)
- IV - Therapeutic mediation sessions using graphic expression under musical induction versus art therapy

24-25 | **Conclusion**

26-27 | **Bibliography**

28 | **About Chantal Desmoulins**

INTRODUCTION

The practices of therapeutic mediation, such as modeling clay, painting and music are ancient in the history of care, particularly in psychoanalytic psychotherapy with children. The theory and practice of these mediations have traditionally been neglected by psychoanalysts and psychotherapists in today's therapeutic milieu. Indeed, contemporary therapists do not conceptualize the use of therapeutic mediation as a viable intervention in their practice. Most of the time, they defer to the conventional, speech-based psychotherapy model. It is therefore necessary to adjust and reinvent their perception in order to regain an appreciation of mediation as a viable therapeutic intervention.

Psychologists, psychotherapists still venture very little into this field, and, in the context of institutional psychotherapy, most mediated groups are led by nurses, educators, art therapists or music therapists.

However, there is currently a considerable increase in the use of these therapeutic mediation, which are considered as effective as talk therapy and has prompted the development of some psychotherapeutic models. These models attempt to define the nature of the transformative processes involved in the therapeutic dynamics established when using mediation with art as a medium. It is important to establish a model for both children and adults, as these practices have proven to be effective for all audiences and a wide range of conditions. They are also very relevant to personal development and growth.

Therapeutic mediations conducted by clinicians can now be considered as an extension of the psychotherapeutic practice. Indeed, therapeutic mediation, particularly those involving drawing, can make it possible to initiate an authentic psychotherapeutic process, particularly thanks to their ability to facilitate access to the process of symbolization. Mental associations can be made by patients in whom everything seems to be locked. Graphic expression under musical induction is, under these circumstances, a particularly well-suited modality.

The following example is very characteristic of the power of graphic expression under musical induction to unlock buried and painful emotions:

Mr. RD is hospitalized in a psychiatric closed unit for violent and dangerous behavior against his family and friends. He regularly beats his wife without being able to control his violent outbursts. During verbal therapies, he is silent and says he has nothing to say. He cannot understand why he is doing this. He feels guilty and helpless. He doesn't refuse to talk, he says that nothing comes, that his head is empty. His psychiatrist proposed art therapy sessions to help the release of this burden emotion with the hope that he'll experience at least some release.

In front of the proposed art material, painting, collage, modeling clay, clay, he has the same behavior than in talk therapy and says that he doesn't know what to do. He feels the same emptiness in his head.

We faced here the classic typology of a man who, having himself experienced traumatic experiences of violence and emotional deprivation, is not in a position to correctly use his symbolic function, he has no access to symbolization, which is, according to Jung an important function because it is the manifestation of the transcendent function: "an remarkable aptitude for change of the psyche" (C.G. Jung, 1917-1942, Psychology of transfer § 360).

On the other hand, when he is proposed a therapeutic mediation of graphic expression under musical induction, he feels comfortable. He fully invests the 12 sessions of the program, draws without respite, and comes with pleasure to the sessions. At the same time, his counseling meeting with his psychiatrist are getting richer.

At the end of the program, when his drawings and all data are reviewed and interpreted, a whole set of memories and understanding emerges. He feels relieved and expresses: "With the music, it was easy to draw. The music told me what to draw and what to write. I did not have to think".

Therefore, the real psychotherapeutic work could then be continued with the psychiatrist. Very quickly, a release from the closed psychiatric unit was considered.

Therapeutic mediation with art as a medium has proven their effectiveness for so-called acute psychopathology, such as autism, severe neurosis, criminality or life-threatening anti-sociality and post-traumatic stress. These therapeutic devices are likely to treat the major destructiveness of suffering patients through the process of symbolization. Melanie Klein (1882-1960) saw drawing and painting as a means of expressing restorative tendencies, which make it possible to sublimate destructive impulses.

The use of therapeutic mediations in the clinical field can therefore greatly enrich the conventional practices used today.

While therapeutic mediation can be used in the most serious cases, it is easy to understand that they can be applied to less severe pathologies as well as self-development and personal growth.

This booklet is rooted in the history of mediation in mental care and more particularly in artistic mediation, which appears to be the prototype of current mediation. The modality used as a reference framework is graphic expression under musical induction.

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Chapter 1

MUSIC & ART AS MEDICINE

I - From Music to Music therapy

The impact of music on the human psyche has been recognized since ancient times. Yet the mechanisms, which underlie it, remain largely misunderstood despite the efforts of scientists and the development of musical therapy.

Music therapy has fairly recently been rediscovered. First the United States, then England and Argentina have recognized its benefits once again. During the 50s and 60s in France, there began a reflection and empirical experiments that led to a prominent awareness of the effects of music. In 1970, “musical therapy” was recognized as belonging to both the arts and science and consequently became, for the first time, the object of international debate.

Today, the stimulation of the human organism by sound, either natural noise, music, language, or in various combinations has become a powerful, efficient and widely-used element in various clinical care and rehabilitation settings.

For years, Dr J. Verdeau-Paillès has depicted the various methods of using music. She reminds us of the relation which has always existed between music and medicine:

“As far as we can go into the history of humanity, we find traces of resonant objects. Music is the heart of people’s life and plays a determining role in their evolution. The history of music and medicine are inscribed in magical thought. At a center of mythology, cantors, shamans, magicians and doctors reign. It is through magical incantation that we see the first signs of therapy through music peek through. Music and medicine possess the same roots. Man, possessed by evil, resorts to the all-powerful man with magical powers to free himself. To identify the diabolical forces responsible for illness, the doctor invokes spirits with songs; he looks for the resonant substance suffering from the illness, in order to give it a name ‘because every illness flees when it hears its own name being sung’. The common genesis of music and medicine is based on magical incantation and is the very source of music therapy.” (Levi-Strauss).

“From the beginning, humans have noted music and medicine as inductors of harmony and order, suitable to resolve conflict. Thus, the curative virtues of music have been known even in the most distant of times through the knowledge of its effects on the mind and the body. The idea of music therapy has gone through different eras of social, political, cultural, scientific, and musical upheavals, and has known prosperous as well as overshadowed times. The concept of music therapy is associated with the concept of universal harmony. Depending on what century, the emphasis was either put on the internal harmony of the individual, or social harmony, and depending on each case with either religious or psychological references. Born from magical thought, music therapy through the centuries differentiated itself from magic, and drew itself closer to scientific thought.”

— (Translated from: “ La ‘troisième oreille’ et la pensée musicale – Dr Jacqueline Verdeau-Paillès, Boris Luban-Plozza, Mario Delli-Ponti- ed. J.M. Fuzeau SA, translated from page 127 to 130)

II - The role of music in Antiquity

In “*The Republic*” (II-376 and III-403), *Plato* developed perhaps the most comprehensive summary of the Grecian world’s view of music, as two quotes demonstrate: “For the body, we have gymnastics, and for the soul, we have the music... Music must lead to the love of what is beautiful...” “Rhythm and music, thanks to their sentimental characters, are particularly capable of penetrating the soul and moving it; at the same time, they soothe the irritable element present in the soul.”

The *PYTHAGOREANS*, in the fourth and fifth centuries B.C., remembered that the rule resided in ‘harmony.’ In this context, the meaning of this term doesn’t correspond to its current representation.



Pythagoreans Celebrate the Sunrise (1869) by Fyodor Bronnikov

Originally, this word was used to describe the layout of rocks that were perfectly put together in a construction. It is probably from *Severino BOECE*, a philosopher, that the therapeutic legend of Pythagoreus was gathered and transmitted: “A young man, driven to madness by a curious Phrygian song, was calmed and immediately cured by listening to another piece.” The Pythagoreans, who used mathematics for the well-being of the spirit and body, considered music as the most important remedy.

ARISTOTLE perceived a link between the process of musical catharsis and the development of corporal harmony, and from this, the easy parallel between dance and rhythmic gymnastics was made. His methods were based on serious investigation, and he himself was a well-informed musicologist. For him, music reveals man and human nature’s need for imitation, it is capable of conveying the soul’s properties, it possesses an ethical value and it plays a large role in the education and rearing of youth.

Thus, *PLATO* and *ARISTOTLE* foresaw and described the therapeutic function of music.

The Egyptian papyrus and the Bible cite the same therapeutic value of music. The story of Saul and David's harp becomes a common ground on which all references to the history of music therapy begin (around 1063 B.C.). David took a harp and played with his hands; thus Saul was comforted and felt good, and the Devil's spirit left him.



David and Saul (Ernst_Josephson)

With this thought in mind, let us take a look at *REMBRANDT's interpretation*. At the Mauritshuis Museum in The Hague, one can dream in front of his painting of David and Saul, where Rembrandt marvelously represents this privileged relationship with music so wondrously that *Jean LEYMARIE* who comments on it in his Skira volume on Dutch painting, is carried away by a lyricism that is in complete harmony with the topic: "This is among the many grand biblical themes that shred the veil of human condition and divine majesty. The figures present themselves head-on, directly, like big radiant blocks that the light disintegrates and reconstructs incessantly, massive forms full of Fall colors, joy and human pain, and however translucent, floating in a musical space, a solemn architecture of looks and hands that exchange their power in a sacred gathering. David's luminous fingers multiply on the harp, in order to drag out a tear from Saul, who is isolated in his Madness..." (*Leymarie Jean: Commentaires des tableaux de Rembrandt – David and Saul* in "La peinture hollandaise", Ed. Skira, Geneva, Paris, New York 1956, p. 140-142)

III - The use of music today

Music has been used as a source of healing and rejuvenation since ancient times. Anyone who has listened to music knows the incredible power it can have over both thoughts and emotions.



Many neuroscientists believe that humans are hardwired for music. This is evident in our observation of mothers soothing their babies with sounds, a behavior only found in humans, to help form a bond between mother and child. Sound, both as pure tones and as music, can affect an incredible number of physiological and psychological conditions.

Modern medical research has demonstrated that music is a whole brain phenomenon, modifying brain activity waves and has been shown to have broadly positive effects on our lives.

Music activates so many parts of our brain that neuroscientists cannot establish a center for music in the brain as we do for a neural activity such as language. When we are exposed to music, our frontal and temporal lobes begin to process the sounds while other brain activity is working to interpret the pitch rhythm and melody.

While music affects auditory cortex directly, it is the involvement of the frontal lobes which evoke emotions and thoughts. When listening to music there is an increase of activity in the cerebellum, which can prompt an emotional reaction and our desire to move with the melody. The nerve pathways between the hemispheres called the corpus callosum are activated, resulting in the stimulation of both the left (math & organization) and right (creative, emotional) brain.

Music listening enhances learning and memory through structures in the limbic system. The amygdala is involved with focused attention and processing emotions, while the hippocampus plays an essential role in transferring information into memories.

Incorporating music into classroom activities has been shown to have broadly positive effects on learning, motivation, and behavior.

Music is a powerful medium generating a whole brain phenomenon. It influences our mood, our behavior, how we think and how we respond to our environment and others.

Besides the effect it has directly on the brain, music has a profound effect on our physiology. Our heartbeat and breathing responds to match the rhythm of a sound. Music listeners have a higher number of immune cells called "natural killer cells" that attack infected and cancerous cells.

Chronic stress increases the hormone cortisol to abnormally high levels which has a negative effect on many bodily functions such as thyroid function and glucose metabolism. Music has been shown to lower cortisol levels by reestablishing our internal homeostasis.

IV - The role of art (drawing, painting) as a tool for a psycho-emotional balance

Music is crucial in our life. Creative expression is crucial too.

Indeed, art is synonymous with expression, and expression is synonymous with emotional release. Images made up our thought processes before words and although language is our dominant form of communication, we still continue to form thought through images.

Some of our habituated defenses associated with verbalization can be averted through art activity. Emotions which are difficult to articulate verbally can have greater opportunity for release through artistic expression.



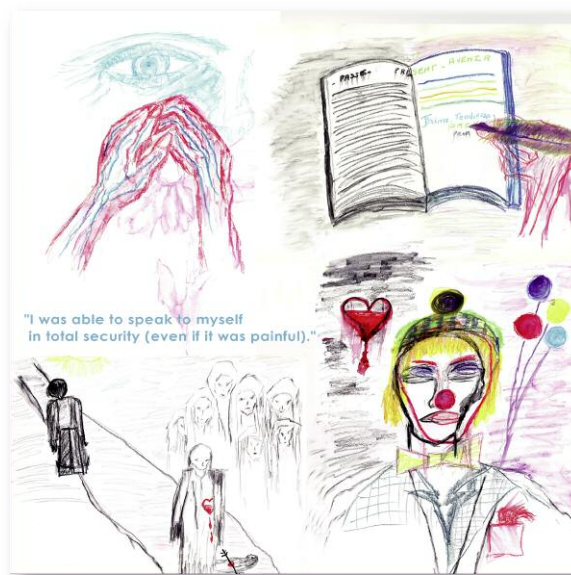
Psychiatrist Dr. Michel G. Mouret has observed the power of the use of drawing in treatment: "If one is offered a piece of drawing paper and crayons, the person has in front of them a space where they will be able to open up their inner world. Besides the fact that visual language can enrich clinical data, the activity of graphic expression is an agent of communication, catharsis and psychosynthesis. Such integration of the psyche is neither explained nor dissected, but perceived... Once drawn, the inner reality becomes an object of contemplation and meditation and therefore a possible transformer... the artwork that the subject creates reshapes him if he is invested in it sufficiently."



There is a restorative power of images. Indeed, symbols and archetypes shown in the drawings have a function of mobilization, hence their powerful impact in psychotherapy.

The idea of the mobilizing power of images is particularly well explained in Jung's oeuvre. Indeed, a centerpiece and original idea of his work is the concept of the dynamic transformation that exists in our unconscious. Highlighting the self-healing and transformative forces that exist within our unconscious which he called "archetypes," Jung enables us to understand the origin of our mental representations, our reactions and our behavior. He brings us in the framework of a harmonious evolution as a human being growing: "The Self is the total timeless human...who stands for the mutual integration of conscious and unconscious".

For Jung, the effect of transcendent function is manifested in symbolization. The transcendent function, as described by Jung, mediates between psyche and soma. The symbol brings together conscious and unconscious content and allows mediation between the self and the unconscious (C.G. Jung, Psychology of Transfer 1917-1942, §184).



Patient 35 y/o: «I was able to speak to myself in total security (even if it was painful)»

John Freeman's introduction in Jung's book "Man and His Symbols" wrote: "But his overwhelming contribution to psychological understanding is his concept of the unconscious—not like the unconscious of Freud, merely a sort of glory-hole of repressed desires, but a world that is just as much a vital and real part of the life of an individual as the conscious, "cogitating" world of the ego, and infinitely wider and richer. The language and the "people" of the unconscious are symbols, and the means of communication are dreams... in Jung's view the unconscious is the great guide, friend, and adviser of the conscious..."

See more example: www.planet-cap.com

If a person draw, specifically under a specific musical induction, they do not simply reveal a problem of the moment, they also access to their unconscious which offer them the opportunity to discover what it is trying to communicate. As Jung wrote, the archetypes - or unconscious dynamics - have the ability to really put the "Me" in motion, and in some cases to repair the emotional disorder present, even the most serious ones. The drawings may have a similar function that we found in dreams, which is to restore a psycho-emotional balance.



After 40 years of clinical work, with a therapeutic mediation called Catharsis Application Program, we have empirical clinical evidence that graphic expression under musical induction is a process that have an ability to create this dialogue between the conscious and the unconscious. Despite its many controversies, Jung understood this: "It is a fact that, in addition to memories from a long-distant conscious past, completely new thoughts and creative ideas can also present themselves from the unconscious, thoughts and ideas that have never been conscious before."

Chapter 2

RESTORING EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Millennia of social and religious moral authority have had a powerful influence over how we express our emotions. The need to gain acceptance of one's community is the driving force for conforming to behavioral standards whether beneficial or counterproductive. Imposed emotional repression has denied humanity the ability to freely explore their feelings and consequently has caused much pain and unhappiness.

Nevertheless, over the past twenty years a new paradigm has emerged that embraces emotions and its importance for our health and wellbeing. This shift to acknowledge our subconscious feelings will take time to embrace as we unravel the embedded emotional denial that has been imprinted in our DNA for many generations.

Many techniques of emotional liberation have flourished the last few years and it seems that each day we have a new discovery in the field! Some of these methods are peculiar and unreliable but others are certainly effective, in the short term, because they take up ancestral knowledge regarding energy meridians (for instance EFT). Nevertheless, they do not replace an in-depth work on emotions. This is why it is important for clinical therapists to fully invest the field of emotional therapies with tools, methods and rigorous protocols that consider the complexity of a human psyche.

Emotions have long been excluded from psychoanalytical and psychotherapeutic reflection. Today, different theoretical approaches study the main concepts developed by the scientific psychology of emotions, emphasizing the intrinsically social nature of emotion. These studies highlight the growing importance of the study of affective life within the social sciences, and in psychology in particular.

Emotions and affects are therefore more than ever trendy: they are at the heart of debates in neuroscience, philosophy, cognitive psychology and science of communication.

I - Etymology of the word emotion

The word emotion comes from Old French *emouvoir* "stir up" (12c.), from Latin *emovere* "move out, remove, agitate," from assimilated form of *ex* "out" and *movere* "to move". Etymology shows us that our emotions are crucial for action, to move forward, to set the «me» in motion. Emotions make it possible to overcome the challenges of life and situations too important to be managed solely by the intellect. In decision-making and action, either intuition or gut feeling, are as important, if not more, than thought. Sociobiologists emphasize the pre-eminence of the heart over the mind.

II - Memory and Emotions

Our memories are events associated with an emotion weaved together to create our autobiography. Emotions are very influential during the process of creating memories. The stronger the emotion, the more embedded the event is in our memory. Each important life event forms a memory that, over time, is strung together one after another like pearls on a necklace.

II - Emotions and the brain

When emotions overpower, when they lead to thoughtless acts (impulsive acts, violence, outbursts of laughter, madness), it is the limbic center that takes control to the detriment of the neocortex (thinking brain). The origin of this neural piracy lies in the amygdala (a fine-sized gland in the center of the limbic brain), the seat of emotional memory. It controls all emotions. The American neurologist Joseph LeDoux was the first to highlight how the amygdala determines our reactions before the neocortex takes a decision, making us fall into the irrational. Its wide network of neural links allows, in case of emergency, the direction of most parts of the brain, including the rational mind: "Anatomically, the system that governs emotions can act independently of the neocortex. Some actions and emotional memories can be formed without the slightest intervention of consciousness, cognition," says LeDoux. Raw emotions are aroused even before the thought manifests itself. The amygdala stores a whole repertoire of memories without us being aware of it. If the amygdala retains the emotional flavor, the hippocampus records and finds meaning in perceptions. It is the memory of context and events (makes it possible to distinguish between the wild tiger and the tiger seen on movie).

One of the disadvantages is that the amygdala proceeds by associations between past and present events. In our changing social environment, the signal sent is often obsolete.

IV- Relationship between cognitive and emotional brains

The cognitive brain controls thought, language, abstraction, reasoning. The prefrontal cortex controls attention, concentration, planning, social inhibition and everything that has to do with the notion of morality, respect. However, the cognitive brain will have a limited influence on the emotional brain.

The cognitive and emotional brains perceive information from the outside world almost simultaneously. They may then cooperate or argue over control of thought, emotions and behavior. Any form of competition between the cognitive brain and the emotional brain will be felt as a discomfort, anxiety, unease. On the other hand, when the two brains complement each other, one to give meaning to what we are living (emotional brain), the other to move forward in the most intelligent way possible (cognitive brain), we feel an inner harmony, a true well-being.

V- The emotional short-circuiting

There is two ways of emotional short-circuiting.

First, is an overly emotional reactions to situations. The emotional brain is responsible for monitoring the environment in the background. When it detects an exceptional danger or opportunity, it triggers an alarm that cancels all cognitive brain operations in a few milliseconds and interrupts its activity. This alarm is based on the reticular formation (a set of interconnected nuclei that are located throughout the brainstem. It is a place of mixing and sorting of all the information received). If the information is not relevant, it will be inhibited. On the other hand, important information will be amplified and, consequently, our attention will be focused on it. This allows the brain to focus on what is essential to its survival.

A team of researchers has shown that, under the effect of severe stress, the prefrontal cortex no longer responds and loses its ability to guide our behavior. As a result, it is the reflexes and instinctive reactions that will guide our actions.

This is what we found in PDST. For those who suffered from trauma, the risk is the use of sex, drugs, alcohol to compensate for their inability to emotionally cope with their experiences. They are looking for the brain's «pleasure center» to avoid their painful feeling and emotions and this can lead to a detrimental addiction that reinforces their chaotic sense of their Self.

Helping trauma survivors is a long process that needs clear steps which involve (1) rebuilding self-esteem (2) finding purpose and meaning in life and (3) engaging and connecting with the world.

A THERAPEUTIC ARTISTIC MEDIATION WILL HELP IN THE FOLLOWING WAYS:

1. By creating a feeling of safety with the secure, safe and contained environment of the session (the holding environment as described by Winnicot).

2. By promoting healing relationship with the therapist and others, if the work is done in group. The person will feel secure in the relationship, if she knows that it will evolve even if there are problems, even if she expresses distressed, avoidance, suspicion and anger. The re-establishment of trust develops new patterns for healthier relation with families, friends, social relationship.

3. By experiencing self-regulation and coping skills. Drawing under musical induction has an action on emotion. It not only regulates heart rate and has a de-stress action; it also helps to access the unconscious in a very safe and respectful manner. The expression through images or painting is liberating. It helps to process unobtrusively unresolved emotions hence helping one to learn new skills of emotion management. Since this transformation comes from within the person, there is a lasting change.

Second, emotional short-circuiting is cognitive repression. It is a cognitive smothering that suppresses emotions completely.

The cognitive brain controls our emotions before they become disproportionate. A functional imaging study shows that when we look at painful images, our emotional brain reacts immediately. However, if we make the effort to reason, it is the cortical areas that we see taking over; they will inhibit the emotional brain.

In some problematic cases, the cognitive brain literally stifles the emotional brain, making the person insensitive; he or she is no longer receptive to the emergency signals sent by the emotional brain. Unfortunately, just because you go blind to distress does not mean that it does not exist. People will then present with well-known physical symptoms that are associated to stress-related illnesses such as excessive fatigue, anxiety, tachycardia, hypertension, digestive disorders, repeated infections, infertility, or skin afflictions.

Let us look at an example of a 13-year-old student, I will call him Jose:

- As a child, Jose was separated from his mother for almost a year at the time of his sister's birth. He saw his father every weekend but only saw his mother 2 or 3 times during that year. He does not remember much about that year of his life and was never given an explanation by his parents of why there was this separation.
- Until the age of 11, his schooling and social development progressed normally, but at puberty, he began to dysfunction completely at school. He began insulting his female teachers, refused to do his schoolwork, disrupted the classroom and became violent toward other children. His attitude led to a series of punishments, isolation from his peers, and disciplinary action by the school board. His parents, who were concerned and loving, felt powerless and very worried about his future.
- Although Jose was subjected to a climate of constant discipline and disruption, he displayed a pathological state of emotional neutrality. He was inundated with teachers, principals, parents, and educators who punished him, criticized him, threatened him with expulsion, and reminded him that his actions would jeopardize his future success. Throughout it all, he remained stoic, did not cry, nor did he show any emotion. On the contrary, he expressed a very calm demeanor.

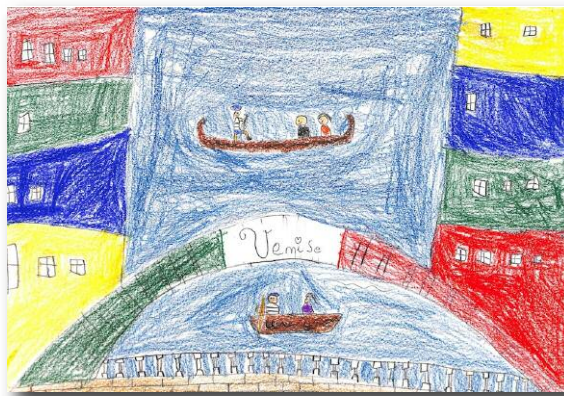


Jose, drawing of a «Sinking Boat»

During one of his therapeutic mediation sessions, which occurred after a disciplinary board threatened him with exclusion and severe punishment, he tells the story with detachment as if he was talking about someone else. That day, he drew a sinking boat. He says in an emotionless tone: "The music reminded me of a boat sinking in a raging sea. The captain of the ship is trapped in his cabin, he calls for help without anyone hearing him. The boat will sink" When the therapist asks him if he makes a connection between his drawing and an event in his life, he answers "No. It was the music that made me think of that". And to the question how you feel? He replied: "I feel fine."

As we can see by his response, that it will take a lot of work for this child to regain confidence as he enters adulthood, reconnect with his emotions and rebuild a positive self-image. Connecting to his emotions is essential for him to break his addiction to video games and his attraction to the activities of a gang near his home.

The process of drawing under musical induction worked well for him and revealed his love of beauty and of art. This entry point is the beginning of a reconstruction as shown in his last drawing. An interesting aspect of the process is that it only took 3 months between the first and the last picture. A therapeutic mediation is a real accelerator for change.



Jose, last drawing: «The beauty of Venice»

VI - The emotional basis of cognition

Dr. Mate Gabor quoted the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio who states in his book «Descartes' Error» that he used to assume that learning, cognition, intellectualization were separate entities in a separate process from emotionality. But he came to the conclusion that cognition is actually something that rests on an edifice of emotion so that the basis of learning and cognition is actually our emotional being.

To quote Dr. Gabor, "Our capacity to pay attention and to learn have a lot to do with what's happening internally on the visceral and emotional level."

When Damasio wrote: "The lower levels in the neural edifice of reason are the same ones that regulate the processing of emotion and feelings along with the body functions necessary for the organism survival.", he was inviting us to have a view of knowledge and learning and cognition that takes into account emotionality and our internal body fades.

[Click here to see a powerful example](#)

Chapter 3

THERAPEUTIC MEDIATION

I - What is an artistic mediation with a therapeutic purpose

Artistic mediation refers to the use of artistic creation or expression for a purpose other than aesthetic. In a therapeutic mediation, the medium, the artistic discipline (such as drawing, painting, clay, dance, collage, modeling clay, theatre) is used for psychotherapeutic purposes.

The use of an artistic mediation in psychotherapy is a new and largely unexplored style of therapy. In the beginning, it was observed that it was impossible to work exclusively from the verbal register in particular populations, which in turn motivated the use of therapeutic artistic mediation, particularly in children's analytical therapy. These mediations then extended to adults with severe mental disorders and now apply to a wide audience in search of self-knowledge.

Artistic mediation makes it possible to bring the person back into activity, to revive, to move their internal resistances, in other words to soften their self-defense mechanisms and to transform the brakes into an accelerator. But it allows much more if we follow the Jungian concept concerning the symbolic attitude. According to this attitude, a therapeutic mediation with art as a medium gives us the ability to endow events with meaning during psychotherapeutic work and allows us to establish a link between the internal reality and the external world, between personal and collective experiences.

« I call symbolic the attitude that interprets any given phenomenon as a symbol. The circumstances outside justify it only in part; on the other hand, it results from a certain conception of life that gives meaning to any event, large or small, and gives this meaning more value than the fact itself. » (C.G. Jung, 1937)

In this sense, symbolization does not only occur in the field of semantic or image; the session itself, as a whole, constitutes a symbolic space «par excellence».

II - Therapeutic mediation with a traditional psychoanalytical orientation

At first, the non-verbal dimension of therapeutic mediation appeared difficult to apply to practitioners whose reference framework was psychoanalytic psychotherapy as conceived by Freud, based on the verbal dialogue. However, faced with the limitations encountered with verbal therapies, today increasingly more therapists are contemplating a mediation centered psychoanalytic psychotherapy framework, and are particularly interested in drawing, which is a language in itself.

Their theoretical framework is generally focused on the main authors whose contributions shed light on understanding these practices, FREUD, WINNICOTT, BION, ANZIEU and they reflect on the therapeutic framework, the modalities of transfer, the role of mediation, and the creative act. A mediation using graphic expression under musical induction makes it possible to work on the subject's conflicts and his relationship to the body, his environment, his history and his future.

The utilization of artistic mediations for therapeutic purposes therefore engages the path of sensory-affective-motor experiences and serves as a support for the feedback of physical or emotional experiences that have not yet been digested. On the other hand, the use of therapeutic mediation does not exclude verbalization.

For example, in therapeutic mediation we propose, verbalization when appropriate. As psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Dr. Simonin asserts:

«The music in Catharsis Application Program sets in motion the unconscious. It can open it to a spontaneous evolution. Otherwise, it plows a field that should be planted, watered, cultivated by the specific action of a psychotherapy on the conscious.»

III - Therapeutic mediation with a Jungian orientation

Therapists with a Jungian orientation place greater emphasis on the importance of harmony between the conscious and unconscious, particularly through dream work.

Jung psychotherapy is based on the discovery of the motivations behind mental problems, various disorders, and malaise, more than on the resolution of symptoms. Once identified, inappropriate motivations can be transformed, leading to healthier and more positive thoughts and behaviors and especially in relation to each person's inner self. It is a work of harmonization that respects the inner movement of each person and requires a great awareness on the part of the therapist to avoid a negative countertransference in therapy.

Jung created the concept of active imagination as a way to bridge the gap between the unconscious and the conscious. To discover unconscious patterns, drawing under musical induction is a powerful tool.

While drawing, the patient becomes, in a way, like the theater director who explores, on the conscious level, some aspects of their own history and at some point, certain facets of their inner life. Added to this is the musical induction suggesting certain themes, which resonate with the patients' inner music.

The patient sets the stage, where the paper becomes the background for their story. They are in charge of the characters, the scene, and lighting, which are developed through the drawing. They express, in a more or less developed way, their personal, philosophical, and social life view, as would a playwright.

At the patient's disposal is a range of colors and a technique (the drawing) which they have more or less mastered but has no impact on their current process. The patient also reflects, in a less conscious way, their conflicts and struggles or at times the lack of internal logic to their history. In this subjective look on themselves, based on what they understand, or misunderstand of their history, their emotions, and the sum of all their experiences, they will gradually reveal their doubts and questions, but also their magnificence and ideals. This is what explains the always personal character of the drawings, even with patients who exhibit rigid defenses. The drawings made under musical induction do not simply reveal a problem of the moment, they also provide an access to the unconscious and offer the opportunity to discover what it is trying to communicate.

It is this broader dimension that seems most interesting. As Jung wrote, and as we have observed in patients participating in our program, the archetypes - or unconscious dynamics - have the ability to really put the "Me" in motion, and in some cases to repair the emotional disorders present, even the most serious ones. This is why in the analysis we focus on the drawing itself, avoiding in the first instance to associate it with the patient's comments.



IV - When to use therapeutic mediation

The use of artistic therapeutic mediation makes it possible to engage in therapeutic work with people who are not able to express themselves in words and for whom associations are complicated or with those for whom symbolic language is a factor of fulfillment; of deep expression of their interiority.

The artistic mediation — graphic expression under musical induction — activates the processes of transition from the perceptual to the figurative, reserving a place for verbalization. The fact of proposing an interpretation of the drawings makes it possible to place this method within the scope of traditional or Jungian psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

We speak of "therapeutic mediation" or "mediated therapy" using artistic mediations when the mediation is used for therapeutic purposes.

Chapter 4

CLINICAL BENEFITS of a Therapeutic Mediation

I - Who can benefit from therapeutic mediation

The public to whom this type of therapy is generally directed, is an audience with psychological difficulty or in search of personal development. Among the first, we will mention the elderly suffering from Alzheimer-type pathologies, or any difficulties related to ageing, autism, people suffering from mental illnesses, or people suffering from temporary psychological difficulties of varying length (depression, anxiety, stress, bereavement).

Mediation therapies can be aimed at people of all ages (children, adolescents, adults, elderly) and can be easily adapted to these audiences. They treat the patient as a whole, socially, physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

II - How works a therapeutic mediation

Although the process involves well-defined objectives for the patient, the therapist remains open to the emergence of emotional conflicts that may surface during the process which may be unrelated to the intended objectives. By doing so the therapist will be able to focus on those unconscious emotions the patient was unaware of prior to the start of the program and intervene with any therapeutic interventions that will best serve the patient's needs.

In therapeutic mediation of graphic expression under musical induction, the therapist, unlike the art therapist, offers an interpretation of the drawings because it is the starting point for a more in-depth work with the patient. The symbolic and archetypal elements of the drawings allow them to discover that, in the depths of our mind, there is a whole architecture of contents, symbols, archetypes and meanings that we must highlight if we want to achieve a form of fullness and inner harmony.

Jung's amplification method can be applied to the work on the drawings and allows not only to understand the unconscious architecture but also the impact of this unconscious material on the conscious life. Like dreams, what has been represented in the drawings, shows both the obstacles to be transformed and the new paths that can lead us to a full, useful and rich life.

This artistic mediation takes place through music, which serves as an intermediary between one or more patients and the therapist. The music becomes a focal point around which the patient and therapist meet. It creates connections and meaning where sometimes only separation and emptiness or loneliness and doubt exist.

Through artistic mediation, a dialogue can be established with people with whom we believe communication is not possible, with conditions such as autism, Alzheimer's, stroke, dementia, or developmental disabilities.

Just as important, the use of drawing with artistic mediation helps those who find it difficult to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. These individuals feel limited in their relationships with others, their family, and with their social and/or professional life. Often there are fears, past traumas, or blockages buried so deep in an inaccessible memory that alternate strategies are needed as a means to bypass the intense emotions and allow an enduring release.

What concerns us all as human beings is the need to give meaning to our lives. This search for meaning and the answer we conceive through mindful reflection is one of the essential elements for our balance and happiness. The use of mediation through art by combining music with artistic expression, establishes a channel that allows the emergence of an authenticity which resides deep within, that would be incommunicable by words. This process offers a means of expression that connects us to what is most significant and awakens us to live our lives responsibly. When this evolution occurs, not only does our personal life improve, but also the quality of our relationships transforms becoming meaningful and creative.

Using an artistic mediation, the therapist gives the patient the opportunity to become an active participant in their own therapy. Music and drawings will serve as an intermediate language between patient and therapist creating a relationship of authentic communication.

Therapeutic artistic mediation can be used in individual, group, couple or in family therapy.

III - The different type of care (individual, group, couple, family therapy)

Whether you work with an individual or in groups, the sessions have the same structure. There is a therapeutic and symbolic function of the framework, hence the importance of setting clear rules and regularity.

- ***Individual therapy***

This is a one-to-one treatment. Private sessions provide a framework of intimacy and confidentiality between the therapist and the patient. Individual work allows for the expression of subjects that may not necessarily be addressed in a group. The protocol is precise and must be clearly stated before starting therapy. The strong involvement of the patient is crucial.

- ***Group therapy***

Therapeutic groups are part of a very specific framework, both reassuring and containing. Homogeneity of the group assists is a key. We select individuals by pathology or diagnosis then by age. For age, consider grouping by child, adolescent, adult, and senior.

If working in an institution, it is important to make sure to have a set of consent form, files to record what transpires in each session and to work collaboratively with other professionals.

- ***Couple therapy***

For couples who have difficulty solving their issues in talk therapy or who simply want to improve their relationship. Together the couple can explore a deeper understanding of themselves creating a more meaningful relationship. It can for those who have children a way for them to explore their role as a parent. The drawing becomes an expression of their relationship which in turn helps them to look at a conflict, problem or any issue they face together in a useful and positive way.

- ***Family therapy***

A therapeutic mediation is a wonderful way for families who cannot determine the cause of their dysfunction to understand, very creatively, not only the nuances in their own psyche but also their family dynamics.

IV. Therapeutic mediation sessions using graphic expression under musical induction versus art therapy

To understand the difference between a therapeutic mediation using art as a medium and art therapy, I will give you an example that perfectly illustrates the difference between the two practices.

I read an article by an art therapist explaining her work with a patient.

During a session, a patient wishes to represent a tiger. She has no model and struggles with this figure that she cannot draw. The tiger takes on several faces under her brushes, including one of a human, which becomes a strong source of anxiety for her. The anguish rises, without her being able to find a way to give it any edge. The art therapist intervenes and suggests that she abandon the effort of representation to work on the "idea of the tiger", that is, for her, in her imagination, would bring this animal to a symbolic level. The patient's answer is the stripes. This is what she will paint, abandoning completely the figurative drawing to keep only traces (orange and black stripes), abstract then, but satisfying enough and really having a calming effect on anxiety. The art therapist does not go any further, the patient is soothed.



What happens in therapeutic mediation of graphic expression under musical induction in a psychotherapeutic setting is different.

It is the music that compels the emergence of the tiger image. The patient will start drawing and hesitate, getting angry at her difficulty in representing the object as she wishes. However, the image that has emerged is so strong that she goes deeper into the drawing. The psychotherapist does not intervene, she is present and attentive and supports the patient silently in her creative expression. She has a strong presence as an observer and welcomes the anxiety of the patient.

The patient draws the contours of a four-legged animal with a pencil. She adds a head from the front, draws disturbing eyes that look like a scary human. The shape takes on the appearance of an animal when she adds large moustaches and erect ears. Before the color, the animal is not clearly identifiable but with orange and brown stripes, the symbol becomes clear. Still inspired by music, she places another head next to the tiger, one of a character half man and half tiger. She finished her drawing calm and happy with the result despite the suffering felt during the elaboration.

By going through the different stages of her drawing, the patient processed the anxiety which was subconsciously played out within herself. Staying in figurative expression has allowed her to make a thematic progression, from the fierce and disturbing tiger to the equally disturbing image of the tiger man. This metaphorization is a substitution of the unconscious and repressed. It signifies the internal struggle of the patient and has a cathartic function. The calming effect is much stronger than the detour by abstraction in art therapy because she has conquered her discomfort. She has found a strong expression to an unconscious content. This content was more anxiogenic before because it had no form, because it was not named. The symbolic form given to her suffering in the drawing (trauma of her childhood) is acceptable to her because it does not put her in danger. She allowed herself to surrender to the process and what emerged was this symbolic image triggered by the music. Also, she initiates a process of transformation, of understanding that she will be able to embrace or to work on, if necessary, in psychotherapy.



The patient in art therapy returns to the next session with the same anxiety that she continues to process at each session without any real resolution, or with very little progress.

The patient involved in the therapeutic mediation has taken a step forward in the conscious expression of repressed experiences and her anguish has greatly decreased in her daily life, way before the end of the program and the interpretation of her drawings.

In this context of a therapeutic mediation using music, the musical pieces must be judiciously selected and have a cathartic capability - the ability to bring out subconscious or repressed content in order to release its anxiety provoking content.

This is why in Catharsis-Application-Program we have selected specific musical selections:

See: <http://www.planet-cap-pro.com>



In summary,

Artistic Mediation for therapeutic purposes, allows a profound exploration of the human psyche and permits the expression of emotions when its expression cannot be formulated by words. The symbols and archetypes found in the drawings can become the basis for engaging and meaningful work during psychotherapeutic sessions with a deep transformative change for the individual.

CONCLUSION

The world of mental health professionals has acknowledged the value of the artistic mediation approach, with a therapeutic or a self-development purpose, in a multitude of disease and psychological conditions. More than ever practitioners are recognizing how an artistic expression enhances work with clients in ways that strictly verbal therapies cannot.

We have also observed that there is a growing movement in medicine, as well as business, that promotes the use of “creative methods” to enhance one’s state of wellbeing and improve one’s capacity for growth.

During the last 40 years as a part of a therapeutic mediation, the Catharsis Application Program, a psycho-emotional therapy, has proven its ability to enhance emotional expression and psychological well-being. Furthermore, it has also proven its efficiency in prevention or solving psychosocial challenges and, in some cases, the restoration of normal mental functions in patients coping with disturbing behavior.

When therapists choose to use a method that combines drawing under musical induction, writing and verbalization, they provide their clients with a very efficient tool to become active participants in their own treatment and thus facilitate self-discovery, change, and restoration.

As a structured approach, a therapeutic mediation needs to provide standardized sessions with well-defined procedures. For instance, the use of projective tests and objective scale can bring reliability and validity to the therapeutic process.

In our method, each patient is instructed the same way, the sessions are conducted in the same manner, and the criteria of analysis and interpretation are standardized, but each practitioner is able to create their own framework of observation and scale of evaluation which is adaptable to the environment and the specific patient’s needs.

All therapeutic mediations are a patient-centered therapy. Within a safe place of a structured methodology it provides a secure relationship between patients and therapist. There is a room for freedom and the expression of one’s personal feelings and thoughts in respect of each one’s psychological reality.

We hope to continue a close relationship with our practitioners, to further enrich the process of therapeutic mediation. It is a vast and fascinating field where much remains to be done.

It is for these reasons that our courses are organized in a spirit of sharing and collaboration. Each level will not only deepen your knowledge of the tool itself, but with the presentation of case studies by practitioners, each training becomes a platform for exchange - or even research - for anyone who wants to help restore art in all its therapeutic existential dimension.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any question
or if you want to share your experience.
I'll be more than happy to help!

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About Chantal Desmoulins



Chantal Desmoulins, is a graduate of University of Grenoble III and Grenoble's Imaginary Research Center in France. Her Master's Degree was devoted to Comparative Literature within the framework of the Imaginary Research Center open to interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity and multi-referentiality.

She met there Gilbert Durand who was the co-founder in 1966 — and the director of the «Centre de recherche sur l'imaginaire». He was a follower of Gaston Bachelard, Henry Corbin and Carl Gustav Jung.

Gilbert Durand gained a worldwide notoriety and his Center is currently a group of an international network of over sixty laboratories.

In 1981 Chantal met Dr. Alain Amouyal, and was so impressed by the psychological power of his music that she invested her considerable expertise in symbolism, anthropology, psychology and pedagogy into the organization of his research, drafting of a therapeutic protocol and analyzing the results.

Since 1985, Ms. Desmoulins has supervised the implementation of The Catharsis Application Program – a Psycho-Emotional Therapy, using art in the framework of therapy.

She trains medical and mental health personnel nationally and internationally and has delivered more than 100 conferences world-wide.

She also supervises the analysis of the patients' drawings in different medical settings. This ongoing relationship with both the practitioners and the patients allows her to ensure the utmost quality in the application of her method, and to maximize the positive results for the patients.

Her work consists in training the professionals she works with – as well as the clients with whom she works - to discover the richness contained in the world of images, symbols and archetypes and to recognize their ability to mobilize, transform and regenerate.

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