

Receptive music therapy: Live-improvisation by the music therapist for the client

Abstract

When improvisation is mentioned in music therapy literature, it usually refers to the therapist and client improvising together or to improvisation in small groups. This thesis focuses on live improvisation by the music therapist for the client. The theoretical part of the work deals with receptive music therapy and the effect which music has on us. Music therapy techniques are examined with discussion on improvisation, its receptive application and the understanding of the somewhat vague German term "Fürspiel" (playing for others). An online survey was carried out asking 25 musictherapists from German speaking Switzerland how they improvise for their clients in practice. The results of the survey show that receptive improvisation is part of everyday music therapy and is used often or at least sometimes by most of the respondents. The findings of the survey are discussed in connection with music therapy literature.

Key Words: Live music, Improvisation, Live improvisation, receptive music therapy, receptive improvisation, Für-Spiel, praxeology, music therapy.