

# **Music Therapy and Sensory Processing Sensitivity**

## **About the experiences and challenges of highly sensitive people in music therapy**

Research on the concept of high sensitivity has made considerable progress over the past 25 years, providing empirical evidence for the existence of various forms of sensitivity. In the field of music therapy however, research on high sensitivity is still in its infancy. This master thesis extends the only existing study to include the perspective of patients affected by high sensitivity and aims to raise awareness of the topic among music therapists. In accordance with current research findings, basic terminology and characteristics of high sensitivity as well as ways to measure this trait are explained theoretically and it is shown what high sensitivity is sometimes confused with. Using qualitative interviews, the four indicators of high sensitivity are used to retrospectively examine possible challenges as well as potentially helpful factors in music therapy. The results show that certain factors in music therapy can be particularly challenging for highly sensitive individuals, yet also suggest that a music therapy program adapted to this patient group holds potential for positive therapeutic development.

## **Keywords**

music therapy – high sensitivity – high sensibility – neurosensitivity – highly sensitive person – perception – personality trait – sensitivity – hypersensitivity – sensory processing sensitivit