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## The Cultural Integrity of a Music Therapist in Analytical Music Therapy-Oriented Supervision (AMTOS)

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# The Cultural Integrity of a Music Therapist in Analytical Music Therapy-Oriented Supervision (AMTOS)

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One of the most important aspects of the Analytical Music Therapy (AMT) (Priestley, 1975; 1994) approach is setting the stage for music therapists undergoing music therapy themselves. In her writings, Mary Priestley (1994) stresses how important it is for therapists to experience music therapy for themselves, as increasing self-awareness is an essential part of music therapy training. This can be achieved by *Intertherapy*— a training method for analytical music therapists. Therefore, AMT has significant implications in music therapy training. As Priestley (1994) asserts, regardless of one’s chronological age, we have an “inner child” inside of us. She explains how important it is for the therapist to recognize his or her “inner child” when working with a client:

...the knowledge and healing of his inner child through the unfreezing of its traumatized emotion, are an essential part of his inner preparation for work. In this way he will make sure of treating his patient as separate individuals without causing them to express the emotions of his unconscious and projected damaged inner child instead (p. 214).

Thus, *Intertherapy* is helpful for music therapists to increase self-awareness regarding feelings and thoughts that may affect their own sessions.

In my work developing the supervision model—*Analytical Music Therapy Oriented Supervision* (AMTOS)—I have been greatly influenced by the Analytical Music Therapy (AMT) method (Priestley, 1994) and my personal experience with AMT training by Benedikte Scheiby. The two essential points of the AMTOS stem from the principles of *Intertherapy*: *Experience-oriented* and *Countertransference-oriented* (Brusica, 2001).

*Experience-Oriented* supervision emphasizes working with supervisees’ personal experiences during therapy. Issues are identified and they work through and reframe these experiences. This helps them to integrate what they learn through lectures and readings and apply it to a therapy situation. Also, they can evaluate their real life issues and experience in the role of the client. Having this experience is invaluable because first-hand knowledge will help them integrate their classroom studies into real-world practice. Additionally, the academic environment is a safer place than a clinical setting in which to learn. The experiential learning component also offers a unique opportunity for them to have emotional experiences which they must explore and this eventually leads to their own growth.

*Countertransference-Oriented* supervision involves assisting supervisees to uncover subconscious feelings and issues that interfere with their relationship with the client, and the therapeutic process (Pedersen, 2006). They will learn to manage the possible recurrent countertransference reactions in the future sessions.

Therefore, the following goals are addressed in AMTOS: Discovery of and work with the supervisee's "inner child"; Better management of culture-related countertransference that may arise in sessions; Identification and alleviation of any cultural conflicts and further development of cultural integrity; Development of strategies for managing stress.

While these methods are widely applicable to any supervisee, they may be particularly effective in training supervisees who have discrepancies in their verbal and musical expressions, or helping those who struggle to identify their internal strength and transform it into creative energy. Additionally, it seems particularly beneficial for supervisees who require cultural integration due to the drastically different natures of their native cultures and American culture, e.g., Asian culture and American culture (Kim, 2011a; 2011b). While they may take time to get adjusted to their new surroundings and integrate their new cultural learning into their practice, AMTOS may be an effective method to integrate their learning and to resolve any cultural conflict that takes place. Culture related verbal and musical expressions can be learned through experienced oriented methods such as *role-playing*, *maintenance of psychohygiene*, *use of AMT improvisation*, *culture-related stress management*, and *psychodynamic movement*.

I found the following salient points helpful in supervising the supervisee who needs to achieve cultural integrity:

- **Role-playing:** In role-playing, supervisees take on the role of therapist, client or colleague. Role-playing is particularly helpful in showing them to use more effective methods of working with clients. Role-playing can help them gain a better understanding about cultural dynamics and further resolve a cultural conflict the supervisees may have with an individual. Regardless of which role the supervisees take on, they will gain new insight about themselves and others.
- **Maintenance of *psychohygiene*:** In AMTOS, maintaining one's psychohygiene (Jahn-Langenberg, 2001) is emphasized: "The desired psychoanalytic perceptual attitude of balanced-floating attentiveness, an openness for the events of the inner world, is described as the optimal centering of the therapist on his/her own person" (Jahn-Langenberg, 2001, p. 275). Maintaining one's psychohygiene increases the ability to be fully present in sessions, and "to be used as living instruments of perception—this optimal attitude remains a posture to be continually reacquired and practiced" (Jahn-Langenberg, 2001, p. 275). Openness to a new environment is an important quality particularly for supervisees from diverse cultures. Music is a powerful and effective tool for maintaining one's psychohygiene; it can help them explore their emotional life, and become more aware of their current state of mind.
- **Use of AMT improvisation:** As the saying goes, "knowing (self-awareness) is the power." The AMT improvisation is an effective way of increasing self-awareness and being more flexible, which can allow for creativity, restore lost abilities and further emotional investigation into one's psyche. Supervisees can be creative, spontaneous, and fluid, however, some are limited to a certain degree during their cultural adjustment period. These characteristics are often expressed through their musical, verbal, and nonverbal

expressions throughout the sessions. The goal is to continue to be in touch with and to heal one's "inner child." The role of improvisation in AMT is for the music to bring the unconscious to the surface.

- Culture-related stress management: Priestley (1994) noted that "times of stress, viewed as opportunities for maturation, can produce in both therapist and patient the incentive to struggle and grow" (p. 198). Since we, as music therapists are trained to assist and heal, taking care of ourselves is very important to ensure the quality of service that we provide to our clients (Kim, 2011a; Robbins, 2008; Scheiby, 2011). In the AMTOS model, the supervisor helps the supervisee to identify one's stressor and develop strategies to deal with existing culture-related stress. Improvisation or other creative modalities can be used to lessen the stress levels of the supervisee.
- Psychodynamic movement: Developed by Priestley and modified by Pedersen and Scheiby, psychodynamic movement (Pedersen, 2002) is particularly useful for supervisees to gain greater insight into their own body, mind and spirit: "The core of psychodynamic movement is improvised movement by one or more persons on an agreed topic, accompanied by one or more persons who follow and interpret the movements in a parallel instrumental/voice improvisation" (p. 191). This is also called "improvised movement to improvised music." Priestley (1975) pointed out that compared to therapeutic methods from the East, therapy in the West has largely neglected area movement in therapy. Supervisees from diverse cultures may respond well to psychodynamic movement due to the familiarity.

Continued clinical supervision throughout music therapy training and the professional life of music therapists is essential. Through the aforementioned methods, the AMTOS model focuses on increasing therapists' awareness of transference and countertransference and dynamic mechanism and managing their own acculturative stress. It offers a unique opportunity for music therapists to enhance their expressiveness, creativity, and cognitive-emotional flexibility while also promoting cultural sensitivity. AMTOS is a valuable medium for cultural integrity of music therapist.

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