

CONFERENCE REPORT

The 2nd International Symposium on Continuum Model of Guided Imagery and Music

Petra Jerling

Music & Wellbeing, South Africa

CONFERENCE DETAILS

The 2nd International Symposium on Continuum Model of Guided Imagery and Music

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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Petra Jerling (M.A. Positive Psychology and M. Mus. Music Therapy) is a certified music psychotherapist in private practice, MUSIC & WELLBEING, in South Africa. She is currently a PhD student at MASARA (Musical Arts in South Africa: Resources and Applications) research department of the North-West University in South Africa supervised by Liesl van der Merwe and John Habron. She is a qualified BMGIM and MI therapist and is a member of EAMI (European Association of Music and Imagery) and SA-ACAPAP (South African Association for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Allied Professions). She has published in the *Nordic Journal of Music Therapy* and *Music Therapy Today*. She has presented papers at the World Congress of Music Therapy, SA-ACAPAP, PASMAE, OPTENTIA and at the 2022 EAMI conference. [musicterapi@gmail.com]

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The call for papers for *The 2nd International Symposium on Continuum Model of Guided Imagery and Music* suggested the following as a theme: Re-birth from the origin: Continuum model of GIM. The emailed invitation read as follows:

The Continuum Model of Guided Imagery and Music (CMGIM) is growing worldwide with our collective inspiration and passion. The CMGIM is in a new stage of development with increased theoretical, research and practical depth. We invite you to join the 2nd symposium for the CMGIM to further expand our growth and knowledge through dialogues and discussion. The symposium will be an opportunity to reconnect, communicate and deepen our insights. (L. Summer et al., personal communication, 15 April 2021)¹

¹ No conference webpage is available. Only delegates received the proceedings and recordings were made available for a short time only. The Korean Music Therapy Education Association website is: <http://www.komtea.or.kr> or: <https://musictherapy.jams.or.kr/>

CMGIM has developed naturally out of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (BMGIM) (Summer, 2020). In the Bonny Method of GIM, a programme of specific, pre-selected classical music, mostly from the Western tradition, is used. Whilst listening, the client is guided by the therapist to experience images. The imagery can include symbols, sensations, memories, and/or feelings that are helpful for working through difficulties in a healing and transformative way (Bonny, 2001). MI uses only one piece of music, often the choice of the client's, which is repeated for a single-focused experience (Summer, 2020). CMGIM consists of these two methods of receptive music therapy, BMGIM and MI. Training in this model began in 2005, starting with the supportive MI level, through re-educative MI and reconstructive MI to supportive, re-educative and reconstructive GIM (Summer, 2020).

Although The Korean Music Therapy Education Association hosted the symposium, the initiative of the organising committee, which included people from both Western and Eastern countries, to host this symposium in English certainly broadened opportunities. The invitation early on in the symposium to ask questions in Chinese or Korean using the chat function, and it would be translated for all to understand, felt warm and welcoming. The 21 papers, six from Korea; nine from China; two each from the UK and the US; one from Germany; one with presenters from South Africa and Spain, and four spotlight sessions were offered over two days.

The first section focused on music, and Lisa Summer from the USA, developer of MI and the Continuum Model, appropriately opened the symposium with her spotlight, concentrating on *Reconnecting to our origins: learning from the 1970's Helen Bonny*. She used a cassette tape which contained music that Helen Bonny had recorded. Together with Lars Ole Bonde, Summer learnt how Bonny might have thought whilst putting this music together. They wondered if the two sides of the cassette represented one or two programmes, whether this was a draft or finished programmes, and whether it should be added to the existing BMGIM programmes. Through analysis of the tape, how the pieces of music were arranged and marked, and listening to the music, they realised the importance of the contour of the music. The contour of the music starts with vast possibilities, moving in a positive direction, building to a peak with possible catharsis. Then a time of rest is followed by another (possibly transcendental) peak, moving towards the return. Listening to Summer was like looking through Bonny's eyes to the importance of choosing music.

Other papers with music as the core element included that of Yang Wan (China) focusing on music listening, emotional regulation and song discussion. In Zhiyan Wang's (China) case report, the music created a bridge, filled the transitional space, to afford the client healing. Christine Routhier and Sally McKnight Harrison, both from USA and Martin Lawes (UK) respectively shared how we listen to music with our bodies, how the music we choose must be worthy of our clients and the work we do, and how a short extract of music could be useful.

In the presentation which I co-presented with Carmen Angulo and Isabel Solana, both from Spain, we looked at how music is collaboratively chosen by the client and therapist during a session. The importance of choosing the best music for the client at that particular moment was highlighted.

The second section of the symposium zoomed in on *research* and the spotlight was presented by Su Lin (China). Her topic: *Experiential supervision and self-growth of therapist in CMGIM training*. She used examples of supervision with experiential qualities and variations. In this process, the supervisor and supervisee explore the answers to questions together. Through using various techniques,

self-growth becomes part of the process for all parties involved. Something Su Lin mentioned that stayed with me, was that the therapist needs to enjoy growing in order to experience growth. This was a wonderful reminder that supervisors are there to support, and together with clinicians and trainees, they too grow during the process.

Varied research studies were presented, all from Eastern countries. Jieun Park's and Juri Yun's (both Korean) case studies respectively discussed self-worth and self-acceptance whilst Aimee Kim (Korea) explored experiences in groupwork. Mindfulness and CMGIM were investigated by Min Li (China) and Young Shil Kim (Korea). Two Q-method studies were presented by Guo Liu, Jing Xia and Xumei Wang (China). Zhonghua Sun's (China) research investigated MI and meta-cognition.

The focus of the second day of the symposium was on practice and Hyun Yu Chong (Korea) opened the day with a spotlight: *The concept of deepening and its strategies for expanding and enriching the inner experience in CMGIM supervision*. Deepening experiences are essential in MI work. She discussed various strategies to help therapists assist clients to explore and deepen their experiences through their imagery.

In the last spotlight presentation, Suzannah Scott-Moncrieff (UK) spoke in a sensitive yet convincing way about *The continuum model of GIM: An anti-oppressive framework*. She quoted Sue Baines's (2013) steps to get to this goal, by firstly taking action (e.g. dismantling oppressive systems, structures and therapy techniques), secondly by being self-reflective, starting with understanding one's own privilege and thirdly by being critical and asking important questions such as 'Who told me this'? Scott-Moncrieff's definition of the CMGIM summarises, in my opinion, in one sentence what this work is all about: "The continuum model of GIM systematises MI and GIM methods in a way that privileges *collaborative decision-making* and centres a person's *preferred music, safety and pleasure*, alongside their therapeutic needs and goals." She concluded by using an example of a session where the above-mentioned concepts, were clearly demonstrated, leaving the audience with an assurance that what was said about anti-oppressive therapy, could really be put into practice in CMGIM.

MI therapy and trauma was discussed in presentations by Cordula Dietrich (Germany) and Young Sook Kim (Korea), and MI work with children and adolescents were highlighted by Kyung Suk Kim (Korea), Chen Chen Wang (China) and Matina Karastatira (UK). Both Xin Zhao and Ying Wan presented practical music-centred projects in China during COVID-19, using music as a resource and for self-care.

I was privileged to be one of the first group of BMGIM-trained MI therapy trainees, the only South African trainee at that time. It was indeed gratifying for me to present at this conference with colleagues and to witness the vast range of people, countries, applications and research possibilities at this symposium. A heartfelt thank you to the organisers, and let us hope that next time, we can meet in person.

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