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Gaku, Jutsu and Gei in Music Therapy

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An Introduction by Rika Ikuno

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It is my pleasure to translate and present Dr. Yasuji Murai's essay "Gaku", 'Jutsu', and 'Gei' in Music Therapy" for Voices 3rd edition. Dr. Murai has been a leading figure of Japanese music therapy for a long time, and presently works as a professor at Seitoku University and a board member of the Japanese Music Therapy Association. I think he has been respected by Japanese music therapy fellows for three reasons: First, he is a psychiatric doctor who has put much emphasis on the clinical work which created his warm and sharp view point to his music therapy theory; second, he also has a Master of Musicology, which he was given at Tokyo University of Arts by studying Japanese traditional music; and third, he has a warm and human personality which is not exactly authoritative, not exactly sentimental, not exactly decisive, but altogether charming. It is not an ordinary thing in Japanese common sense that a younger person like myself sums up a person like Dr. Murai. But let me say this: He is an interesting, lovable precursor who always attracts and puzzles us as followers. Now, this essay is about the attributes music therapists should acquire, and he unfolds his discussion from his wide experiences as a psychiatrist, a musician, a music therapist, an educator, and a human-being. The reason I chose this essay for Voices is that it presents not only Japanese cultural tendencies, but also it reflects the situation Japanese music therapy is facing right now. As I wrote in the inaugural issue of Voices, Japanese music therapy is developing rapidly, but there are a lot of backsides to it which is typically represented by the confusion in music therapist applicants. Misunderstanding for the profession and an unnecessary rushing feeling to merely take the music therapist certification are prevailing. Dr. Murai's calm but definite tone as a guide makes a good contrast to the overheated situation. I think his essay reminds us of an essential of our profession and also a greater vision about what human-beings are. Dr. Yasuji Murai's mail address Yasujimu@aol.com

In the symposium "What is Required to be a Music Therapist" at the Third Annual Conference of Clinical Music Therapy Association of Japan, recently held (1997) in Hiroshima, leading Japanese music therapists gave many suggestions. Listening to them, the image of existing music therapists came into my mind that made me reflect upon the many different qualities of a music therapist. So when I was asked to give some comments, I used the above three perspectives, *Gaku*, *Jutsu*, and *Gei* as the qualities a music therapist should acquire.

***Gaku* - The Academic/Scholarly Element in Music Therapy**

Needless to say, every therapist is trying hard to create his/her own professional personality in order to become a good therapist as a life long task. And the only premise for this task is to be a specialist of music therapy. However, aiming to be a good therapist varies depending on where each person puts his/her basis. For example, since my major work has been around schizophrenia, I have been trying to watch schizophrenic people closely and constantly. It might seem to be a natural task for a music therapist who deals with schizophrenia. But every time I have tried to summarize this disease, I have felt keenly how challenging this task is, even

after a 30- year career. What on the earth is the cause of schizophrenia? It is said that the person's own make-up or hereditary predisposition might come into control, or the environmental factors might operate. But how do these things build up an individual to schizophrenia? How and when are the so-called "pre-personality tendencies" made, such as withdrawing or lack of self-confidence? This pattern of thoughts/behaviors that entice the person to the world of morbid experiences, has a close connection with the build-up of the disease. I personally believe that in this secret connection, there are some clues to the treatment. The work of discovering these clues is achieved by reviewing my own past clinical cases and other researchers' papers.

When I try to make a form of music therapy using the knowledge acquired in the above process, I need to deeply consider the relationship between the human mind and music. This sort of attitude inevitably becomes *Gaku*, the academic/scholarly influenced attribute. That is what comes into my mind first.

***Jutsu* - The Technical Element in Music Therapy**

Next let's think about music therapy in terms of a technique. If you try to grasp music therapy as psychotherapy and to understand the flow of the human mind based on group or individual psychodynamics, the therapist, to grasp this flow, needs to have a technique of psychotherapy such as *Jutsu*. This is indispensable. Primarily, treatments are to restore the individual. The accumulation of these individual clinical cases has constructed today's progress in medicine. It is true for schizophrenia, neurosis, children, or the elderly. It is also true for the sick and for the healthy. When a person has a conflict, the mind that holds this conflict proceeds according to some patterns. These patterns have been clarified by psychoanalysis and psychodynamic medicine. The act of supervision which is called upon in the treatment is to show the therapist, in the light of these behavioral patterns, where the therapist and the client are at that moment and how they can arrive at the goal.

This process might have some resemblance to a car navigation system. However, it is far more complex than that since the client is also moving. Even if you know the final goal, you cannot necessarily go straight to it. You have to aim for a different goal for the time being, and it is decided within the relationship between the therapist and the client at that moment. For example, in clinical work it often happens that the therapist gets lost where he/she is at the moment, or the therapist hesitates over many possible choices in relating to the clients. In such cases it is very valuable for the therapist to have an adequate guide who can settle the entanglements, or to pilot the ship. It is also advisable for the client.

As described above, the most important thing in the psychotherapeutic relationship is to look at the process of treatment objectively and calmly. And this aspect of music therapy is what I express with *Jutsu* - technical element. *Jutsu* should be taught by supervisors who have rich clinical experiences including successes and failures.

***Gei* - The Artistic Element of Music Therapy**

Finally I would like to talk about *Gei* - the artistic element. Regardless of the individual therapy or group session, when I look back at the session, I often feel it as a marvelous artwork that the therapist and the patient have created. And I think the basic factor to create this marvelous artwork is the therapist's *Gei* - the artistic element. What composes this *Gei*, of course, is the therapist's music, but not only that: the personhood of the therapist also has a significant relationship to it.

When the therapist sees the client, he/she intuitively receives the messages from the client and reacts with the music according to the session procedure and the psychological feelings alive inside the patient(s). The responses can be not only musical but also verbal or nonverbal messages along with them. These are a kind of reflex reaction functions that are derived from the therapist's past experiences; but what works deeper down is a humanistic attitude "to be closely with" that person.

In the aspect of music, the therapist has to love music from bottom of the heart. The pleasure of enjoying music makes him/her delighted with a certain harmonic progression or work hard on the charming ornaments on the accompaniment. These therapists never cease musical training in order to improve their own improvisational skills and make them meaningful. In other words, they are very committed to practicing.

However, if there is not humanity closely channeled to his/her music, the therapy will die, I'm afraid. Therapy is something to which the music and the human being are delicately connected. Our old saying tells us that *Gei* is not to learn, but to take in. I think what you have to do is to take in the personhood or the manner of mind of the *Gei* maker.

In just one meeting with somebody, you can never understand all aspects of that person. However, to the earnest observers' eyes, it is possible to grasp something like a whole impression. It is a total impression including his/her talking skill, attitude, what and how he/she is dressed with, how he/she acts, and all other elements. These things we must take in as a good *Gei* maker.

In the world of art, we often make a comment such as "you must have to have a good sense after all." The "sense" you need for music therapy is not an extraordinary sense that only the 0.1 percent of us are born with, but the senses that anybody can achieve by efforts, and that you can find anywhere in your daily lives. It might be expressed in this way: it is to make use of your humanistic charm that is unique to you. However, you yourself or the people who are closest to you are often not aware of your unique charm. Only if this uniqueness could start to emerge, your session would become a deeply tasteful one that people have to simply admire. And into this *Gei*, the client comes in. Then the *Gei* of the therapist involves the client and the client's music skillfully. It also involves the client's personhood. All of these create a scene of music-therapeutic human relationship.

When we compare *Gei* with *Jutsu*, *Jutsu* is more closely connected to the subject, and it is more serious. This connection and seriousness create the therapist's keen interests towards the client. On the other hand, *Gei* is more self-completed, and it could be said that itself is a goal. It has some distance from the client. Of course we observe the client accurately and react precisely to the information we gain; but within this situation, the client might be placed in an audience-like position in some way. steps into the subject vigorously, and the subject cannot help but be changed. The subject can live or die, depending whether the *Jutsu* is good or bad. But with *Gei*, the subject observes it as a participant who co-exists there and learns many things from it. Of course in many cases he/she is involved in it. His/her feelings are influenced by it into various directions. And this makes a treatment occur.

The Harmony of *Gaku*, *Jutsu* and *Gei*

Finally, I would like to refer to which of *Gaku*, *Jutsu*, and *Gei* music therapists should acquire. I believe that they should acquire all three in a moderate way. When one element surpasses others too much, the treatment can be offensive and even detestable. As our old saying suggests *Gaku narigatashi*, the true learning is hard to achieve. We have to preserve the sense of a student until the last moment, while keeping the humility to avoid "being addicted" to *Jutsu*. And ultimately we will all come to the point to aim at the original treatment that nobody can imitate. What we really hope is the happy marriage of *Gaku*, *Jutsu* and *Gei*.

And lastly, the language you speak, the facial expression you make and the music you play in music therapy must resound in a lively and attractive manner. When this happens not artificially but spontaneously, the patients who are in therapy can have what Nordoff called "the wonderful music time they have never experienced before" in a heart warming way. Treatment must be the trinity of knowledge, technique, and humanity.

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