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## **Music therapy in dementia care**

*Perspectives on clinical practice*

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## Music therapy in dementia care: Perspectives on clinical practice

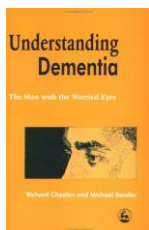
Hanne Mette Ridder, Aalborg Universitet  
MUSIK OCH SÅNG INOM DEMENSVÅRD, Stockholm, 4.10.2012

## Fokus for clinical praxis:

### ► Intersubjectivity

"All present moments involving intersubjective contact involve actions, be it a mutual gaze, a postural shift, a gesture, a facial expression, a respiratory change, or a change in vocal tone or strength" (Stern 2004, s. 145).

## Understanding dementia



"... dementia is essentially a strange and frightening situation that activates very deep fears and consequently a range of behaviours aimed at making the world less frightening." (Cheston & Bender 2003, p. 145)

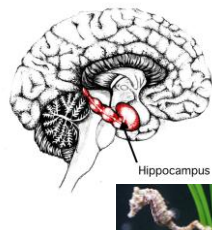
Personhood and a psycho-social approach (Kitwood 1997)

## The human voice

- Processing of the human voice is neurobiologically different from the processing of other acoustic signals (Porges 2001, p. 144).
- This has an impact on social engagement via hippocampal function, stress-related responses and self-soothing behaviours.

## Hippocampus and stress-related responses

- Hippocampus: impressions are turned to memories
- Alzheimer's disease: damage to Hippocampus
- Hippocampal dysfunction: problems in creating meaning/coherence  
→ the nervous system is stressed
- Hypersensitivity to stimuli  
→ strong emotional reactions  
experience of chaos → anxiety



## Stress and self-soothing behaviours

- Dementia. Two extreme states; either:
  - depression, avoidance, 'vegetation'
  - anxiety, panic, aggression
- Parallel to two first phylogenetic stages in the polyvagal theory (Stephen Porges 2001)
  - **Immobilization**: freezing, paralysed, avoiding contact
  - **Mobilization**: mobilizing behaviours necessary for flight/fight

### Stress and self-soothing behaviours

- Immobilization system Depressed Parasympathetic nervous system
- Mobilization system Stressed Sympathetic nervous system
- The social engagement system Socially engaged The mammalian signaling system for motion, emotion, and communication.

(Porges 2001, p. 130; Hart 2006)

### The therapeutic relation

- ▶ ... if the individual perceives the environment as safe, there is the neurophysiological possibility that the cortex could regulate the lower motor neurons of the social engagement system to promote communication and social behavior.
- ▶ Thus **the perception of safety** is the primary requirement for our intervention (Porges 2001, p. 143).

### Attention

“... When the level of stimulation is more moderate, somewhere between the two extremes, his attention will be more easily captured and maintained” (Stern 1977).

### Examples from case descriptions

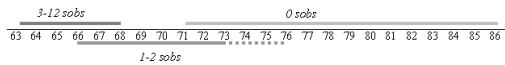


Fig. 07.2n (Session 14 deviates as bpm is relatively high. This makes a jump in bpm marked with the dotted line)

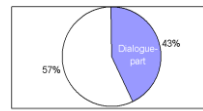


Fig. 07.2o

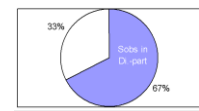


Fig. 07.2p

### Arousal regulation

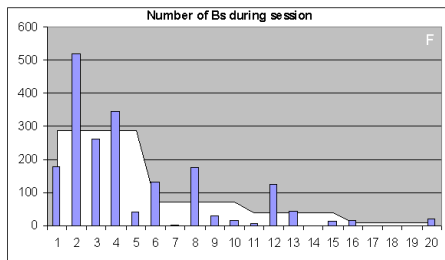
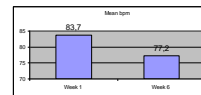
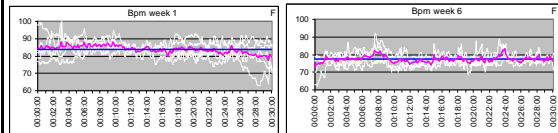
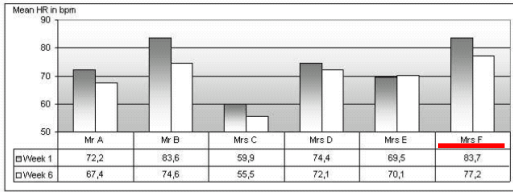


Fig. 07.7g

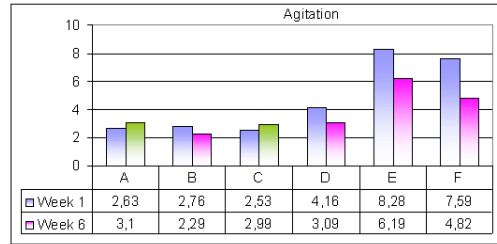
### Arousal regulation



## Arousal regulation



## Arousal regulation



## Songs in music therapy

Level	Components	Aspects
<b>Focussing attention</b>	Structure: stability and cues Songs as cues	Constitutional
<b>Arousal regulation</b> (→ environmental attention)	Musical and social elements Songs that stimulate/sedate	Regulative
<b>Dialogue</b>	Focus on psychosocial needs Validation, holding, facilitation Songs with personal meaning	Dialogical
<b>Conclusion</b>	Structure: stability and cues Songs as cues	Integrative



TAK for nu!

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