

# THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTIONS THROUGH MUSIC-KINETIC EXPRESSION FOR PUPILS WITH ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

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## **Abstract:**

This paper is focused on pupils with the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. The author characterizes their behaviour, for which constant movements and disorders in dynamics of psychological processes are typical. To ease these expressions, the author presents an intervention based on the musical therapy and dance movements. Expressive movements in the rhythm and dance therapy are promoted and presented as effective methods and means to regulate manifestations of hyperactivity in order to achieve good health and good lifestyle of pupils in an educational environment.

**Keywords:** hyperactivity, school education, music-kinetic activities, intervention, music-kinetic expression, dance therapy

## **1 Introduction**

During the development of CNS, little diffuse brain injuries can evolve. These minor functional deviations can lead to diversified manifestations in psychical, kinetic and vegetative areas. Reasons for formation of various dysfunctions vary. Damage can be caused by: internal influences during the prenatal period, during a labour, or in early childhood. It can also be caused by hereditary disposition. *Hyperactivity disorder* belongs to deviations in the area of activation level. It is an organic damage of brain, and according to the diagnostic manual of psychical deviations and disorders it is defined as hyper-kinetic syndrome.

## **2 Hyperactivity Disorder in Elementary School Pupils**

Pupils in educational environment with a deficiency of attention combined with hyperactivity – ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), often have difficulties with fixing one's attention on learning. They also tend to be impulsive and above all, hyperactive. Their behaviour can be characterised by increased restlessness, excessive and often purposeless mobility, inner tension, frequent tiredness, uneven emotionality, exasperation [1]. Key symptoms for ADHD are:

- Hyperactivity,
- Impulsiveness,
- Insufficient ability to focus.

According to Zelinova „these attributes, whether isolated or in conjunction, predispose a child to further difficulties, which are in many cases more severe than initial three key symptoms“ [2].

The earlier this disorder is diagnosed, the more effective the results of therapy will be. Specialised records inform about unusual activity of children with hyperactivity disorder already in a womb before the birth. In some cases, after the birth these children cry a lot and sleep very little. Their parents are often overlaid, dispirited, exhausted. Dysfunction in early childhood is usually detected by certain suspicion that the child is not developing as expected. Developmental dysfunction of cognitive brain centres is often detected much later. This

condition is slowly improving approximately from the age of fourteen, presumably due to maturing of brain cells. This age is identified as „catching up with evolution“, and it is said that „the child is growing out of it“. However, we can also find residuals of hyperactivity disorder in adults. These can often have a negative impact on their career. Complete disappearance of all symptoms depends, to a certain extent on overall approach to a pupil throughout the school attendance. Pupil’s emotional, character and social difficulties tend to persist in his/her adulthood, if he or she is not provided with all care necessary [3].

After entering a preschool facility and later enrolling to an elementary school, it is very difficult for pupils with hyperactivity disorder to align with new environment. They have to learn how to sit still, how to be occupied, communicate with teachers and their peers, what is very demanding and constraining for their excessive and often purposeless mobility need. This constant activity need causes disturbances in dynamics of psychical processes, what often results in distractibility, lack of endurance, physical inaptitude, and prompt tiredness. They have disturbed psychomotor coordination in all kinds of motility, their performance is unequal, they can do one type of activity only for a short period of time, and they have no sense of rhythm. Even healthy pupils can have specific problems in transitive period especially in cognitive and affective sphere [4].

### **3 Music and Movement Expression as Therapeutic Intervention**

In social sphere, hyperactive pupils have difficulties with creating and maintaining new connections. Even though they yearn for emotional acceptance and for social interaction, most often they are rejected, and they behave in provocative manner and attract attention through negative reactions, attitudes and even aggressive behaviour. These pupils inevitably require help and support from their school environment as well as family. Teacher through his/her righteous and consistent approach seeks opportunities how to regulate their demanding physical activities, how to control their unnecessary movements and how to use these for a benefit of their good health and creation of suitable life style. Kinetic activities can vary in their nature. *Explicitness and consistency during interventions* are inevitable both on parents as well as teachers part. When the child finds out that it is being approached and treated without any sort of rules, it can react negatively. Interventions, attitudes, approaches followed by a family and at school should be as similar as possible.

*Musical therapy* is one of the most progressive and effective method which uses kinetic activities combined with music and experiences in educational environment. Teacher, while using its individual components, helps pupils to unveil secrets of musical art, and thus, through a musical experience he/she helps to moderate the tension in their little soles, develops their emotional lives, desires, thoughts, feelings. This *intervention* through combination of music and movement represents important area of musical therapy in influencing various types of psychical, somatic, social and sensual disorders in all age groups. Use of movement and dance in a group process in education, health care and social sphere is increasing nowadays.

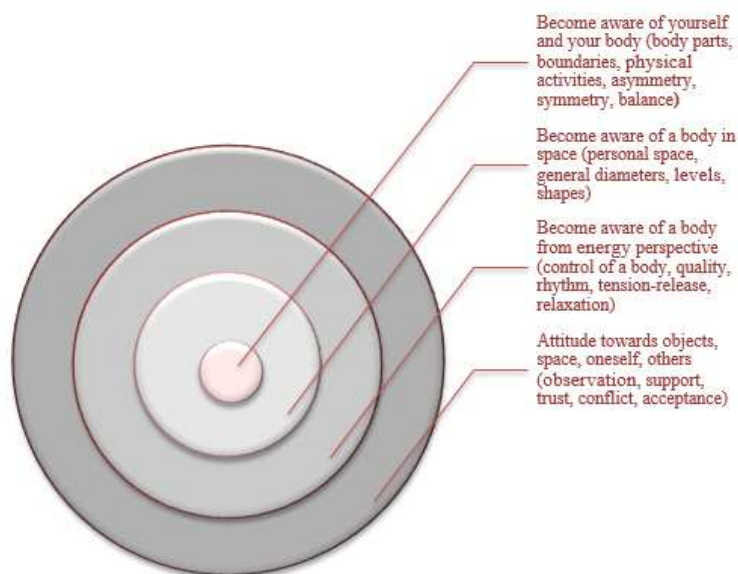
By using music-kinetic activities teacher develops pupils’ creativity by engaging their entire bodies in musical experience, and thus encourages their kinetic and musical self-realization. In music therapy [5], considers movement to be a kind of motional relaxation through music with blending of physical and musical rhythm. It is about sensitive perception of musical rhythm experienced through movement and also about an ability to conform to this rhythm of music and completely amalgamate with it. Rhythm should be regular, expressive and suggestive, realised in slow rates.

Application of relaxing breathing exercises used for enhancing and deeper experiencing of fully relaxed state of whole organism, which has proven to be very useful in the final phase of motional release and merging of rhythm with music.

Potential of music for development of pupils' personalities is above all realised in its expressive part, especially in information and recreation of mental conditions and processes [6].

*Expressive movement in the rhythm of the music* is an adequate technique used in musical therapy. It is an internal deposition of emotions and imaginations through motional expression. Emphasis is put on spontaneity of movement, improvisation, and self-expression. Pupils with hyperactivity disorder can express their individual emotions through specific physical movements – face play, hand grip. In some cases, hyperactivity can represent a certain „breakaway from body and its emotions“. They are very impulsive, often in combination with emotional outbreaks, when it comes to kinetic activities. They can move with their arms raised high up, with a tendency „to fly“, what implies „lack of contact with the ground“ [7].

The aim of the work with movements and dance is not just some reflexion of emotions. It also stimulates perception of what is happening with a person during the expressive movement. Pupils are able to express their kinetic activities via different jumps and leaps. Choice and intensity of jumps can reflect a mood, notion or desire to be „up in the clouds“, what is related to „dissatisfaction during the contact with a ground“ [8]. We agree with Payneová [8] who states that „work on verbal and nonverbal level allows emotions to turn into physical movements through imagination“. Rhythmical essence of movement and dance often enables pupils with hyperactivity disorder to initiate certain form of order.



**Fig. 1** Schematic alignment

Laban [8] was a pronounced specialist in the field of dance and movement development. His analysis and categorization of movement significantly enriched verbal and nonverbal communication. Laban's approach, which is used until today in particular by kinetic and dance teachers helps to understand the quality of movement even in dance-kinetic therapy. When directed by experienced teacher, participant can for example come into contact with parts of his/her body, become aware of them, accept them as his/her own and control them easily. Considering already mentioned areas, which Laban's analysis of movement focuses on, we will use as an example schematic alignment of relationships and realisation (fig. 1) by Payneová [8]. Cycle graph captures mutual connectivity and synergism of individual areas of Laban's analysis of movement.

*Music used in kinetic activities:*

- Outlines an atmosphere,
- Encourages imaginations,
- Develops contact and interaction within a group.

Expressive movement in therapeutic process, which is directly combined with perception of music, leads pupils to desirable spontaneity, abreaction on emotional level, free experience and utilization of body movement in space, fellowship, self-control. It is a visualizing element of emotional expressions, music content. It can also release stress, activate the pupil, and make him concentrate on a specific task [9]. All activities should be followed by relaxing and releasing exercises and discussion about experiences, emotions.

When looking for further possibilities how to make use of movement and dance, **dance-kinetic therapy** is still topical. In Slovakia Očenášová [10], pursues this method. According to her ascertainment, it is about psycho-therapeutic use of dance and movement in a process, which is “main aim is to reach emotional and physical integration of mind and a sole movement as reflexion of personality” [10]. **Emotional values are the essence of kinetic and dance education.** In its realisation it allows the moving person to work with the rhythm of his/her own body, and to observe his/her own experience in the process. Movement and dancing is an activity, which, to a certain extent can be performed by nearly anyone. From the psychological point of view, even pupils who are less talented can apply their creativity, and make this activity as important as it is for those who are talented. Kinetic and dance education can be used to form pupils’ personalities. Even with hyperactive disorder this form of education can participate in development of creativity, sensitivity, surrounding receptiveness, it also develops social intelligence and teaches discipline which is an important factor in this case [11].

When asking “where does the movement come from?”, the dance-kinetic therapist Chodorowova [12] answers that it originates in an internal impulse, which has a character of a percept. This impulse leads out into open space, so the movement becomes visible in its physical action. This physical action is allowed thanks to active imagination. This way it is possible to set one’s dreams, imagination and fantasy in motion. In relation with motional imagination, above mentioned therapist characterises movement as distinct and natural way of expressing emotions. One only has to learn to listen to body language – comply with lived through emotions and images. It is a vital connection between memory and moving body. Relationship between the body – imagination – emotions creates creative and at the same time healing process. The aim is to offer safe space, in which it is possible to overcome problems and difficulties without feeling endangered.

#### 4 Conclusions

Musical therapy is about mutual interaction between movement and musical-expressive elements – melody, rhythm, dynamics, and tempo. The body has to be in energetic equilibrium, what can be achieved through direct work with the body – movement. The aim is to create notion of freedom, enchantment, and beauty. Freedom – immerse into a river of emotions; enchantment – river in motion; beauty – expression of inner harmony, which river brings [13].

“We can shape children towards noble growth, in order that even those who are less talented are capable of deep experience. It is in our power and we are able to give children not only happiness but also development of sensibility and responsiveness towards music, movement, themselves and towards others.”

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