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## THE NEED FOR MUSIC THERAPY IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

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**Abstract.** The primary function of penal institutions in the Republic of Macedonia is the resocialization of individuals serving prison sentences. The application of various programs for working with this category of persons should be more diverse, which would achieve the desired result, which is their training and return to the social environment as citizens who will live by social norms and will not commit crimes again. In addition to the general and specific programs intended for usage in the resocialization process, the application of music therapy and the opportunities it offers through useful methods and forms of work can achieve positive effects among convicted persons. The need for music therapy can contribute to fulfilling useful time that convicts do not have in penal institutions. It is precisely this organization of useful time for convicted persons through music therapy that enriches and advances the resocialization process, especially in a thoughtful organization of the free time of convicted persons, which is an important aspect and integral part of the resocialization process.

**Key words:** music therapy, resocialization of prisoners, organization of the free time of prisoners

### INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to enrich the process of re-socialization in prisons in the Republic of Macedonia through the application of music therapy and the opportunities it offers to achieve positive results in the personality of the convicted person. Music therapy provides quite practical methods and work that can be applied to this category of people serving a prison sentence. Much of the time convicted people spend in prison is underutilized. The organization of time by employees in the re-socialization sector and regular general and specific programs intended for their re-socialization while serving a prison sentence should be filled with other useful activities. This is especially true of the organization of leisure time, which is also of great importance and is an integral part of the process of re-socialization of convicted people.

### 1. MUSIC THERAPY AND ITS MEANING

Music therapy has its origins from ancient times to the present day. A long time ago, people reacted to certain sounds that caused them to feel certain emotions, which changed their behaviour and mood. As humanity has evolved, music therapy has developed and found widespread application in many fields. In this paper, the emphasis of music therapy

will be placed on its application in resocialization of convicts serving prison sentences in prisons in the Republic of Macedonia.

Music therapy is a way of providing a non-threatening environment necessary for optimal development. It is an avenue through which one can emotionally reach out to a person at their highest level of development. Music is a medium, much more appropriate than traditional verbal communication, through which a person can speak, learn and acquire social skills, develop communication skills, and develop a concept of self-control and self-esteem. Music therapy is a science that requires intensive training and professional development.<sup>1</sup>

The way music therapy works is to increase the level of prosocial skills acquisition in a person and provide a straightforward way through which they can achieve excellent development, which is primarily based on arousing and awakening positive emotions in the person. The sense of satisfaction that one can build a system of healthy values that conform to societal norms and rules makes the connection of music therapy with the person even more potent. Such strong connections between music and personality are applied to the methods and forms of things through music therapy, strengthening the person's self-esteem.

The beginnings of music therapy in the Republic of North Macedonia date back to the 1980s with the initiative of Prof. Dr. Kiril Vangelov Makedonski to use music therapy methodology in the approach to children with special needs.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the beginnings of music therapy in the Republic of Macedonia, its application is very little or only in certain areas, such as the upbringing and education of children and access to children with special needs. Music therapy, in addition to these mentioned areas, can find application in other places, specifically in the process of re-socialization through educational work with convicts serving a prison sentence. Its significance and endeavour to develop positive emotions through which the condemned person can change his personality are one of the factors of re-socialization in the person itself. We must emphasize that music therapy does not replace resocialization, which is a complex process, but rather only enriches it to return the condemned person to the post-penal environment successfully. Music therapy prepares convicted prisoners serving a prison sentence for their upcoming challenges and to act according to moral and ethical principles. Music therapy can also provide a developmental component for individual and social development through which the person can recognize what is right and what is not. Music draws people in and can connect them together; this can especially yield results in group work with convicts that can be applied through music therapy. Such treatment of convicts can enrich their social and cultural life and raise their level, which may have been weak or abandoned altogether.

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<sup>1</sup> Tanevski, T. (2024), *Fundamentals of Music Therapy*, Association of Theory and Practice of Education "EDUCATIONAL REFLECTIONS", Skopje, p.21

<sup>2</sup> Tanevski, T. (2024), *Fundamentals of Music Therapy*, Association of Theory and Practice of Education, Skopje, p.46

## 2. THERAPEUTIC EFFECTS OF MUSIC THERAPY

The benefits and effects that music therapy can achieve may contribute to the process of resocialization with convicted people, in which other therapies are used. The therapeutic effects that music therapy can achieve can connect with and complement what the re-socialization process itself requires.

Music therapy, on the other hand, is an evidence-based clinical practice. It uses musical intervals to achieve non-musical goals within a therapeutic relationship. These goals vary widely and may include improving communication, emotional expression, cognitive function, or physical coordination.<sup>3</sup>

Behaviours that may manifest in convicted persons may include depression, anxiety, trauma that the act itself may cause; stress that may be present because some convicts are facing a prison environment that is unfamiliar to them for the first time; deprivation, or disorder. Such conditions in convicts can be alleviated by medical attention through drug therapy. However, another therapy that can significantly help with these conditions in convicts is music therapy.

However, compared to other therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), music therapy has not been an active therapy for many years, despite being carried out in correctional facilities dating back to the 1930s (Coddington, 2002).

There are more choices for applying other therapies in correctional facilities. In the Republic of Macedonia, treatment programs for convicted people are below the level. This is primarily due to several factors. One of those factors is the conditions in KPU facilities. Conditions include a regular educational group with which the professional person from the re-socialization sector should work, appropriate spatial conditions, and equipping them with the necessary work for a particular type of specific work, including music therapy.

Drums also have therapeutic effects. Rhythmic beating can help reduce stress and anxiety and improve mental health. This is one of the reasons why drums are also used in modern music therapy. These aspects show that drums have much more than a musical role – they are a vehicle for spiritual, social, and therapeutic expression.<sup>4</sup>

Playing the drum to reduce stress and anxiety as part of music therapy in the re-socialization process can be an essential element that can help. However, it is also instrumental in the resocialization process in convicted people to study an instrument that will raise the level of cognition in the convicted person. Through music, positive emotions, relaxation, and motivation can be instilled in convicted people. Improving the emotional status of a convicted person will also mean a better quality of life. In addition to improving emotions, you must keep them at bay. Often, convicts do not know how to deal with certain problematic situations. Through music therapy, the continuity of positive emotions should also be enabled. Usually, the method of composition should be emphasized here. We know that not everyone can compose, but the very attempt to compose something, to create it, involves thinking, melody, and mood that is in the direction of discovering the inner potential

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<sup>3</sup>Tanevski, T. (2024), *Fundamentals of Music Therapy*, Association of Theory and Practice of Education "EDUCATIONAL REFLECTIONS", Skopje, p.29

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 50

that the condemned person has and may not be aware of possessing. Such an approach to things will give him some encouragement that he too is able and useful to do something, despite the marginalization and stereotyping that prevails in society, and which is very prevalent, especially in his most challenging period, which is after his release from prison where he has to deal with such challenges as once criminals for always criminals. Music therapy should instil in the person a portion of positive values, presenting the person with a positive way of thinking first and then acting and living that is socially acceptable.

## **2. THE PRISON AND ITS ENVIRONMENT**

Prison is an unnatural and artificial environment for a convicted person to pass – to serve the prescribed sentence of imprisonment imposed on him by the court for the crime he has committed. In such circumstances, it is difficult to change someone, and sometimes, it is even more difficult for the convicted person to adjust to his new environment if he is the primary offender. Some convicts have found themselves in this unnatural environment on multiple occasions and have already developed some patterns of behaviour. They can overcome these initial difficulties or may be faced by those convicted people in prison for the first time. Typically, convicted people, upon arrival at the Correctional Facility, have very low levels of self-esteem. Regaining self-esteem is one of the measures taken in the process of re-socialization. The process of re-socialization involves many aspects of correction. The basis of re-education is pedagogical, i.e., educational. Where society has stagnated, and the individual has been unable to adapt and has embarked on the path of crime, it is now in the hands of penal institutions that must accomplish the most challenging aim and task: re-education. Several negativities drag the person away and do not allow him to make changes that distract him from the criminal mindset. Lost confidence is just one of those negatives. Another aspect that is very important in re-socialization is the stimulation of internal motivation in the convicted person to want to change something in himself. Through music therapy, convicted people can be motivated to create new skills and values and overcome their previous negativity. Along with other forms and methods of work in the re-socialization of convicts, music therapy can also significantly contribute to the convicts finding and building a prosocial identity. The impact of music therapy, in addition to aiding in the acquisition of prosocial skills that would benefit the convict, can also contribute significantly to reducing and managing stress, controlling certain emotions, and managing certain emotions such as anger.

## **3. APPLICATION OF MUSIC THERAPY IN THE PROCESS OF RESOCIALIZATION OF CONVICTED PERSONS**

Applying music therapy to the re-socialization process can have a tremendous positive impact. Just listening to music in convicts can trigger a range of positive emotions. All of this can cause the convicted person to feel that he or she possesses positive characteristics that he or she is not aware of or has forgotten without knowing their usefulness in thinking, solving problems, and behaving in the environment. Music therapy can also help convicts return to some old habits they had forgotten or abandoned and did not practice. Music therapy can help convicts tell their life story through it. This is the basis for further change that can be achieved in a convicted person. We mentioned that music therapy can help reduce stress, but it can also help reduce violent behaviour and aggressive communication between convicts. Any convicted person can take part regardless of whether they have any prior knowledge of music. Music therapy can yield good results in group work with convicted

people. When applying group work activities in resocialization with convicts, it is very important to define certain things that would facilitate group work. I want to mention some of these important things briefly. Convicts in prison come with different educational levels, abilities, and acquired skills and habits. When we organize group work with convicted people, consider the minimum criteria that need to be met to form the group. Once it has been formed, the second phase will be implemented. In the second phase, it is determined on which days group treatment activities will be carried out. In addition to the topics discussed about group therapies, including the application of music therapy in a group, there are many benefits. In addition to the effect that music therapy can achieve with its work and action, it can achieve other useful things that may be insignificant for some, but are of great benefit when working in resocialization with convicts serving prison sentences. When there are multiple convicts in a group, the first and foremost is to establish the rules that the group will adhere to and always abide by when the group activity occurs. Perhaps some of the convicted people in the group will not have much knowledge of music. Although the emphasis in such a convict group is music therapy, convicts learn and acquire specific rules and patterns of behaviour, such as respecting each person's personality, actively listening without interruption, identifying patterns of functional behaviours, improving emotions, being able to use and retain them in everyday life, and developing creativity. The atmosphere created through music therapy allows convicted people to feel better and thus increase their happiness and satisfaction as positive emotions enable them to live a better quality of life. Emotions determine the quality of life.

Music therapy can be applied in prisons in two ways:

First, when we have a passion for music, playing instruments, and composing music, this includes musicians, musicians who work with convicted people, and educators. Creating a composition and its practical use develop creativity in the condemned.

The second way is to associate music therapy with aesthetic education, where we have a room where, through painting, the condemned people create, but this is accompanied by a particular musical composition based on which the condemned people tell their stories through the emotions that the music evokes. Here, you can combine different musical genres to perceive the emotions the condemned will convey on their painting canvas. Combining music therapy with art drawing in convicts has a double effect. The first thing is listening to a particular musical melody to stimulate positive emotions, while art and drawing will increase creativity. Also, combining multiple genres of music will help to see the emotional expressions and previous experiences and deal with them, discussing the problem they have with listening to the music and pictorially portraying it through drawing. Listening to the music and narrating it on the canvas will also observe the reactions of the condemned, whether they are relaxed or impulsive, the combination of colours, whether they are darker or lighter colours, with what intensity they are applied, expressions of pleasure or dissatisfaction, openness or closure. The music therapist will need to carefully observe and note all of this for analysis to see where it may be necessary to intervene in a particularly convicted person to induce positive emotions. Music therapy can also help convicts work with a focused discipline that they can achieve through drawing and aesthetic education.

### **3.1 MUSIC THERAPY AND EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES**

Music therapy in convicts focuses on improving different upbringings and education, such as physical, aesthetic, and intellectual, and concentrate primarily on activating positive emotions. This is only one segment of the positive effect that can be achieved in the person of the condemned. Such educational effects will contribute to a change in the behaviour of the convicted person. Music can challenge an internally condemned person and, in some way, provoke them to start talking about their feelings. Music is a connection to the moment that occurs now as the condemned person hears the melody, his reflection while the melody lasts, and a return to his thoughts of previous events he has gone through in life. It is here that the music therapist should use his knowledge and all these stages that the condemned person goes through while listening to the music to get him to use them in solving the problem situations that led him to commit the act or some other blockers that the condemned person has that are an obstacle to achieving the change that needs to be achieved in him to achieve the ultimate goal and that's re-socialization.

## **4. ORGANIZATION OF LEISURE TIME FOR CONVICTED PERSONS IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

In addition to applying regular and specific programs in re-socialization, an integral part of this process is organizing leisure time for convicted people. Leisure usually encompasses activities that follow all the work and daily activities that the convicted person must perform through the established schedule of daily activities provided for in the correctional facility. A good prison environment is a structured day filled with useful activities in the direction of the re-socialization of convicts. The organization of leisure time encompasses several things, including sports competitions such as basketball or football, other games such as chess or dominoes, the organization of cultural entertainment life (theatre, cinema, and concerts), and the production of a prison newspaper. Also, according to the motivation and interest of the convicted people, a section can be organized. One of these sections may be the music section, where one can study the playing of musical instruments. This will further influence and enrich the resocialization process through which the person will contribute to stress relief and allow them to overcome the deprivations and difficulties they feel.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Music therapy works in a variety of areas where we can see excellent results. Because prisons are primarily a closed and unnatural environment in which convicts serving a prison sentence need to be re-socialized and re-established as useful citizens in the social environment, it makes this whole process specific, difficult, requiring various methods, forms and therapies at work. All this should contribute to positive results in the person of the convict, change something in him, allow him to see that through the change in his behaviour it can be the other, the one who knows how to deal with problem situations and respond appropriately without thinking that the solution to everything is always reaching for criminal activities. In addition to the regular and specific programs aimed at the re-socialization of convicted persons serving a prison sentence in the Republic of North Macedonia, a serious contribution to this segment of re-socialization of convicted persons serving a prison sentence can also be given by music therapy. The effect that music therapy can achieve can help and complement the process of re-socialization to develop positive emotions in

convicts, but it also makes a great contribution to the implementation of different types of education. The prison environment should always be filled with beneficial activities for convicted people to nullify the negatives. It is in this direction that music therapy can make a great contribution to the organization of the free time of convicts, which is a very important and indispensable part of the process of re-socialization.

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