



Music & Medicine

Authors: Franziska Buttgerit
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The use of music in medicine has been attested both among indigenous people and in the ancient civilizations up to Greco-Roman antiquity. In the 18th century, the therapeutic effect of music was increasingly used in the area of mental disorders, from which today's music therapy developed. There is hardly an area in medicine today that does not attempt to achieve health-promoting effects with music.

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Music inspires us. It touches us. It is universally understood, as it has the power to trigger feelings of peace, goosebumps, or tears. Music is pure feeling, and its effect can hardly be described in words.



So many people have already experienced the positive effects of listening to music and/or making music and singing for themselves in a variety of situations: on the premature baby ward, as participants at concerts in nursing homes and hospitals, as well as at musical get-togethers with family or friends, especially in cases involving dementia or relatives sick with cancer.



The positive effects music has on recovery and on the physical and mental states of people in general is no secret. Music has been used as a remedy for thousands of years and in a wide variety of cultures. The use of music in medicine has been attested both among indigenous peoples and in the ancient civilizations up to Greco-Roman antiquity. In the 18th century, the therapeutic effect of music was increasingly used in the area of mental disorders, from which today's music therapy developed. There is hardly an area in medicine today that does not attempt to achieve health-promoting effects with music.

“Happy” pieces of music reduce the concentration of the stress hormone cortisol in the blood of patients. They therefore need less anesthetics during an operation. A study in the journal "The Lancet" from August 2015 shows: pain perception and feelings of fear after an operation were lower on average if patients listened to music before, during or afterwards. Tinnitus patients can use specially edited music to help get rid of the annoying whistling in their ears. After a stroke, people try to coordinate their movements again with music. In



people with Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, singing together can ease aggression, and one's favorite music can bring back faded memories.

Singing strengthens the immune system, emphasizes Eckart Altenmüller from the Institute for Music Physiology and Musicians' Medicine at the Hanover University of Music. Singing in a choir is fun and one can make friends. In addition to medical care, social contacts are an important supportive measure to lead the sick out of their isolation, to get together with like-minded people and to support one another.



Music is used therapeutically to reach people emotionally. Even in patients with whom no verbal dialogue is possible, music is used to enable relaxation and to awaken positive feelings. Music can therefore also be beneficial in psychotherapy for adolescents, especially when treating young people who suffer from autism, anxiety, depression or eating disorders. In addition, music therapy is now used intensively to promote brain development in premature babies

More than ten years ago, Professor Harald Schachinger showed that music works on an unconscious level. Then the head of the department for child and adolescent medicine at



the Berlin Forest Hospital, the professor played the cello in the presence of premature babies. Later, selected pieces were played for them through headphones. The harmonious sounds not only normalized their breathing and heart rates, but also reduced the death rate of small patients. In the meantime, several clinics in Germany have hired specially trained music therapists for premature babies.

Music not only helps to express emotions, it can also trigger them, says Professor Dr. Stefan Koelsch from the Free University of Berlin. The music psychologist evaluated 21 neuroscientific studies that showed the influence of sounds on the brain using imaging methods. Music “speaks” to the amygdala and the hippocampus, both of which belong to the limbic system, which is responsible for processing emotions. Koelsch is convinced that the possibilities of music therapy are far from being exhausted, “even if we are still at the very beginning when it comes to proving the effectiveness of these methods”. He sees potential in the use of music therapy in patients with depression, among other things. Finnish researchers have observed, for example, that those affected were able to relieve tension by playing music regularly and had a sense of achievement. Concentrating on the rhythm also generally increased alertness and thus led to more activity. These scientists therefore see music therapy as a good addition to current standard treatments.

Music therapy is of course not a panacea, but its increasing role in some areas of medicine should not be underestimated. It is free of negative side effects.





About the author:



Franziska Buttgerit (Mezzosopranistin)

Franziska Buttgerit erhielt 1995 ihren ersten Blockflötenunterricht an der Jugendmusikschule Dreisamtal.

2000 wechselte sie in die Blockflötenklasse von Frau Prof. Agnes Dorwarth.

Von 2000-2010 gewann sie diverse Preise bei verschiedenen Wettbewerben, u.a dem Flötenwettbewerb in Bruchsal und „Jugend musiziert“ in verschiedenen Kategorien: Solo, Ensemble und Alte Musik.

Darunter 2007 den 1. Bundespreis in der Kategorie Alte Musik sowie den Sonderpreis der Manfred Vetter-Stiftung als auch den 2. Preis für Alte Musik beim Händelwettbewerb in Karlsruhe. Zudem nahm sie von 1998-2010 Querflötenunterricht bei Constanze von Bauszern und Susanne Hopfer.

2005 begann Franziska Buttgerit im Kinderchor als Ensemblemitglied des Stadttheaters Freiburg zu singen, was sie auch zu vielen kleinen solistischen Rollen in diversen Kinderoperen brachte.

Den ersten Gesangsunterricht erhielt sie 2007 bei Frau Prof. Ingeborg Möller und Lini Gong. Es folgten weitere Wettbewerbe und Preise im Fach Gesang, u. a. der 1. Bundespreis in der Kategorie Kunstlied Duo beim Wettbewerb „Jugend musiziert“ und der WESPE Sonderpreis des Bundesministeriums für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend für die „beste Interpretation eines Werkes einer Komponistin“.

Diese Preise wiederum brachten Franziska nach Lübeck zu Meisterkursen bei Prof. Christiane Hampe und Michael Gehrke.

Seit 2010 ist sie Mitglied des Extrachores des Theater Freiburg und 1. Vorstand desselben seit 2017.

2015 begann sie ihr Studium für Gesang bei Prof. Christiane Libor an der Musikhochschule Schloss Gottesaue in Karlsruhe.



Bis heute folgen Kooperationen mit der Hochschule und dem Stadttheater Freiburg, was ihr u. a. zu einer kleinen Rolle in den Vorstellungen sowie der gleichnamigen DVD-Produktion „Cendrillon“ von Jules Massenet verhalf.

Neben ihren Auftritten auf der Musiktheaterbühne widmet sich Franziska Buttgerit leidenschaftlich dem Oratorien- und Konzertrepertoire, womit sie regelmäßig als Solistin auftritt.