Music Orchestrating Health

Feelings and senses given to the music present at the hospital during hemodynamic procedures: Cardiac Catheterization and Coronary Angioplasty.

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Faced with the suffering of patients due to hospitalization, illness, physical and psychic pain and the necessary but often invasive procedures, we seek to relieve their pain and discomfort by offering them a more humanized treatment, based on our belief in the therapeutic effects of music. We are not referring to music therapy stricto senso but rather of a new posture in relation to the use of music in the area of health: the so-called "Music Medicine" [1], a therapeutic approach for the use of music in a medical context. Music therapy developed its practices and research with a qualitative methodology more related to humanistic traditions than to Medical Science. "Music Medicine" was developed as an isolated discipline, seeking to incorporate the legitimate therapeutic use of music within the medical context [1]. Music exerted a profound influence on involuntary physiology, capable of affecting the pulse and blood pressure, relaxing muscles, altering the breathing and affecting the emotions to the point of making you cry or even laugh [40]. It interferes in the system that regulates the emotions, thus constituting an ally to help hospitalized patients improve [22]. Several studies indicate that music has soothing effects and is beneficial in reducing stress and anxiety in coronary patients. It is known that reactions to music are considered to be subjective, however, results of previous studies suggest that variables such as changes in heart rate, in cerebral blood flow and heart rate variability increase with a faster musical tempo, regardless of individual preferences. The effects of stress on the cardiovascular system have also been proven. However, the meanings assigned to music when used during hemodynamic procedures are unknown, as are the meanings of the experience of these procedures. We believe that music can alleviate the psychic pain and consequently, physical pain too, of the patients at the time of carrying out hemodynamic procedures, when they reflect about life and their own death. This research is based on a Clinical Qualitative Methodology, which deals with the investigation of symbolic meanings from reports of adults about phenomena that involves the health-disease process [41]. The subjects are patients undergoing hemodynamic procedures in the Hospital SEMPER (Permanent Medical Service), Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The semi structured interview was used in order to obtain data. The sampling method was the Theoretic Saturation. For the analysis and interpretation of the data, we used the Qualitative Content Analysis of the Interviews [41] [42].

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Several studies related to stress due to cardiac risk factor, are basically of a quantitative nature, whereas the nature of the acoustic stimulus is qualitative. The aim of this research is to understand the senses and feelings of music for patients undergoing hemodynamic procedures, identify and interpret the related fantasies and emotions and study the possibility of deploying in hospitals the "Musical Method for Hemodynamic Procedures", being developed by the author. We conclude that within the experience of listening to music while undergoing catheterization and angioplasty, 100% of the patients interviewed claimed they had overcome the experience of stress and felt calm, tranquility, peace and happiness. Some patients described the music as a companion, as something that diverts their attention from fear, transporting them to an imaginary place, to another dimension.
Some of the patients' reports:

"I didn't feel alone, music was my companion! It was great!!";
"I felt Peace, from the first moment I saw you. You were talking about music and I felt PEACE!! (smiling). Thank you very much!";
"Music brought Peace! It helps to relax. You can implant it in the hospital, for everybody! It will be really good!"; "Ah! Music helps a lot. It takes away the tension from it, from the exam."; "Very good! I was like this... (he closed his eyes) very relaxed!"; "Did you see how happy he was when you spoke of music? He gave a huge smile!!!"; "Fear, fear of dying. It is going to touch my heart!!! It helped to calm (me). I was very nervous!"; "It increases confidence, strength and faith!!"; "Marvelous! Music carries you away!"

We can observe the importance of music for the hemodynamic patients insofar as psycho-emotional aspects are concerned. Music not only helped diminish stress but also brought about changes in mood. The sensation of fear, uneasiness and terror were substituted by feelings of strength, contentment, happiness and states of tranquility, faith and peace. It was very important to evidence the satisfaction reported by the patients on having music as a companion, as a real comfort for the heart, alleviating the idea of being alone to face the possibility of death. We verified the enormous value of the episodic memory in the capacity demonstrated by the patients when, as they remembered the experience with music during the first procedure, they were able to bring to the new procedure without music, the sensations of well-being they had experienced, as if they were accompanied by music in this second moment. The board of directors of Angiosemper, Hospital SEMPER, decided to implant the Musical Method for Hemodynamic Procedures in a more specific and permanent form, as a part of the hospital's routine.

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