



We're all in this Together

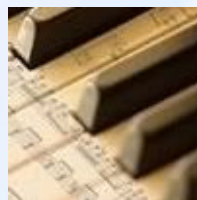
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Inpatient and community based
Music Therapy
for children and families experiencing
terminal illness



What is it you think you can do?



“being able to say the things we want to say to each other”

“write about the things you feel and put them into a song”

- Hearing a need
- Identifying how Music Therapy can help the individual family
- Establishing a relationship of trust
- A safe space to allow expression



Hospital

- Foreign environment
- Imposed routine
- “safety”: medical assistance always close-by
- Structured
- Parenting in “public”

Home

- Familiar environment
- Family directed routine
- More responsibility on family members
- Less structure
- Private/familiar

Why music?



- Familiar medium – pre-existing relationship
- Can function as a tool for projection
- Relationship with music separate to relationship with cancer
- Children: creative/expressive tools are almost instinctual, it's their “language”
- Minimal expectation – child/adolescent controls degree of involvement

Song writing – musical stories



How does
this sound?

- Gathering ideas and thoughts within family conversation at the bedside, with child/client, with siblings and parents – **all contributing their own words**
- Song writing process makes possible the externalisation of unexpressed feelings and stories
- Enables the collection and construction of shared experiences into song framework

Song writing in music therapy and narrative therapy



Letting the
song speak
for itself

- Enabling families and friends to speak the unspeakable
- Facilitating families to tell their story and then “bowing out”
- Skill in listening carefully for words and phrases that can become lyrics.

Denborough, 2002

We're all in this together



Mum and me love scrapbooking, we call it “crap booking!”

And we're all in this together

I have the ideas and Mum takes the orders

And we're all in this together

Mum is more than a Mum, I love her so much

And we're all in this together

She is always positive towards me and keeps me going

And we're all in this together

Musical improvisation



- Meeting in the moment
- Permission to be “child-like”
- Facilitating conversation - a structure without structure
- Memory making

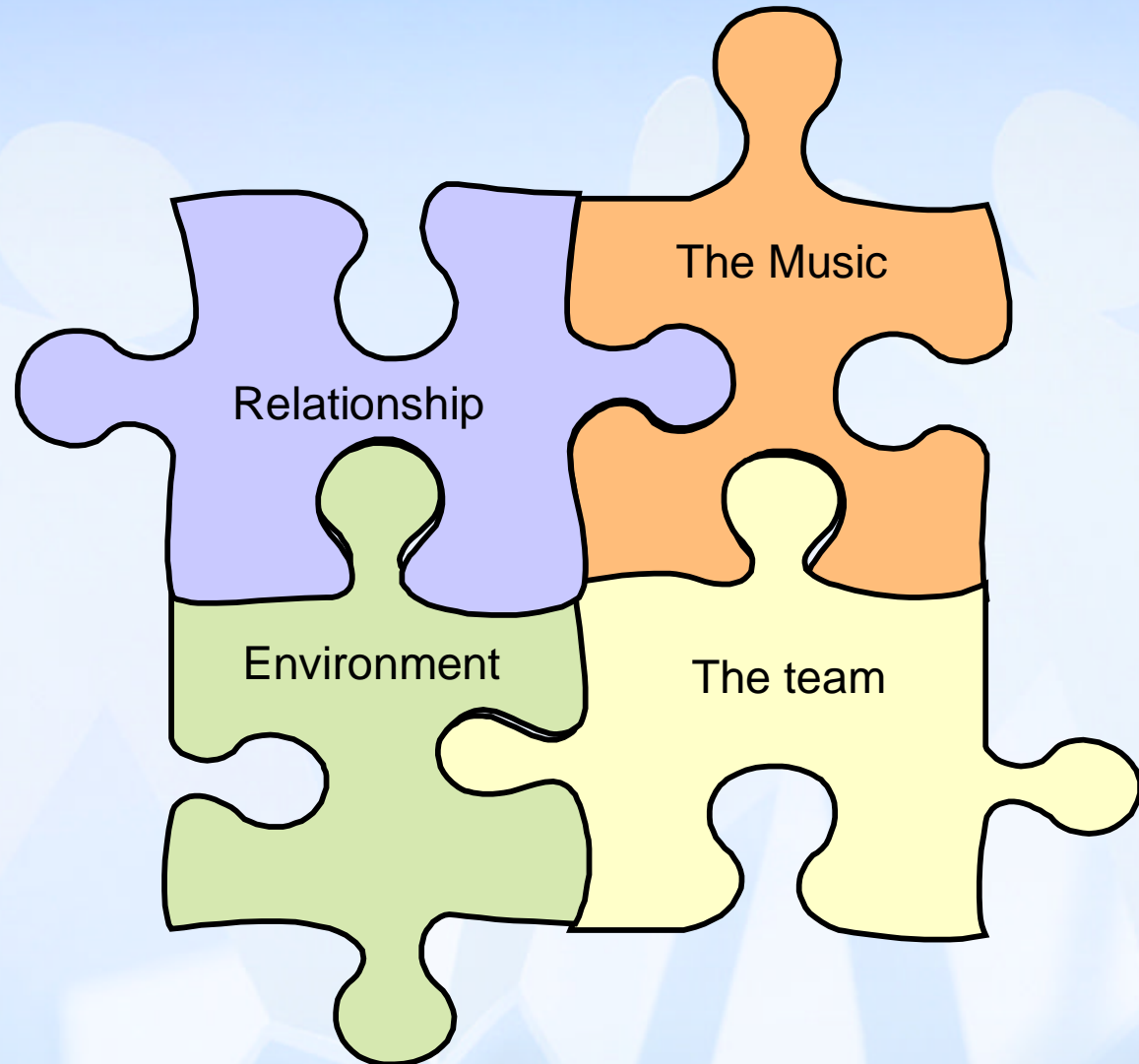
*Riding my
horse... Over the
rainbow*

Bricolage



...Something
that is made
or put
together with
whatever
materials
happen to be
available.

Dun, 2007



Different settings



Hospital

- Music remembers the “well” part of the child/adolescent – a time to be noisy or quiet, a time to have control
- Music can provide structure and familiarity

Home

- Recall some of the “fun” moments
- Music connecting different family members – creates a “task”

← Auditory associations →

Child in context



- Siblings
- Parents
- Grandparents
- Friends
- Stage of disease
- Health professionals
- ??

“A song for
Sophie”

Self-reflective practice



- Who “owns” the music?
- Being authentic
- The person beyond the disease
- Being aware of personal “trigger points”
- Themes in songs
- Memory making – a shared journey?

References



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