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Lives in Dialogue:

Shared Musical-Relational Engagements in Music Therapy and Music Education

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Abstract

Music therapists and music educators, within their distinct workplaces and often holding distinct mandates, share a common imperative to advocate for the value of music within society. This paper's authors—a music therapist and a music educator—engage in "genuine dialogue" (Buber, 1947/2002) as a "primary source of under-standing" (Garred, 2006, p. 105) in exploring the purpose of music within their respective disciplines. Through interrogating common conceptions of music, music education and music therapy, they propose that the theoretical and practical points of intersection between their fields are far broader in potential scope than is typically assumed, particularly within the current North American interdisciplinary discourse.

Specifically, this paper's authors present music-centered theoretical perspectives from the field of music therapy (Aigen, 2014) as providing a meeting place for transdisciplinary dialogue and a renewed vision for the purpose of musical engagement, a fundamentally relational act. This perspective includes recognition of music's "para-musical" affordances, a concept that challenges overly simplistic distinctions between "music itself" and its "nonmusical benefits" (Ansdell, 2014). This perspective reminds the music educator that it would be remiss to neglect the personal and relational affordances of the medium, while imploring the music therapist to resist reducing music to a mere tool for achievement of a nonmusical outcome, thereby neglecting the medium—the music—itself.

Keywords: Music education, music therapy, music-centered, transdisciplinary, relational

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Introduction

> It is in the nature of beginning that something new is started which cannot be
> expected from whatever may have happened before. (Arendt, 1958, pp. 177-178)

In the opening quote Arendt reminds us of the importance of not just a first meeting, but all meetings, regardless of what may have come before. This article first and foremost reflects our desire to begin. Throughout, we endeavour an engagement that embodies Arendt's (1958) belief that to distinguish ourselves through our encounters with each other means to risk the disclosure of who we are; without doing so our dialogue exists only as a "means toward the end" (p. 180). We thus embrace this desire to disclose through Martin Buber's (1947/2002) conception of genuine dialogue in order to open ourselves—a music therapist and a music educator—to the other. It is not to disregard the history and traditions of our disciplines but rather to challenge, as Buber asks of us, "the desire to have one's own self-reliance confirmed" (p. 23). It is above all to think together what we are doing (Arendt, 1958) unencumbered by presumptions and expectations.

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As we examine theoretical and philosophical matters at the heart of our chosen disciplines, we move beyond inter- to transdisciplinarity, "[concerning ourselves] with the unity of intellectual frameworks beyond the disciplinary perspectives" (Stember, 1991, para. 15). We are cognizant of and respect the important body of inter-disciplinary scholarship regarding our two disciplines.[3] However, we find that this scholarship is often limited in scope, focused upon the "means toward the end" (Arendt, 1958. p. 180) such as the sharing of goals, projects, challenges, and the "learning (and re-learning) of concepts, ways of thinking and practicing" (Tsiris et al., 2016, p. 58). While this interdisciplinary dialogue is necessary and powerful in its impact upon both disciplines, it also often resides in Buber's conception of "technical dialogue" where "the focal point of the exchange" is to "understand something, or gain information" (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, p. 33). In this paper, seeking a "higher level of integrated study" (Stember, 1991, para. 15), we see ourselves in "mutual relationship" (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 22) and enter dialogue in order to "[generate] new meanings collaboratively through the interpenetration of our knowledge and experiences" (Murphy et al., 2011, p. 112).

A recent article makes the distinctions between our disciplines within the confines of schooling seem apparent:

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3   For example, the International Society for Music Education (ISME) commissions and special interest groups (SIGs) provide its members with opportunities to explore specialised areas of practice and research (ISME, 2016). The Music in Special Education and Music Therapy Commission is a clear avenue for interdisciplinary conversation and research between music educators and music therapists. The Community Music Activity Commission often engages with scholarship that is "located at the interstices of both community music and community music therapy" (Leske, 2016, p. 73) and a recent conference of the Spirituality and Music Education SIG was organised in collaboration with the Nordoff Robbins Centre for Music Therapy (see https://www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/conference2017).

> Goals in music therapy can be physical, emotional, cognitive, or social and can be met through music experiences that include creating, singing, moving to, and/or listening to music. Music education involves the teaching and learning of music. Goals in music education are related to the acquisition of music skills and can be met through creating, performing, responding, or connecting to music. (Smith, 2018, p. 183)

While we respect the certitude that comes with such precise definitions, it is exactly this certitude that needs to be thought through. What does it mean to "teach music"? What is being taught, how, for whom, and for what purpose? And what is the rationale for the use of music as a medium for therapy, given that physical, emotional, cognitive, or social goals can also be attained through a multiple of other avenues? Furthermore, might not learning occur in therapy, and development in nonmusical domains occur in education?

That our disciplines overlap within school-based special education contexts is well-established (Bunt, 2003; Darrow, 2013; Hammel & Hourigan, 2011; McFerran & Elefant, 2012; Montgomery & Martinson, 2006). Within discourse surrounding the connections between music therapy and special education however, assumptions regarding the purpose of these fields, or the purpose of music in the lives of students/clients–with or without diagnosed disabilities–often remain unexplored, particularly in the North American context in which we both live and work. Though overlap between our disciplines is assumed within special education contexts (Bonde, 2019; Darrow, 2013; Smith, 2018), there is minimal consideration of broader theoretical and practical points of connection. We propose that there is a need for expansion of existing theoretical perspectives, or the creation of new ones, in order to validate our shared musical medium. Such transdisciplinary perspectives, though relevant to special education, would by necessity hold relevance within *any* music education context.

Much like Regelski's (2014) "ethic of resistance" (p. 82) we too strive to resist instrumental "strategic thinking" and focus on, as Regelski suggests, "the long term musical welfare of students" (p. 82), recognizing that "a relationship to music" is "an essential human need" (Aigen, 2014, p. 39). Our mutual commitment to praxis, and music as a shared medium, helps us to remain aware of the potential problematics of care (so often the uninterrogated guiding principle in our disciplines) construed as legitimizing educational or therapeutic intervention (Bowers, 2005, p. 17). Thus, we grapple here with the potential of both music education and therapy construed narrowly as "activities intended to produce external ends" versus music education and therapy "done as an end it itself" (Aristotle *Nicomachean Ethics* as cited in Hayden, 2014, p. 16), and seek a more nuanced approach that resists this false dichotomy and embraces both perspectives. Clearly, the potential is neither simple nor obvious, but we seek to perceive "the subjective worth rather than objectified utility" (Holler, 1989, p. 83).

In turning toward the other through dialogue, without seeking solutions, we welcomed "unpredictability and surprise, even possible discordance" (Garred, 2006, p. 100). While perhaps philosophical in nature we believe, as Biesta and Stengel (2016) do, that thinking together offers a way forward that "challenges, qualifies, deepens, and even transforms [an] understanding of a phenomenon ("Introduction", para. 1). To that end, in this article we work backward from in-person and "live" online dialogues. In those encounters we discovered, and uncovered, themes that both sprang from and spoke to both of us. Mutual relevance for the music therapist and the music educator emerged particularly in themes from music therapy such as "music-centeredness" and "para-musical". Out of these themes we were drawn to consider the ethical imperative of the relational aspects within contexts of meeting and musicking. Thus, in the following sections we first present literature and discussion from our disciplines that frames these themes. We then present an excerpt from one of our dialogues and finally, use our dialogues to think through the ways in which music-

centered perspectives from music therapy, and music's relational imperatives, transcend disciplinary boundaries.

Music Centeredness and Relationship

In this article, we explore how the centrality of music within our respective fields provides a clear avenue to make our world in common (Arendt, 1958). Though we recognize and concur with the compelling argument that education and therapy–as conceived of broadly–share areas of common ground (Lampropoulous, 2001; Smeyers et al., 2007), we focus here upon *music* education and *music* therapy. In particular, we draw upon a music-centered theoretical perspective from music therapy, which asserts that "the clinical uses of music in music therapy...are continuous with the nature of music and its use in nonclinical contexts" (Aigen, 2014, p. 44). Music therapy is commonly perceived to be, in essence, the use of music as a tool to be used for the achievement of a nonmusical end. In contrast, music-centered music therapists propose that "music enriches human life in unique ways" and that such enrichment can be "a legitimate focus" of their work (p. 56). This perspective challenges us to understand music's value within human life as far more complex and nuanced than as a means to an end.

We propose that this notion of "music-centeredness" from music therapy scholarship is a natural starting point for the embodiment of Buber's genuine dialogue between a music educator and a music therapist. Recognizing that music-centered perspectives need not convey music's impacts as universal or automatic, we use the term "affordances", as per DeNora (2000), to convey that music's effects are ecological, "constituted from within the circumstances of use" (p. 44). Certainly, the discussion as to what constitutes music seems to have settled; most now agree music is not a page you can hold in your hand, but something alive, sounded, and socially constructed (Cross, 2014; Goehr, 2009; Small, 1998; Varkøy, 2015). On the other

hand, the purpose and function of music, in the context of both therapy and education, is not as equally settled, specifically as the disciplinary purposes of music education and music therapy are continually shifting. A music-centered lens reminds the music educator that it would be remiss to neglect the personal, social, and spiritual affordances of the medium, while imploring the music therapist to resist reducing music to a tool to arrive at personal, social, or spiritual ends, thereby neglecting the medium—the music—itself.

In our use of the term "relational", we draw upon the relational movement in psychology (Robb, 2006) and the work of feminist/therapist scholars, such as Gilligan (1993) and Miller (1986). These groundbreaking women challenge Western psychology's valourization of the autonomous, self-made monological "man" and propose an alternative framework, one in which "healthy development occurs when both people are growing and changing in relationship" (Jordan & Hartling, 2002, p. 51). This shift towards celebrating human development as wholly relational in nature, emerging from interaction (Garred, 2006), rather than as a trajectory moving from relationship to independence, resonates with Buber's call to embrace genuine dialogue, rather than technical or instrumental exchanges. Our relational perspective is intertwined with our perspective upon music, similar to Trondalen (2016), who describes musical relationships as "offer[ing] new ways of being with one another, an existential experience different from anything else" (p. 259). Though she is speaking here of relationships fostered within music therapy specifically, we suggest that music's affordances surrounding relational ways of being transcend disciplinary context.

Thus, in the next section we explore literature pertaining to the relationship between music therapy and music education and raise persistent issues in both disciplines. We do so in order to draw attention to possible meeting points as well as to the similar kinds of theoretical discussions that reoccur for both.

Affinity, Affiliation, Alliance

In literature situated within a North American perspective, cited distinctions between music therapy and music education normally pertain to areas such as goals/ purpose, training/education, and the nature of the relationships formed within these settings (Bruscia, 2014; Mitchell, 2016; Smith, 2018). Though clear on paper, these distinctions are often murkier in practice; in the area of *goals*, for example, learning often occurs in therapy (Bruscia, 2014) and personal growth certainly within education. The matter of goals is further complicated when one considers that definitions of music therapy vary depending on the context from which they emerge, even in areas of geographical proximity. For example, the American Music Therapy Association defines music therapy as the "clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions" to address goals in nonmusical domains only (AMTA, 2018), whereas the Canadian definition acknowledges the "musical" domain as an area of "human need" that can be addressed within therapy (CAMT, 2016). The subtle recognition within the Canadian definition that humans have *musical* needs is noteworthy, not least because it represents a potential point of connection between music therapy and music education. Relevant here is Ruud's (2008) proposal that music therapy be viewed "as a broad interdisciplinary field", rather than merely as a form of treatment; this invites conversation with music educators, and indeed anyone interested in "how we may use music to promote health and well-being" (p. 48).

That there exist connections between our disciplines is not a new assertion (Gaston, 1968). Historically speaking, early music therapists "seemed able…to maintain a flexible role and to work with a spectrum of musical/therapeutic activities" (Ansdell, 2002, "Towards Music Therapy", para. 4), a spectrum that included participation in performances, ensembles, and other musical experiences more typically associated with the work of music educators. A shift occurred as "music therapy was reinvented as a modern profession in the middle of the last century" (Ruud, 2004, p.

11); the field became affiliated with the natural science paradigm and its practitioners "insisted upon the boundaries between their discipline and others" (p. 11). It followed naturally that music therapy moved into private spaces and its purpose and aims required framing with medical and psychological terminology. Musical skill development was seen as counter to therapeutic purpose, and certainly music-making "for its own sake" was not the domain of this modern healthcare profession.

Over the past two decades, there has been a renewal in conversation regarding music therapy's intersections with other music-making practices. For example, approaches such as resource-oriented music therapy (Rolvsjord, 2010) and community music therapy (Ansdell, 2002; Stige, 2002) have invited music therapists to once again consider the clinical value of musical experiences such as skill-development and performance, thereby challenging the primacy of the medical model. With parallels to Habron's (2014) exploration of the conceptual connections between music-centered music therapy and Dalcroze Eurhythmics, in a 2016 article, I (Elizabeth) examined music-centered music therapy's theoretical relevance to students' personal growth within private studio lessons. Additionally, to support the notion that the fields of music education and music therapy are intertwined, several authors have proposed continuum models to represent points of intersection. For example, Bonde (2019) displays a continuum that progresses from music therapy ("music is a means"), to special education, and finally to music education ("music is the purpose") (p. 38). Robertson's (2000) version of a continuum between the fields is displayed below.

Figure 1: Robertson's (2000) music education/music therapy continuum.
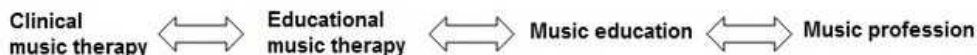
My (Elizabeth) aforementioned article from 2016 proposed a continuum perspective in response to Robertson's. This continuum sought to include areas of music educa-

tion in which therapeutic goals might be a focus, whether or not these were contexts of special music education.

Figure 2: Mitchell's (2016) music education/music therapy continuum.
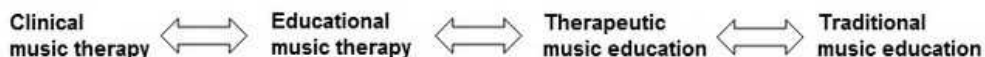
These continuums invite us to identify points of connection between music therapy and music education rather than dwelling only upon areas of distinction. In this paper, we strive to take this notion of "continuum" further still; as we discuss the affordances of music and relationship that potentially encompass *all* contexts of music education and music therapy, we recognize the limits of these above linear models, and embrace the connectivity between and among *all* points on these continuums.

In music education both purpose and goals have not only shifted but are continually shifting. Skill development, whether linked to the affective power of music, or heightened skill improvement in disciplines outside of music, is often assumed to be the purpose of music education and more often than not, is linked to the Western classical canon. Critical conversations and questions bound to purpose, however, have begun to guide the field, and critical reflection (grounded in decolonizing efforts), as to how these "skills" came to be defined and who benefits are no longer the outliers they once may have been. However, we also need to attend to the powerful and perhaps uncomfortable arguments Delpit (1995) makes when she argues that deliberate "skill-based schooling" (p. 12) is important for many children who may not have the same skills accessed through privilege. It is important to note, then, that the question as to the purpose of music education is complex and hardly universal. Music functions differently in different contexts.

Skill-based music education that extends and reproduces the Western canon *might* assist in developing skills that are helpful to have in particular contexts, but

certainly not in all. Much like scripted mathematics and reading programs, in which literacy often remains at the functional level, a singular focus on skill development (such as the ability to read Western notation), much like a singular focus on master-ing phonics skills, comes at a cost.[4] Music curriculum that is not grounded in sociolo-gical and philosophical models that reflect nuanced understandings of multiple and critical literacies, social fulfilment, quality of life, and mutual relationship rarely move teacher and student beyond "silently consum[ing] other people's words" (Christensen, 2006, p. 393).

In the following section we shift out of the theoretical into the narrative. We choose to present our *thinking together* as a narrative for two reasons. The first is to engage with a relational process that mirrors Buber's (1947/2002) genuine dialogue as a movement toward the *I-Thou* encounter. Recognizing that we could not will the *I-Thou* encounter, we sought to be present to the other and to the "spontaneous un-folding of the moment" (Dodson, 2014). Thus, we desired to move beyond simultan-eous or dueling monologues, or what Buber would refer to as the *I-It* relation, to an "immediate, direct engaging and being engaged in which attentive listening and in-clusive responding flow back and forth" (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, pp. 33-34). Dia-logue in this context, or our story created in relation, then, served methodologically as "a means of sense making, a way in and through which we represent, interrogate, and interpret experience and come to know ourselves and [each other]" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2012, p. 1). While we shared many spoken conversations, what is presented here is a small portion of a much longer conversation we had in a live, online docu-ment. This writing format allowed us more easily to "[turn] to the silent place of at-tention" (Avnon, 1998, p. 120) without preconceptions of how the other might re-spond, or about what the other might write. We also believe this record demonstrates "the possibility of being surprised" (Kramer & Gawlick, 2003, pp. 33) that is integral

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4   For a more in-depth look at functional and critical/transformative literacies in mathematics, language arts and music, see Benedict (2012).

to genuine dialogue; happiness and spontaneous joy is found in the unexpected. We were drawn to Barone's (1992) belief in the power of critical storytelling and "fashioned an honest and critical story in a nontheoretical, nonmethodical manner" (p. 145). Thus, we embrace the exclamation points, so often disparaged in academic writing, and choose not to provide reference citations for the authors of which we speak.

The second reason we present this section of dialogue is to reflect aspects of transdisciplinarity. We recognize this project as one that uses transdisciplinarity as a process rather than as a method of research and echo the belief of others that the "promise of transdisciplinarity [is] in terms of multidirectional conversation rather than unidirectional presentation" (Murphy et al., 2011, p. 112). Within our conversation we seek to "trouble certainty, and raise questions concerning the "taken-for-granted" (Barrett & Stauffer, 2012, p. 1).

On Being in Dialogue

> The meaning of this dialogue is found in neither one nor the other of the partners, nor in both added together, but in their interchange. (Friedman, 1965, p. 6)

Elizabeth (Liz): Part of the reason I was drawn to study and earn my PhD within a department of music education was that, in my music therapy education, there was minimal acknowledgement of music therapy's relationship to other music disciplines, and at times even resistance towards such acknowledgement. And certainly, my music education training made no mention of music therapy. I'd had transformative experiences—both musically and personally—as a music student, and yet my training programs appeared to be invested in maintaining strict disciplinary boundaries. To me, these strict boundaries minimize the potential within our fields and I wanted to explore this.

Cathy: In so many ways I am humbled and drawn to the positioning of you as the one that wanted to reach out to music educators. In my experience too often I did not reach out to therapists unless I could use them. Instrumental ends, as it were.

Liz: And maybe that can be traced to particular beliefs about the purpose of music therapy and the role of the music therapist - that is, that the music therapist's role is entirely distinct from the educator's. Music therapists hold these beliefs too, namely, that music therapists are all about the nonmusical. And music educators focus on musical skill development, or music for music's sake.

Cathy: I recognize the problems of speaking in generalizations, and I come from a very particular way of teaching music, but music teachers are, for the most part, about teaching music skill development.

Liz: Absolutely, and this makes sense. The simplest way to define music therapy is often "the use of music to achieve nonmusical goals." And it is that. Music does have potential nonmusical benefits, and that's how I have to talk about my work when I'm sitting across the table from doctors, nurses, etc. But when music therapists focus only on the nonmusical ends, we can lose sight of the stuff going on in the music. And alternatively, music educators perhaps don't address other aspects of music-making, such as relationship, because it's not their domain—but—what if it was somehow a part of the medium of music?

Cathy: I am led to think about "what's going on in the music." I often think that teachers have learned not to use the word aesthetic or refer to personal meaning that can be found and made in music. Perhaps it's because it is beyond difficult to explain and measure what that might be.

Liz: It's so interesting. You say that music educators have moved away from talking about aesthetics—and—on the flip side, music-centered music therapists are trying to move away from exclusive focus upon the "nonmusical." It seems there might be a place to meet in the middle. Perhaps in the past, to talk about "what's going on in the

music" did just refer to aesthetics. But Aigen or Ansdell, as examples, propose that to be "music-centered"—to focus on the "music itself"—is far more than just focusing on sound. Aesthetics is one aspect, but we know that music is social, relational, spiritual, expressive, and so on, and we know these things because we can look at how human societies have always engaged with music. So, a focus upon the "music itself" can also affirm all of those potential benefits. I think it follows that those potential areas of impact are just as relevant for music education as they are for music therapy, since they're a part of music-making.

Cathy: I think relevant and "works at what" are connected. Everything works. It's the "works at what" that needs articulation. Everything I do lately with the pre-service teachers with whom I work has to do with the conversations and reflections that take place out of the musical doing, the relationships out of the doing, the relationships IN the doing. Which is what you are addressing as well.

Liz: To your last point, to emphasize relationship doesn't negate the music if music is itself an active and relational thing. And maybe we can bring in the concept of "para-musical" here – I think this is a helpful concept that music therapists have developed to find a meeting place between the poles of music "for its own sake" and music for its nonmusical benefits. Para-musical phenomena are all the "things" that go along with acts of music-making; they aren't the sounds themselves, but they are still entirely connected to the music. Argh, how to explain this? They would be occurring constantly in any musical environment, maybe how someone feels or what they think about while musicking, how a group acts towards one another while in music, etc. Ansdell uses the example that a group might interact differently within music than they do outside of music. But these interactions are wrapped-up in the music. It's not as simple as saying the music has led to a nonmusical outcome, as that different quality of interaction may or may not last once the music has ended. I'm not sure I'm explaining that well.

Cathy: Oh gosh, lots there!! My first thought was I am not so sure how you are using "music for music's sake" – I don't think most music teachers use this phrase out loud as a justification anymore. But what I also hear you saying is that music for music's sake is much more nuanced and that the music is something that speaks to, or needs to "address," as Buber would say, each person individually. But what I feel might be more challenging for many music teachers is teaching a class with the relational first and foremost at its core, no matter how you would frame relational, Nel Noddings, anyone. The challenge for me is how to help pre-service teachers consider this powerful shift in pedagogical focus.

Liz: I agree that many music educators may not feel prepared to work relationally, because they're not given the tools and perhaps they haven't had this modelled. And perhaps they have been actively steered away from the relational elements of their work, since they are teachers and not therapists. This is an amazing thing about music therapy education –because it's "therapy", we talk about relationship, read about relationship, practice relationship, and are evaluated on the relationships we form. When it's framed as "therapy", relationship suddenly matters. But if music is relational/social/communal—which music-centered therapists say, but so do most ethnomusicologists—then relationship is vital in music education as well. This is one of those transdisciplinary points. That these ideas from music *therapy* are really just ideas about music and people. And music education involves music and people.

Cathy: This is fabulous for me to think through! What is relational, and for what purpose? What would our teaching look like if we embrace your last paragraph?

Liz: We can't say that music-making will automatically create lovely and harmonious relationships with other people, but if we *can* say that it is relational—it implies being in relationship—then we perhaps have an ethical imperative to acknowledge this, and be clear about what kind of relationships we want (especially in the context of the inevitable power dynamic of teacher/student or therapist/client) rather than ig-

noring relationships and focusing on the notes. This is another place where music therapy scholarship can offer something to music educators.

Cathy: This can be one manifestation for this transdisciplinary thinking of ours – the ethical imperative of relational, which is what Buber is addressing. What does that look like in a music class, in all of our engagements with others? Music-centered, then, also means relational – or embedded in the discourse of music-centered is the relational. In my experience this is not how music teachers would consider music-centered.

Liz: Exactly. This is the work of scholars like Aigen and Ansdell – to be music-centered IS to acknowledge the "nonmusical" (or "para-musical") stuff like relationships because it's part of what music is/what music does.

Cathy: Well, again, I am not convinced music does this, but rather it's something that a teacher or facilitator with students, together, can do. But it doesn't just happen magically. And relational needs to be defined in our context for music educators – more importantly what it is not … i.e. cooperative learning groups, peer-to-peer teaching, or sectionals, etc. Of course, they could be, that's the issue, but just using those terms, and words, and groupings doesn't mean that relational as care and reciprocity is what becomes operationalised.

Liz: Aha! I think I'm getting what you're saying now. Yes, to be truly "relational" means that the teacher or therapist also needs to be open to being changed in the process. It's certainly not just about changing the other person. It's collaborative. Which is different from a purely "student-centered" or "client-centered" approach, I think. The teacher/therapist matters too. I think that this idea that music "is" or "does" the relationship thing, is not about something magical in the music, but rather an acknowledgement that relationship will happen differently in a music therapy session versus a talk-therapy session. Because of music's musical-ness, relationship is somehow implied. Same as a music classroom as opposed to any other type of classroom.

This doesn't mean that the relationships are necessarily "better", but that they are musical in nature, and so unique. I think Aigen would say that as music therapists we have to hang our hats here. That what is done in music has unique affordances, and also that having a relationship to music is an important part of being human.

Music-Centeredness and the Para-Musical

That music has unique affordances, and that our relationships to music are integral parts of being human, are fitting places to pause our "live" dialogue. We re-engage now more formally in thinking through how the themes that emerged from our dialogue go beyond matters of technicality and practicality, and are indeed transdisciplinary in nature. Certainly, music and relationship both transcend our created disciplinary boundaries, whether or not we invite them to. We turn first to a critical examination of the purpose of our respective disciplines and begin by drawing upon authors who challenge common practices regarding which students receive "therapy" versus "education."

Laes (2017) uses Resonaari, an extracurricular music school in Finland, to exemplify an inclusive and activist model of music education that promotes "musical agency beyond therapeutic care" (p. 139). Similar to Laes' recognition of the importance of musical agency for students "that have generally been relegated to remedial and therapeutic spheres of music education" (p. 139), Darrow (2013) advocates for "musical rights" (p. 13), including access to music education, for people with disabilities. Certainly, we concur with Darrow in this regard. Darrow goes on to say that "if children are only given music therapy, they are being discriminated against in terms of their cultural and aesthetic education" because "music therapists do not attend to the musical growth of the child" (p. 14). Darrow's point is valid if it is the threefold case that music therapy's sole purpose is to work towards functional goals in non-

musical domains, that the primary purpose of music education is "aesthetic education", and that musical development can be separated from development in non-musical domains through music.

Aigen (2014) too argues that it is problematic for access to music for individuals with disabilities "to be based upon nonmusical criteria that are different from other members of society" (p. 71); however, his argument diverges from Darrow's in his proposition that music therapy can be a context in which individuals access *music* for *musical reasons*:

> [I]f music enriches human life in unique ways, and if this enrichment is considered to be a legitimate focus of the work of music therapists, then what music therapy provides to people is different from that of other therapies. It provides experiences of music, self, others, and community, within music, that are essential to well-being and that are uniquely musical. (p. 65)

Darrow's (2013) perspectives on the purpose of music education—as "aesthetic education" (p. 13)—and music therapy— "to address nonmusical goals" (p. 14)—underestimate our professions' potentials and the affordances within music. Music education affords students' development far beyond the aesthetic, a domain often made manifest in the classroom as teaching the elements of the Western classical canon. This is only one culturally specific function of music, one which tends to favour a privileged way of knowing as well as limit other epistemic musicking possibilities. Similarly, we limit our clients in music therapy when we preclude domains of growth associated with the music itself, including the aesthetic (Aigen, 2005; Lee, 2003), and rather hinge participation solely upon the achievement of nonmusical goals. Thus, alongside our wholehearted support for Darrow's (2013) argument that all children should have access to music education, we propose the importance of transdisciplinary conversation (through genuine dialogue) regarding our shared medium of music,

rather than the further entrenching of rigid conceptions of music education and music therapy that are often found within North American contexts.

It is not that music therapists are misrepresenting ourselves when we talk about our practice(s) this way—musicking *does*, or more accurately, *may*, lead to non-musical benefits—however, when we justify our work (in music therapy or music education) based upon the achievement of nonmusical outcomes, we do not provide a full picture of the value of musical experiences for individuals and communities. Aigen (2014) explains that within the traditional definition of music therapy

> the nature of the musical experience is essentially irrelevant… because it is not important as music; it is only important to the extent that it facilitates a non-musical goal…If a better, quicker, or more efficacious tool can be found toward the nonmusical end, then there is no rationale for the provision of music therapy. (p. 65)

The concept of musical "affordances", defined earlier, is a starting point in recognizing that "music is different from being a one-sided stimulus" (Stige et al., 2010, p. 298). Music's effects—whether perceived as positive or negative—are never givens, as "it all depends on the *when, how,* and *with whom* of the given context" (p. 298, italics original). Grappling with the analytic dilemma involved in talking about music and its nonmusical benefits as if these were separate entities, Stige et al. propose the term "para-musical", a concept "which does not either *reduce* the musical to the merely physical or psychological or social, or, alternatively, artificially separate out music into its own rarefied realm, of 'music for music's sake'" (p. 298, italics original). Ansdell and DeNora (2016) explain: "Seeing music as more fluid and continuous within human experience and practice would rather suggest how *para*-musical phenomena accompany or work beside the musical, whilst not being purely musical themselves" (p. 35, italics original).

For music therapy, a field typically defined as "the use of music to achieve non-musical goals" (Aigen, 2005, p. 56), this concept of the para-musical provides an invaluable tool for conceptualizing music's benefits in increasingly nuanced ways without disregarding our musical medium. For music education, whose relationship with the nonmusical is at best ambivalent, permission to acknowledge music's para-musical affordances opens up spaces that move the field beyond the polarities of either aesthetics or, alternatively, transactional conceptions of music's benefits. Neither music therapy nor music education's role need hinge upon the achievement of nonmusical outcomes, as "music enriches human life in unique ways" (Aigen, 2014, p. 65) and addresses "core human needs" such as developing as individuals, being in relationships and community, and experiencing the transcendent (p. 297). Rather than necessitating a choice between the "music itself" or its instrumental benefits, this music-centered framework encompasses both perspectives.

Put more simply, "What is musical is already personal and social" (Stige et al., 2010, p. 300). There is an inherent paradox here, as music may improve mood or spatial intelligence or numerous other things

> but such effects are mostly not what it does best, or indeed is primarily for.... Music is not primarily just a way of getting something done, but a way of doing things, or rather an indication of how to do things – musically. As such, musicking has value and purpose as an end in itself. Paradoxically, this is exactly how it achieves other things. (Ansdell, 2014, p. 299)

If music therapy can find theoretical grounding within music, and there exist "continuities between clinical and nonclinical use of music" (Aigen, 2014, p. 39), then music therapy is indelibly linked with other contexts of music-making. Just as music therapists can work with their clients on musical goals, with understanding that music's nonmusical affordances are implicated in these processes, conversely, these affordances will resonate in many settings of music education as well. And this is where

there is such untapped potential for dialogue: between music therapists looking to increase clients' access to and involvement with music, and educators looking to validate the potential that "core human needs" (Ansdell, 2014, p. 297) may be addressed through music.

Concluding Thoughts

> Can we who live in a culture informed by a persistent instrumentalism that construes all things as tools or means to ends break out of that reduction and perceive beings as ends-in-themselves? (Holler, 1989, p. 83)

In a daily lived reality defined more and more by hardened positionalities of reason, objective understanding not only offers spaces of comfort, but respite from "think[ing] what we are doing" (Arendt, 1958, p. 5). That one would choose to not think is hardly surprising when one considers the often-high cost of challenging (and perhaps rejecting) that which *works*, or that which is *efficient*. Focusing on making one's place in our current reality favours "monologue disguised as dialogue" (Buber, 1947/2002, p. 22), self-reliance, and a dependence on one's own individual successes. Points of intersection where we pretend to find in common, might really be moments in which we are desirous to be in common, terrified of a superfluous existence. Reflecting on the "basis of human dignity" (Darrow, 2013, p. 17), Hayden (2014) reminds us that dignity is contingent upon "equal recognition" among each other as we make "in common" our world (p. 14). Dignity cannot be given by another, not if we desire to, as Holler asks in the above, "perceive beings as ends-in-themselves" (p. 183). Dignity can, however, be made in common when we engage in forms of resistance against therapeutic and educational models that define our needs and sanction our musicking engagements.

Ansdell (2014) asserts that "there is no intrinsic difference between how music helps in everyday life and within the specialist area of music therapy" (p. 295). Music therapy practice is indelibly connected to the ways in which human beings have always used music personally and socially, and thus is indelibly connected to community music, music education, and all other practice that connects humans and music. We are not asserting that music teachers are or should be doing music therapy; rather, we propose simply that, though music therapy has fought hard, and for good reason, to establish its boundaries, maintaining professional identities can no longer be at the expense of dialogue with those who are asking the same questions about the purpose of musicking and its connection to being human. Mendes-Flohr (2015) reminds us that the risk of genuine dialogue is that we may be "transformed cognitively and existentially" (p. 3). Within our fields we have concerned ourselves with protecting disciplinary turf for long enough; genuine dialogue can allow us to hear one another—even in our different and, oft times, conflicting theoretical perspectives—and open ourselves to transformation.

A music-centered perspective, and the concept of para-musical phenomena, suggest that the boundaries we have constructed, between "music itself" and "music's nonmusical benefits", are artificial and unhelpful as we endeavor to understand our work for ourselves and those who come into our care. By validating that a relationship to music is a healthy part of being human, music therapists can safeguard against disrupting the healthy relationships to music that our clients often already have. Music educators too risk disrupting naturally healthy relationships to music. The musical world in a school is controlled not only by the boundaries of the four walls of a music classroom, but by administrative and community expectations. Conceptualizing music as note reading and writing is tantamount to retreating into false comfort within those walls. If one believes that "making music is making social life" (Ansdell, 2014, p. 27), and one must if one believes that an education in music moves beyond

the classroom, then one must contend with imagining possibilities for music education beyond learner-centered or even music-centered perspectives.

Engaging in acts and encounters with others that allows music to retain its "wholeness as a phenomenon" (Ansdell, 2014, p. 299) seems a sacred beginning place for our clients, our participants, our students, ourselves. Meeting the other through relational silence, actions, words, and music, through dialogue, "makes" as Maurice Friedman (as cited in Buber, 2002) writes, "my ethical 'ought' a matter of real response with no preparation other than my readiness to respond with my whole being to the unforeseen and the unique" (p. xvi).

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