

Create to heal

Editorial

THANK YOU ON THEIR BEHALF

Yes, art therapy can really contribute to convalescence! More and more doctors reaffirm it, an ever-increasing number of studies are supplying proof for it, and results achieved in hospitals confirm it. Pure elements that fulfil our hopes - from oncology to neonatology and surgery and finally to the sensitive field of mental illnesses. Our Foundation is celebrating its tenth anniversary - looking back shows how important the path was that we took in this decade (see accompanying article).

Yes, art therapy can really contribute to convalescence!

After a hesitant attempt 20 years ago with modest projects in hospitals, art therapy increasingly blossomed out and has become an integral part of patient treatment. The objective is clear: return confidence to a patient, help him to express himself where words fail, strengthen his healthy resources, in order to combat his illness.

To celebrate our tenth anniversary, we are dedicating our large symposium to this exciting topic. We look forward to welcoming you there. Irrespective of whether you can be there or not, we would primarily like to thank you for enabling us to support these important therapies for young patients. Wholeheartedly: Thank you on their behalf.

Prof. Dr. Alain Golay

*Chairman of the Art Therapie Foundation;
Senior Consultant in the Service de l'Education
Thérapeutique (HUG).*



Success

THE FOUNDATION IS 10 YEARS OLD



This little patient finds some moments to escape from his suffering.

**We have come a long way!
Art therapy has applications in numerous pathologies: from extremely premature babies to adolescents suffering from anorexia.**

When an 8-year old suffers from cancer, the communication between him and the family can be very difficult. How can he express his worries and his fears, and how can he struggle with the feelings of guilt towards his nearest ones? He says to himself: "They're worried because of me", attests Charlotte Leber, who founded the Art Therapy Foundation ten years ago: "Making sure that children have fun certainly lifts their mood, but this feeling of well-being soon recedes afterwards, because nothing could be

expressed. On the other hand, art therapy enables them to express unsaid, what lies heavy on their hearts." Singing, dancing, painting: These activities are often the only way to communicate. The child expresses what he cannot otherwise dare to say.

As Professor Alain Golay, Senior Consultant at the HUG and President of the Foundation stresses, the expression through creative work is particularly beneficial "when the suffering is too painful, too severe and unacceptable." This opinion is shared by Dr. Valdo Pezzoli, Senior Consultant in the paediatric department at Lugano regional hospital: "We offer therapies in drawing, painting and sculptural design particularly to younger patients, who suffer too severely to be able to express themselves

in words.” He reports: “We let them draw. The gradually become calmer and more approachable.”

For this reason the Ticino Hospital has adopted art therapy programs in its multidisciplinary module for paediatrics, for example in the treatment of chronic illnesses or eating disorders. Dr. Pezzoli is convinced that this approach is would appropriate everywhere, “where there is a complex process of suffering, in other words, when there is more than one cause of suffering.”

We offer the patient creativity and the power of imagination as an alternative means to language for expressing his distress. Art therapy encourages exchange, maintains and improves the quality of life of a human and enables him to fight courageously against the illness. At the same time the medical team gets valuable information about further treatment, especially as this approach is implemented by qualified therapists with a solid training.

The Foundation has come a long way since its inception! Ten years ago art therapy was just at the beginning and was particularly used as part of pilot projects. Today this therapeutic approach in numerous hospitals is a supplementary constituent in the treatment of a patient. Rapid rise of studies about art therapy. Several factors confirm that his discipline is becoming better accepted. The proof: On the one hand, doctors can establish numerous positive results. On the other hand, the number of scientific publications about the utilisation and effectiveness of art therapy has risen rapidly in the last few years. As Dr. Christian Mann, Senior Physician in the

Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine in the Cantonal Hospital of Chur, wrote in his progress report in 2017, in 1997 there were 185 publications about this topic, in 2007 around 850 and in 2017 there were 2400.

Art-therapy is particular beneficial, when the suffering is too painful, too severe and unacceptable.

Another factor underscores the credibility: training. “Until recently there was no schooling. In the meantime recognised institutes award diplomas in art therapy, and the art therapists are trained in the same way as psychotherapists,” Prof. Alain Golay emphasises.

IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE FOUNDATION

The Art Therapy Foundation has also played an important part in the recognition of this therapeutic approach: Through its work, through the positive results of the programs it supports, but also through the nationwide coverage, hospitals in all language regions are Foundation members.

The charitable organisation has reached a remarkable level: Since its founding in 2008, 20,000 young patients - new-born babies, children and adolescents - have been able to benefit from its help. At the moment, the Foundation supports twenty therapists in twelve Swiss hospitals. The

therapeutic approach has been additionally extended to numerous patients and is offered to premature babies and also to children suffering from cancer, to children suffering from autism, as well as to overweight or anorexic adolescents.

OUR WISHES FOR THE NEXT 10 YEARS

Although art therapy now enjoys a good reputation, its recognition must further rise in order to extend its sphere of action. “I hope that it will be broadly integrated into the multidisciplinary approaches. Together with other therapies, this would be a holistic treatment option for patients, so that each person finds the way that best suits him,” Dr. Valdo Pezzoli affirms.

Another wish that he shares with Professor Golay and many other consultant physicians: that art therapy will be accepted by the health insurance companies.

The Foundation could, according to its secretary-general Eléonore Gruffel, “use its means to support more hospitals in introducing art therapy programs, to expand the training of therapists and to cement the reputation of the therapies by financing research projects.”

Foundation performance figures since 2008:



Agenda

THE SYMPOSIUM IN THE PAUL KLEE CENTRE

AN ABSOLUTE MUST!

The Art Therapy Foundation is celebrating its tenth anniversary by looking at current research topics and testimonials of patients in a large symposium. This will take place on June 21 at the

Paul Klee Centre in Bern. The exceptional spirit of this location is particularly suitable, as it combines the world of Paul Klee with painting, music and dance: Paul Klee's mother was a singer, his father a professor, his wife a pianist and the son a theatre and opera director.

The morning is dedicated to the conference themes “Drawing in relationship to children with cancer”, “The significance of art therapy in multidisciplinary treatment”, “Lullabies for participation and empowerment in neonatology” and “Dance therapy for the relief of psychological stress”. In the afternoon, various workshops will be held to discuss two topics in detail. Pa-

tients will also tell how these therapies helped them in the fight against their illness. Nine high-quality participants, mostly professors and doctors, ensure an event of a high level. The day will be rounded off with a convivial lunch and a festive aperitif to end the day, crowned by some surprises.

An event that you should not miss in any case! For registrations contact:
www.arttherapie.org
symposium@arttherapie.org or 079 221 66 63

The Interview

« A PLAYFUL, NON-INVASIVE AND SOOTHING REMEDY »

Charlotte Leber founded the Art Therapy Foundation ten years ago. Today as Vice-President, she summarises the journey.

The Art Therapy Foundation was founded by Charlotte Leber ten years ago. Her entrepreneurial spirit (she founded her first business when she was 30 and her second when she was 33) does not allow her to make an early withdrawal to retirement. So she brought a philanthropic project to life.

Why did the choice fall on art therapy?

The project had to meet many criteria: a connection with children, should address all social classes, is innovative and affects Switzerland. After I had spent many hours in the intensive care station, it was clear to me how important art and music therapy were for convalescence: These are playful, creative, non-invasive and effective remedies that bring relief to both the little patients as well as to their families, thanks to the specially trained and qualified therapists.

As Petula Clark, the famous English singer in the eighties said, who dedicated a song to our Foundation and the sick children: "Music reaches places where no injection does."

What did you experience in the first few years of the Foundation?

I have invested all my energy in creating this Foundation. My friend, acquaintances and contacts have all helped me. This Foundation was like a new enterprise for me. We started with six hospitals and now we are represented in twelve.



Vice-chairman Charlotte Leber

In your opinion, what are the three major successes that you have achieved?

First of all, both the medical and care fraternities are increasingly recognising and becoming convinced of the effect of art therapy programs.

This is possibly because more and more studies are verifying the benefits of our credo. For example, two studies in neonatology departments show that the programs make it possible for babies to leave the incubator earlier, sometimes after 120 days instead of 150. This is a success for everyone: For the parents and child of course, but for the general public, too, since the monthly costs for a hospital bed correspond to the music therapist's salary for 6 months!

Finally, in my view the loyalty of donor foundations is a wonderful success, for which I am extremely grateful. They have been loyal to us for several years, and shows that they are convinced both of the results and of our transparent communication.

In a nutshell

THE EFFECT OF A SINGING WORKSHOP

What effect does a singing workshop have on the physical and voice awareness of the nursing staff? The answer to this was the objective of music therapist Anne Bolli, Isabelle Carrard and Prof. Alain Golay (both lecturers for training patients with chronic illnesses at the HUG), who have recently published a report concerning this in the scientific journal *Education thérapeutique du patient* (Educ Ther Patient/Ther Patient Educ 2017; 9; 20201). The findings: The nursing staff feel particularly liberated, more approachable, calmer and unburdened, and this to a considerable degree.

www.etp-journal.org

COLLECTION OF LULLABIES

Music therapist Dr. Friederike Haslbeck has just published a collection of lullabies from parents to parents of different cultures. This book was co-financed by our Foundation and is titled "Lullabies for the youngest" and is available from us. www.arttherapie.org

BLOG FOR PARENTS

The blog www.amiamusica.ch was started up a short time ago. This platform is to encourage the use of music by parents of premature and new-born babies and to enable them to share their experiences and be informed. Now in German and English.

THE FOUNDATION ON PATIENT'S DAY

On Patient's Day, visitors were welcomed at the entrance to the Cantonal Hospital of Chur with a colourful, cheerfully designed table. Decorated with brochures, teddy bears and chocolate, it was a flagship presenting the activities of the Art Therapie Foundation. In this manner, art therapist Brida Lang was able to inform numerous people. The reactions were extremely positive.

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THE HANG; A WARM AND SOOTHING SOUND



Monika Esslinger soothes patients when she plays the hang.

This instrument, which is presently very much in vogue in ethnic music, can also be often used in music therapy on account of its numerous acoustic and practical properties.

Its domed surface reminds one of a tortoise shell. Its sound is incomparable. Melodies and rhythms can be played at the same time on it. In particular, it “has a very warm tone”, says Monika Esslinger, music therapist at the University Children’s Hospital of Basel City and Basel Land.

But what is the hang exactly? It is an instrument belonging to the percussion family and was developed in 2000 by Sabina Schärer and Felix Rohner from Bern. It consists of two metal hemispheres and is played with the hands, and this provides the origin of the name: In the Bernese dialect, “Hang” means “hand”.

Depending on how it is played, different sounds are created that resemble both those of a harp and bell. This makes it possible to express many feelings without words. Its developers are of the opinion, that “the power of the Hang’s vibrations can open many doors to a person’s soul”.

Its properties have also opened the door to the world for it: This “tone sculpture”, as many call it on account of its noble and modern design, has achieved much acclaim, so that the Bernese workshops has received orders from all over the world. However, Sabina Schärer and Felix Rohner preferred not to flood the market with their product, but they carefully selected their customers by taking their motivation into consideration. They stopped production a few years ago.

HIGHLY APPRECIATED IN NEONATOLOGY

“Many people say that its tone calms them and evokes pleasant visual images”, explains Monika Esslinger, who frequently uses the Hang, particularly in neonatology. “It has an effect on the mother (or father). And if they become calm, their pulse rate slows down, and this has a positive effect on the child. It is a virtuous circle”.

Other extremely beneficial aspects: The therapist can play and sing (or talk) at the same time. The instrument can be easily transported. It is made of metal and can be easily disinfected, which depending on the location where it is used, is an important factor.

Although Monika Esslinger very often

Music therapy is the result of the interaction between the therapist, the music and the patient.

falls back on the Hang during her sessions, she sometimes uses other instruments. “I always ask the patient which instrument suits him or her best.” Not everyone reacts in the same way to the same tones.

Moreover, one should not forget, as the music therapist notes, who became familiar with the Hang during her training, that “the instrument is a go-between. Ultimately, the interaction between the therapist, the music and the patient is the decisive factor. Music therapy is the result of this interaction.”

YOUR DONATION HELPS TO HEAL!

Your donations are indispensable: With them, young patients have access to art therapy sessions that are held by qualified therapists. Increasingly, doctors that are convinced of the beneficial effect of art therapy are turning to

our Foundation with the request for financial support, as this is not yet covered by the Health Insurance Act (KVG).

Thanks to your generosity, new-born babies, children and adolescents recover quicker.

Thank you in advance on their behalf!

Your donation to the charitable ART-THERAPIE Foundation is tax-deductible. Donations of 50 francs and more will be acknowledged with thanks in writing.

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