

The influence of cultural identity in music therapy in psychiatric practice

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Cultural identity

Ask yourself:

- Who am I?
- Where do I come from?

I ask my colleague:

- As a Chinese colleague working in Austria: Do you find yourself having become partially Austrian?
- As a Japanese colleague in Germany: Do you find yourself having become partially German?

My cultural identity

- Yuka Kikat (<— birth name: Yuka Shiraishi)
- Japanese
- studied music therapy in Germany 2004 - 2008
- living in Germany since 2003, in Hamburg since 2008, married to a German husband.
- working as music therapist in a psychiatric hospital in Germany since 2009



gathering experiences and thoughts on the role of cultural identity in my work

My cultural identity

the longer I live in Germany...

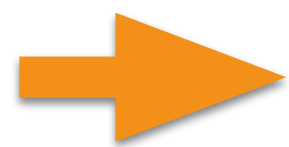
1. the more aware I become of my own cultural identity.
2. the more I find aspects of adjusting to German culture.
3. but an essential part of me will always be Japanese.

Changing my identity as a professional

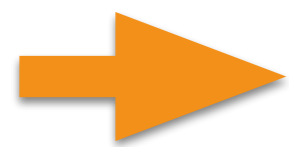
	Role	Emotions
T i m e ↓	I am a Japanese student.	I am a foreigner.
	I am Japanese, a music therapist qualified in Germany and working in Hamburg.	I feel proud and insecure.
	I am Japanese, a music therapist qualified in Germany and working in Hamburg. I am psychological naturopath with my own practise.	I feel more secure and stable.

Redefining my personal identity

1. single —> wife —> mother
2. multicultural family in Japan, Germany and Canada
3. parental leave for two years —> 2018 returning to my position at the hospital



a life full of change, decisions, new experiences and unfamiliar roles



tension between adjusting to the country I live in and integrating it with my birth identity

Redefining my identity in two cultures

There are many important points of cultural background that influence my new identity.

Germany

- individuality is important - ego
- collective society is secondary
- difficulty establishing a collective cultural identity
- need to define oneself and one's position, society functions by adjusting to the individual

Japan

- individuality is subordinate to the collective
- adaptability is important
- a long tradition of isolationist society and closed culture
- society defines identity and position, and the individual adjusts

Redefining my professional identity

- new sense of self-confidence
- prepared for another new step: integrating Japanese Taiko drums in my work at the psychiatric hospital
- 2014 - 15: experimental phase to test effectiveness
- 2018: planned project

Conflicts introducing Taiko

1. My attitude as a therapist with a depth psychological and psychodynamic approach in psychiatric music therapy

Ethical questions:

It is very important for the professional in psychiatry to have a hobby for mental health. Can I make my personal hobby as a Taiko drummer part of my work? Am I ignoring the boundary between the professional and the private person? Do I mix these?

Answer:

Singers, guitarists, flutists or pianists also use their instruments in music therapy. As a Taiko player, I am no different!
I believe in myself and my professionalism.

Conflicts introducing Taiko

2. Innovation: using an instrument that not been used in music therapy in Germany to date - e.g. in my case Taiko drumming

Requirements:

- convincing the hospital to experiment, based on my experience and cultural background
- gaining support of the hospital in planning and treatment
- getting the hospital to invest in instruments
- gaining confidence in myself as a music therapist in the context of my job

Theses

1. It is necessary to find a unique personal profile in the course of a career by:
 - using my strengths
 - integrating my heritage and cultural background
2. Transforming my unique personal profile into a unique and effective professional profile is a „*survival strategy*“.

Question 1

Are my experiences
independent of the cultures involved?

Question 2

What role does your cultural identity play in your situation now?

Thank you for listening

There is one path in the world that none can walk but you. Where does it lead? Don't ask, walk!



Without music, life would be a mistake.

- Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche -