

METAPHORS CLIENTS USE TO DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCES IN BMGIM

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the various ways in which clients experience and manage different parts of a Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (BMGIM) therapy session. BMGIM is an individual form of music psychotherapy, in which a client images to specially designed programs of classical music and verbally dialogues with the therapist while imaging (Bruscia, 1998). The traditional BMGIM session consists of five parts or procedural components.¹ In the initial part of the session, called the “preliminary conversation,” the client and the therapist engage in a conversation. This is an opportunity for the client to talk about any events, issues, problems, or concerns that have brought them initially to BMGIM or that have arisen since the last session. The second component is the “induction.” In the induction, the therapist uses various relaxation techniques to help the client enter into an altered or expanded state of consciousness. The therapist then either provides the client with a starting image to explore or the images emerge from the client’s own conscious when the music begins. The induction then leads into the “music-listening;” the third component of the session. During this component, the client spontaneously images to the specially designed music (a program of pieces created by Helen Bonny or one of her proponents and specifically selected by the therapist based on the client’s current issues) and verbally dialogues with the therapist about the experience while in the altered or expanded state of consciousness. The images are not always just visual but can be feelings, sounds, memories, fantasies, smells, etc. Sometimes the music-imaging experience is intense enough that the client literally feels as if they are somewhere else, as if they have traveled to somewhere out of the real world. This is one reason why the fourth component, called the “return,” is such an important component of the session. During the return the music is finished and the client begins to come out of the altered state and returns to the here and now. This may take some time for the client, but the therapist continues to assist the client until he or she returns to an alert state. Finally, in the fifth component, the “postlude discussion,” the client and therapist talk about what was experienced during the imagery session, and what implications these experiences have for the client’s life.

While in training to become a BMGIM therapist, I learned that the components or phases of a session are not rigidly fixed procedurally. The therapist can vary how s/he implements each phase of the session based on the client’s needs. This is because each component is experienced differently by every client. Furthermore, an individual client can experience each component in different ways from one session to the next. Most likely then, the relationship and style of both the client and therapist dictate the flow of each session while still engaging in the same components of a session.

¹ The BMGIM session is sometimes described as having four rather than five components, with the “return” not considered a separate component. Given my view that the “return” is a significant aspect of the session, I am including it as a separate component.

As a client in BMGIM, I became aware of how uniquely I experienced and navigated each phase of the session. Often, I was flustered during the preliminary conversation and then had a difficult time relaxing during the relaxation and induction. Conversely, I was less flustered imaging to music and found it more meaningful. During the postlude discussion, however, I found it difficult to describe and evaluate my experiences or connect my experiences with language.

When I began to put together my experiences as a therapist-in-training, and my experiences as a client of BMGIM, two major questions began to emerge about how clients respond to the different components of a BMGIM session: 1) How do clients describe their experience of each procedural component of a BMGIM session? 2) How do clients describe their experience of the BMGIM session as a whole?

RELATED LITERATURE

Very little has been written about how clients describe their experience of the procedural components of BMGIM sessions. One source of information is in an edited book by Julie Hibben entitled *Inside Music Therapy: Client Experiences*. This book contains six chapters or cases by clients who have written about their own BMGIM therapy experiences. A review of these chapters helps to discern how each client experienced each procedural component of a BMGIM session.

Three clients, Cecilia (Schulberg, 1999), Ann (Newel, 1999), and Rebecca (Buell, 1999), describe their experiences mostly in terms of the music imagery component of the session (i.e., when the client spontaneously images while listening to the music and dialoguing with the therapist). Their therapeutic process unfolds as they recount the changes within their music imagery experiences. Although, the other three clients also describe their experience in terms of the music imagery component of the session and changes therein, they also describe their experiences during another phase. T (T & Caughman, 1999) mentions that in one session he was so “upset” during the preliminary conversation (the first component) that he “took longer than usual” to engage in the relaxation/induction (p.33). Mark (Nielson & Moe, 1999) noted that he initially “struggled to relax” during the relaxation/induction (p.55). Finally, Connie (Isenberg-Grzeda, 1999) indirectly described her experience of the postlude discussion (the final component) where she states: “The therapist and I weave our connection through our joint effort to arrive at intellectual understanding, to link the emotional and physical” (p.64). None of the six clients described their experience of every component of a BMGIM session.

In order to extract more information on these client’s experiences of GIM, the next part of my review of their chapters examines how each client described their overall experience or process. In the first case, Cecilia describes her sessions in four phases. The first phase describes her first group GIM session, wherein she had images of her mother as a victim of the Holocaust. After this session, the music and imagery helped her to let past experiences die and for her to be re-born, a continuing theme that occurs in later stages. In the second phase, her mother and grandmother kept reappearing in her images as representations of her own healing process. In the third phase she described a central imagery experience in which she was able to connect her

mind and body. In the final phase, she described her GIM experience as the music allowing her to “break through” barriers and provoke her experiences (p.11).

In the next case, Ann, told the “story” of her BMGIM therapy by combining her personal background with her specific session experiences. Her first session is titled “Fear,” in which she experienced images dealing with the connection between life and death (p.15). Her next session is titled “Depression.” In this session, the music induced images of other significant people in her life. Through these images she discovered that she gained strength by accepting the support of others. The third, fourth and fifth sessions are titled “Anger.” As a whole the music in these sessions “urged” her to let out pent up anger that she had not brought into awareness or addressed. The experiences in these sessions enabled her to be more in touch with her body and “less in her head.” The final session, entitled “closure,” allowed her to “see that all of the emotions and feelings that surfaced were normal and necessary” (p.26).

In the next case, T intermittently described his experience of BMGIM through journal writings. In the initial sessions, he reported that the music and imagery provided “not necessarily what I want or am looking for, but what I need for each new stage of growth” (p.30). Over the next four to five sessions he relived his past sexual abuse, and began to integrate these memories into his experiences. He also experienced images with others who were supportive in his life, rather than facing the images alone.

Rebecca described her BMGIM therapy through a combination of images and brief journal entries that explored those images. Over 14 sessions, she noticed how changes in her outer life were “foreshadowed by changes in her imagery” (p.51). Her general experience of the music was described as sustaining and supporting some of the strong emotions she experienced in the therapy.

Mark described his overall experience with his images as initiating a “chain reaction of visions, scents, flavors, and feelings,” and on an emotional level “strange things happened” (p.55). He noted that with his first couple of sessions he “struggled to relax” but was able to relax more as he proceeded with his therapy (p.55). Mark more fully described his experience through one significant session (session number 7). The various images in this particular session consistently occurred in other sessions and were symbolic of his overall experience.

Finally, Connie described the music as “acting on her” in three ways. The first is by holding, touching, and filling her. She noted that “I sink in the music as a baby would sink into its mother’s arms and I allow it to rock me, to cradle me and to help me feel safe” (p.61). The second is by penetrating. She noted that the music penetrated “my being, infusing me with its energy, moving me emotionally and physically” (p.63). The third is by organizing. She wrote that the “music lends an internal structure—just as a mother helps to bring order to a child’s chaos” (p.64).

Connie used metaphors in describing her experience in BMGIM. She notes that the music acted on her through holding, touching, and filling. Similarly, the other client’s descriptions provided a preview to the relationship with metaphors and BMGIM. Although the purpose of the above descriptions was to extract information on client experiences, the use of metaphors is clearly evident.

BMGIM and Metaphors

In the literature there are two articles that discuss the use of metaphors in BMGIM practice. In the first article entitled *Metaphor and Narrative in Guided Imagery and Music*, Bonde (2000) discusses the use of metaphors as an integral part of the BMGIM session and all of its components. He then encourages the expansion of those metaphors within the larger framework of a client's narrative as a means of discovery or self-transformation. He first notes that the different components of a BMGIM session have specific metaphorical tasks. In the preliminary conversation, the task is to find a core metaphor. In the relaxation/induction, the task is to transform the core metaphor into an actualized image. In the music imaging, the task is to explore and elaborate the core metaphor, and in the postlude, the task is to ground the metaphor in the life situation of the client (pp.62-63).

The further expansion of each metaphorical task leads to identifying three "levels" in discovering a therapeutic narrative. These levels include the basic level of the core metaphor (discovery of hidden meaning), the level of ego and self (discovery of personal voice), and the level of joined metaphors (discovery of configurations in one's life story). Interestingly, Bonde notes that the therapist assists the client with developing and using a metaphor in order for the therapeutic process to unfold. In essence, the client's metaphoric description of his or her own experience is necessary for discovery of the therapeutic narrative.

In the second article, entitled *The Role of Metaphor in the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music*, Perilli (2002) notes that metaphorical elaboration is a subsequent step of meaning making. Like Bonde (2000), Perilli integrates the use of metaphors with the different components of the BMGIM session. She notes that in the preliminary conversation while the client is presenting any needs or issues the therapist is listening for and finding verbal metaphors. In the music imaging, the therapist assists the client in exploring his or her internal world and evoking metaphors "which accurately present the self" (p.434) In the postlude, the therapist helps the client to "process and elaborate" upon the metaphors from the imagery (p.434). Also like Bonde, Perilli notes that the therapist assists the client with developing and using metaphors in the therapeutic process.

In both articles, the authors note the specific use of metaphors in BMGIM and provide a framework for how metaphors can be applied to different components of the session. Significantly, they both note that the metaphorical process is similar to the therapeutic process in that both are conducive to effecting change in an individual (Perilli, 2002). In essence, the meaning making and change typically associated with therapy is similar to the meaning making and change that arises within client's metaphors, and the subsequent elaboration of the client's metaphors within BMGIM's therapeutic process. Perilli (2002) notes that BMGIM is a "quintessential example of the metaphorical process" (p.445). Bonde (2000) notes that metaphors have three characteristics, "each of which can be clearly seen in BMGIM:" 1) An "outcropping of unconscious fantasy," 2) A combination of the "abstract and the concrete in special way, enabling one to go from the known and the sensed to the unknown and the symbolic," and 3) The "elicitation or accompaniment of strong feelings that lead to integrating insight" (pp.61-62).

Although other BMGIM related literature (e.g. Bruscia & Grocke, 2002; Lewis, 1993; Pickett, 1992) mention metaphors, they do not go into as much detail as Bonde and Perilli. A common theme in these articles is that metaphors provide a means for the therapist to describe the client's experience. Another common theme is that the therapist should be aware that continually recurring images of the client are metaphorical to the client's process.

In summary, the literature on metaphors in BMGIM consists of client reports of their own experiences, two theories on the role of metaphors in BMGIM, and several articles where therapists describe their client's experiences using metaphors. No studies have been found on metaphors that clients use to describe their experiences of the component parts of a BMGIM session or the session as a whole.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The purpose of the present study is to examine and compare metaphors that clients use to describe the five components of a BMGIM session (i.e. preliminary conversation, relaxation/induction, music-imaging, return, and postlude discussion) and the entire session. The research questions are:

1. How do clients describe their experience of each procedural component of a BMGIM session?
2. How do clients describe their experience of the BMGIM session as a whole?

METHOD

Participants

Nine participants, including the researcher as a participant, were chosen by convenience based on two criteria: 1) that they had had at least three BMGIM sessions, and 2) that they were over eighteen years old. The proximity of Temple University and closeness of the BMGIM community allowed for easy accessibility to clients in BMGIM and, hence, participants in this research project. Clients who had had numerous sessions and/or had been trained as BMGIM fellows were particularly sought out. I had unproblematic access in seeking out participants for this research because I was currently in training to become a BMGIM therapist and beginning my Ph. D in Music Therapy. I was able to recruit current BMGIM trainees, BMGIM practitioners, professors, and fellow students whom were all music therapists. Also, each participant was either being trained as therapists in BMGIM, completed training as therapists in BMGIM, and/or had taken some training as therapists in BMGIM (including myself as participant/current BMGIM trainee and BMGIM client). As part of training in BMGIM each therapist must also have extensive experience as a client in BMGIM therefore each participant had a distinctive perspective on the procedural process of BMGIM that clients who are not

music therapists and not trained in BMGIM may not have. Each subject was given a consent form, a permission to audio-tape form, and was explained his/her rights as a research subject. The study was reviewed and approved by Temple University's Internal Review Board. Participants were not paid.

Methodology

Initially, when preparing the study and subsequently the methodology, my focus was on discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is typically described as a qualitative form of research that analyzes language, spoken or written. This study does focus on metaphors, a creative form of language. However, through further preparation and subsequent changes to my research method and form of inquiry, I realized that the study began to focus on the client's experience. It occurred to me that the method needed to evolve towards a study of the client's experience, and thus is inspired by phenomenology (Abbott, 2005). Although, metaphors are examined for their use in describing experience, the present study is focused on the experience and not specifically on the language. Because BMGIM is a creative form of psychotherapy, I decided that I would use metaphors, a creative form of language, to study the experiences of clients. Therefore, this study is a phenomenologically inspired inquiry into clients' experiences of BMGIM through the use of metaphors.

Procedure

After each participant consented to participate in the research, a date and time was set for an interview. Most interviews were conducted at Temple University; however for the convenience of the participants, some interviews were conducted in alternate venues. Every attempt was made to make the time and place for the interview as convenient as possible for each participant. Each participant was interviewed privately for between 45 minutes and an hour. The research then proceeded through the following steps.

Step 1: The Interview

Before asking the interview questions, I informed the participants of the purpose of the research, guidelines for the interview process, and definitions or explanations needed for the interview. I began by explaining that the present research is on the metaphors clients use to describe their experiences in BMGIM.

Participants were informed that there would be two parts of the interview process. In the first part I encouraged them to use metaphors to describe their typical or general experience

of the different components of a BMGIM session,² and in the second part I asked the participants to describe the typical or general experience of the whole session with a brief narrative. The definition of metaphor that was given was a “figure of speech in which a term that ordinarily designates an object or idea is used to designate a dissimilar object or idea in order to suggest comparison or analogy” (American Heritage Dictionary, 1983).³ This definition was followed by an example of a metaphor (moving slow like a turtle, etc.).

The researcher then described the five components of a BMGIM session as follows: 1) The preliminary conversation is the beginning part of the session where the client has the opportunity to talk about any events, issues, problems, or concerns that have arisen since the last session; 2) The relaxation/induction, the next part of the session, is where the therapist uses various relaxation procedures to help the client enter into an altered or expanded state of consciousness, and then either provides the client with a starting image to explore or images emerge from the client’s conscious when the music begins; 3) The music imaging part of the session is where the client images spontaneously to music, and dialogues with the therapist about the experience; 4) The return is the brief part of the session when the music is finished and the client begins to become out of the altered state, and to “reawaken;” and 5) The postlude discussion is the part where the client and therapist talk about the experiences during the session.

After the research purpose was presented, the interview process was described, any questions that participants had pertaining to the interview were answered, and an explanation was given about the different components of a BMGIM session as well as the session as a whole, the interview began.

Step 2: The metaphors

The researcher asked the participants to describe their general or typical experiences during a BMGIM session by using metaphors. An example of one of the interview questions was, “Can you think of a metaphor that describes your experience of the preliminary conversation?” Similar interview questions were used for each different component of the session as described above. If I needed to have a metaphor clarified or have a participant expand on it, I would state “what is that like,” or “what does that remind you of?” For example, one participant mentioned that the music and imaging component was like “surrender.” I asked “is that like ‘surrender’ from a conflict or battle?” The participant clarified the metaphor by stating that it was not that kind of surrender but a letting go. Clarifying the metaphors was an important part of the research. Given that metaphors are an analogy or comparison, people create metaphors differently. I have my own meaning on what the metaphor may be in comparison to, but that may be a different meaning from the participant’s. I wanted to make sure my bias or my experience with a metaphor was bracketed out of the data.

² While I did not require that participants use metaphors when discussing the different components, if they did not use metaphors I did not include it in the research, but encouraged elaboration.

³ While I am aware of other ways that metaphors have been defined in the music therapy literature (e.g. Smeijsters (2005) and Bonde (2007)), I opted for this dictionary definition.

Step 3: The whole session

After each component was discussed through a metaphor I asked the participant to describe his/her general experience of the entire session through a metaphor or short narrative. The interview question was, “What metaphor or short narrative would you use to describe your experience of moving from the beginning to the end of the session?” Similar questions were used to clarify and expand the metaphors in the different components and to clarify and expand the entire session into one narrative. The difference was that the participants were asked to connect each component with a continuous narrative or metaphor.

Step 4: Transcribing the interview

I then listened to the recorded interview and transcribed it. As I transcribed, I omitted unrelated conversation and unfinished thoughts. The goal was to capture the participant’s descriptions while also transcribing complete and coherent sentences of the metaphors the participants used. For example, one participant’s original description of the induction was “*Um, letting... STOPPING other input from getting in the way of listening to me. I am so in tune to... I am use to be to being so in tune to what other people want from me. When it comes to figuring out how to take care of me, I need to tune everybody else out. . . .*” This description was rearranged to this: “*The induction is like stopping other input from getting in the way of listening to me. I need to figure out how to tune everybody else out in order to take care of myself.* Although, certain parts of the interview were omitted when transcribing, every attempt was made to encapsulate the metaphoric description of the participant’s experiences in BMGIM.

Step 5: Discerning titles for each component metaphor

After putting each interview into complete and coherent sentences, I segmented the description into units, each containing one metaphor and the explanation of that metaphor. In all cases I tried to extract the title of the metaphor directly from the words used by the participant.

Every metaphor that was included had to be elaborated on or explained further by the participant and not relate to any other comparison or metaphor. For example, one participant mentioned that the preliminary conversation was an “emotional dump,” and then elaborated in a confusing way. She said: “*the prelude is an emotional dump. I go through emotional highs and lows, and pick one or two to discuss. It reminds me of how I used to be with my mom.*” Essentially, I omitted the phrase “it reminds me of how I used to be with my mom,” because this further expansion of the metaphor appeared to actually be describing or leading to another metaphor which she did not define or identify as such. I decided that the phrase did not fit the original title metaphor, so I used only the title metaphor and that part of her description that was directly related to it.

Step 6: Analyzing the title metaphors

In this next step, I re-read the title metaphors and provided my own code for each one in order to allow for comparisons. In doing this, themes began to emerge across clients. These themes were then used in the discussion of how clients describe their experiences of the different components and of the whole session. Some participants had more than one title metaphor for describing the components. In these cases, all metaphors are noted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Metaphors for each component of the BMGIM session

Preliminary Conversation Metaphors

Mary: *An open wound*: It is like having an open wound, while somebody stands by me while I figure out how to tend to it.

An emotional Dump: I go through highs and lows, and pick one or two to discuss.

Fred: *Focusing at school*: It is like the way I approach school. I always struggle to take things that are interesting to me and focus on something.

Being with women: It is the same with my relationships with women and I try to put all my focus and energy there. It is like being with a woman in that I play the same games with my therapist.

Bob: *Beating the same old drum*: Sometimes it feels like beating that same old drum. It is very tiresome and the stick is kind of worn out, kind of raw, and the drum has lost any life.

Drinking stale water: It is like drinking stale water, or breathing stale air.

Sophia: *Testing the water*: It is like getting into water, starting to stick your toe in to test the waters.

Jane: *Sharing an internal space*: It is like coming together and reconnecting with the therapist. Connecting is about being in the same space with the other person where we are focusing our attention on that space together. It is more of an internal space that is shared with one another person.

Mark: *A whirlwind*: It is like a whirlwind for me. I bring in all of the stuff that I have felt, and it seems like trying to put something so vast into a small area.

Frank: *Yoga*: It reminds me of yoga, because you take it in and as you hold it you become more aware of how much you are holding and then when you let out the air you can feel those places begin to relax.

A scanning: There is a scanning that takes place or a selecting and/or prioritizing to see what is ready to go.

Susan: *Talking with a friend*: It feels comfortable, like I am having a regular conversation. It is a comfortable one like I am chit-chatting with a friend.

Victoria: *Unloading stuff*: It is like an unloading and refocusing. Unloading stuff and spilling all this stuff and then as the conversation continues you try and sift through to find out what is at the heart of all of this stuff.

Cleaning out a closet: The stuff is like cleaning out a closet and you are sorting through it all, what am I going to look at today. Going through the closet is like what you are going to keep or what you are going to discard.

Table 1: Preliminary Conversation Metaphors

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>
<u>Mary</u>	<u>An open wound</u> <u>Emotional dump</u>
<u>Bob</u>	<u>Drinking stale water</u> <u>Beating the same old drum</u>
<u>Fred</u>	<u>Being with women</u> <u>Focusing at school</u>
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>Testing the water</u>
<u>Jane</u>	<u>Sharing an internal space</u>
<u>Mark</u>	<u>A whirlwind</u>
<u>Frank</u>	<u>Yoga</u> <u>Scanning</u>
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Talking with a friend</u>
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Cleaning out a closet</u> <u>Unloading stuff</u>

Two themes are evident in these metaphors of the preliminary conversation. The first is that the preliminary conversation is an *active, dynamic process*, that is, it requires some effort on the part of the client. For some of the participants, the process is essentially *pleasant*, as evidenced in metaphors such as yoga, cleaning out a closet, talking with a friend, and testing the water. For others, the process is *not so pleasant*, as evidenced in metaphors such as focusing at school, whirlwind, beating the same old drum, and drinking stale water.

The second theme is that the preliminary conversation is *intentional*, that is, it provides the client with an opportunity to shape how the rest of the session will unfold. Here there are two approaches. Some participants used the preliminary conversation as a way of identifying a *single focus* for the rest of the session. This is evidenced in metaphors such as cleaning out a closet, unloading stuff, and yoga. Other participants used the preliminary conversation as a way of surveying *possible foci* for the session, but allowing the most important one to emerge during the rest of the session without manipulation. This is evidenced in metaphors such as open wound, whirlwind, talking with a friend, and focusing at school. Thus, some participants intentionally established a *focus* for the session in the preliminary conversation, and others intentionally survey *possible foci* that may emerge.

Metaphors for the preliminary conversation can be placed in the following categories:

- Pleasant active process
 - Aimed at focusing on one issue
 - Aimed at surveying several issues
- Not so pleasant active process
 - Aimed at focusing on one issue

Relaxation/Induction Metaphors

- Mary: *Shutting the door*: I need to figure out how to tune everybody else out, in order to hear myself. It's like stepping into a closet and shutting the door.
A camera: I have permission to turn the camera around and see myself.
- Fred: *Threading a needle*: It is like trying to thread a needle. My focus and energy shifts and I am not actively shifting it. It feels like I do not have a choice, and almost like I do not know how to direct the energy. It was like I would thread the needle, get the thread in there. The next time I would come back to it, the needle is across the room and I have to find the needle and it takes me forever to thread it again.
- Bob: *The support of the earth*: It is like feeling the support of the earth, letting your body feel heavy, but yet feeling supported. I feel supported and I feel safe. I don't really feel pressured. It is like precious few situations for me.
- Sophia: *Being connected*: It is like being connected to the earth and also to the core of myself.
Being liquid: There is a shift in breathing and a shift in position. I am conscious of physical changes, of being more liquid.
- Jane: *Going to the theater*: It is kind of like walking into the theater when the lights are already out and the show is about to begin, so the space has already been prepared.
- Mark: *A mirror*: It is like the relaxation is the mirror of myself and it usually seems like I am feeling myself for the first time in weeks. It is like viewing myself in a mirror that reflects my inner world.
- Frank: *Turning inward*: It is really a turning inward, like going right back in towards yourself. It is more of a closed position—you are in a kneeling position, like a praying pose. It puts me in touch with myself, and becomes a closing inward.
- Susan: *Walking away*: Walking away from the rational part of me to wherever it takes me. It was the opportunity to get away from my body and my logical self, and see my body relaxing. All of the tight, rational parts, the relaxation, and me that were held up allow me not to have to hold that together.
- Victoria: *Getting ready for a trip*: It is like getting ready to take off in an airplane, or getting on a cruise to nowhere. You are now at the launching point and you are ready to go on a quest or exploration. You are getting what you need to prepare yourself for the journey or exploration.

Table 2: Relaxation/Induction Metaphors

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>
<u>Mary</u>	<u>Shutting the door</u>	<u>A camera</u>
<u>Fred</u>	<u>Threading a needle</u>	
<u>Bob</u>	<u>The support of the earth</u>	
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>Being connected</u>	<u>Being liquid</u>
<u>Jane</u>	<u>Going to the theater</u>	
<u>Mark</u>	<u>A mirror</u>	
<u>Frank</u>	<u>Turning inward</u>	<u>Praying pose (Yoga)</u>
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Walking away</u>	
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Getting ready for a journey</u>	<u>An exploration</u>

Again, two themes are evident. The first theme is that the relaxation/induction is *purposeful*, that is, that there is some intention on the part of the client. There are two approaches to fulfilling this purpose. For some of the participants, the purpose is to be *receptive* and *amenable* to the relaxation. This is evidenced in metaphors such as the support of the earth, being connected, being liquid, and the praying pose in yoga. For others, the purpose is to be *active* and make an effort to relax. This is evidenced in metaphors such as shutting the door, threading the needle, going to the theater, turning inward, walking away, getting ready for a journey, and an exploration.

The second theme is that the relaxation/induction is *focused* that is, the client actively focuses on relaxing. There are three approaches. In the first, participants use a metaphor that involves something *outside of themselves*. Examples are: going to the theater, shutting the door, threading a needle, walking away, and getting ready for a journey. In the second approach, participants use a metaphor that *focuses* on a tangible object that they use to view themselves. Examples are: a camera or a mirror. In the third approach there are *internal foci*, in that, the participants used a metaphor that focuses on them or their body. Examples are: the praying pose, the support of the earth, being connected, being liquid, and turning inward. Inevitably, it appears that with each approach the clients use the relaxation/induction to *actively focus*; some participants focused on external items while some focused internally.

Altogether then, metaphors for the relaxation/induction can be placed in the following categories:

Purposeful

An intention to be receptive

An intention to be active

Focused

Actively focused on external things

Actively focused on external things used to view themselves

Actively focused on internal states

Music-Imaging Metaphors

- Mary: *A roller coaster*: The music imaging is like a roller coaster, because I never know whether I am going up or down.
Roulette: Some sessions the ball falls on the number the whole time, and I am able to feel my feelings.
- Fred: *A tunnel*: It is like a tunnel and I can't get my focus into it. It's like I am in front of the tunnel and almost like I am half in it, except it's like holding on or something or I keep hitting the sides, or I can't move through it, or can't just flow through it.
Birth: This is like a birth thing, like not wanting to leave the womb.
- Bob: *A big pear*: It is like I am a big pear and I am afraid I am going to eat it all up and there isn't going to be anymore left, and the pear tells me, go ahead there will always be enough.
- Sophia: *A story*: Sometimes it is like writing the story, and sometimes it is like being in the story. It is like being a character and also the audience. If I am in the story I have control over what I do but not control over the story.
Being a child: It is like being a child where textures and touches are new and exploratory. A little like a baby who is touching things for the first time and the main way for the baby to get in touch with the world around them.
- Jane: *A dream*: It is very much like being in a dream and having the experience and at the same time being conscious of it at another level that you don't have when you are asleep and dreaming.
A story: Begins with something that is story-like. The story isn't just about a nice little story; it is a story that has a lot of depth to it. It is really an internal experience.
- Mark: *A switch*: It feels like a switch is being turned on and I enter a deep mysterious place. The switch goes on and the movie starts. In the movie, the scenes and plot may change but there is still a reason for the whole movie, although it is not always understandable. The movie may go to some strange place or come out of nowhere but it all seems connected in some way.
- Frank: *Surrender*: It is like surrender, to what is. Like not to anybody and not a conflict in terms of acceptance. It is surrendering to the music, and to whatever needs to be will be.
A faucet: The music part is also like a faucet because when the music comes on so all the things that have been stored in the pipes begin to flow out of you. The music releases the water at the right flow. The music is the faucet and the water is the music also. It is like a device that releases water like a shower. I feel the water coming out of the faucet.
- Susan: *Being in the cosmos*: My experience of the music imaging is a wow experience, like where did that come from. It feels like I am in the cosmos. I was there, and that was the first time that I got a sense of getting out of my own way. By not getting caught up in the body or the logic of the experience, it was exciting and scary. It was a true experience without logic or rationality.
Letting go: It is the letting go. It opens my ability to get beyond logic and opens my ability to get beyond a behavioral understanding of my actions. I did not get solutions but I got feelings.

Victoria: *Quick sand*: Sometimes is like I am sinking under whatever. I often have imagery where dirt is being thrown on me and I have to get out of it, and I have to get out from under it. The point is being in this place, and if you don't do something you will drown.
A roller coaster: The roller coaster is like being on top and then going down to the bottom. There is always some kind of movement, like what an astronaut would feel like when he is in space.
An adventure: For the most part it is like being on a journey and not following a map, but following signposts. At other times it is like driving and getting lost.

Table 3: Music-Imaging Metaphors

<u>Participant</u>		<u>Metaphor</u>	
<u>Mary</u>	<u>A roller coaster</u>	<u>Roulette</u>	
<u>Fred</u>	<u>A tunnel</u>	<u>Birth</u>	
<u>Bob</u>	<u>A big pear</u>		
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>A story</u>	<u>Being a child</u>	
<u>Jane</u>	<u>A dream</u>	<u>A story</u>	
<u>Mark</u>	<u>A switch</u>	<u>A movie</u>	
<u>Frank</u>	<u>A surrender</u>	<u>A faucet</u>	
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Being in the cosmos</u>	<u>Letting go</u>	
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Quick sand</u>	<u>A roller coaster</u>	<u>An adventure</u>

Two themes are evident. The first is that the music and imagery is a *process* that describes the client's being or life, which is, the client recounts his/her own reality through the imagery. For some of the participants, the process is essentially a *narrative*, as evidenced in metaphors such as a story, a dream, or a movie. For others, the process is metaphorically described as the *beginnings* of life or entering into a new way of being, as evidenced in metaphors such as a tunnel, birth, being a baby, and being in the cosmos.

The second theme that emerges is that the music and imagery is an *engulfing* process, that is, the client gets submerged in it. Here there are two approaches. Some participants were *relieved* while being engulfed as a way of remaining receptive to the music and imagery. This is evidenced in metaphors such as a surrender, a faucet, letting go, and sinking. Other participants had a paradoxical engulfing, in that being receptive to the music and imagery was *risky*, *exciting*, or *adventurous*. This is evidenced in metaphors of a roller coaster, roulette, a tunnel, and a journey. Thus, some participants were *relieved* in the engulfing of the music and imagery, while others were *excited* by being engulfed.

Altogether then, metaphors for the music and imagery can be placed in the following categories:

Being

Narrative: an account of the client's life

Beginnings: starting over or beginning one's life in a new way

Engulfing process

Relief: the letting go to be receptive to the music and imagery

Excitement: an adventure that is exciting and scary simultaneously, even risky

Return Metaphors

Mary: *Returning*: It is like returning from a foreign land.

Fred: *A space of silence*: Well, there's usually a nice space there. It is a space of silence and I appreciate that because it is just for me to gather what happens, give myself a chance to either recover from the tension, or to just stay with something that has come to me.

Breathing easier: It's like I can breathe easier. It's like I can breathe and I can have more than enough space that I need, but yet I feel supported, or at least that I'm heard. I don't even know if it is supported, it's that I notice there is someone over there that is interested in me.

Bob: *Coming back*: It is like coming back from vacation in some way.

Sophia: *Floating*: I often have a physical sense of ascending or descending, and starting to flow back up to the surface. Floating back up to the water or floating back down to the ground. It often makes me conscious of being tired, a good tired. It is like lightness coming back to ground, or liquid coming back to solid.

Jane: *Being in the theater*: It is like being in a theater or darkened room where something has been going on and it has run its course, and then turning the lights back on.

Mark: *Ending an exercise routine*: The return seems like ending an exercise routine. I have done all this work and coming back seems like my energy is gone.

Coming out of coma: It is like coming out of a coma, where I have been in my inner world for so long.

Returning from space: It is like being in another world or in space and when you come back from space you have to get used to the atmosphere change and the weight change before you come out of the spaceship and onto the planet.

Frank: *Another kind of knowing*: The return is another kind of knowing and you know when you are finished, so that when you come to that it is like the same knowing when you come in. When you are going out you are still focused inward. It is like you are turning back out again, inner ways to outer ways of being.

Peeling a flower: Layers of inward, outward. The layers remind me of a peeling away of some kind of flower.

Susan: *Work*: Sometimes it has been exhausting, it sometimes felt like I had worked for eight hours, and being ok with letting myself feel that.

Victoria: *Coming back home*: You have been away for a long time and you are ready to go back home. It is a coming back, and it is always good to be back home, and you have done what you have had to do.

Table 4: Return Metaphors

<u>Participant</u>		<u>Metaphor</u>	
<u>Mary</u>	<u>Returning</u>		
<u>Fred</u>	<u>A space of silence</u>	<u>Breathing easier</u>	
<u>Bob</u>	<u>Coming back</u>		
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>Floating</u>		
<u>Jane</u>	<u>A marking of a change</u>	<u>Being in a theater</u>	
<u>Mark</u>	<u>Ending an exercise routine</u>	<u>Coming out of a coma</u>	<u>Returning from space</u>
<u>Frank</u>	<u>Another kind of knowing</u>	<u>Peeling flower</u>	
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Work</u>		
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Coming back home</u>		

As opposed to the other components, there is one major theme that is delineated by three sub-themes. The main theme is that the return is a *coming back* to the here and now. In fact, several participants used this exact metaphor such as returning, coming back, and coming back home. From the return, three sub-themes emerge and each is related to the returning in a different way.

The first sub-theme is that the return is *insightful*, that is, it provides the client with an awareness of what has unfolded in the music and imagery component. This is evidenced in metaphors such as a marking of a change, another kind of knowing, and a peeling flower. The second sub-theme is that the return is entering into a *different space*, that is, the client has come back from the music and imagery and entered a different place that is not defined by the usual confines associated with a typical space. This is evidenced in metaphors such as a space of silence, floating, and a coma. The third sub-theme is one of *expended energy*, that is, the client has returned from the music and imagery and has exerted themselves through the process. This is evidenced in metaphors such as breathing easier, ending an exercise routine, and work.

Altogether then, metaphors for the return can be placed in the following categories:

A returning or coming back:

- Returning with insight
- Returning to a different space
- Returning after expending energy

Postlude Discussion Metaphors

Mary: *Piecing together a puzzle*: It is like trying to put the pieces together of a big 3d puzzle that is spherical.

Fred: *A game*: It's sort of like a fun little game, a game of me staying out of my head.

Bob: *Being in love*: It's like being in love with someone and looking for a gift or something like that from that person, which is supposed to mean everything. I actually want that

gift and I want it to explain everything, but it doesn't. I want that and it never gives it to me.

Sophia: *A web/tapestry*: It gives me a real sense of my own depth and my own richness. And, it gives me a sense of the beautiful complexity of myself, like a web. Or, like a tapestry.

Jane: *Playing*: Usually, it is an exciting time of making things make some kind of sense, the parts that do, and trying to own the parts that do not seem to have any meaning. Trying to hang on to them so that I can play with them. Playing with the pieces that do not have meaning yet, but that have significance in some way. Either things have some emotional charge, or they were a surprise to me, I don't know what it was about but it has meaning. The playing is like being creative, creatively playing around with it.

An amoeba: The creative process, when I try to give it form is amoeba-like, it is something that can move and shift and take on many forms, but it still has an identity, it still has a core.

Mark: *Someone agreeing with me*: It feels like a validation of my experience. I start to feel OK and that everything will be alright in some way. It is like someone is finally agreeing with me and hears what I am saying and I can feel comfortable saying it.

The importance of my life: There is no place in the world like the postlude in that I can image the strangest or scariest things and in the postlude, although I may be in for a difficult stretch it does not feel strange or scary, but seems important. The postlude is the importance of my life and what that importance means to me.

Frank: *A quiet reentry*: The good [postlude] is a real quiet reentry into how do I now incorporate this into my life. Where does this move me, how does this get filtered in, and how does this fold into my life.

Two movies going at once: The bad [postlude] is that there are two movies going on at once, my movie and the guide's movie.

Susan: *Cradling*: Whatever the experience was, I felt that I was ok. It is like cradling.

An experience of the experience: The postlude experience is the experience of the experience, but in a grounding way so that I could go home. It leaves me with enough to think about. It puts me in a whole different place and mood. It is a way to keep connected, but allows me to stay out of my defense.

Victoria: *Waking up*: It is like when you first wake up, kind of asleep but awake. Like a dream but you remember what stands out.

A smorgasbord: You have this smorgasbord of things to choose to talk on. You pick out the important stuff, and you are looking at the most meaningful aspects of the session.

Table 5: Postlude Discussion Metaphors

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>
<u>Mary</u>	<u>Piecing together a puzzle</u>
<u>Fred</u>	<u>A game</u>
<u>Bob</u>	<u>Being in love</u>
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>A web/tapestry</u>
<u>Jane</u>	<u>Playing /playing with pieces</u>
<u>Mark</u>	<u>Someone agreeing with me</u>
<u>Frank</u>	<u>A quiet reentry</u>
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Cradling</u>
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Waking up</u>
	<u>An amoeba</u>
	<u>The importance of my life</u>
	<u>Two movies going on at once</u>
	<u>A smorgasbord</u>

Again two themes are evident. The first theme is that the postlude is *employed as a resource* to attempt *insight*, that is, clients use the postlude to try and gain some understanding of the experiences of the session. For some participants, insight was gained either focused on an object, as evidenced in metaphors such as web/tapestry, an amoeba, a smorgasbord, and one movie playing, or not focused on an object, as evidenced in the metaphor of someone agreeing with me. For other participants, the *insight* was not gained, because they were trying to figure out their experience either by *playing*, as evidenced in metaphors such as piecing together a puzzle, a game, and playing with pieces, or by *struggling*, as evidenced in metaphors such as looking for a gift, and two movies going on at once. Interestingly enough, some participants had two different metaphors that fit into both categories of gaining insight and not gaining insight as evidenced in the metaphors of two movies going on at once (not gaining insight) versus one movie going on (gaining insight), and playing with pieces (not gaining insight) versus an amoeba (gaining insight).

The second theme is that the postlude is *united* with the music and imagery component, that is, clients remained in that experience. Some participants remained in the experience by making an effort to come back or return. This is evidenced in metaphors such as a quiet reentry, and waking up. Other participants had not returned but remained in the experience. This is evidenced in metaphors such as cradling.

Altogether then, metaphors for the postlude can be placed in the following categories:

Employing the postlude as a resource

Insight gained.

Insight not gained through playing or struggling

Submerged in the experience of the music and imagery

Coming back

Remaining in the music-imaging experience

When taken together, metaphors for the five components can be summarized in this way. The prelude is *active and intentional*, the relaxation/induction is *purposeful and focused*, the music and imagery is about *being and is an engulfing process*, the return is about *returning*, and the postlude is about *using it as a resource and being submerged*. A common theme that

runs through each component is an active intention in that each client makes an effort to immerse him/herself in each component of the session with a purpose. The metaphors describe the specific ways that each client proceeds through the session, but the active intent describes the common themes that emerge from each of the component metaphors as a whole.

Narratives for the Entire Session

Mary's full narrative

The whole session is like deciding to go on a trip. I pack and decide what to take or not to take. I look into my closet and decide what to take. Then it is like I am on a plane. You are suspended and just waiting to get there. I take the plane ride to my destination of a foreign land. Then I return from my trip. It depends on the trip, and where I am going and then it's like returning home from wherever I was and preparing for the rest of the week.

Fred's full narrative

OK, so I go into the session and I sit down on the couch and I feel like I am floating. I'm floating, I'm in motion, and there's all these things moving around. I start talking to the therapist and I'm waiting for him to ground me. I'm wishing that the therapist would sort of reel me in and ground me. I can tell he could do that if he wanted, because I can see it in his eyes that he can see in me, can see things in me that I can't see. But he won't do it. So it's sort of like, I have to go to work, and then I have to thread that needle. I am going back to that womb, it's like I am sitting in the womb.

Bob's full narrative

I can see myself getting there on a broken bicycle, tired, and having to pull a load behind me in a basket. Then I lie down tell about my journey and the person gives me a bed to lie in, I have to bring the load in. I bring it in and lie down, and while I lie down that person cuts away the load. I bring in the load, and it has something in the middle, which is really the only part that I need. I only need this little core of this load. Let's say it is a small object in a big package with heavy stuff in it like rocks instead of packing material. Then I go in there and this person unwraps it and the music sort of does things with the rocks. Whatever happens there it gets rid of the stuff and it gives me another wrapped package and I still don't know what that package is but it is smaller and the bicycle gets repaired. I ride home with this smaller package. It is the same package but it is smaller and I can carry it without breaking my bicycle. The postlude is presenting me this package and saying, "Look, you can put this in your bike basket and carry it home," and I say, "What's in this package?" I never get an answer, but my bike's fixed.

Sophia's full narrative

The prelude is being at the waters edge, maybe sticking a toe in and back out. The relaxation is getting into the water. The prelude is consciously sticking a toe in the water and the relaxation is just sinking into the water. The imaging is swimming and you can't always see everything there. Your vision is different when you are underwater and maybe that is where the tactile comes in also. You need your other senses as well as just normal sight to know what is going on in there. The return is surfacing, coming back up. The postlude is like taking some of the water and looking at the crystalline structure of it. I would look at it by putting it under a microscope or putting it in a place where you can see other details about the water, seeing it a different way. The water is clear, deep and dense.

Jane's full narrative

The whole process is not different from that creative process, there is a core and a defined identity around which things move and shift and change shape. It looks different and feels different, but there is still a core. There is a central stable core around which the work happens, like a steel bar. The bar is about some inner place that can be stable despite of what else goes on around it. Like the amoeba and sea anemone, they have this rooted spot. The bar is always present, but I am not always consciously aware of what the core is like. The shift of attention allows me to get closer to the core or to be closer without being conscious of it. It is the shift. As the induction begins, the fluid part of the amoeba begins to shift more and becomes more fluid, because the space is making room for that to happen. In the session, it does what it needs to do. At the end, it is like settling down. It may look different than it did at the beginning, but not dramatically so. It is a different shape or form. In the postlude I am stepping away from that space but it is still present. The playing with it is like keeping conscious of how it has changed shape a little bit in order to continue to be aware of that change or new piece of information. Part of the joy of the session is that you bring from it something that is new and different and that you can have as a part of yourself.

Mark's full narrative

It really feels like myself. I start out my day with a whirlwind try to get a sense of myself and I am usually either relaxed or not relaxed so I decide to see a movie. I then turn on the movie switch and the movie turns on so that I can see myself. My return seems like I was so in to the movie, coma like, that it is hard to leave the movie theater and I realize that there are other things going on around me like life and sounds and smells. Then the postlude is a reassurance and offers me a way where I might be able to change my typical self in a different way so that each day is not the same.

Frank’s full narrative

It is like a yoga sequence, and the yoga sequence starts with standing positions and outward open poses, and proceeds inward to more compact poses which are in sitting or reclining positions. Then you move yourself back outward to more standing positions that are more open and when you get to the second set of standing positions you are more aligned or balanced than you were as you went in. You may be in the same poses but the same poses now feel different. It is the imagined world, so it is all you. That has to be translated into the more open poses and more active poses. You are now able to do the same things, but you can do them in alignment and with balance. In some ways it is like you don’t have to come out with different poses and change, the change is really from within. You now are operating in a different way and your body has not changed.

Susan’s full narrative

My experiences are like watching a rose blossom. Not the roses that are open, but the bud—and watching the bud open. The prelude is right before the bud becomes a bud. The induction is the bud itself, the music imaging is the beginning of the opening. The entire process is the blossoming into a rose. My willingness to do GIM was the start of the bud. Some level that was not logical was this desire to see if a rose could ever come from this little tiny bud.

Victoria’s full narrative

Getting prepared to go on a trip, to someplace you don’t know. Then you embark on this journey and the music is the vehicle that carries you to these places, probably that you have never seen, or coming back to revisit. Finally, it is time to come home. Then you are going back over your vacation memories or photo album and trying to make a record of the most important things that have happened.

Table 6: Metaphors in the full Narrative

<u>Participant</u>	<u>Metaphor</u>
<u>Mary</u>	<u>Going on a trip</u>
<u>Fred</u>	<u>Floating</u>
<u>Bob</u>	<u>The broken bike</u>
<u>Sophia</u>	<u>The water’s edge</u>
<u>Jane</u>	<u>An amoeba taking shape</u>
<u>Mark</u>	<u>Going to the movies</u>
<u>Frank</u>	<u>A yoga sequence</u>
<u>Susan</u>	<u>Watching a rose bloom</u>
<u>Victoria</u>	<u>Taking a trip</u>

Womb

When looking at the metaphors in the narrative of the entire session certain themes also emerge. The first theme is that the metaphors are *sequential*: there is a natural order in the metaphors used. When each participant described the entire session sequentially, several sub-themes arose. First, there is a *singular focus*; that is, the participants identified and elaborated one metaphor for the entire session. Second, each component of the session fits *logically* within the narrative; that is, the sequence of the narrative is compatible with the sequence of the components. And third, participants used a similar metaphor in describing the components of the session. This theme and subsequent sub-themes are evident in the metaphors of going on a trip, the broken bike, the water's edge, an amoeba taking shape, going to the movies, a yoga sequence, watching a rose bloom, and taking a trip.

The second theme is that there is either active or passive *involvement* in the experience of the BMGIM session. When clients describe the entire session with an *active involvement*, the clients include themselves in the metaphor. This is evident in the metaphors of going on a trip, the broken bike, the water's edge, going to the movies, yoga sequence, and taking a trip. When clients describe the entire session with a *passive involvement*, they were *waiting* for the experience to happen or *watching* the experience. This is evident in the metaphors of floating/womb, an amoeba taking shape, and watching a rose bloom.

Altogether then, metaphors for the entire session can be placed in the following categories:

- The metaphors are sequential
 - Singular focus
 - Logical narrative sequence
 - Use similar metaphors as those used for session components
- Type of involvement in the experience
 - Active
 - Passive

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First, metaphors can be used to assess the client's engagement in the process. Clients who had difficulty navigating the components gave metaphors that illuminated their specific difficulties, whereas clients who were able to navigate the components without difficulty gave metaphors that illuminated their ease and comfort. Thus, if therapists ask their clients to give metaphors for each component of the session, they will not only gain insight into whether they are experiencing difficulties, but also gain clues from the metaphors about how to assist clients in navigating comfortably through each component of the session.

Second, BMGIM clients develop metaphors very easily and tend to become emotionally involved in elaborating on them. This confirms the link between metaphors and the BMGIM process. People who are attracted to BMGIM may be more metaphoric in general than those who are not. This research suggests that metaphors can be explored more consciously and more frequently in the BMGIM process.

Third, this study also confirms Bonde's theory (2000) that core metaphors form a complete narrative. More specifically, the findings of this study confirm that each session provides clients with metaphors that can be developed into a fuller narrative, and that each session itself may be a metaphor within a larger narrative of the client's life. Bonde (2000) notes that, "It is metaphoric language that makes the healing narrative possible" (p.64.)

Each participant had a unique narrative when describing the BMGIM session as a whole. Bunt (2000), suggests that clients seek out transformational processes when they come to BMGIM and that "these various changes often develop into a pattern unique to each person's journey through therapy" (p.44).

BMGIM is fertile ground for the use of metaphors. The purpose of this study was to examine how clients describe their experiences using metaphors. Because BMGIM practitioners and clients develop metaphors in their imagery experiences, and because, as illustrated in this study, clients can create metaphors of their experience of the components of a BMGIM session, more research should be done on the use of metaphors in BMGIM. In short, in the field of music therapy generally, and in BMGIM more specifically, we need to understand more about the ways in which we use metaphors to describe our experiences.

In this research I did not examine the metaphors BMGIM therapists use to describe their client's experiences. Future research could include interviewing both the client and therapist, separately, to ask the clients to describe their experience of BMGIM through metaphors and to ask therapists to use metaphors to describe their client's experiences. This would also be useful for understanding transference and countertransference in BMGIM. Bruscia (1995), in an article about the multiple dimensions of transference, mentions that "metaphors clarify and give meaning to one's inner realities," and they help the therapist to explore the relationships between them. Metaphors can be useful for the therapist in working with the transference relationships. This research would then lead BMGIM therapists to use a creative form of language, like metaphors, to understand the multiple dimensions of transference in BMGIM; a creative form of therapy.

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