The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (GIM) is a music-assisted integrative therapy which facilitates explorations of consciousness that can lead to transformation and wholeness. It evolved as a method through the research and practice of Helen L. Bonny, Ph.D. In its one-on-one application it is known as The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music.

IMAGERY

Consciousness, the totality of human experience, can be expressed through metaphoric imagery. Imagery encompasses the totality of visual imagery, perceptions, emotions, somatic and sensory responses, as well as biographical, archetypal, transpersonal, and symbolic experiences that are available to human awareness. Intentional exploration of these phenomena can lead to expanded self-awareness, healing, transformation, spiritual growth, and lasting positive changes in behavior.

In The Bonny Method of GIM, explorations of consciousness
- are music-activated journeys through metaphorical imagery experiences;
- expand the individual’s perception of wholeness by affirming the sense of connection to realities that transcend the personal;
- require that a trained facilitator refine intuition, openness, clinical skill, musical awareness, and spirituality in order to respond to the dynamics of these explorations.

NON-ORDINARY STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Non-ordinary states of consciousness (NOSC; also known as alternative states of consciousness), the varieties of perceptual experiences, such as meditative states, hypnotic states, and dream states, are qualitatively different from normative waking state experiences. These states, when induced and experienced with therapeutic intent, can serve positive functions within the healing process.

In The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, NOSC experiences, induced and supported by trained facilitators
- enable a multidimensional connection and interaction with music and imagery;
- facilitate the emergence of both positive and problematic aspects of the individual psyche;
- provide access to peak experiences containing healing processes not available in waking states;
- engender a unique and insightful rapport between the individual and the trained facilitator.
MUSIC

Music, the dynamic art of sound in time, is capable of engaging the total being of the listener as it enlivens the realm of inner experiences. Intentional listening to music in an non-ordinary state of consciousness can bring about an internalized sense of order, balance, and harmony, as well as a sense of connection to the pulse and movement of consciousness.

In The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music, specifically chosen music of the classical genre is utilized to

- initiate movement within the individual psyche;
- provide structures for therapeutic work;
- evoke and support varied responses and reactions;
- support and sustain NOSC experiences.

METHOD

The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music is identified by the use of specifically chosen music programs within a one-on-one session, or series of sessions, conducted by a facilitator formally trained in this Method. These sessions are characterized by a patterned progression of components which give shape, continuity, and a sense of safety to the therapeutic process. A session in The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music includes

PREPARATION

- The facilitator and client engage in a preliminary discussion which may include biographical information, goal-setting, and current concerns or feelings.
- The facilitator provides verbal suggestions to relax the body and focus the mind of the client, thereby assisting the client's entry into a non-ordinary state of consciousness.
- The facilitator chooses a music program appropriate to the client's readiness to pursue the therapeutic process.

INTERACTIVE MUSIC EXPERIENCE

- The client listens to the music and expresses the imagery evoked by it.
- The facilitator interacts verbally with the client in ways which support and enhance the client's music and imagery experiences.
- The facilitator neither directs nor controls the imaging process and encourages engagement with the music and imagination.

CLOSURE

- At the ending of the music program, the facilitator assists the client's return to a waking state of consciousness.

INTEGRATION

- Integration of the session experiences proceeds through reflective discussion and/or expressive activities immediately following the music, as well as throughout the period of the therapeutic process.