

Harmony between Heaven and Earth: The Utilization of Mindfulness-Oriented Music Practice in an Ethnic Community Health Setting

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Abstract:

This study explores the potential effectiveness of culture-inspired and mindfulness-oriented music practice as a way to nourish human wellbeing. Specifically use guqin (a plucked seven-string Chinese zither) as a case study to investigate a guqin-based mindfulness program in a Chinese Cultural Center for people living in the Chinese diaspora. Initially, two research questions guided my efforts: in what ways does engaging in mindfulness-oriented music practice nurture individual and community wellness? how can we build an intercultural community-based arts in health programs that serves Chinese diaspora in community health setting? My research questions are approached in an interdisciplinary manner with literature and methods from the applied ethnomusicology and arts in health. I collect discourse through participant observation, in-depth interviews, reflective journals, questionnaires, and field notes. Through an ethnographic case study, this study is conducted in a Chinese Cultural Center in Tucson, Southern Arizona of United States.

This study offers a preliminary model for future directions in creation and research of music-making, mindfulness, and wellness. I'm using the guqin-based mindfulness program, "Harmony between Heaven and Earth", as an ethnographic case study to identify what kind of music and in what way are appropriate for people with diverse backgrounds and preferences for life nourishing, and to address the process associated with creating, adapting, developing, and evaluating intercultural community-based arts in health program that unfold in an ethnic community health setting. Through engagement in mindfulness-oriented guqin practice, group sharing, and collaborative playing, participants and organizers discovered a new lifestyle of healthy living. As a result, the self-awareness of participants was enhanced, calmness, balance, and wisdom were cultivated.