

Full-Length Article

At the Crossroads of Midlife: Journeying the Midlife Transition with Guided Imagery and MusicLouise Terry-Clark^{1,2}¹Connect Psychotherapy, Sydney, Australia.²Sing&Grow, Australia**Abstract**

This article explores the use of The Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music (BMGIM) to support 8 women as they struggled with the challenges of midlife. Unconscious forces can reach a critical mass at midlife and the Self is summoned to search for a new psychological identity. Case study data from 49 standard GIM sessions conducted over a 22 month period was pooled, analysed and reviewed for commonalities in imagery. This was a convenience sample based on clients attending a private practice in Sydney, Australia. The examination of the reported imagery discovered a number of emergent themes: 1) Land of death and darkness; 2) Betwixt and Between 3) Encounters with the Shadow, Archetypes and Helpers; 4) The Body and 5) Looking Forward.

Keywords: *midlife, guided imagery and music (Bonny Method)*multilingual abstract | mmd.iamonline.com**Guided Imagery and Music in Australia**

GIM is defined by The Music and Imagery Association of Australia (MIAA) [1] as a “psychodynamic and multimodal therapy that incorporates music listening in a deeply relaxed state to stimulate imagery, memories and feelings to help the client understand life issues from a holistic perspective”. Grocke further describes GIM: “by combining the two media of music and imagery, a form of psychotherapy emerges that engages the richness of creativity, symbolism, metaphor and narrative.” [2,p.64]

During GIM sessions, it is important to note that the client’s imagery is self-generated and evoked by the music. The therapist’s verbal interventions are non-directive and provided to support the client in engaging with the images at a deeper level. “In GIM experiences, music not only evokes imagery it also enhances the imagery experiences and encourages images to move and evolve.” [3,p.7]

Context

My personal theoretical orientations are drawn from Jungian and transpersonal theories [4,5]. Symbols and archetypes typified in the hero’s journey towards growth and wholeness are utilized for an analytical framework of

the imagery.

The reported imagery is drawn from full standard BMGIM sessions of approximately 90 minutes in length. The clients (women) attended weekly or fortnightly sessions at the therapist’s private practice (therapy room within her home).

The analysis of case study material was motivated by my awareness that the majority of private clients were women in midlife reporting similar themes in imagery. In analyzing the reported imagery, there was an immediate push and pull for me, as a woman in midlife attending my own GIM sessions. King and O’Brien suggest that there is “the potential to inform the work of the therapy with an immediacy that enhances the impact of therapeutic communication” [6,p.17] and Schenstead [7] encourages that it is sometimes necessary to immerse oneself in the ‘bathtub’ of the phenomena which one is studying. So I embarked on a journey of deeper exploration into the imagery reported by these women as a way of further understanding this turbulent and often misunderstood period.

Midlife

“Midlife is a crossroads in life’s journey where one comes face to face with the relative past, present and future.” [8,abstract]. The concept of midlife is a modern construct. Erikson’s seventh psycho-social stage represents middle adulthood (40-65 years) and “is typified by a psychosocial crisis involving generativity and stagnation.” [9,p.36]. Recent research has shown that adulthood is as ‘developmental’ as childhood or adolescence [4].

PRODUCTION NOTES: Address correspondence to:

Louise Terry-Clark, BA, RIGMT, RMT. E-mail: louiseterryclark@gmail.com | COI statement: The authors declared that no financial support was given for the writing of this article. The author has no conflict of interest to declare.

Exactly when midlife takes place varies amongst those in the field but usually falls in the following age bracket: Midlife or middle age for women is considered to be between the ages of 35-65 years [8,p.1]. But it is argued that what is called 'midlife' "is actually a spiritual and psychological process, not a chronological one, and it is quite possible that the changes that we associate with midlife can occur at any point in the lifespan. The vast majority of people will experience these changes and symptoms between the ages of 35 and 50" [10,p.8]. It can also be argued that change is evolutionary, nonlinear and is unconstrained by the idea of chronological time [8].

Research to date has mainly focused on symptomology that occurs as a result of biological changes in midlife. Menopausal studies have been quantitatively measured but the biomedical lens gives only one perspective of the transition that is occurring in women and this information is "not sufficient for their needs." [11,p.423]. Qualitative work in the area of midlife seems to mainly focus on the midlife time frame but not within the experience of the woman and their relationships with themselves and the world.

Continuous change in midlife can be described as "a dynamic time of multiple transitions, turning points, and existential questioning" [9,p.37] and the need to turn inward is a consistent characteristic of the midlife journey [12,p.32]. Many women who experience challenges at midlife tend to have similar symptoms [10]. "Persons generally feel gripped by a sense of loss and all of its emotional attendants: moody and nostalgic periods of grieving for some vaguely keen absence, a keen and growing sense of life's limits, panic about one's own death and exercises in rationalisation and denial. Sometimes the reason for the loss is obvious... but the thorn may be extremely hard to find because of its deep unconsciousness" [4,p.24].

Guided Imagery and Music is often aligned to Jungian philosophy and it is noteworthy that many of Jung's ideas were formulated during and after his own midlife search for meaning. Carl Jung experienced a profound midlife crisis that dramatically influenced his thinking and ideas and "his work presents us with a great deal of wisdom regarding the midlife transition and the second half of life" [10,p.13]. He began spontaneous creations of mandala symbols in his dreams and drawings around 1918 as he was emerging from his own midlife transition. Jung (1931/1969) wrote that during the second half of life "an important change in the human psyche is in preparation" [12,p.52].

The women (clients)

This article looks at the imagery as reported by 8 women who range in age from 33 to 54 years in age covering a 21

year span. All women were born in Australia except one woman from a western European background. Names have been changed. All women received a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 18 full BMGIM sessions. The examination of the imagery explores a total of 49 BMGIM sessions over 22 months.

The over-riding commonality during the first session for each woman was an inability to state a desired focus for seeking therapy. Reasons for attending BMGIM sessions involved broad statements around gaining an increase in inner awareness and wanting a sense of direction.

For these women, the future lacked vision and their sense of direction seemed clouded. There was much discussion around what Judith Viorst calls "necessary losses" [13], that is, looking back on events or dreams that never materialized. Two women openly stated: 'I think I'm having a midlife crisis' while another woman (a highly functioning and successful business woman in the external world) described her internal world as "a mess". None of the women came to their BMGIM sessions to work on a specific presenting issue, nor could they easily articulate their goals.

At midlife, an unsettling occurs that calls into question the previous view of Self and decisions about how to live and move forward. Midlife often brings forth an initiation into deep places that have never surfaced previously. These 8 women were courageous and curious enough to answer the call.

Imagery Themes and Discussion

The reported imagery was analysed according to thematic and inductively driven systematic analysis [14]. This process involved: several readings of all 49 transcribed sessions, separating the imagery into units for coding; analysing imagery for themes, grouping together of themes to form grand themes. In this process Aronson states "themes that emerge from the informant's stories are pieced together to form a comprehensive picture of the collective experience" [14,p.2]. The material was then viewed from a semiotic process drawn from Jungian perspectives. The emergent grand themes arising from the women's reported imagery were: 1) Land of Death and Darkness; 2) Betwixt and Between 3) Encounters with the Shadow, Archetypes and Helpers; 4) The Body and 5) Looking Forward.

A thematic table indicates the relationships of grand themes and themes.

Grand Themes	Themes
Land of death and darkness	The void
	Death
	In a fog
Betwixt and Between	Stuck in the middle
	Aloneness
Encounters with the Shadow, Archetypes and Helpers	The shadow
	Wise old man
	Wise old woman
	Animal Helpers
The Body	Embodied experiences
	Rebirth
	Dancing couples
Looking Forward	Angels
	Feeling good
	Transformation

For the purpose of this article, samples of imagery from each theme will be highlighted and discussed. The therapist’s verbal interventions will not be included in the reported imagery.

Grand Theme 1: Land of Death and Darkness

There were three themes under Grand Theme 1: The Void, Death and In a Fog.

The Void

Examples of The Void were:

“I’m sad and I’m in a dark place (crying). I can’t see anything. There’s a damp earthy smell. It’s scary. I’m under the earth. There is a small turquoise blue shimmering white light. I don’t know how to get out. It’s so dark. I can just make out a string. I’m walking very slowly holding onto the string, walking through the dark. I’ve come out a hole. It’s flat as far as I can see. I can’t see anyone or anything.” (Sarah, 47, Menotti Piano Concerto in F (Lento)).

“I’m falling into a deep dark hole and the lights are getting smaller and smaller. It’s pitch black. The walls feel textured, rocky and really old. I’m in a well. I’m at the bottom of the well. My eyes have adjusted. I can see the rocky walls and a rope which is thick and straw coloured. I know I could use the rope to climb up and out but I’m not using it. The earth is damp, it smells really damp. It feels overwhelming. It is a really deep well and when I look up, it just keeps going on and on and I can’t see anything.” (Theresa, 33, Debussy Prelude to a Faun).

Common in early sessions for the women were images of descent to a dark place. Marie-Louise Von Franz, friend and colleague to Carl Jung, wrote that “Every dark thing one falls into can be called an initiation. To be initiated into a thing means to go into it. The first step is generally falling into a dark place and usually appears in a dubious or negative form” [12,p.64].

“In midlife, the task before us requires us to look deeply into the well of our own unconscious life.” [10,p.235] St. John of the Cross called this place the ‘dark night of the soul’ and it is often frightening terrain at this stage of a client’s journey [10]. At this point it would be nice to have a map however, in BMGIM sessions, it is the music that navigates the client through the landscape. For these women in midlife, they are stepping into the void without a clue as to where they will emerge. As in the Hero’s Journey, these women are leaving behind what is safe and predictable and what they have known themselves to be [10].

Death

Examples of Death were:

“I am in an empty cemetery. It’s a shock. There are very old graves. It makes me feel sad. Death is real. It’s all ahead of me. I feel so sad.” (Genevieve, 43, Beethoven Piano Concerto #5 (Adagio)).

“I can see a big old fashioned black van. There is death all around the van. I feel uneasy.” (Susan, 51, Vivaldi Gloria (Et in Terra Pax)).

“There is a person lying on the ground. He’s dead. He has a mask on. I feel very unsettled”. (Theresa, 33, Debussy String Quartet in G minor (Andantino)).

“I am in a black robe with a black hood and in a school playground. I am invisible, I am a ghost. I feel sad. There are no children. It’s like the whole place has been evacuated. There’s no sound, no movement, no laughter. There’s nothing for me here.” (Sarah, 47, Sibelius Symphony #1 (first movement)).

At midlife we are being asked to hold the tension of the opposites, to be living while knowing that death and loss are inevitable [10]. While going through his own midlife challenges Jung wrote “it was like a voyage... a descent into an empty space. I had the feeling that I was in the land of the dead” [10,p.60]. Stein [4] says death is Hades and it is here that the soul exists as a shade form without material substance, ghostlike in existence. These women are finding themselves in the shadowlands of invisibility and isolation having to let go of the structures they have built for themselves. For these women the masks they have created for the first half of life no longer seem to fit and begin to crumble. At midlife there is a sense that there is more than just the face we show the world [10].

In a Fog

Examples of In a Fog were:

“The cloud is around me. I am in the centre of the cloud in a cross legged position. It’s a bubble, like fog. It’s dark grey inside the bubble of fog.” (Genevieve, 43, Marcello, Concerto #2 in C minor (Adagio)).

“I am in a black cloud of nothingness. I am going through the fog and cloud and there is nothing there. It’s thick and heavy inside. It’s more beautiful and clearer outside the fog.”(Rachel, 51, Beethoven Symphony #9 (Adagio molto e cantabile)).

The imagery shows the women floating, untethered and cut loose from their foundation. It seems necessary to float through this ambiguous period of midlife where the path is veiled and obscured. “This netherworld is a place where a person’s sense of identity is suspended, where there is no longer the same clear sense of “I” that has been a lifelong companion” [10,p.59].

Grand Theme 2: Betwixt and Between

There were two themes under Grand Theme 2: Stuck in the Middle and Aloneness

Stuck in the middle

Examples of Stuck in the Middle were:

“I’m in the meadow in-between the valley and the mountains. It’s a neutral space.” (Genevieve, 43, Elgar Enigma Variations #8).

“I don’t know where to go. I can’t go forward over the cliff and I don’t want to go back to the rocky path. I feel a bit confused about where I am supposed to go.” (Stephanie, 55, Dvorak Serenade in E major (Larghetto)).

“I’m walking in a stream that comes up to my ankles. I am between where I am and where I want to be. The stream is narrowing and not as wide as I thought it would be.” (Emily, 39, Beethoven Symphony #9 (Adagio molto e cantabile)).

In midlife there is a sense of feeling stuck in the middle between our past and our future. Liminality comes from the Latin word ‘limen’ meaning doorway or threshold [4] and for women in midlife, they can stay on the threshold of change for some time. They are in a borderline space waiting for the unconscious to become conscious and this betwixt and between place can become very uncomfortable.

Aloneness

Examples of Aloneness were:

“I feel like I am at the end of the world, a far -away place. It is deserted. It is disconcerting as nothing is familiar.”(Genevieve, 43, Borodin Symphony #1 (Andante)).

“I am in a winter landscape. It is bare and empty. I feel lonely.”(Jessica, 50, Britten Simple Symphony (Sentimental Sarabande)).

“I feel a sense of loneliness and aloneness. There is something missing. I can feel the emotion in my chest... it is aloneness. I have not been understood.”(Genevieve age 43, Strauss Death and Transfiguration)).

Once the familiar structures start disintegrating at midlife, it can be a lonely and desolate place for these women to find themselves. At this point in the midlife transition it is easy to give up and return to what is known and safe.

Grand Theme 3: Encounters with The Shadow, Archetypes and Helpers

There were four themes under Grand Theme 3: The Shadow, Wise Old Man, Wise Old Woman and Animal Helpers

The Shadow

Examples of The Shadow were:

“I am in the castle. I do not want to see the Queen. I want to run away. But I am going to see that horrible queen. I have to be strong. I have to tell her she is wrong and that she cannot get away with it.” (Sarah, 47, Rodrigo Concerto de Aranjuez (Adagio)).

“There is a woman in a dark alley and she is a lady of the night. It’s the 1920’s and I’m going into a dark club with smoke haze. I’m in 1920’s clothes- stockings, suspender belt, feathers, red lipstick, a beauty spot. There are soldiers in the club, alcohol and shot glasses. There is a band playing, people dancing. I am on the dance floor and everyone is living for the moment.” (Sarah, 47, Bach Passacaglia and Fugue in C minor).

At midlife, unconscious shadow material bursts forth into our life. The emergence of the shadow is important in that it is the unconscious Self attempting to bring greater balance into one’s identity [10]. “Frequently the shadow is portrayed in negative terms” as it calls to attention neglected aspects of our selves [10,p.227]. In midlife the shadow is unsolicited and can become particularly persistent. In the above imagery it seems that Sarah’s unconscious is speaking in a symbolic language telling her to stand up for herself but to also have some fun in her life. In midlife, old selves are lost and new ones come into being.

Wise Old Man

Examples of the Wise Old Man were:

“He’s waiting on the canoe for me. He is Indian with a long white beard. He is wise and kind. When I’m lost he takes care of me.He is holding my hand now as we walk up the mountain together. He says you are not on your own.”(Sarah, 47, Brahms, Violin Concerto (Adagio)).

There is a wise man with a white beard around the camp fire. He has old fashioned clothes and he is telling a story. He is getting to the moral of the story. He says there is no sadness, only hope." (Genevieve, 43, Kalinnikov Symphony #2 (Andante)).

The midlife journey also calls forth a meeting with the animus (the internalised masculine). "The qualities include knowledge, reflection, insight, wisdom, cleverness and intuition ... and experienced as a guide and instructor" [4,p143]. At this stage of the journey the women are ready to own these qualities and bring them more fully into their present day lives.

Wise Old Woman

Examples of the Wise Old Woman were:

"I am with an older lady in the castle.... People are dancing in the ballroom in beautiful gowns. She says they have dancing every night because life is too short and she wants to share this with the villagers. She has asked if I want to get changed for dancing, she has a dress that will fit. I am wearing a pink dress and jewellery and I am ready to dance and have fun. The lady is helping me get ready- doing my hair and makeup. I feel happy and sad. The lady is so lovely. I haven't had that in my life. The lady tells me I am beautiful just the way I am." (Emily Brahms Piano Concerto #2(Andante)).

"At the ruined castle there is an old lady with a set of old keys. She is taking me somewhere special, an out-building, an artist's studio. There are paints and canvases all around the room. I feel privileged that she has let me inside. There is a big painting on an easel. It is a painting of me from another era. I look so serene. There's peacefulness about finding that painting of me. I am not sure what I have found but I have it. I have found the part that is going to help make the whole. The old lady shows me where she hides the keys so I can come back and visit anytime." (Sarah, 47, Haydn Cello Concerto in C (Adagio)).

The wise old woman "is the one that knows...an old woman symbolises dignity, mentoring, wisdom, self knowledge, tradition bearing, well defined boundaries and experience" [15,p.27]. These women at midlife are growing into the 'wise old woman' consciousness, a true opportunity to embrace their inner wisdom. The wise old woman is guiding the women into becoming the women they desire to be.

Animal Helpers

Examples of Animal Helpers were:

"I'm in the forest. There is an owl watching me. He is showing the way to go. I have to rest. The owl will keep watch, so I can sleep." (Emily, 39, Sibelius Swan of Tuonela).

"I am on the back of an animal. It has grey white fur, taking me somewhere. I am holding onto the collar around its

neck. It is a white grey wolf and it is protecting me. The collar is so that I won't fall off. The wolf is keeping me warm. I am saying goodbye to the wolf because he has brought me to where I need to be." (Sarah, 47, Debussy String Quartet (Andantino)).

The 'animal helper is a universal archetypal pattern that often appears when support is needed. Marie Von Franz ¹⁶ believed that listening to our animal helper was akin to listening to the most essential part of our physiological selves, our instincts. Animals can bring forth resources required to help us complete a task and in the case of Emily and Sarah, the qualities of vision, wisdom and strength were accessed to help them on their midlife journey.

Grand Theme 4: *The Body*

There were two themes under grand Theme 4: Embodied Experiences and Rebirth.

Embodied Experiences

Examples of Embodied Experiences were:

"I feel tight in my chest, like something is weighing me down." (Theresa, 33, Marcello Concerto #2 in C minor (Adagio)).

"I feel I am in the centre of the music, it is soft and poignant. I feel it in my throat and my heart is beating fast."(Genevieve, 43, Dvorak Czech Suite (op.39)).

A key feature of the imagery is that it was embodied for these women. At midlife, "we must connect to our body, our feelings, to our life as it is just now, if we are to awaken" [10,p.293].

Rebirth

Examples of Rebirth were:

"I'm like a new born baby, soft, natural, fresh and gentle. I feel like that new born baby feeling. It's lovely, creamy, soft, just beautiful. I feel really comfortable."(Rachel, 51, Debussy Prelude to Afternoon of a Faun).

"I am in the white marble temple. I need to be here for a while. I am shedding all my skin, layers and layers and layers. After all my skin and flesh are gone, I have a beautiful light blue body form. I go for a swim, to honour my new body, I feel lighter. The wise man is sweeping up all the layers of skin and putting them in bags and taking them away."(Sarah, 47, Mendelssohn Symphony #3 (Adagio)).

At midlife, there is a renewal of a worn out self and a new sense of self emerging. For the women at this stage of their midlife journey, this demands shedding protective structures and allowing a new form to emerge, a more authentic Self.

Grand Theme 5: Looking Forward

There were four themes under grand Theme 5: Dancing Couples, Angels, Feeling Good and Transformation.

Dancing Couples

Examples of Dancing Couples were:

“I’m dancing a waltz in an old fashioned blue Georgian gown with sparkles and my skirt is swaying. I’m dancing in a large crowded room with a male partner. I feel wonderful.” (Rachel, 51, Debussy Dances of the Sacred and Profane).

“There is a couple dancing on a stage, she is wearing something simple and white, the man has tights and a white shirt. They are dancing now in a cathedral with light streaming in through the window.” (Genevieve, 43 Chopin Piano Concerto #1 (Romance)).

Imagery of dancing couples was a common theme showing the integration of masculine and feminine energies for these women. The integration of a positive animus and the uniting of the opposites is a step toward wholeness.

Angels

Examples of Angels were:

“The angel’s wings are beautiful and soft yet firm and far reaching. There is a sense of grace and poise about the angel.....she says I am beautiful just the way I am and she will carry me on eagles’ wings and care for me. I feel love and supported. She says you are not alone. She says I am whole.” (Emily, 39, Faure Requiem (in Paradisum)).

“There are lots of angels around, it feels safe and nurturing. They are celebrating me! It feels good. I’m now a white dove, flying over the country, it feels very peaceful.” (Jessica, 50, Berlioz Shepherd’s Chorus).

Imagery of angels helped these women connect to their higher Self. Often the higher Self is not experienced as part of one’s own being, but as another. The profound nature of an angelic encounter can be one of insight, possibilities, creative awakening and unfolding of the psyche.

Feeling Good

Examples of Feeling Good were:

“I’m up high, looking at the land, the mountains. There’s more scope and abundance of possibilities. I can feel the expansion.” (Theresa, 33, Mendelssohn Symphony #3 (Adagio)).

“I am in a balloon, there is great delight, a sense of freedom, wonderment and awe.” (Rachel, 54, Wagner Lohengrin (Prelude to Act 1)).

Transformation

An example of the theme Transformation:

“I am rescuing a little doll trapped inside an old dusty broken cello in a neglected broom closet. I am going to help little Sally. She might have died, she has been waiting for so long. I pick her up and she is covered in cobwebs and dust. I clean her up with a soft tissue. She needs warmth, so I hold her next to my heart. She is starting to breathe. I am taking her outside to get some fresh air. I cover her with a cloth as the sun is too bright outside for her. I am rocking her like a little baby. I am still scared she won’t survive. I am putting drops of water to her lips. She opens her eyes. I am being very gentle, she trusts me, she snuggles into me and sleeps... We both need to go somewhere, it is a long journey... (a friendly horse takes Little Sally and Sarah into the forest where it is both magical and threatening)... We need a burial now to take us where we need to go... I lie down in the circle with Sally on my chest... There are flowers on top of us. It looks like a burial, an open grave but it is very beautiful...The others are singing us into being... Sally and I are now two strands of golden energy, swirling and intertwining. Sally and I have become one woman. We are together now.” (Sarah, 47, multiple tracks of the Death-Rebirth program).

For this woman, imagery of death and rebirth lead to reintegration, an archetypal theme at midlife. The psyche is demanding wholeness and as seen in the imagery, there is opportunity for intense intimacy with oneself. There is an awakening as women in midlife find their authentic selves. “The midlife passage is an entranceway into the deepest layers of one’s soul. The growth and transformation that can occur at this transition is nothing short of remarkable” [10 ,p.11].

Summary

BMGIM offered these women a symbolic language to access their inner selves via metaphor, symbol and archetypes which allowed a safe journey between their conscious and unconscious worlds and initiation into deep places within themselves. The method of BMGIM enabled a non-linear process into an often chaotic and turbulent period allowing the therapist and women to flow back and forth in the process and through certain stages simultaneously. The music provided a figurative space for the women to safely explore their imagery while also navigating them on their journey. Importantly, the women were able to actively participate in the changes occurring within themselves at their own pace.

Conclusion

The midlife transition is a complex and multidimensional process that is dynamic with potential for transformation. It can surprise with its intensity but also offer the chance for greater self-knowledge and meaning. The reported imagery of the 8 women highlighted the inner landscape of the midlife journey as both frightening and beautiful but rich with potential for growth and transformation.

The discussion on the reported imagery of these 8 women contributes to the current knowledge of the experiences of women in midlife and suggests that BMGIM is an effective psychodynamic approach for supporting women at this time.

References

1. MIAA Therapy page. What is GIM? Music and Imagery Association of Australia Web site. Available at: [\[LINK\]](#). Accessed January 12 2015.
2. Grocke D. Guided Imagery and Music: The Bonny Method as Psychotherapy. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 2009;15(3):64
3. Goldberg F. Images of Emotion: The role of emotion in Guided Imagery and Music. *AMI*,1992;1:7
4. Stein M. In *Midlife: A Jungian Perspective*. (10th print run 2009) Putnam CT. Spring Publications.1983.
5. Shapiro SI, Lee GW,Gross PI: The Essence of Transpersonal Psychology. *International Journal of transpersonal Studies*, 2002;21 (19-32).
6. King R, O'Brien T. Transference and Countertransference: Opportunities and risks as two technical constructs migrate beyond their psychoanalytical homeland. *Psychotherapy in Australia*, 2011;17(4):17
7. Schenstead AR. The Timelessness of Arts-Based Research: Looking Back Upon A Heuristic Self-Study and the Arts-Based Reflexivity Data Analysis Method. *Voices*, 2012;12(1).Available at: [\[LINK\]](#)
8. Scroggs NH. Life patterning of women in Midlife Transition.(dissertation).Greensboro NC. University of North Carolina; 2010.Avaialble at: [\[LINK\]](#)
9. Grove DL. Reconceptualizing Depression at Midlife: The Role of Adult Learning and Counselling.(thesis). Calgary AB. University of Calgary.2011. Available at: [\[LINK\]](#)
10. Brehony KA. *Awakening at Midlife*. New York. Riverhead Books. 1996.
11. Harris MTC. Menopause: the need for a paradigm shift from disease to women's health (thesis).Lismore NSW. Southern Cross University; 2013. Available at: [\[LINK\]](#)
12. Talisman LW. *The Journey Within: Midlife Initiation*. (dissertation). Carpinteria CA. Pacifica Graduate Institute.2010. Retrieved from Proquest UMI 1482034
13. Viorst J. *Necessary Losses*. New York. The Free Press.1986.
14. Aronson J. A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 1995;2(1):2
15. Estes CP. *Women Who Run with the Wolves. Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype*. New York. Ballantine Books. 1992.
16. Von Franz ML. *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*. Boston MA.Sahmbala.1995.

Biographical Statement

Louise Terry-Clark BA, RGIMT, RMT, is a Registered Guided Imagery and Music Therapist and a Registered Music Therapist. Louise runs a private music psychotherapy practice in Sydney and is also Manager (ACT/NSW) of the national music therapy project, Sing&Grow in Australia. Louise is currently a council member of The Music and Imagery Association of Australia (MIAA) and past Vic-Chair of The Australian Music Therapy Association (NSW).