



What is Music Therapy?

Music Therapy is an established health profession that can address a wide variety of health goals for all ages in the areas of physical, emotional, social, and cognitive needs.

Clinically, the main goal for the use of music therapy for older adults is to maintain or improve physical health, mental processing, and social functioning. However, the beauty of using music as a pathway towards increased health is that it is also enjoyable! Music has the ability to bring back fond memories and can provide an outlet for creative expression and social engagement.

What does a music therapy session look like?

Music therapy is highly interactive and differs from a music performance in many ways. The therapeutic relationship begins with an assessment of client needs, the formulation of goals and objectives, and provides ongoing documentation to provide measurable outcomes.

Music therapists utilize four main musical experiences to help clients meet their goals. These include receptive music listening, re-creating favorite songs, improvisation, and the composing of original music.

Receptive: This may be an experience to incorporate movement to increase range of motion or work on coordination. Listening for lyrics from recorded or live music provides an opportunity to discuss the themes in the song and process emotions. Other times, receptive music may assist in relaxation to help manage symptoms of pain or anxiety.

Re-Creative: A music therapist may lead a group in playing percussion instruments to a favorite song to address fine motor skills, or singing together to promote social interactions, memory recall, and orientation to reality.

Improvisation: Improvising a melody can be as simple as playing together on rhythm instruments with everyone providing personal expression in their play. This is a great way to provide an outlet for communication, especially for those who are unable to verbalize their feelings, or increase group cohesion through rhythmic entrainment.

Composing: Although sometimes writing an entire song complete with melody and instrumental accompaniment may be included, often this can be as simple as incorporating fill-in-the-blank words to switch up an already well-loved song. This can provide opportunity to personalize the music to work on cognitive goals or to facilitate emotional expression.

Services Available

Individual Sessions

Music therapy can help individuals in their home with personal goals towards maintaining independence, as well as those in care facilities who would benefit from private music therapy sessions.

Group Sessions

Group sessions are available for assisted living, memory care, and community locations. Small group music therapy sessions can provide support for the overall health and community goals of residents working on specific needs.

Staff Support




Short group team building, and stress reduction sessions are available for staff and caregivers upon request.

Reference:

Gardstrom, S., & Sorel, S. (2015). Music therapy methods. In B. Wheeler (Ed.), *Music therapy handbook* (pp. 116-127). The Guilford Press.

Schedule a free consultation!

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