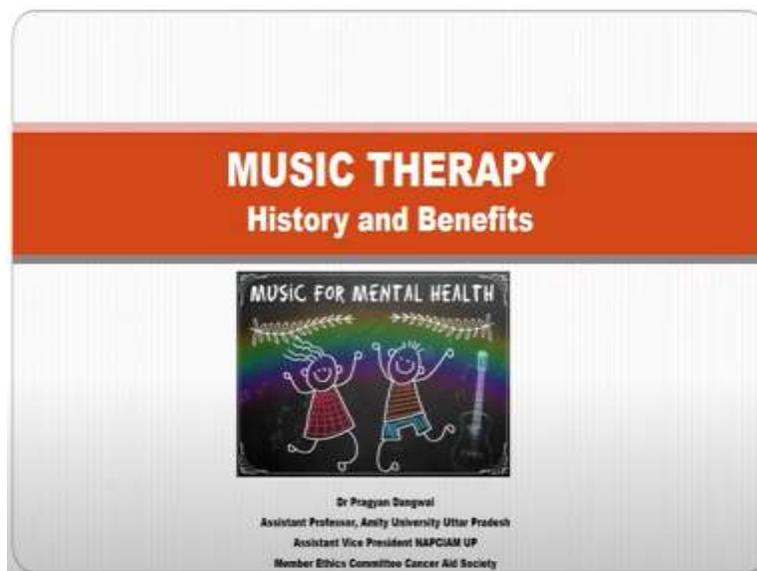


Certificate in Integrative Palliative Care – 3
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Week-08
Lecture 62: Music Therapy: History & Benefits

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We start with music therapy, history and benefits. In this, we will be discussing the history and benefits, especially benefits related to the cognitive, emotional, and social health of an individual.

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PRELUDE

- Music therapy involves using a person's responses and connections to music to encourage positive changes in mood and overall well-being. It can decrease anxiety and improve self-esteem.
- **Music has powerful effects on the mind.** Different styles of music can have a significant effect on a person's mood very quickly, and it can help them experience and process a wide range of emotions, from happiness to excitement, as well as sadness, calmness, and thoughtfulness.
- Making music can also be as beneficial as listening to music, and music therapy encourages people to actively create the music they find helpful to them.

Now, music therapy involves using a person's responses and connections to music to encourage positive changes in their mood and overall well-being. It can decrease anxiety and improve self-esteem. And as we progress with an ailment, this is more beneficial because it starts giving the clients more and more confidence into what they are doing the therapy that they are undergoing and how the treatment is affecting them. So it helps build that connect between the clinician and the client also.

Now music has powerful effects on the mind. Different styles of music can have a significant effect on the person's mood very quickly. And it can help them experience and process a wide range of emotions from happiness to excitement, as well as sadness, calmness and thoughtfulness, as all of us have experienced when we listen to music. And that is why we prefer a certain kind of music when we are in a certain kind of a mood.

Making music can also be beneficial as listening to music and music therapy encourages the people to actively create the music they find helpful for them. So it is a creative expression as well as an expression of their emotions.

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History & Origins

- Music has been a part of human life for thousands of years. Specifically, experts have found instruments dating back to over 40,000 years ago, suggesting that humans' desire to express themselves or communicate through music is deep rooted.
- The use of music for therapy and healing dates back to Ancient India & Greece, but its therapeutic use today began in the 20th century, after World War II had ended. The earliest reference to music therapy comes from a 1789 article called **"Music Physically Considered."**

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History & Origins

- The 1800s saw medical research into the therapeutic nature of music grow, and by the 1940s, universities were offering music therapy programs. E Thayer Gaston, one of three men who pioneered the use of music as a therapeutic tool, had organized and promoted the practice so that it would become an accepted type of therapy.
- Now, there are many music therapy associations around the world, and music therapists work in private care, education, and social care.

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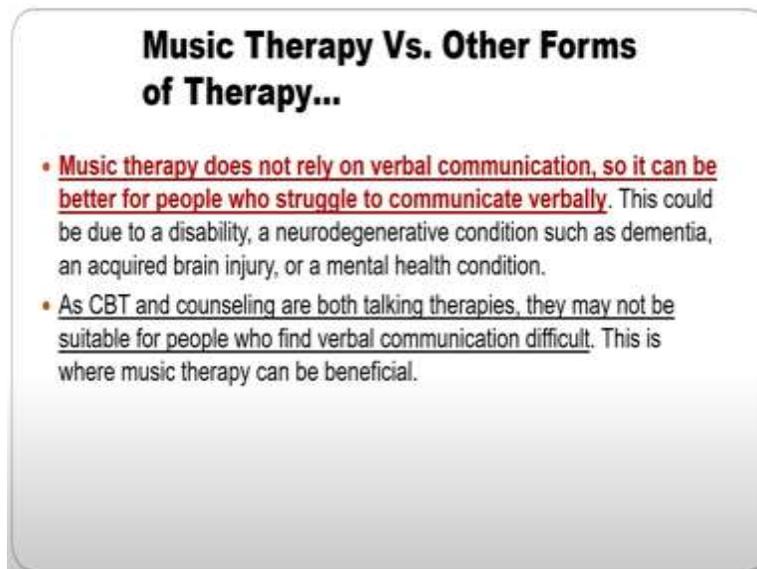
How Does Music Therapy Work?

- The way that music affects the brain is very complex. All aspects of music — including pitch, tempo, and melody — are processed by different areas of the brain.
- For instance, the cerebellum processes rhythm, the frontal lobes decode the emotional signals created by the music, and a small portion of the right temporal lobe helps understand pitch.
- The reward center of the brain, called the nucleus accumbens, can even produce strong physical signs of pleasure, such as goose bumps, when it hears powerful music.
- Music therapy can use these deep physical reactions the body has to music to help people with mental health conditions.

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Music Therapy Vs. Other Forms of Therapy...

- Music therapy does not rely on verbal communication, so it can be better for people who struggle to communicate verbally. This could be due to a disability, a neurodegenerative condition such as dementia, an acquired brain injury, or a mental health condition.
- As CBT and counseling are both talking therapies, they may not be suitable for people who find verbal communication difficult. This is where music therapy can be beneficial.

Music therapy does not rely on verbal communication, and that is how it differs from other forms of therapy.

So it can be more better for people who struggle to communicate verbally. This could be due to any disability, a neurodegenerative condition such as dementia, an acquired brain injury, or a mental health condition. As CBT and counselling are both talking therapies, they may not be suitable for people who find verbal communication difficult or have great difficulty in expressing themselves. This is where music therapy can be beneficial because it can help the person to communicate better and faster which otherwise would take more sessions for the client to open up.

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Music Therapy Vs. Other Forms of Therapy...

- Additionally, mental health practitioners can bring music therapy directly to a person, such as if they cannot get out of bed or are unable to get to a therapist's office.
- Enjoying music therapy at home can also benefit children who want to be in a familiar environment during their sessions.
- This is not specific to music therapy, though, as many other types of psychotherapy can take place in the home.
- The skills a person learns in music therapy can be useful in their everyday life, too. They may even take up learning an instrument as a new hobby, which they can use as a tool for improving their mental health and coping with difficult situations throughout their life.

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Now we come to the benefits of music therapy as the next part of this module.

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There are extra benefits to listening or creating music that talking therapies may not be able to offer. For instance, learning and practicing a piece of music can improve memory skills, coordination, reading, comprehension and math skills. And it can also give lessons in responsibility and perseverance. So, here we see that it is the overall personality of the

individual which is also getting affected apart from getting relief to the ailments which they are undergoing.

People can also enjoy a great sense of achievement from creating a piece of music which can help improve their mood and self-esteem.

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BENEFITS...

- Music therapy can also introduce people to many different cultures, as clients can explore any type and genre of music during therapy. Understanding the history behind a piece of music can help people connect with the music they are hearing or playing.
- Although self-expression is a part of talking therapy, music therapy allows people to express themselves in a creative way, which can be a more enjoyable way of exploring difficult emotions.

Music therapy introduces people to many different cultures as clients can explore any type of genre of music during the therapy. Understanding the history behind a piece of music can help people connect with the music they are hearing or playing. Although self-expression is a part of talking therapy, music therapy allows people to express themselves more creatively, which can be a more enjoyable experience of exploring difficult emotions.

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BENEFITS...

- Lyric analysis is another accessible way for people to explore and process difficult emotions, experiences, or memories through music.
- For example, a person can find themes and meanings within lyrics and offer alternative lyrics that apply to their life and experiences, which can help them find the words that represent how they are feeling if they are finding it hard to express this themselves.

Lyric analysis is another accessible way for people to explore and process difficult emotions, experiences or memories through music.

For example, a person can find themes, meanings with lyrics and offer alternative lyrics that apply to their life experiences, which can help them find words that represent how they are feeling at that moment and how would they like to express themselves.

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BENEFITS

SOME OF THE DOCUMENTED BENEFITS OF MUSIC THERAPY INCLUDE:

- **Improved Self-esteem**
- **Decreased Anxiety**
- **Increased Motivation**
- **Successful and Safe Emotional Release**
- **Increased Verbalization**
- **Stronger connections with other people**

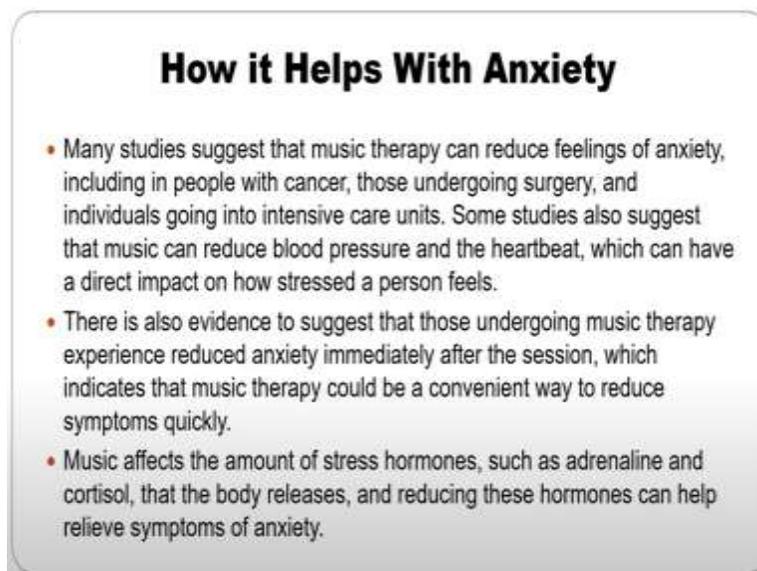
Some of the documented benefits of music therapy include improved self-esteem, decreased anxiety, increased motivation, successful and self-emotional release, increased verbalization, stronger connections with other people.

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So you see all these listed benefits not only work for the person at present and for themselves but it also helps them connect and become more functional in their social environment which somewhere we see which they withdraw from when they are suffering from any disease or disorder.

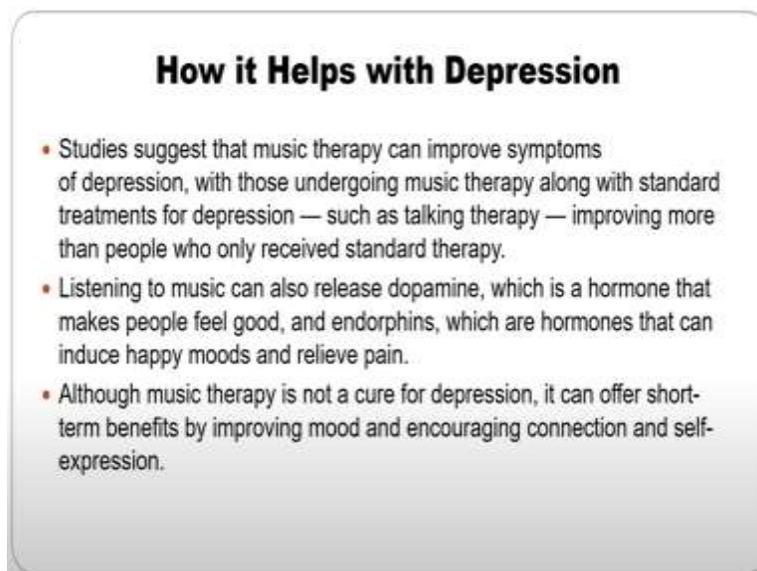
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Now let's look how music therapy is specifically helping with anxiety. Many studies suggest that music therapy can reduce feelings of anxiety including in people with cancer, those undergoing surgery and individuals going into intensive care units.

Some studies also suggest that music can reduce blood pressure and the heartbeat, which can have a direct impact on how stressed a person feels. There is also evidence to suggest that those undergoing music therapy experience reduced anxiety immediately after the session, which indicates that music therapy could be a convenient way to reduce symptoms quickly. Music therapy affects the amount of stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol that the body releases, and reducing these hormones can help relieve symptoms of anxiety.

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How it Helps with Depression

- Studies suggest that music therapy can improve symptoms of depression, with those undergoing music therapy along with standard treatments for depression — such as talking therapy — improving more than people who only received standard therapy.
- Listening to music can also release dopamine, which is a hormone that makes people feel good, and endorphins, which are hormones that can induce happy moods and relieve pain.
- Although music therapy is not a cure for depression, it can offer short-term benefits by improving mood and encouraging connection and self-expression.

Studies also suggest that music therapies can improve symptoms of depression and those undergoing music therapy along with standard treatments of depression such as counseling, talking therapies, improving more than people who only receive the standard therapy. Now listening to music can also release the happy hormones dopamine which makes people feel good.

The endorphins which are the hormones that can induce happy moods and relieve pain. Although music therapy is not a cure for depression, it can offer short term benefits for improving mood and encouraging connection and self-expression. We have to remember that this is not the sole therapy for depression, anxiety, alienation, loneliness, schizophrenia, suicidal tendencies. But in combination with the standard therapies, they are found to be more effective.

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For dementia, music therapy is seen to improve their social communication and interaction, decrease anxiety, improve memory, decrease caregiver stress and non-pharmacological pain management.

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In children, it is found to benefit them by offering fun ways of expressing their thoughts and feelings, practicing social interactions and communication skills, encouraging creative play, improving concentration and coordination, increasing self-awareness,

increasing awareness of other people, particularly in group music sessions, building self-esteem and resilience, building language and listening skills, strengthening family relationships.

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SUMMARY

- Although music therapy is not a cure for any mental health condition, it can be an effective and enjoyable tool for reducing the symptoms of numerous conditions, including depression and anxiety.
- Music therapy offers people a creative and accessible way of expressing their feelings and processing their experiences. People have used music for its powerful effects on mood and emotions for a long time.
- Aside from helping with mental health conditions, music therapy also has numerous other benefits, such as providing a creative outlet, expanding knowledge and cultural awareness, and improving cognitive skills such as memory.

To summarize, although music therapy is not a cure for any mental health condition, it can be very effectively and enjoyably used as a tool for reducing the symptoms of numerous conditions, including depression and anxiety. Music therapy offers people a creative and accessible way of expressing their feelings and processing their experiences and emotions. People have used music for its powerful effect on mood and emotions for a very long time. Aside from helping with the mental health conditions, music therapy also has numerous other benefits such as providing a creative outlet, expanding knowledge and cultural awareness and improving skills such as memory.

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SOURCES



Medically
reviewed by Alex Klein,
PsyD — Written
by Lois Zoppi on
November 4, 2020

The sources have been taken as mentioned. Thank you and thank you all for contributing towards this making of this module.