



WHAT IS MUSIC THERAPY?

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Definition

- “Music Therapy is the **clinical and evidence-based** use of music interventions to accomplish **individualized goals** within a **therapeutic relationship** by a **credentialed professional** who has completed an approved music therapy program”
- Addresses physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs
- American Music Therapy Association

Music Therapists...

- Have a music therapy degree (bachelors or higher)
- Experienced 1200 hours of clinical training
- Hold the MT-BC credential (and a license if required by the state)
- Studied courses in psychology, medicine, and music

(AMTA)

History of Music Therapy in the US

- Music as healing has existed for millennia
- Veterans who were traumatized after WWI and WWII
- Hospitals continued hiring musicians to help elicit physical and emotional responses from patients
- First music therapy program was founded in 1944 (Michigan State University)
- The National Association for Music Therapy & the American Association for Music Therapy merged in 1998 = American Music Therapy Association

(AMTA)

Music Therapy

is

- Assisting patients with their recovery and with decreasing pain
- Promoting healthy functioning in older adults with dementia or Parkinson's
- Working with people with psychosis or mood & anxiety disorders to manage mood and improve coping skills
- Working with people with autism to improve communication and interpersonal skills
- Assist healthy development in pediatric patients or patients with developmental disabilities

(AMTA)

is not

- A hospital with bedside musicians
- Nurses or physicians playing background music or giving a patient an iPod with favorite songs
- A music relaxation CD
- Volunteers playing music in a hospital lobby
- A music performance

Music Therapy Methods

1. Improvisation
2. Song recreation
3. Songwriting
 - *Lyric substitution*
4. Receptive methods
 - *Lyric Analysis*
 - *Music-assisted relaxation*
 - *Music and imagery*

Experiential

Why does music therapy work?

Neurological perspective

- Nonthreatening way of accessing primitive brain structures
- Rhythmic music synchronizes with neurons firing in brain stem
- Music increases oxytocin levels and decreases cortisol levels in brain
- Music synchronizes people: promotes empathy and social bonding
- Music can refocus attention away from pain
- Promoting language development in infants by supporting vocalization
- Accesses many types of memories
- (Rigby, 2015)

Psychodynamic perspective

- Bringing unconscious to conscious
- Therapeutic relationship
- Music can bypass verbal/conscious content to access the unconscious
- Music bridges the unconscious and the conscious
- (Wheeler, 1981)
- Music-making can be interpersonal and can facilitate a group process or therapeutic relationship (Cassity, 1976)

Prescriptive music vs preferred music

- Familiar music evokes emotional safety
 - *We are connected to our favorite musicians*
- Listening to unfamiliar music involves a learning curve, especially as we get older
- Neural pruning in our teenager years relates to our current musical preference
- Balance between complexity/novelty & familiarity
 - *Violations keep us interested, but too many violations is unpleasurable*
- (Rigby, 2015)

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