

“Rambling on with Kathleen”

Music Therapy

Many of us listen to music daily. We probably all know that a “slow” song may slow down our minds and movement and may even help us to fall asleep. A “fast” rock and roll song may seem to even provide us with energy or make us want to move more quickly. The beat and rhythm of music somehow is within us. Just try to dance fast to a slow song or vice versa.

When we hear that same song that was playing twenty years ago on our first date, wedding day or on that day our child played solo for the first time in the school musical it brings back those same memories, emotions and feelings of that very day. Therefore, many believe that music can effect our movements and our minds. It can be used as a therapy for people of all ages to provide us with yet another tool in our quest for optimal health.

Music therapy is the use of music and sometimes movement by a professional music therapist to improve physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health and wellbeing. Music can be used to improve interactions, self awareness, learning, communication and more in a creative way with or without use of words.

For example, some people can actually sing after having a stroke even if they cannot use words for communication. According to professionals, this is because speech and singing may use different areas of the brain. The music therapist will use this notion to the advantage to first teach people to sing then continue to assist them to use words for communication, moving them back to their pre-stroke state. Music therapy is not about learning to play an instrument or to practice a professional musical talent but instead about using music in other ways to optimize health and improve quality of life.

May be used for people of all ages with:

- Alzheimer’s
- Autism
- Mental Health Issues
- Traumatic injuries
- Parkinson’s
- Pain
- Stroke
- Neonatal care and Obstetrics
- AIDS
- Hearing Impairments
- Anyone that wishes to improve their quality of life

Music therapy assists with movement, speech, memory, motor coordination, cognitive issues, psychotherapy, pain management or just quality of life.

Music therapy may use a variety of instruments, recorded music, songwriting, group or individual sessions.

Music is thought to:

- Stimulate brain activity and quicker ability to shift thinking (beats and rhythm)
- Changes heart rate and breathing
- Provide for a more positive state of mind and thinking (depending on the music you listen to!)
- Induce relaxation
- Enhances learning retention
- Lower blood pressure
- Boost immunity
- Improves speech and communication

You do not have to know how to play an instrument! Anyone can benefit from music and music therapy. Music touches all of our lives in some way. It is great to know that we can use music not only for enjoyment, but to actually assist us in improving our overall health as well.

For more information on this topic please visit us at the Outlook in Bloomsburg on November 5th at 1pm for an overview of music therapy presented by our guest speaker and local music therapist Cynthia Richie.

Resources: Internet, personal and professional experience, www.bethabe.org/successstories199.htm

Wellness Webpage by Kathleen Dunkelberger Nursing Consulting Services, LLC

This information is for informational and educational purposes only and is not intended to be medical advice. As with any program, all individuals are encouraged to seek the advice of their medical practitioner prior to starting or changing any typical practices and for further information.