

Program Background - for presenter review

Dance is the hidden language of the soul of the body. Martha Graham

What is dance therapy?

Dance therapy uses movement to improve mental and physical well-being. Improving one's health, mood and body image while also reducing stress. It is a recognized form of complementary therapy used in hospitals.

History of dance therapy

The roots of dance therapy go back to the early 1900s. It grew from the idea that dance could go beyond simple entertainment and be used as a form of communication and expression. By the middle of the 20th century, the modern dance movement had laid the groundwork for dance therapy pioneers Marian Chace, Mary Whitehouse and Trudy Shoop. They formed the foundation for dance therapy through the addition of observation, interpretation and manipulation of dance elements into the practice.

In the 1940's, dance therapy was influenced by the psychodynamic theory (how the mind, personality or psyche relates to mental, emotional or motivational states. In the 1960's, research on non-verbal behavior and the role of the body on mental health issues also influenced the practice as well. In 1966, the American Dance Therapy Association was established and with it came the development of training and certification standards for the field.

Music is an art that goes well beyond science. Proof can be found in the huge amount of studies that have been carried out throughout the world based on music-therapy and the important results achieved. Andrea Bocelli

What is music therapy?

Music therapy is an established health profession in which music is used within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs of individuals. Music therapy also provides avenues of communication that can be helpful to those who find it difficult to express themselves in words.

History of music therapy

The idea of music as a healing influence which could affect health and behavior is as least as old as the writings of Aristotle and Plato. The 20th century profession formally began after World War I and World War II when community musicians of all types, both amateur and professional, went to Veterans hospitals around the country to play for the thousands of veterans suffering both physical and emotional trauma from the wars. The patients' notable physical and emotional responses to music led the doctors and nurses to request the hiring of musicians by the hospitals. It was soon evident that the hospital musicians needed some prior training before entering the facility and so the demand grew for a college curriculum.

In 1903, Eva Augusta Vescelius founded the National Society of Musical Therapeutics. In 1926, Isa Maud Ilsen founded the National Association for Music in Hospitals. And in 1941, Harriet Ayer Seymour founded the National Foundation of Music Therapy. Although these organizations contributed the first journals, books, and educational courses on music therapy, they unfortunately were not able to develop an organized clinical profession.

The National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT) was founded at a meeting in New York City on June 2, 1950. NAMT succeeded where previous music therapy associations previously failed by creating a constitution and bylaws, developing standards for university-level educational and clinical training requirements, making research and clinical training a priority, creating a registry and, later, board-certification requirements, and publishing research and clinical journals. NAMT operated from 1950-1997 and saw the creation of a board-certification program (1985), a critically-acclaimed Senate Hearing on Aging (1991), and the growth of music therapy from a few dozen practitioners to thousands.

Originally called the Urban Federation of Music Therapists, the American Association for Music Therapy (AAMT) was established in 1971. Many of the purposes of AAMT were similar to those of NAMT, but there were differences in philosophy, education and approach.

The American Music Therapy Association (AMTA) was formed in 1998 as a merger between the National Association for Music Therapy (NAMT) and the American Association for Music Therapy (AAMT). AMTA united the music therapy profession for the first time since 1971.

AMTA is the single largest music therapy association in the world, representing music therapists in the United States and in over 30 countries around the globe.

Why dance or music therapy?

It may address several needs simultaneously in a positive and exciting medium.

How does dance therapy work?

Experts have shown that physical activity is known to increase special neurotransmitter substances in the brain (endorphins). These create a state of well-being. And total body movement such as dance enhances the functions of other body systems. These include the circulatory, respiratory, skeletal and muscular systems. Dance therapy can help you stay physically fit and enjoy the pleasure of creating rhythmic motions with your body.

How does music therapy work?

Music is used to improve the quality of a patient's life. Music therapy helps with both motor and communication skills. Additional benefits that are associated with music therapy include the reduction of pain, loneliness and stress as well as improved feelings of self-esteem.

Child Development

Dance therapists use large motor play, physical regulation, non-verbal communication, problem solving skills, and movement games to help children thrive physically and psychologically.

Music and props are often incorporated to encourage extension of movement and self-expression.

Music therapy stimulates all the senses and involves the child at many levels. Quality learning and maximum participation occur when children are permitted to experience joy of play.

Music is highly motivating - yet has a calming and relaxing effect.

A child can be helped to manage pain and stressful situations.

Music encourages socialization, self-expression, communication and motor development.

Because the brain processes music in both hemispheres, music can stimulate cognitive functions and may be used to help speech/language skills.

Studies show also that even a half hour of music training increases the blood flow to the brain's left hemisphere, resulting in higher levels of childhood development.

Health and Fitness

Dancing is a great option for to maintain a heart healthy lifestyle. It gives you a great mind-body workout. Because dancing has many steps, it obligates your muscles to move in different ways. Also, your mind is stimulated throughout the whole session. Having to pay attention to your steps and anticipating your next move keeps your brain engaged with the movement of your body.

In addition to the calories burned, other benefits are

- * stronger bones and muscles
- * greater endurance, stamina and flexibility

- * improved posture and balance, which can help prevent falls
- * body toning and weight loss
- * reduces back pain
- * cardiovascular benefits, diminished stress and tension

Dance/Movement therapy can make a contribution to the national effort to reduce childhood obesity. Programming aimed at those children who experience psychological barriers to changing health behaviors, could benefit from the creative expressive approach offered by dance therapy. The social aspects of dance/movement therapy are inherently motivating and can help to generate new attitudes about self-image and self-esteem.

Depression

When it comes to the human brain, music is one of the best medicines. Listening to music releases the "feel good" hormone, dopamine. Dopamine is an integral part of the brain's pleasure enhancing system. Listening to music reduces stress on both the emotional level and the molecular level.

The aim of music therapy is to help individuals develop relationships and address issues they may not be able to address using words only.

Cancer Patients

Researchers have found that music therapy used with antiemetic drugs (drugs that relieve nausea and vomiting) in patients receiving high-dose chemotherapy can be effective in easing the physical symptoms of nausea and vomiting. It has been found to decrease the overall intensity of the patients experience of pain, enabling them to decrease the level of pain medicine needed.

For cancer patients, dance therapy can promote a positive body image and improve self-esteem.

Trauma Injuries

Unlike some therapies that focus on specific brain centers, music therapy

hits them all.

Music aids our brains ability to heal itself, something called neuroplasticity. Music can actually help strengthen the connections we have in our brain and build new connections around where the damage might be.

The centers that are responsible for movement, language, emotion and cognition are all activated when we passively listen to music.

Veterans

PTSD-

When a veteran perceives a threat during a trauma or experiences an episode of PTSD, the nervous system initiates the "fight, flight or freeze" response that overrides higher cognitive functioning and decision making. They experience physiological changes in sensory awareness, heart rate, breathing, cortisol and other stress hormone levels.

Dance therapy can empower our Veterans to use these experiences as a tool for establishing a new-found sense of mind-body connection and internal control and help to return the nervous system to a state of balance.

Using structured body building techniques can help them to experience their body's sensations and breathing patterns. Using a combination of verbal and movement-based affirmations allows them to shift negative perceptions and shame by embodying positivity and confidence.

Brain Injury -

More soldiers have returned home with brain injuries from improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Memory and emotions are affected by brain injury and they are at increased risk of Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

Alzheimer's

Music therapy has worked wonders on patients suffering from Alzheimer's disease. With Alzheimer's, people lose their capacity to have interactions. According to the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, "When used

appropriately, music can shift mood, manage stress-induced agitation, stimulate positive interactions, facilitate cognitive function, and coordinate motor movements.

Music is also a cognitive enhancer, which is an important area of the brain that needs stimulation to prevent the progression of Alzheimer's. Music also reaches an emotional area of the brain, as people remember music from their past, connect with new tunes, and relate to music in a way that they're unable to relate to anything else.

People with dementia-related disorders such as Alzheimer's experience anxiety, frustration and fear, along with physical changes, as [memory loss](#) progresses.

Those with Alzheimer's may have trouble connecting to society and loved ones. Dance, experts say, can help bridge that gap and improve quality of life.

Both the music and dance routine used in dance therapy offers the right brain stimulation for patients with Alzheimer's. What you hear, see, and do during dance helps enhance the memory, and offers brain stimulation that is clinically proven to help Alzheimer's progression. You not only hear the music and dance to the beat, but you see others taking part in the routine which offers visual stimulation for the brain. Additionally, when you have fun you bring back memories from your younger years which can help improve your long-term memory.