



Music Therapy in Mental Health

Music therapy for adults with mental health and substance use conditions is the specialized use of music to restore, maintain, and improve cognitive, emotional, social, communicative, and physiological functioning. It involves the use of goal-directed music interventions focused on symptom management, fostering relationships with peers and therapists, and providing psychosocial support and education to augment hope, meaning, purpose, and recovery.

The American Music Therapy Association defines evidence-based music therapy practice as the confluence of three factors: 1) the best available findings from the peer reviewed research literature, 2) the client's values, needs and preferences, and 3) the music therapist's training, experience and expertise. All of these factors are used in any given clinical situation.

Published peer reviewed research in music therapy spans over 70 years in the United States.

Effectiveness Research

- A Cochrane review reports evidence that music therapy is effective with depression. Because major depression increases suicide risk, music therapy is an intervention, involving regular meetings with a qualified music therapist, that may help improve mood through emotional expression.
Aalbers S, Fusar-Poli L, Freeman RE, Spreen M, Ket JCF, Vink AC, Maratos A, Crawford M, Chen X, Gold C. Music therapy for depression. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews 2017, Issue 11. Art. No.: CD004517. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004517.pub3
- Music therapy can result in beneficial outcomes on emotion, motivation, participation, locus of control, and perceived helpfulness for adults with substance use disorders
Hohmann et al., 2017
- Music therapy has a strong positive effect in enhancing contemplation, treatment readiness, motivation, and cravings in addiction treatment
Megranahan & Lynskey, 2017
- Single music therapy sessions can be as effective as single verbal therapy sessions for various psychological outcomes with higher music therapy scores for comfort, therapist-rated working alliance, and change readiness for adults with substance use conditions
Hohmann et al., 2017
- Music therapy, when added to standard care, has strong and significant effects on global state, general symptoms, negative symptoms, depression, anxiety, functioning, and musical engagement.
Gold, C., Solli, H.P., Kruger, V., Lie, S.A. (2009). Dose-response relationship in music therapy for people with serious mental disorders: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Clin Psychol Rev.*, 29(3):193-207.
- Findings from individual randomized trials suggest that music therapy is accepted by people with depression and is associated with improvements in mood.



Maratos, A. S., Gold, C., Wang, X., Crawford, M. J. (2008). Music therapy for depression. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*, 1. Art. No.: CD004517. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD004517.pub2

- The Music4Life® Music Medicine Protocol is designed to assist in resolving unsettled moods and bringing emotional balance whereby physician directed cessation of anti-anxiety, depression, and pain medications subsequently led to increased reengagement with previously enjoyed activities and a reported enhanced quality of life.
Wellman, R., and Pinkerton, J. (2015). The development of a music therapy protocol: A Music 4 Life® case report of a veteran with PTSD. *Music and Medicine Journal*, VII (3), 24-39.

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