

## **The Importance of Music as a foundation of Mental Peace**

**Dr. Sandhya Arora,**  
Associate Professor,  
Department of Music,  
S.S. KhannaGirls' Degree College, Allahabad.

### **MUSIC FOR THE PEACE OF MIND**

Shakespeare once wrote: "If music be the food of love, play on..." Profound words, true, but he failed to mention that music is not just nourishment for the heart, but also for the soul.

Music surrounds our lives, we hear it on the radio, on television, from our car and home stereos. We come across it in the mellifluous tunes of a classical concert or in the devotional strains of a bhajan, the wedding band, or the reaper in the fields breaking into song to express the joy of life. Even warbling in the bathroom gives us a happy start to the day.

Music can delight all the senses and inspire every fiber of our being. Music has the power to soothe and relax, bring us comfort and embracing joy! Music subtly bypasses the intellectual stimulus in the brain and moves directly to our subconscious There is music for every mood and for every occasion.

Many cultures recognize the importance of music and sound as a healing power. In the ancient civilizations of India, the Orient, Africa, Europe and among the Aboriginal and American Indians, the practice of using sound to heal and achieve balance from within has existed for many years. The Tibetans still use bells, chimes, bowls, and chanting as the foundation of their spiritual practice. In Bali, Indonesia, the echoing gamelan, gong, and drum are used in ceremonies to uplift and send messages. The Australian Aboriginal and Native American shamanists use vocal toning and repetitive sound vibration with instruments created from nature in sacred ceremony to adjust any imbalance of the spirit, emotions or physical being.

The Priests of ancient Egypt knew how to use vowel sounds to resonate their energy centers or chakras. There is a direct link between different parts of the body and specific sounds. Such a technique appears extremely old; yet healing through sound goes back even further at least as far back as Atlantis where the power of sound was combined with the power of crystal.

Inevitably, music has a very powerful therapeutic effect on the human psyche. It has always been part of our association with specific emotions, and those emotions themselves have given rise to great music. It works as a creative, flexible and sometimes spontaneous means of utilizing the appeal of music to help people of all ages and abilities.

Music can be characterized by how it heals. The way music fires the neurons in the brain to the tempo it is played, helps bring into play the characteristics that bring the biggest healing benefits to an individual. Although the power, range and effectiveness of music as a healing tool has many variables, there are certain traits that are Universal.

### **MUSIC THERAPY**

Music Therapy is the prescribed use of music and music related techniques to assist and motivate a person towards specific, nonmusical goals. Music therapists use their training to effect changes in the cognitive, physical, communication, social, and emotional skills

It utilizes music to modify ineffective learning patterns, help to promote emotional, mental, social and physical growth and to develop non-musical goals. It is an established health care profession that uses music and techniques" in order to address physical, psychological, cognitive and social behavioral patterns.

Music Therapy can make the difference between isolation and interaction and has been proven in situations such as depression, anger, pain, stress, grief, loss, motivation, growth, change and improving communication.

It is incorporated in a number of areas of medicine. Some of these include labor and delivery, pain management, physical rehabilitation, and paediatrics. Music Therapy has been shown to have influences on the immune system, blood pressure, heart and respiratory rates, and pain perception.

### **Music Therapy and Psychiatry**

Music therapists work with people with mental health disorders including schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorders, anxiety disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders and post traumatic stress disorder. Music therapy can provide this population with an alternative means of communication and a chance to express themselves through improvisation, song writing or lyric analysis.

1. Music works like a sedative, which can act as a tranquilizers for the human being.
2. Music also diverts the attention of a patient from his discomfort or pain during his treatment. The right type of music diverts the mind of the patient in cases of psychological trauma or the dreadful past events.
3. Music can direct a man's behaviour on positive lines and can help in making the patient more cooperative. Music is a source of great help in cases of neurotics and mental problems.
4. Music stimulates motor activity in a person, and stimulates the action of physiotherapy.
5. Music can awaken a sense of good personal relationship amongst men by participation therapy and can curb the anti-social feelings and general attitude of hostility and violence towards each other.

Music has a curative power in many ways. Blowing on the horn improves abdominal muscle weakness. Playing on the cello improves the working capabilities of a polio victim. Piano playing' improves finger coordination of the player,

### **Music Therapy and Social Skills**

Psychiatric disorders can often impair social interaction and social skills. Music therapy can provide opportunities for safe group and individual musical experiences, address how people interact with their environment and examine how they affect their environment. Music can encourage social interaction among patients. The interaction may take the form of talking about thoughts and feelings, contributing to group experience, cooperating with others or responding to others' needs. Interpersonal interaction can take place through music listening techniques lead by the music therapist

The blind ones are helped to have a career in music and achieve social respect. Deaf children are bound to respond the rhythm and learn more through music therapy to control the volume of their own voice. Crippled persons develop coordination of limbs by moving with the rhythm of music. Even, older people find it better and suffer loss from loneliness, when listening to the music

### **Music Therapy and Communication**

People with mental health difficulties may find communication with others difficult. As music therapy can help social and interpersonal interaction and emotional expression, so it can help communication difficulties. Music may speak where words fail. Music therapy techniques such as song writing, lyric analysis and improvisation can be used to assist the client in development of their communication skills.

### **Music Therapy and Emotions**

Music therapy can provide a safe environment for a client to alleviate their feelings with a person who can process and reflect the patient's expression in a modified form. Preference and familiar music are important in this area. If patients are to be reached, the music employed must be that which they understand, at least to some extent argues that music can reflect, influence and alter emotional response and therefore is a valuable therapeutic device in music therapy processes including identification, awareness, reflection or expression of feelings and relevant issues,

### **Music Therapy and Self-Esteem**

Low self-esteem can be part of many mental health disorders. Music therapy can act as a psychotherapeutic agent to improve low self-esteem. Improvisation, group singing, movement techniques and dancing can provide a client with sensory and social feedback, successful musical experiences that can promote self-worth and promote body awareness and identity.

### **Music Therapy and Relaxation**

Anxiety disorders are common and can be helped by relaxation techniques. Studies show that music can be used to effectively reduce anxiety and promote muscle relaxation. Clients' musical preference is important to consider when using music for relaxation purposes. The idea of stimulating and sedative music increasing and decreasing anxiety respectively does not apply to everyone. Music imagery can be used to help the client reduce tension and focus on positive thoughts and feelings. Imagery should not be used with people who are delusional or have psychotic disorders.

### **Music Therapy and Cognition**

Music is a time ordered, structured stimulus. People with psychotic disorders may have poor reality orientation whereas people with mood or anxiety disorders may have insight into their disability. Music therapy can provide treatment programs geared towards the clients' level of cognition and awareness. Structured reality based music experiences such as writing a song can help reality orientation, divert from neurotic concerns or obsessions and help improve impulsive behavior control.

## **SPECIFIC APPLICATIONS OF MUSICAL TECHNIQUES IN MUSIC THERAPY**

The following examples illustrate some of the procedures used in music therapy. Although these are only a sampling of the methods used by music therapists, they provide a general idea of how music therapy can benefit a variety of clients, regardless of past musical experience, participation, or current level of ability.

Music therapy helps in improving the stammering defects, over excitement and inferiority complex by participation techniques. It is only the simple rhymes and tunes which cure the patients. The scientists have experimented various other effects of music like curing the insomnia reducing the pain of body, normalising the low and high blood v pressure. Fast melodies with sharp notes are effective in normalising the low blood pressure, while slow melodies having soft or komalswaras are helpful in lowering the blood pressure. The scientists have experimented that music has effect on the physiology of human body and, thus, effects the blood circulation and regulates the blood pressure. The soft, flat or sharp musical notes increases or decreases the heart beat. While given the music treatment, the patients showed good behaviour and some of them were fully recovered of their diseases. Some of the scientists experimented music therapy with two groups of mentally retarded patients. They used Indian music on one group and western music on the other. They chose gay, lively and cheerful ragas and similar types of western compositions. After the specific use of therapy through Indian music they performed better than the patients who were subjected to western music. Auditory discrimination is usually improved through helping the children to distinguish the differences between sounds (amplitude, pitch and quality). Singing of rhymes and songs and listening to records and rhythms also contribute to the improvement of performance in this area.

Singing is used to help people with speech impairments improve their articulation, rhythm, and breath control. It is also being used to improve oxygen saturation rates of individuals with COPD, following exertion, and those with asthma or breathing difficulties. Singing in a group setting, as part of a community choir, or as part of a treatment group can improve social skills, and foster a greater awareness of others, For those with dementia, singing can encourage reminiscence and discussions of the past, while reducing anxiety and fear.

Playing instruments can improve gross and fine motor coordination in individuals with motor impairments or neurological trauma related to a stroke, head injury or a disease process. Playing on the cello improves the working capabilities of a polio victim. Piano playing improves finger coordination.

Rhythmic based activities can be used to facilitate and improve an individual's range of motion, joint mobility/agility/strength, balance, coordination, gait consistency and relaxation. Rhythm and beat are important in "priming" the motor areas of the brain, in regulating autonomic processes such as breathing and heart rate, and maintaining motivation or activity level following the removal of a musical stimulus. The use of rhythmic patterns can likewise assist those with receptive and expressive processing difficulties (ie, aphasia, tinnitus) to improve their ability to tolerate and successfully process sensory information.

Improvising offers a creative, nonverbal means of expressing thoughts and feelings. It is non-judgmental, easily approached, and requires no previous' musical training. As such, it helps the therapist to establish a three-way relationship between the client, themselves and the music.

Where words fail or emotions are too hard to express, music can fill the void. Where learning ability is limited, the opportunity to try different instruments, musical sounds, timbres and mediums may provide an opportunity for mastery of a new skill and increase life satisfaction.

Composing is useful in facilitating the sharing of feelings, ideas and experiences. For hospitalized children, writing songs is a means of expressing and understanding fears. For people with a terminal illness, it is a vehicle for examining feelings about the meaning in life and death. It may also provide an opportunity for creating a legacy or a shared experience with a caregiver, child or loved one, prior to death. Finally, lyric discussion and song writing can help adolescents deal with painful memories, trauma, abuse, and express feelings and thoughts that are normally socially unacceptable, while fostering a sense of identification with a particular group or institution.

Imagery based activities, such as Guided Imagery in Music (GIM), can provide powerful opportunities to reflect, process, and interact with unconscious or conscious material that may be reflected in an individual's life. Mandalas, an ancient form of artistic expression, are useful in expressing thoughts and feelings, in combination with music. Detailed analysis of the imagery (ie, color saturation, density, objects, etc.) IS not the role of the music therapist, and best interpreted by those with more extensive and specific training (e.g. art therapists).

Listening to music has many therapeutic applications. It helps to develop cognitive skills such as attention and memory. For those facing surgical procedures allows the individual an opportunity to exert a sense of control over the one unpredictable environment. During pregnancy, music listening can provide a com between the uterine environment and the external environment following delivery Duringlabor music listening can facilitate and support the different stages in melow process. relaxation and serve as a distraction for the laboring mother where cognitive perceptions are comprised. such as in early to mid stage listening can provide a sense of the familiar, and increase orientation to reality.

## **CHOOSING THE RIGHT MUSIC**

The music you choose depends on the results you expect. If you have relaxation and meditation or just energizing in mind, the best choice would be something that is designed to take you into an altered state of consciousness and does not require intellectual analysis. It can range from a simple instrumental tune on the piano to Tibetan bowl music and chanting.

The effect of musical sounds and ragas is also important in curing human ailments. There have been various experiments to assess the effects of ragas on human beings by playing particular combinations of sounds and also particular ragas and it has been found that the classical ragas can also invoke emotional sentiments in human beings. Raga Raginees can successfully be used for the treatment of various diseases. It has been a popular experiment when Pt. OnkarNath Thakur put to sleep Mussolini, who was suffering from insomnia and this very experiment can be followed by musicians to cure insomnia. The effect of other ragas has been likewise, a person felt very upset whenever he listened to raga kalingara and his heart-beat increased Similarly, raga piloo had an effect of crying and weeping over some human beings. meaning thereby that all ragas do not have the same effect on every human being Indian ragas have been assigned different moods and sentiments and they are sung according to their respective aesthetic sentiment for creating different emotional moods in the minds of singer and the listener. Six primary ragas are

said to have particular qualities, sentiments and moods as given. For example Raga Hindol can create all the sweetness and freshness of the spring season in the mind of the listener. Rag Sri is capable of producing the effect of calmness and silence of the day approaching the evening and darkness, whereas Raga malhar has the quality of producing the effect of thunder, storm and rain. Raga Oepak is related to fire which can destroy the animals and trees. Raga Bhairav can inspire the mind of listener with the feeling of approaching dawn, and the start of morning. Raga Kaushik can bring an environment of gravity and serene feeling

If we study the GranthaBrahaddeshi written by Matanga in 5th century, we find that he has described the different sentiments of "jatiragas". According to Matanga Raga BhinnaShadaj, and Raga BhimaPancham, produces "Vibhastha and Bhayanak Rasa". Similarly, in Sang it Samayasar, AcharyaParshvadev has also described the Ragas having their respective sentiments and moods. Sharangdev has described the sentiments of the "Gram Ragas" in SangitRatnakar. On the basis of the concept of sentiments, Raga Dhyani depicts the Ragas and Paintings of Ragas represent the various moods and Rasas of Ragas.

It would be worth mentioning here that four musical experts consisting of twenty minute recording on Ravi Shankar's Sitar recitals of four Ragas, viz., Kafi, Mishra Mand, PuriyaDhanashree, and Raga.eshwari were played through a tape records Students numbering 37, between the age group of 20 to 30 years acted as respondents. The responses received from the experimental listeners was that Raga Rageshwari produced deep, somber effect of the evening, whereas Raga Kafi created gaiety, devotion and romance. PooriyaDhanashree produced an effect of physical tired, longing, and sombreness.

Some of the analysis on the responses of Indian classical ragas concluded that the Indian ragas have specified moods and have typical responses. Ragas like, Shankara, Patdeep, Hindol and others have proved good in bringing behavioural changes in children of 8 to 18 years of age. There has been some experiments in M.S. University, Baroda, on heart ailments, mentally depressed and slow learners and it has been concluded that Ragas like, BihaJrKafi, Malkauns, Ramkali, Hindol, Bahar, Deshkar, Lalit and Jaijaiwant, can have significant role in improving the conditions of such persons. It has also been experimented by various musicians that the Malaria, hysteria, insomnia, tuberculosis, constipation, typhoid and many other diseases can be cured through various Ragas like, Hindol, Marwa, Pooriya, Bilawal, talang, Ramkali, Multani, Darvari Kannada, Khamaj etc. Pt. Ravi Shankar observed the Raga Bhairavi arouses the emotions in the listeners. Similar effects of other Ragas like Adana, DarvariKanhara, Khamaj, Kalingra, Bahar, Rageshwari, Dhani, Bihar were observed. It is also said that Nawab of Rampur was cured of his rheumatism with the rendering of the Raga Jaijaiwanti.

Researches have also been carried out by playing specific Ragas from Hindustani Classical music for certain diseases and they proved effective in curing ailments ranging from ordinary stomach ache to mental disorders and serious maladies like epilepsy. It was found that Raga Bhairavi induced good sleep and calmed down the patients. Raga Shivranjani helped to improve memory and cure psychiatric diseases. Raga todi helped to reduce tension and blood pressure. In SangitRatnakar, AcharyaSharangdeva has described the connection of swars with chakra, cells nerves, veins and physiological structure of human body. In Brihaddeshi, PanditAhobal has described the relationship of 22 Shrutis of the Indian music to 22 veins of the human body. In "SangitMakarand", Narad has quoted in the third pada that Sampooma Ragas should be sung for

the benefit of long life, religion, strength, wisdom, wealth, good harvest, fruits, gains, profits, prosperity and children. Shadav Ragas are beneficial in conquering battle, attaining beauty, youth, charm and singing of good names and works of warriors. Audav Ragas are useful in curing diseases, winning over enemies overcoming fear and sorrow, poverty and ills, sickness and bad health. Specific Ragas are also beneficial on some occasions, circumstances and different states.

In the Indian philosophy much emphasis is given to the supreme power of Nada and attracted by this supreme power, a branch of therapy has evolved which generally known as music therapy. This therapy is connected with the relationship of soul and body. The disorders of the body can be cured with the proper use of Nada Tatva with a combination of swaratala, lava and concentration. Because we are the body are made up of the five cardinal elements and the correct combination of swara, tala and laya can create wonders in the world of therapy. The correct use of Rishabhswara can cure the arthritis. The diseases like, respiratory problems, throat and thyroid infections, the diseases connected with lungs, low or high blood pressure, heart diseases, diarrhoea, intestinal diseases, fatigue, infertility, skin diseases, and various eye sight problems can be cured with the correct combination of laya, sur and tala. In the samaveda, there is long sequence of the "GayanVidhan" to cure many diseases. Music therapy is dependent on the style, form, speech and pronunciation of the syllables along with the intensity, pitch and timber using the Vilambit, Madhya and DrutLayakaries. The nature of Ragas having the shrutis of different Jatis, can play an important role in curing many diseases. The Raga having Alapini, Madanti, Rohini, RamyaShrutis increased the KaifPrakarti and to overpower this Prakriti, the Ragas having Raudri, Krodhi, Vajrika, shrutis should be sung. Ragas having RishabhSwar as the Vadi is also beneficial to cure the weakness, fatigue and low blood pressure Indian Ragas do have effects in curing many of the diseases and Indian Ragas Raginis can be used as a means of music therapy.

Recently, I happened to listen to an audio cassette album conceived and produced by Narayan Agarwal of Bombay. This audio album is in four cassettes with instrumental music like flute, sitar, tabla and guitar. I can feel that this album is a creditable effort to harness Indian Classical music which has been used as the medium of the various instruments. The cassettes like

—

Jeevan	:	Music for life
Tanav	:	Music for relaxation
Vishram	:	Music for comfort and contentment
Nidra	:	Music for sonorous sleep.

### **BENEFITS OF MUSIC THERAPY**

Pleasant tunes transfer good vibrations in the atmosphere. Music acts on our mind before being transformed into thought and feeling. Music influences the lower and higher cerebral centers of the brain. Use of Music as a therapy helps search of an individual's personal harmony. Music therapy is an important tool in the treatment of both physiological and psychosomatic disorders. Music Therapy stimulates good vibrations in the nerves of the listeners. Music brings about a sense of mental well being in individuals. Music Therapy helps to clear the junked thought in mind, which leads to have positive frame of mind. Music Therapy enhances the concentration level of children. Effect of music on the behavior of individuals is enormous capacity of planning, Musical training helps to express refined exhibition of emotions and clarity in cognition too.

Music therapy stimulates beta cell activities and enhances the quality pro Teleses Of brain chemicals. It enhances the quality of neurotransmitters and Con the heart Music therapy reduces hypertension. Music influences the perception and promotes physiological and behavioral relaxation in neonates. Music produces kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without. Music relieves insomnia. Music enhances cognitive process. Music training and exposure increases the amount of brain that responds to musical sounds. Music during exercise produces physiological benefits. Exposing to classical music regularly facilitate few positive benefits in patients. Music helps to attain comfort from a discomforting condition.

## **CONCLUSION**

Music therapy may not be an exact science. It may yet be in its infancy. But there is no disputing the fact that music has a value which affects one of our prime senses. That people respond to music is a foregone conclusion, what now matters is how the response can be tempered and turned to something more positive and more conclusive to enrich our life.

1. Music Therapy: An Art beyond Words  
by Leslie Bunt
2. A Comprehensive Guide to Music Therapy: Theory. Clinical Practice Research and Training  
by Tony Wigram, Inge Nygaard Pedersen, Lars Ole Bonde
3. Counseling Techniques: Improving Relationships with Others, Ourselves, Our Families, and Our Environment  
by Rosemary A. Thompson.
4. Community Music Therapy  
by Mercédès Pavlicevic, Gary Ansdell.
5. Music Therapy and Neurological Rehabilitation: Performing Health  
by David Aldridge.
6. Using Music Therapy Techniques to Treat Teacher Burnout, in Journal of Mental Health Counseling  
by James R. Cheek, Loretta J. Bradley, Gerald Parr, William Lan.
7. Music Therapy, Sensory Integration and the Autistic Child  
by Dorita S. Berger
8. Music Therapy in the Treatment of Social Isolation in Visually Impaired Children, in Review  
by Charles Gourgey
9. Talking over the Years: A Handbook of Dynamic Psychotherapy with Older Adults  
by Sandra Evans, Jane Garner
10. Broken Spirits: The Treatment of Traumatized Asylum Seekers, Refugees War and Torture Victims  
by John P. Wilson, Boris Drozdek