USE OF THE ARTS IN DEMENTIA: Music Therapy in Dementia Care

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Learning Objectives:
- Describe standard interventions used in music therapy with AD
- State symptom management outcomes in music therapy
- Make an assessment-based referral to a Board-Certified Music Therapist

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Music Therapy in Dementia Care
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Music Therapy Clinical Work

- Long Term Care 1987-1998 with a focus on Dementia, End of Life Issues, Stroke Rehab, Family Support and Coping with Caregiver Stress
- Worked as part of an interdisciplinary team: medical, psychosocial, recreational, nursing, direct care, speech and physical rehab
- Have continued clinical work through engagement with Banner Alzheimer's Institute

Music Therapy Strategies Early Stage AD&R

- Learn about individual
  - Social History- work, personal, etc.
- Learn the songs and music
- Build a relationship with caregivers
- Assess abilities and needs
Music Therapy Strategies

**Awareness and Reminiscing**

- Music Supports Reality Orientation and Reminiscing
  - Seasonal music
  - Intergenerational groups
  - Associations to music from earlier life
  - Moment-to-moment “How are you today?”
  - Oh What a Beautiful Morning!
  - Singing in the Rain
  - It’s too Darn Hot

**Behavior Issues**

- Agitation
  - Use music to calm
  - Familiar music helps to provide sense of security
  - Physical movement to music helps to release tension
  - Seat people who get along near each other

**Adapting for Independence**

- Maintaining Musical Independence
  - Adapt the music experience by offering large print song sheets, turning pages, helping with instrument play
  - Take out music books or recordings and encourage participation
  - Praise and encourage
Music Therapy Strategies

**Emotional Coping**

- Counter depression with opportunities to express sad feelings, support them, then improve mood with up tempo music
- Dancing, movement, singing and instrument play increase mobility and O2
- Social engagement through mutual interest pursuits reduces isolation

**Support Group**

- Include caregivers in group music
- Keep group homogeneous as much as possible
- Facilitate so that each person has a chance to share—allow for the “solo voice” within the group
- Group singing provides unity and support

**Building Community**

- Celebrate life events and memories
- Performance
- Drum Circles—not too large or too loud
- Create and sing simple chants
- Songwriting and song parody
- Faith and Spiritual Support
Music Therapy Strategies

Mid and Late Stages

- Life Review with associated music
  - Helps to cope with loss and “tell story”
- Use music to energize the lethargic person—more daytime activity improves regular sleep
- Caregiver singing familiar songs helps—the sound of caregivers voice comforts
- Receptive music and physical contact important

Music Therapy Research

  - OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate the feasibility and to evaluate the impact of music therapy on anxiety and depression at the early to moderate stage of Alzheimer’s disease and on the main caregiver burden.
  - DISCUSSION/CONCLUSION: This preliminary study demonstrates the feasibility as well as the initial efficacy of music therapy in terms of its impact on the overall care for patients suffering from Alzheimer’s disease. This easily applicable technique can be useful in treating anxiety and depression in a patient with Alzheimer’s disease and also in relieving the emotional and physical burden experienced by the main caregiver.

Music Therapy Research

Music Therapy Research


Connecting Through Music with People with Dementia: A Guide for Caregivers

Changing Hands Bookstore
6428 South McClintock Dr
Tempe 480-730-0205
Changinghands.com

Jessica Kingsley Press
JKP.com

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Also Available in Kindle!

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