

Music to My Ears

The connection between you, your music and your world

Guest Contributor: Jennifer Buchanan of JB Music Therapy

MUSIC DEFINITELY HAS the capacity to reach everyone — of all ages and abilities — but it requires the right applications in order to be truly successful.

The music we use and how we respond to the music in our life is unique to everyone. It 100% depends on your preferences and your preferences depend on your musical histories, interests, age, ability and personal interests.

One of the most amazing features of the human brain is the way in which it impacts our memory and contributes to our life-long learning. Music can do many amazing things including (but not limited to):

- ▶ Relaxing the mind and lowering our stress, opening up our learning reserves.
- ▶ Stimulating creativity by increasing blood and oxygen flow to the brain.
- ▶ Inspiring feelings — creating a clear passage to long-term memory.
- ▶ Changing emotional states — helping us move from a negative or resistant emotional state to a more positive learning state.
- ▶ Anchoring us into the moment, helping our memory to maintain important data for later.
- ▶ Connecting us to our feelings and to those around us — with the release of dopamine (feel good hormone) and oxytocin (trust hormone) the right music can help us feel more safe, secure and happy with those we know and love... and even

with those we are in the process of getting to know better.

Today, individuals who are Deaf and hard of hearing are listening and appreciating music as a result of the tremendous advancements in technology. People who are hard of hearing sense vibration in the part of the brain that other people use for hearing and enjoy concerts and other musical events as much as their hearing peers. Findings from the University of Washington in 2001 suggest that the experience people who are Deaf have when 'feeling' music is similar to the experience other people have when hearing music.

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Not only does music play a role in how we "feel" about the world but it can also affect our cognitive, language and social development. Group participation in music activities helps individuals feel a part of a greater social community. Through music, individuals can experience the joy of being part of a group working together, creating



something beautiful. The boost in mood and confidence during music therapy later translates into other social settings at school, home, and in the community.

What does a Music Therapist do?
Music Therapists work with individuals in a group or individual setting. Clients will have opportunities to choose and play a wide variety of instruments from the percussion family including instruments from around the world. Time is given to explore the instruments, and understand how the sound is made. Discussion around how you feel when you hear the sound, and what responses you have when joining others in creating music together will ensue.

Music therapy sessions may also include singing familiar songs, as well as learning and creating new songs aimed at the goals that had been previously set for that individual or group. For persons who are Deaf and hard of hearing, music therapy can facilitate the processes involved in connecting with and understanding music. In addition, it can provide support and growth opportunities for other important skills and abilities that can contribute to the overall development of each person.

Countries throughout the world have national certification programs for music therapists who have graduated with the prescribed educational requirements including supervised clinical work.

All good strategies are best if used with the right intention—music is no different. Sometimes we just need a professional guide. To find a professional (registered, licensed, accredited) music therapist near you contact:



Canada: www.musictherapy.com
USA: www.musictherapy.org
International: www.musictherapy-world.net

"How miraculous it is to witness the benefits that music therapy can bring. The mysteries of the mind and the power of music combined is an incredible therapeutic tool to reach those

who can be reached in virtually no other way."
 Denise Donlon, Executive Director
 CBC Radio, English Canada ◀

Jennifer Buchanan was the Keynote Presenter at the 2013 Canadian National Deaf and Hard of Hearing Conference in Edmonton. Jennifer is an accredited music therapist, President of the Canadian Association for Music therapy and owner of JB Music in Calgary, Alberta. To visit her website and to review the research articles that support the information above please visit: <http://jbmusictherapy.com/research/>

Remembering



We have been informed that the following members have passed away, and we will sorely miss them. Our condolences to the family and their loved ones.



- ☞ Polly Achis
- ☞ Ruth Davis
- ☞ Laura Gabbay
- ☞ Jack Oschmann
- ☞ Anita Plover
- ☞ Harold White

