

## The Healing Touch of Music

This topic makes me ponder about my childhood days when my mother used to sing me to lull. It had never occurred to me that music had such power to provide solace to the suffering creature until I took up this area of study; though rumors about music as a cure did reach my ears.

Earlier, lots of things were not known about the therapeutic powers of music though music was often played in the courts of kings and dramatists included music for special effects. People enjoyed the different types of music played to tunes. Human response to music was considered natural but its influence over the disordered or the diseased wasn't thought about.

Recent studies suggest that music does influence growth of plants, modifies irregular behavior of animals and provides emotional security to the ailing. Extensive studies have proved that music appeals to human beings as well, especially, to the sick, and the emotionally disturbed irrespective of age.

Tara Parker who is a Pope, in her essay *Health* quotes what authors say about the strength of music. They are of the view that "Music is well known to connect deeply with adolescents and to influence identity development, perhaps more than any other entertainment media" (Under the Influence of Music).

It has been found that music is highly effective in relieving stress related disorders and pain, improves communication and promotes physical rehabilitation. Where medications fail, music therapists are called and often they sing for patients to find that the patients feel immediate relief. Those who prescribe music aren't sure how it might work. According to Kim Painter, "Music might be moderately effective pain reliever, an audio analgesic" (Painter).

Sandra Siedlecki, a nursing researcher at Cleveland writes that “it obviously has something to do with mind-body interaction” (Painter).

It is possible that music might induce hormonal or immune system changes that reduce pain. Some other findings prove that music is simply a pleasant, but powerful form of distraction. There are also evidences to prove that rehabilitation programs are working round the clock to provide relief for patients of Parkinson’s, stroke, physical disabilities. A Professor of music and Neuroscience at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Michael Thaut says, “You play music with a strong beat and people start tapping their feet. That’s a biological process not a cultural process” (Painter).

This view substantiates that music has deep biological connections with human nervous system and plays a crucial and decisive role in the improvement of mental and physical disorders.

The Journal of Advanced Nursing, involved 60 patients with chronic, non cancer pain reported significantly less pain and depression and increased sense of control (Painter).

From the above statements and facts it can be safely concluded that the influence of music on human lives does make a difference. The application of music in treatment has been a prominent field of research nowadays. The far reaching implications of the study will contribute significantly to substitutes for pills and other medications. With the advancement in science and technology, the medical field has also undergone a revolution with the introduction of music into various physiological, psychological and mental disorders. Psychiatry which treats emotional and mental disturbances plays with the mental response to control of the mind by psychiatrists. Music therapy doesn’t involve control of the senses by a person and it is

administered gradually and in doses. The patient experiences a gradual relaxation of the nerves thereby influencing both the nervous systems and the motor systems in our body. Apart from that it induces the secretion of certain hormones that suffer imbalance due to physical and emotional changes with the advancement of age.

There has been a profusion of youngsters top study music psychotherapy. The NYU graduate program offers a specialization in this course. Every year, a good number of students register and they successfully find placements in distinguished hospitals, which treat cancer, other chronic and pain related ailments. It can be asserted that music therapy is

an established health care profession that uses music to address physical, emotional, cognitive and social needs of individuals of all ages.” It is designed to “promote wellness, manages stress, alleviate pain, express feelings, enhance memory, improve communication and promote physical rehabilitation. (Music Therapy Makes a Difference)

In this rapidly changing world, public awareness of the benefits of music therapy has advanced a lot and every patient should be provided with the healing touch of music.

## Work Cited

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