

Music for Mind and Memory

Dr. Alicia Barksdale-- January 20, 2024-- Participant Tip Sheet

Big Ideas:

- **Music is a brain builder. Music lessons/experiences enhance brain functioning at every age (Krause, 2022).**
- **Music therapists** are professional musicians who specialize in using research-based targeted musical interventions to facilitate non-musical outcomes for health, wellness, and learning.
- **Music therapy** is identified as a licensed healthcare service by the Maryland Department of Health and can be added to a student's IEP or a disabled adult's individual care plan, to address cognitive skills, communication needs, social/emotional/behavioral needs, sensory needs, motor skills, and recreation.
- **Music interventions for people with acquired brain injuries** have been shown to improve:
 - Negative mood states and quality of life
 - Cognitive recovery
 - Physical performance, including walking, upper limb function and talking
 - Communication outcomes, including voice, speech, and language (AMTA, 2024).
- **Research on music therapy in the treatment of memory disorders** has shown the following benefits:
 - Decreased depression & improved mood
 - Decreased anxiety & agitation
 - Decreased medication
 - Increased alertness & Orientation
 - Enhanced cognition & memory recall (AMTA, 2023)
- **Music therapy programs facilitate improvements for patients with Parkinson's disease** (Sotomayor et al, 2021). Music therapy may address motor skills through listening, body rhythm, and rhythmic auditory stimulation, and improve communication, swallowing, breathing, and emotional functioning through programs that focus on singing, either individually or in groups, to improve the quality of life of people with PD.
- **Musical strategies can be used in our everyday lives** to enhance relaxation and calming, energize when needed, reduce our perception of pain, and cope effectively with stressors, since musical engagement involves the whole brain and creates feel-good chemicals in the brain and body. Music is a great way to create positive responses in individuals of all ages, create a sense of belonging, and support health and well-being.
- **Create your own playlists of preferred music** that works for you at different times: to wake up, stay focused and alert for brain work, motivation for exercise, relaxing to calm or induce sleep.

How to Find a Music Therapist:

- **Maryland Association for Music Therapy** provider directory:
 - <https://www.marylandmusictherapy.org/findamusictherapist>
- **Dr. Alicia Barksdale**, Washington Adventist University Music Therapy Program Director:
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Musical Strategies to improve quality of life for you and your family:

- **To wake up and energize:**
 - Use musical tempo settings at 80 beats per minute or higher
 - Body percussion, dance, move, sing- take turns leading and following movements and sound patterns. Can use energizing music, with or without lyrics.
 - Create a wake-up movement routine with music to an energizing positive song that is used to set the tone for the day.
 - Use body percussion or drumming play-along songs-- search on YouTube, i.e. <https://youtu.be/4VgfhXKncvs> <https://youtu.be/72wsLNmDYUU>
- **To calm, relax, and de-escalate:**
 - Use musical tempo settings at 60 beats per minute or slower
 - Teach the Navy Seal technique of Box Breathing- can use with or without music: Box breathing https://youtu.be/FJZKtH_9I
 - Drawing or coloring to music: move pencil or marker to match the rhythm patterns or the tempo of the music.
 - Search for guided imagery or progressive relaxation music videos. Beach music meditation: <https://youtu.be/oeusbGFWPtY>
Thought bubble: <https://youtu.be/70j3xyu7OGw>
 - Hum a familiar slow song
 - Use a relaxing musical instrument: Rain stick, ocean or lullaby disc, tongue drum, kalimba, or instrument of your choice
- **To encourage expression or engagement:**
 - Offer many musical means of engagement- singing, moving, instruments
 - To encourage speech, sing familiar songs and leave a blank (i.e. Mary had a little _____)
 - Present preferred songs from the person's teenage or young adult era.
 - Tap or pat a beat or rhythm on the person's hand.
- **To increase attention, focus, following directions, active listening:**
 - Play "Name That Song", "Guess the Movie from its Song", "Guess the Instrument". Use your own voice, recordings, or videos. Examples:
<https://youtu.be/hNyM5GxU9Rw>
<https://youtu.be/qvZl3ftsHY>
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 - Sing karaoke style.
 - Web-based interactive musical sites can promote instant creativity and a brain break: <https://buildingbeats.org/toolbox>
 - Watch and listen to sights and sounds of nature. Make a list of things you see and hear. Use the video below, or take a walk outside. Can also do this as a "scavenger hunt." <https://youtu.be/eNUpTV9BGac>