

Circles of Rhythm - The Integrated Community Drum Circle - Research Articles



COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING IMPROVES THE EFFICACY AND OUTCOMES OF PSYCHODYNAMIC TREATMENT MODALITIES—See the Neurosequential Model of Therapeutics, Dr. Bruce Perry, MD, PhD; Psychiatrist and researcher in children’s mental health and neurosciences.

“Patterned, repetitive, rhythmic somatosensory activity...elicits a sensation of safety. Rhythm is regulating. All cultures have some form of patterned, repetitive rhythmic activity as part of their healing and mourning rituals—dancing, drumming, and swaying. The first step in therapeutic success is brainstem regulation...Start with the lowest undeveloped/abnormally functioning set of problems and move sequentially up the brain as improvements are seen...” (Dr. B. D. Perry, 2008)



COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING STRENGTHENS THE IMMUNE SYSTEM—See the REMO HEALTHRHYTHMS, Dr. Barry Bittman, MD, Neurology

Group drumming resulted in increased dehydroepiandrosterone-to-cortisol ratios, increased natural killer cell activity, and increased lymphokine-activated killer cell activity without alteration in plasma interleukin 2 or interferon-gamma, or in the Beck Anxiety Inventory and the Beck Depression Inventory II.

COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING AS A RECOVERY TOOL FOR THE ADDICTIONS & MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER—See “Drumming-Out Drugs” Michael Winkelman, PhD—leader in neurotheological perspectives on traditional healing practices.

“Research reviews indicate that drumming enhances recovery through inducing relaxation and enhancing theta-wave production and brain-wave synchronization. Drumming produces pleasurable experiences, enhanced awareness of preconscious dynamics, release of emotional trauma, and reintegration of self. Drumming alleviates self-centeredness, isolation, and alienation, creating a sense of connectedness with self and others. Drumming provides a secular approach to accessing a higher power and applying spiritual perspectives.

Drumming circles have applications as complementary addiction therapy, particularly for repeated relapse and when other counseling modalities have failed.” (*Am J Public Health*. 2003;93:647–651)



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COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING TARGETS EMPLOYEE BURNOUT & TURNOVER REDUCTION—See the REMO HEALTHRHYTHMS, Bittman MD, Christine Stevens, MSW, MT-BC.

A study conducted at Westbury United Methodist Retirement Community observed 112 employees' mood states (POMS, Profile of Mood States & MBI-Maslach Burnout Inventory) including: tension/anxiety, depression/dejection, anger/hostility, vigor/activity, fatigue/inertia, and confusion/bewilderment. Total mood disturbance is the sum of the above mood parameters weighing vigor/activity negatively.

Upon implementation of the drumming program, a 46% improvement was measured in total mood disturbance and 62% improvement 6 weeks post intervention. Economic Impact projections—a typical 100 bed long-term care facility—would expect to experience an 18.3% overall reduction in employee turnover. Retention of 11 of 60 positions predicted to be lost each year would result in an average cost savings of \$89,100 per year.



COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING COMBATS THE “BUSY BRAIN” SYNDROME—See Brain Wave Entrainment, Deepak Chopra, MD, and Dr. Rudy Tanzi, PhD. Leading Alzheimer’s Researcher.

“The rhythm of these wisdom tradition technologies actually slows people’s brain waves from their normal busy brain frequency we call Beta (13–30 cycles per second or Hz), to Alpha (8–13Hz)—meditation, Theta (4–8Hz)—deep relaxation and dreaming, and Delta (0.5–4Hz)—slow wave or dreamless sleep” (Eby, D., 2015).



COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING REVERSES STRESS ON THE GENOMIC LEVEL—See the REMO HEALTHRHYTHMS

This study looked at the effects of Recreational Music Making (RMM) at the genomic level and demonstrated not simply a reduction in stress but a reversal in nineteen genetic switches that turn on the stress response believed responsible in the development of common diseases. This study also “extends our understanding of individualized human biological stress responses on an unprecedented level” (Bittman, B., 2005).



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EFFECTS OF GROUP DRUMMING INTERVENTIONS ON ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, SOCIAL RESILIENCE, AND INFLAMMATORY IMMUNE RESPONSE AMONG MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE USERS—See Daisy Fancourt in PLOS One Scholarly Journals, Research Associate in the Centre for Performance Science

In a recently published study (March 2016), participants were found to experience psychological and physiological benefits from engaging in a regularly scheduled drum circle. By week six participants reported a 9 percent decrease in symptoms of anxiety, and by week 10 they reported a 20 percent reduction from baseline. In the analysis of depression, well-being, social resilience, and perceived stress ratings, all participants showed significant improvement by week 10 and at the three-month poststudy follow-up. Across the ten weeks, there was a shift away from a pro-inflammatory toward an anti-inflammatory immune profile. Consequently, this study demonstrates the psychological benefits of group drumming and also suggests underlying biological effects, supporting its therapeutic potential for mental health.



COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING IMPROVES SOCIAL CONNECTION AND CREATIVITY IN LONG-TERM CARE RESIDENTS—See the REMO HEALTHRHYTHMS

After completion of the program, many residents noted the immediate benefits of creating connections with staff and other residents. Participation in just one Recreational Music-Making (RMM) session often promoted identifiable and meaningful connections. The predominant conclusion was that there are no “strangers” at the end of an RMM session. Several residents remarked that their ability to more effectively deal with the loss of a loved one or friend was enhanced through RMM sessions. The acknowledgment of a person who had recently passed on served as an effective means for honoring an important relationship through empathetic group support. A number of participants commented that RMM positively influenced their overall perspectives and expectations for living in a long-term care environment. In addition, residents reported that RMM activities produced far more favorable effects, when compared with antidepressants or mood-stabilizing drugs.



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COMMUNITY-BASED DRUMMING OFFER SIGNIFICANT QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS IN AT-RISK ADOLESCENTS—See the REMO HEALTHRHYTHMS

Dependent variable measures included the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS), the Adolescent Psychopathology Scale (APS), the Adolescent Anger Rating Scale (AARS), the Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale, 2nd edition (RADS 2), and the Adolescent Visual-Analog Recreational Music Making Assessment (A-VARMMA). Statistically significant (experimental vs. control) improvements in multiple parameters include school/work role performance, total depression, anhedonia/negative affect, negative self-evaluation, and instrumental anger. In addition, extended impact (experimental vs. control) is characterized by statistically significant improvements six weeks after completion of the protocol, for school/work role performance, behavior toward others, anhedonia/negative affect, total anger, instrumental anger, anger, and interpersonal problems.

