

ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

A person diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia experiences a global deterioration of cognitive functioning. This can cause emotional distress and social isolation. He/she experiences significant difficulties which bring about a gradual loss of autonomy. Loss in memory, communication and orientation can also cause anxiety, disorganization, and behavioral problems.

Music therapy can maintain or improve the person's emotional and social well-being. Through an Initial Assessment, the music therapist first identifies the person's needs and strengths in socio-affective and cognitive areas, and highlights their habits and musical preferences. An Individual Intervention Plan is then devised to include overall goals such as: stimulating awareness of the environment, managing anxiety, stabilizing mood, promoting reminiscence and encouraging interactions and communication. The person then attends individual or group music therapy sessions depending on his/her needs.

To attain these objectives, the music therapist employs a variety of methods and techniques that use music in all its forms. The communicative and creative properties of music are central to the client-therapist relationship and therapeutic interactions.

ALZHEIMER'S AND OTHER DEMENTIAS

The person may be invited to participate in theme-based vocal and/or instrumental improvisations to evoke emotions or memories, to listen to a pre-composed song whose lyrics express a familiar situation, to participate in discussions about chosen pieces of music and/or to move to or relax to music. A wide variety of instruments (guitar, piano, percussion instruments to name a few) are incorporated into sessions in order to satisfy individual musical preferences and offer a rich and meaningful experience. In short, music therapy is a useful means to reach a person diagnosed with Alzheimer's or another dementia and to contribute to his/her well-being.

For additional information about music therapy or if you wish to communicate with a music therapist:

Association québécoise de musicothérapie
www.musicotherapieaqm.org
Tel. 514.264.6335

info@musicotherapieaqm.org

