

## MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY, CEREBRAL PALSY, MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS, ETC.

A person who is diagnosed with a neurological condition that reduces their motor skills can experience a decrease in his/her self-esteem, feelings of isolation, physical pain or a loss in their cognitive abilities. He/she can face significant difficulties in communication, emotional stability or the ability to accomplish daily tasks independently. Anxiety and depression may also be present and impede the person's quality of life.

Music therapy can maintain or restore various aspects of the person's performance. The music therapist first identifies the needs and abilities of the person in different areas by the means of an Initial Assessment. These areas include affective, motor, cognitive and social skills; as well as his/her habits and musical preferences. An Individual intervention Plan is then devised to include global objectives such as: developing better breath control, improving basic movements, strengthening self-esteem, expressing emotions, managing anxiety, developing communication techniques, promoting relaxation, etc. The person then attends individual or group music therapy sessions depending on his/her needs and abilities.

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.

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The person may be invited to improvise with voice or instruments to express what he/she is feeling, to improve his/her phonatory muscle tone by playing wind instruments, to compose song lyrics, to discuss chosen pieces of music and 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 everyone's musical preferences and offer them a rich and meaningful experience. It is possible to adapt instruments to suit a person's functional capabilities in order to vary the means of expression and to optimize his/her autonomy. In short, music therapy is a useful means to reach a person who has physical limitations and to promote his/her physical, emotional and social well-being.

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

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