

Research Article

**Received Date:** October 13, 2024

**Accepted Date:** November 13, 2024

**Published Date:** November 16, 2024

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**Citation**

Wanshu YANG, Hehuizi TANG,  
Xiaoyan LUO, Jun ZHANG (2024)  
The Voice of Melodies: A Study on  
the Role of Music Healing in Psy-  
chotherapy. CEOS Sleep Med. Disord.  
2(1): 102

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# The Voice of Melodies: A Study on the Role of Music Healing in Psychotherapy

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## Abstract

This paper explores the concept, principles, application areas, and positive impact of music healing on physical and mental health. Through the analysis of relevant studies, it elucidates how music plays a unique healing role in psychotherapy, rehabilitation medicine, and daily life, providing new perspectives and methods for promoting individual holistic health.

**Keywords:** Music Healing; Psychotherapy; Rehabilitation Medicine

## Introduction

Music healing, as part of art therapy, is not synonymous with music therapy. Therapy refers only to the process of alleviating trauma, while the term healing indicates the process of restoring an individual's physical and mental wholeness. It aims to help individuals recover from trauma and attain a more complete state, thereby treating illnesses and refining emotions, as well as enhancing overall well-being [1]. Music, as an art form that transcends culture and time, possesses unique charm and power. Throughout history, music has been used to express emotions, convey messages, and entertain the public. In recent years, music healing has gradually emerged as a field of significant interest, gaining increasing recognition for its roles in promoting physical and mental health, relieving stress, and improving emotions.

### The Concept and Principles of Music Healing

Ancient Chinese literature has long documented the therapeutic functions of music. The Confucian classic *Li Ji* (Book of Rites) states that the essence of music lies in "the human heart's response to things," emphasizing that "the sound of governance in a harmonious world brings peace, while the sound of chaos brings resentment and anger, leading to discord. The music of a fallen nation evokes sorrow and reflection, leaving its people in distress. The way of sound is connected to governance" [2].

### Meaning

Music therapy is a treatment method that promotes physical, emotional, cognitive, and social functions through musical activities and techniques [3]. Through these musical activities, emotional responses are triggered, physiological functions are regulated, and psychological states are improved, ultimately achieving therapeutic and rehabilitative goals. This approach is not simply about having patients listen to music, but rather involves a series of targeted musical activities that encourage active participation from the patients, thereby achieving physical and mental healing effects.

In ancient Chinese literature, the therapeutic function of mu-

sic was documented long ago. For example, in the Confucian classic *Liji* (The Book of Rites), it is emphasized that the essence of music lies in "the emotional response of the human heart to external objects," and it also points out that "the music of a well-governed state brings peace and joy, and its governance is harmonious. The music of a chaotic state brings resentment and anger, and its governance is disorderly. The music of a fallen nation brings sorrow and contemplation, and its people suffer. The way of sound is connected with governance" [3]. This suggests that the ancients had already recognized the close relationship between music, social environment, and inner emotions, and acknowledged that music might have a potential power to influence people's physical and mental health.

### Principles

Some studies have shown through experiments that when individuals experience psychological trauma from sudden events or are in a state of anxiety and stress, their bodies also suffer damage. Conditions such as rapid heart rate, heart disease, and hypertension severely impact both physical and mental health, leading to difficulties in normal learning, work, and life [2]. Music can influence physiological functions, such as regulating heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure. Specific musical rhythms can resonate with the body's physiological rhythms, producing a resonance effect that promotes relaxation and recovery. Additionally, music can stimulate the brain to release neurotransmitters like endorphins and dopamine, which have analgesic, pleasurable, and relaxing effects.

Music has the power to touch individuals' emotions and memories, eliciting resonance and emotional responses. Listening to music that aligns with one's emotional state can release suppressed feelings and alleviate negative emotions such as anxiety and depression. Furthermore, music can stimulate creativity and imagination, fostering self-expression and self-awareness, and enhancing psychological resilience and adaptability. Thus, through strong and intuitive emotional experiences, music ultimately achieves therapeutic goals. Susan Langer, the founder of symbolic aesthetic theory, stated, "The composer does not merely express; they strive to convey subtle and

complex emotions that cannot even be named in words” [4]. Therefore, through intense and direct emotional experiences, music can ultimately fulfill its healing purpose.

## Applications of Music Healing

### Psychological Therapy

Currently, a common approach is structured cognitive training. The core content includes identifying and understanding emotions, emotion regulation techniques, rational thinking, as well as interventions such as play therapy, family therapy, and psychodynamic therapy. For children with communication disorders like selective mutism and autism, speech or language therapy may also be conducted [5]. For example, in the treatment of depression, music can help patients alleviate feelings of sadness and enhance their sense of self-worth. In the treatment of post-traumatic stress disorder, music can assist patients in recalling and processing traumatic events, reducing anxiety and fear.

### Rehabilitation Medicine

Music healing also plays an important role in rehabilitation medicine. For instance, it is used in the treatment of neonatal intensive care, trauma survivors, movement disorders, hospice care, and dementia [6]. In the rehabilitation of stroke patients, music can stimulate neural activity in the brain and promote the recovery of motor functions. In the rehabilitation of heart disease patients, music can lower heart rate and blood pressure, alleviating the burden on the heart. For cancer patients, music can help relieve pain, reduce anxiety and depression, and improve quality of life.

### Special Education

Music healing holds unique value in the field of special education. It can be used for the education and rehabilitation of children with autism, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities, with singing training being a common method. In singing training, special education teachers may have students press on their throat areas one by one, allowing hearing-impaired students to feel the vibrations in their throats. The teacher can then press on the students' throats to indi-

cate vocalization. This process is lengthy and requires a gradual approach. However, when parents can hear their children sing, all the effort invested by special education teachers becomes worthwhile [7]. Through listening, performing, and creating music, these children can improve their attention, enhance language skills, and develop social skills, promoting their overall physical and mental development.

### Daily Life

Music healing is not only widely applicable in professional fields but also offers a simple and effective method for self-care in daily life. For example, when facing high work pressure, listening to relaxing music can help alleviate tension and improve work efficiency. When struggling with poor sleep, listening to soothing music can assist in falling asleep and enhance sleep quality.

## Implementation Methods of Music Healing

### Music Listening

Music listening is one of the most commonly used methods in music healing. Patients can choose music that suits their emotional state and needs. During the listening process, they can close their eyes, relax their bodies and minds, and focus on the melodies and rhythms, allowing themselves to immerse in the world of music.

### Music Performance

Music performance is also an effective method of music healing. Patients can express their emotions and relieve stress by playing instruments such as the piano, guitar, or violin. Engaging in music performance can enhance an individual's hand-eye coordination, attention, and memory, while also boosting self-confidence and a sense of achievement.

### Music Creation

Music creation is a more personalized approach to music healing. Patients can express their inner world and explore their emotions and needs through composing their own music.

This creative process can stimulate an individual's creativity and imagination, enhancing self-awareness and self-expression.

## Conclusion

Music therapy, as an emerging treatment method, offers unique advantages and value. It can not only help patients alleviate physical and psychological suffering and improve quality of life, but also provide a new self-care approach that promotes both physical and mental well-being. With ongoing research into music therapy, it is believed that it will play an increasingly important role in the future healthcare and medical fields. At the same time, there is a need to strengthen professional training and standardized management of music therapy to improve the expertise of music therapists, ensuring both safety and effectiveness in the practice.

Some of the main issues in music therapy include the lack of unified treatment standards and evaluation methods, making it difficult to quantify and verify the therapeutic effects; a relatively weak theoretical foundation with a lack of systematic explanatory frameworks; and the significant impact of individu-

al differences on therapy outcomes. Different individuals may have varying responses to the same music. Some patients may experience positive and effective results from music therapy, while others may show no noticeable effects or even feel discomfort. In future developments, we can expect music therapy to integrate better with other treatment methods, providing patients with more comprehensive and effective treatment plans. For example, music therapy could be combined with pharmaceutical treatments, psychotherapy, and other methods, developing more personalized treatment plans tailored to specific diseases and individual patient differences. Moreover, with the continuous advancement of technology, we can also anticipate music therapy benefiting from new technological tools, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence, to further enhance its therapeutic effects and broaden its application range. In conclusion, music therapy holds significant potential for future development and deserves further in-depth research and exploration.

## Funding Statement

Not applicable.

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