



Show Me the Evidence

An Outline of the Evidence Supporting the R2R Approach

The Following Peer reviewed articles have been published in Journals on programs and interventions based on a model combining rhythmic music with cognitive reflection:



RESEARCH SUPPORTING THE R2R APPROACH

Published, peer reviewed journal articles & book chapters

Balfour et al, 2019 - 146 prisoners across 8 prisons, male & female with control. Drumming & Therapy combination reduces psychological distress & increases resilience in prisoners with improvement maintained 3 month post program. *Performing arts in prisons*, Bristol, UK: Intellect.

Faulkner S. 2018. Therapeutic Applications for Integrating Rhythm and Reflection in Support of People with Co-occurring Drug and Alcohol, and Mental Health issues. *Dual Diagn Open Acc Vol.3 No.2*: 5

Faulkner, S. 2017. - Field notes from clinical work with families and individuals recovering from trauma. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 38, 627-636.

Martin & Wood, 2017. Drumming to a new beat: a group therapeutic drumming and talking intervention to improve mental health and behaviour of disadvantaged adolescent boys - improved mental health & lower post-traumatic stress symptoms. Lower levels of anti-social behaviour. *Children Australia*, 1-9.

Wood & Faulkner, 2014. Reach me & You can teach me - Engagement and social learning through hand drumming - Qualitative case studies show improvements in self assurance, emotional control, interpersonal trust and reductions in anxiety. *Journal of Relational Child & Youth Care Practice*, 27,1 18 -26

Wood et al, 2013 - To the beat of a different drum - improving the social and mental wellbeing of at risk youth with drumming. 180 students across 19 schools with control groups. Drumming & Cognitive therapy combination increases self esteem in identified 'at risk' school students, whilst reducing behavioural incidents and increasing school attendance. *Journal of Public Mental Health*, 12,2 , 70-79

Faulkner, Wood, Ivery & Donavan, 2012. It is not just music & rhythm - Evaluation of a drumming based program to improve the social wellbeing of alienated youth. Sixty students classified as 'high risk' across three schools with control - improvements in attendance, social integration and behaviour as well as reductions in suspensions. *Children Australia*, 37,1, 31-39

Faulkner, Ivery, Wood & Donovan, 2010. Music as a tool for social learning and improved educational outcomes. Longitudinal study of 36 Aboriginal students who had completed the drumming & reflection intervention, followed up after 12 months - improvements maintained in self esteem, attendance and behaviour - no criminal activity. *Australian journal of Indigenous education*, 39, 98-108

Note many of these studies are of the DRUMBEAT program, an early program developed by the author of the Rhythm2Recovery model.

Endorsed by Researchers at The International Centre for Clinical Excellence

Simon Faulkner gets to the soul of rhythm and its potent use when working with individuals, families, and groups of all ages. This training is a treasure. It's a must-do for anyone working in a therapeutic or educational context. When words get in the way, tune in to the principles that Rhythm2Recovery offers in this packed filled workshop.

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Rhythm2Recovery is a model of practice, combining rhythmic music and cognitive reflection, with additional elements of Positive Psychology & Act & Commitment Therapy, that allows practitioners to formulate programs and interventions that are not locked into a strict format, but instead can be adapted to the specific needs of individuals and offer a flexible template, solidly grounded in evidence. This replicates the way most professionals in the therapeutic field work; where they are schooled in a range of therapeutic approaches but adapt these to best provide for the needs of their clients. Research has shown that program manuals do not of themselves support improved client outcomes (Duncan, Miller, 2005)¹

The Rhythm2Recovery model is an eclectic approach using different therapeutic elements, each of which has its own focus and is strongly supported by research. In combination, these provide a holistic framework for working with rhythmic music to achieve personal development outcomes. These elements transfer readily between different modes of practice, being equally applicable in individual counselling sessions and to larger group psycho-education programs.

The key element in the rhythm2recovery approach is the use rhythmic music and movement; The use of rhythmic music and movement to elicit emotional states and to support healing is an ancient tradition and one of the most studied research areas of music therapy. Rhythmic music has been shown to positively impact both physiological and psychological function, improving motor coordination and emotional impulsivity². Research in the growing field of neurobiology has shown how rhythmic input impacts the primal areas of the brain and can help stabilise the stress response and restore homeostasis. Today rhythmic interventions are key elements of trauma informed practice, helping to reduce anxiety and increase psychological well-being³.

Few people have the opportunity to play music regularly with others despite the fact that playing music has been well documented as improving a range of academic and social outcomes⁴. Communal music making has been shown to increase the release of neuropeptides associated with reductions in social anxiety and increased levels of empathy and social bonding whilst increasing NK cell activity and cortisone, elements critical in boosting our immune system⁵. Rhythmic music and movement incorporating cross-arm body movement improves motor coordination and stimulates increased neural activity across the two hemispheres of the brain; a finding linked to improved memory and cognition⁶.

The Rhythm2Recovery model also draws on the extensive body of research detailing the positive impact of mindfulness on both physiological and psychological health. Playing rhythmic music is a natural way of reducing hyper-vigilant thought patterns by providing an

¹ Duncan, B.L., & Miller, S.D. (2005) Treatment manuals do not improve outcomes. In Norcross, J., & Levant, R., & Beutler, L. (2005). Evidence-based practices in mental health: Debate and dialogue on the fundamental questions. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association Press.

² Staum, M.J. (2000). Music for physical rehabilitation: An analysis of the literature from 1950-1999 and applications for rehabilitation settings" In: *Effectiveness of Music Therapy Procedures: Documentation of research and clinical practice*, 3rd Edn. Silver Spring, MD: American Music Therapy Association

³ Thaut, M.H. (2005). *Rhythm, music and the brain: scientific foundations and clinical applications*. Oxford: Routledge

⁴ Hallam, S. (2009). The Power of Music: its impact on the intellectual, social and personal development of children and young people. Paper commissioned by the Performing Rights Society, retrieved from http://www.japhil.com/sites/default/files/media/pdfs/shared/education/yola/susan-hallam-music-development_research.pdf

⁵ Chapados, C and Levitin, D.J., (2008). Cross-modal interactions in the experience of musical performances: physiological correlates, *Cognition* 108, 639-651; Bittman B., Berk L., Felten D., Westengard J., Simonton O., Pappas J., & Ninehouse M. (2001). Composite Effects of Group Drumming Music Therapy on Modulation of Neuroendocrine-Immune Parameters in Normal Subjects, *Journal of Alternative Therapies*.

⁶ Altenmuller, E., Wiesendanger, M., and Kesslring, J (2006). Music, motor control and the brain. Oxford: Oxford University Press



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in-the-moment experience that requires complete focus. Rhythm2Recovery programs extend that benefit into a conscious practice of trained attention and awareness, helping people experience life with greater clarity and understanding. Studies have shown even short courses of mindfulness practice reduced rumination, stress, and emotional reactivity, whilst increasing memory, and cognitive focus and improving relationship satisfaction⁷.

Rhythm2Recovery interventions utilise a human centred, strengths-based approach to working with clients closely aligned to 'Positive Psychology'. Rather than focus on what went wrong, positive psychology looks to support growth and change by examining the strengths and virtues of the individual, and their environment and how these can be used to overcome the challenges they face. Positive psychology utilises positive emotions and hope to improve relationships, and help people find meaning in their lives. The reflective elements in Rhythm2Recovery programs provide clients with insight into themselves and their relationship with the world around them as they explore the social and emotional themes of each session from this positive psychological perspective. An extensive body of research into the use of positive psychology as a strength-based approach has shown increased levels of psychological well-being and resilience, and reduced levels of depression⁸

Rhythm2Recovery programs are expressive therapies that allow people to communicate in ways beyond the level of words. Music is essentially a form of emotional communication. Although our programs do incorporate a reflective discussion element, they are not solely reliant on speech and have numerous benefits for people for whom communication through language is problematic. Expressive therapies encourage people to explore the self through a creative process that allows for the safe release of emotion and memory. Personal narratives can be expressed and experienced through the conduit of music and movement, whilst supported by the facilitator or therapist. Creativity is central to expressive therapies and also to assisting people address a challenging & changing world – the creative nature of Rhythm2Recovery programs is aligned to assisting people creatively overcome the challenges in their lives.

The benefits of rhythmic music, mindfulness, positive psychology and creative expression have been well documented in the research literature on effective psycho-social interventions. Rhythm2recovery programs and training workshops combine these four clinical approaches into a model of practice that provides an engaging, flexible and effective template for therapists and educators working in support of individual growth and potential.

Programs developed from this template are supported by a comprehensive body of evidence as to what works in helping people overcome adversity.

⁷ Davis, D.M., & Hayes, J.A. (2012). The benefits of mindfulness. *Journal of Psychotherapy*, 48, (2)

⁸ Sin, N.L., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2009). Enhancing well-being and alleviating depressive symptoms with positive psychological interventions: A practice friendly meta-analysis. *Journal of Psychology*, 133, 656-668.