Musical Reminiscence Therapy: Global Solution for Improved Dementia Care

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"I have seen deeply demented patients weep or shiver as they listen to music they have never heard before, and I think that they can experience the entire range of feelings the rest of us can, and that dementia, at least at these times, is no bar to emotional depth. Once one has seen such responses, one knows that there is still a self to be called upon, even if music, and only music, can do the calling."

- Oliver Sacks, *Musicophilia*
Memory Clinics & Hospice Care

• Patients with dementia in America and India provide insight into the benefit of music
• Experiences include: change in mood, improved interactions with clients, opportunity to engage caregivers with clients
Musical Reminiscence Therapy Demonstration – Kochi, India
Music in Dementia Assessment Scale (MidAS)

Visual Analog Scale:

- Interest
- Response
- Initiation
- Involvement
- Enjoyment

Source: McDermott, Orrell, Ridder
Memory is coded spatially

- The hippocampus is responsible for attributing geographic detail to memory
- Musical Memories are associated with the place they happened

Source: Miller et al. (2013)
By knowing the history of clients it is possible to tailor music play lists that engage them.

- This information can have important impact for families, caregivers, nurses, and social workers.
What is happening?

• The normalization of medical progress
• Music may offer a way forward for dementia interventions
• Musical Reminiscence Therapy (MRT) is designed to be a best practice for dementia care
• Progress in dementia care in the next 10-20 years may have more to do with effective intervention strategies than medical breakthroughs

Sources: de Mol van Otterloo et al. (2016)
de Mol van Otterloo & Kumar (2017)
MRT & International Dementia Strategies

• Economical interventions for care
• Improving the lives of family and caregivers
• MRT functions via basic neurological principals and can be implemented globally
• MRT is an intervention that can improve the lives of patients and caregivers

TODAY!
Discussion and conclusion:

• MRT makes it possible to effect identical neurological responses with clients from entirely different backgrounds.

• Popular music can produce similar affective responses, no matter where patients are from and where they are now.

• This intervention is cheap, and easy to train healthcare workers to produce dramatic improvements in patient and caregiver lifestyle.
References


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