

Therapeutic Aspects of Indian Music and Steps to Impart Awareness for Music (Raga) Therapy in Indian Masses

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Abstract

Modern science and medicine are now rediscovering the healing powers of music. It's a yoga system through the medium of sonorous sounds. Depending on its nature, a raga could induce or intensify joy or sorrow, violence or peace, and it is this quality which forms the basis for musical application. Music therapy carries a great vintage in the ancient holistic medical science of India. The whole subject of music medical therapy is now getting attention from across the world. In India, the stream still grabs a backseat and needs to be empowered with certain advertising tools. In this paper, author has endeavored to bring the real scenarios of Indian culture and human temperament; present place of music therapy in India and suggested the steps to promote it in the Indian masses.

Keywords: Indian Music Therapy, Raga Therapy, Music therapy education.



Introduction

“Music should be healing; music should uplift the soul; music should inspire. There is no better way of getting closer to God, of rising higher towards the spirit, of attaining spiritual perfection than music, if only it is rightly understood.” — Hazrat Inayat Khan

Sound exists all around us in many forms, therefore we may go about our day not thinking too much about the transformational power of sound. All sound vibration is comprised of wave patterns, like the emotional waves of the human body. Sound can transmit through a solid, liquid or gas medium. “Sounds and music agitate and animate the arteries and the veins. This generates life-giving breath and brings to the heart harmony and rectitude.”ⁱ Hence, music therapy is considered as the deep-rooted treatment of the mental and physical body. Musical tunes heal us from the root level. It helps in altering the inner mechanism and treat the diseases on mind level. Music can encourage socialization, self-expression, self-acceptance, communication, and motor-development. It is highly motivating, yet it can also have a calming and relaxing effect. Enjoyable music activities are designed to be success-oriented and make children feel good about themselves.

Nowadays, music therapy is being employed increasingly in many countries to treat many diseases. Many reputed foreign universities are imparting music therapy education and the courses range from certificate to doctorate level. However, in India

music therapy is yet to be recognized as a subject in Indian universities and other educational institutions.

What is Music Therapy?

Music therapy is an efficacious and valid treatment for persons who have psychosocial, affective, cognitive, and communicative needs. Research results and clinical experiences attest to the viability of music therapy even in those who are resistive to other treatment approaches. Music therapy enhances the quality of life. It involves relationships between a qualified therapist and child, between one child and another; between child and family; between the music and the participants. These relationships are structured and adapted through the elements of music to create a positive environment and set the occasion for successful growth. Barbara Crowe, past president of music Therapy in the United States, suggests that music and rhythm create their healing effects by calming the constant chatter of the left brain. "A loud repetitive sound sends a constant signal to the cortex, masking input from other senses like vision, touch, and smell."ⁱⁱ

Kenneth Bruscia, a key player and a prolific writer in the field of music therapy, provides a definition of music therapy in his book, *Defining Music Therapy* (pg. 20).

"Music therapy is a systematic process of intervention wherein the therapist helps the client to promote health, using music experiences and the relationships that develop through them as dynamic forces of change."ⁱⁱⁱ

Historical overview

Dr. T.V. Sairam, in his Music Therapy training at Nada quotes beautifully that,

"The birth of language was preceded by the birth of music; music by sounds emanating through vocal chords and the sounds by – hold your breath – silence. It is the silence, which causes the sound, the music and the music, the language."

Healing through sounds is not a new field in India. It has been practiced in ancient India and the world in meditation, penance, God worship, healing and other rituals. Music and sounds have been adequately used as a transcending tool in all the era be it ancient, medieval or modern. Much ancient is the association between music and mind. It can be dated back to the Vedic age, where attempts were made to relate the

“seven” basic notes of music and the “eight” basic moods identified in the Indian drama theory. The seven basic notes are - *sadaja*, *rishaba*, *gandhara*, *madhyama*, *panchama*, *dhaivata* and *nishada*; whereas, the eight basic emotions are - *sringar* (love), *hasya* (laughter), *karuna* (compassion), *vira* (heroism), *raudra* (wrath), *bhayanaka* (fear), *bibhatsa* (disgust) and *adbhuta* (wonder). Love and laughter are associated with *madhyama* and *panchama* notes; wrath, wonder and heroism with *sadaja* and *rishaba*; *nishada* and *gandhara* with compassion; and *dhaivata* with disgust and fear.^{iv}

The chanting and toning involved in Veda mantras in Worshipping God have been used from time immemorial as a cure for several disharmonies in the individual as well as his environment. In fact, “Historical records indicate that Swami Haridas, the guru of Tansen, recovered one of the queens of Emperor Akbar with a selected raga. Legend has it that saint Thyagaraja brought a dead person back to life with his *Bilahari* composition *Naa Jiva Dhara* (T.V Sairam, n.d.)”. “The most recent and memorable instances of Music Therapy have been noted during the First World War. Musicians of many varieties, both amateur and professional were brought into hospitals to perform for the infirm soldiers and were seen to have therapeutic effects upon the injured. Doctors and nurses as well witnessed some of the miraculous effects of music upon the soldiers and although they were aware of the need for a more structured academic environment to train the musicians, they were also patently aware of the power of music to heal (Mark Lincoln, 2009).^v

There are various stories in mythology which denotes the practices of music therapy or sound healing during those times. Several sects of ‘bhakti’ such as *Chaitanya Sampradaya*, *Vallabha Sampradaya* have all accorded priority to music healing. Medieval historical records too indicate that one Swami Haridas, guru of the famous musician in Akbar’s time, Tan Sen is credited with the recovery of one of the queens of the Emperor with a selected raga.

How and Why Music is a Good Tool for Health?

Sound is considered as the medium of expression and connection amidst all existence. It is said that our human body has eight energy centers (chakras), and they own a pleasing sound frequency. "Vibrating sounds form patterns and create energy fields of resonance and movement in the surrounding space. We absorb these energies, and they subtly alter our breath, pulse, blood pressure, muscle tension, skin temperature, and other internal rhythms."^{vi}



Research has shown that music with a strong beat can stimulate brainwaves to resonate in sync with the beat, with faster beats bringing sharper concentration and more alert thinking, and a slower tempo promoting a calm, meditative state. Also, research has found that the change in brainwave activity levels that music can bring can also enable the brain to shift speeds more

easily on its own as needed, which means that music can bring lasting benefits to your state of mind, even after you've stopped listening.^{vii}

Indian culture and music

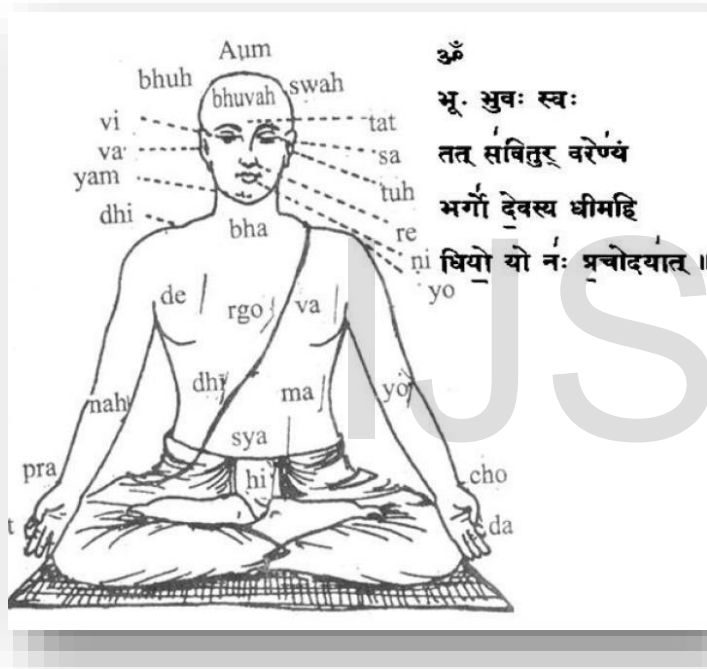
Music is ubiquitous nowadays too. "Indian system of music treatment is defined as an "individualistic, subjective and spiritual art, aiming at personal harmony with one's own being and not at symphonic elaborations."^{viii}

Many of the international researchers and spiritual seekers from abroad living in India share the perception that this culture has something very valuable and essential to contribute towards a functioning and more healthy future of our global civilization. This ancient tradition speaks about the '*Sanathana Dharma*', a universal truth, law, way an expression of our deepest human longings and highest ideals of perfection.^{ix} Not only Indian culture and tradition is rich in music but in general scenarios like people's own lifestyle, corporate hangout, election campaign music fits in enormously and occupies its part. For example, IT-sector companies conduct *Fungama* events with music and dance constantly. Or we frequently hear the radio played by the vegetable vendors when go to buy vegies on the road. Our gyms, malls, all play music to enhance the atmosphere.

Indian Music and Spirituality

“Music is the mediator between the spiritual and the sensual life.” — Ludwig van Beethoven

Musical tunes play an essential role in spirituality and contemplation. It unleashes the filtered brain knots and transcends one to a higher meditative state, which is beyond the level of physical world. Power of music tends to uplift one in the deep ocean of trance. For instance, **Gayatri mantra** has been bestowed the greatest importance in Vedic dharma. This mantra has also been termed as *Savitri* and Ved-Mata, the mother of the Vedas.



Om bhur bhuvah swah

Tat savitur varenyam

Bhargo devasya dheemahi

Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat!!

The literal meaning of the mantra is:

“O God! You are Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Almighty, You are all Light. You are all Knowledge and Bliss. You are Destroyer of fear, You are Creator of this Universe, You are the Greatest of all. We bow and

meditate upon Your light. You guide our intellect in the right direction.” The mantra, however, has a great scientific importance too, which somehow got lost in the literary tradition. OM BHUR BHUVAH SWAH: Bhur the earth, bhuvah the planets (solar family), swah the Galaxy. We observe that when an ordinary fan with a speed of 900 RPM (rotations Per minute) moves, it makes noise. Then, one can imagine, what great noise would be created when the galaxies move with a speed of 20,000 miles per second. This is what this portion of the mantra explains that the sound produced due to the fast-moving earth, planets and galaxies is Om. This sound Om heard during *samadhi* was called by all the seers nada-brahma a very great noise), but not a noise that is normally heard beyond a specific amplitude and limits of decibels suited to

human hearing. Hence the rishis called this sound *Udgith* musical sound of the above, i.e., heaven. They also noticed that the infinite mass of galaxies moving with a velocity of 20,000 miles/second was generating a kinetic energy = $1/2 MV^2$ and this was balancing the total energy consumption of the cosmos.^x

Being in contact with spiritual music like chants, shlokas and mantra, harmonization of the centers of consciousness is possible through sound and color. "The centers of consciousness and energy are known as *chakras* in Sanskrit, which means wheel of energy-consciousness. Each energy centers or *chakras* reverberates with a particular sound frequency and corresponds to specific planes of consciousness."^{xi} These Chakras are extremely powerful transmitters and receivers which must be essentially balanced to be healthy and emotionally strong. All sorts of fears and tensions usually block the centers which obstructs the spiritual heritage in our lives.

Music Producer Karsh Kale once said, "For someone the sound of the bansuri is the sound of Krishna, while for somebody else, the sound of sub bass frequencies is a connection to spirituality." Ravi Shankar put it when asked if music is essentially spiritual: "The highest form in music is spirituality." When it is, the effect on us — our thoughts, our emotions, our subconscious, and even our physical well-being — can be quite profound.^{xii} Hence, it is important to direct the world towards spirituality and music for their wellbeing and persona transcendence.

Maybe people have forgotten the roots, but India has always been the flagbearer of spirituality. It is said that we are the descendants of rishi-munis, thus it is not complex process to reboot spirituality, Yoga, music therapy in India.

Folklore and Therapy

When there was nothing as such like music, only two types of music genres existed: Worship music and folk music. There were various classifications done with time and need of the hour: *Margi and Deshi sangeet, Saamik-Aarchik and Laukik-Alaukik sangeet*; but the concept was the same. Organized music (Classical) was for worship and mantra-chant and was supervised by the elite knowledgeable class. Casual or folk music belonged to the common masses.

Folklore was the casual or light songs created by the common people to perform normal household and day-to-day tradition. Folk songs and dances, as the name 'folk' (masses) denotes, are the origin of music because it was created and sung whole heartedly by common men. Every culture, region, and country have their own folk

music in their own comfortable language, accent, dialect, rhythm, meter, and pitch. Folk music, since created by the people, for the people, portrays the lifestyle, thought-processes, temperaments, rituals, caste creed, and even dress-code of that region. It does not have any rules-regulations of music, therefore, it's extremely intimate, fluent, casual for the general masses. There are folk songs for all occasions or without any occasion, such as wedding, rituals, child-birth, baby-shower, agriculture-folks, festival-driven, seasonal-folk, folklore for celebrating youth or adolescence, and so on. In fact, classical music was created after folk music to standardize and organize the contents in the same.

Folk music can be considered as one of the most appropriate tools of music therapy because it is people's own tunes. The culture of frequent folklore festivals is held usually within small towns where people are more connected, interactive, and comparatively lead less routine life. In bigger cities, these folk culture is missing. People in big cities, being over-busy, might be unaware of this fact, but they really miss their roots and its music. Folk culture/concerts/get-together in the cosmopolitan areas should evolve so that the people connect and get refuge in their own music. This might prove one of the biggest way to form musically controlled culture and environment.

Concept of Raga therapy

Ragas, the modes of Indian Music, and their metric-rhythmical counterparts, the talas, are used to accelerate or slow down heart-beat and metabolism, to produce heat or cold, desire, frustration, happiness, energy, lethargy etc.^{xiii} Most common approach used in the Indian form of music therapy is the "raga-based approach. It basically involves the application of musical pieces focusing on the swara patterns. Indian music therapy is always considered as the Raga therapy because that is only our very own music. India music therapy or Raga Chikitsa is a widespread area among today's musicologists and researchers as it seems to have much scope.

Raga Chikitsa- Treatment or healing done by making the patients listen to the ragas is Raga Chikitsa. Ragas are the fixed characteristic tunes, having a definite set of sound frequencies played repeatedly. Repetitive audition of the definite sound frequencies containing irresistible emotions helps in healing a person. Therefore, ragas make one cry, or can take one high to the level of bliss and contentment. In a study carried out by Shantala Hegde, it was noted that ragas with more major notes were seen to have a positive valence on the emotional state of person while ragas with more minor notes had a more negative valence. Patients are made to listen to music and then discussions

are made on how the music makes them feel. This kind of music therapy is effective in Indian culture due to the deep connection to religion and faith.^{xiv}

Important Steps to promote Music Therapy

- **Research Area should be stronger:**

There are not many researches in the field of Raga (Indian Music) therapy as compared to that in the west. To illustrate, there are plethora of scientific views on music therapy and Mozart music on google and YouTube. Alzheimer and autism control through Music therapy has occupied a lot of researches and discoveries and started the practices.

“No study is published until date from India with respect to substance use, dementia, or schizophrenia and music.”^{xv} There are only a handful of Indian musicologists who are working in this field. To name a few, Dr. T.V. Sairam, who is the only recognized personality, a torchbearer in this field and who has worked a lot in the Raga therapy. In addition, Dr. Sumathy Sunder, Dr. Suvarna Nalapat, Dr. Bhaskar Khandekar, Dr. Rajendar Menen are some of the Indian Music therapists and researchers who uplifted the field. But the problem is, everybody writes about ‘what ragas heal which mental issue’, ‘What to listen for such and such problem.’ In this advancing world, where people look for reason, where the tendency of delving into logic is gradually occupying its space, the Indian music therapy can only nurture through the ragas exploration: ‘How ragas heal our body?’ ‘What are the inner mechanisms while listening to the ragas?’ or ‘how body cells react while rendering a song’: these questions are pretty much important to explore. People out there are spilled with questions when they associate with this field. Thus, there should be more authentic evidences regarding how ragas heal, to convince people about the relevance of music therapy and make them get directed. Moreover, people will value our own culture and age-old therapeutic traditions.

According to Michael G McGuire, Music Therapist and a Professor in Greece, “The best way to start identifying competencies depends on the country, its culture, and how much literature might be published in music therapy. Perhaps one way that would be common to all countries would be to gather expert opinions from practitioners of music therapy.”^{xvi}

Why is it difficult to prove raga- healing causes scientifically?

Sadhguru truly states, “Instead of delving into logical side of things, enjoy the magic of what you are doing, for life is to live in the present.” Like spirituality, Raga music is also beyond the reach of science and logics. It is found that every specific Raga cause different effects on different people according to their temperament and case history, therefore it gets difficult for the researchers and musicians to conclude the rational aspects on how ragas heal. For instance, Atlekar (1986) observed that Ragas like *Shankara*, *Patdeep*, *Hindol* and others have proved good in bringing behavioral changes in children of 8 to 18 years of age. He also observed significant changes in the mood from irritating to normal after administration to them.^{xvii} According to Tiwari (1980), Pandit Omkar Nath Thakur had observed several beneficial effects of Ragas on human beings. He reports that Pandit Omkar Nath Thakur cured a boy suffering from insomnia because of rendering raga “puriya”.^{xviii}

Dr. Ravi Kannan, a leading Cancer specialist working at a Cancer institute in India, while an interview with Dr. Sumathy Sundar, discusses the complexity of research in this area with the wide range of variables and associated ethical and consent issues. He encourages the usage of standardized assessment tools and notes that such tools exist for researching the cancer patient’s quality of life in relation to various therapeutic interventions.^{xix}

“In art, there will always be the diversity of methods, cultural settings, regional health belief systems, different biographies of music enculturation and reception.” says Jorg Fachner, Professor of music, health and the brain in Anglia Ruskin University, and editor of Music therapy today. Jorg further states, “The practice of doing music therapy is always a unique situation and this uniqueness has to be considered when looking at results. Therefore, single case studies or studies with multiple baselines dominate music therapy research. It is an adequate way to document what must be considered. Research methods are means for formalizing our knowledge so that we can compare what we do.”^{xx}

- **Increased Music Therapy Colleges**

There are handful of colleges which offer music therapy certification course. To name a few are: Chennai School of Music Therapy, Chennai, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth, CMTER, Puducherry, MET-Certificate in music therapy, Mumbai, Meera Center for Music Therapy Education & Research by Manollasini Trust, Bangaluru, Nada Centre for music therapy, Delhi, The Music Therapy trust, Delhi. A few online certifications are also

available as in Indian association of Music therapy etc. The Indian Institute of Medical Music Therapy (IIMMT) a unit of Apollo hospital, Chennai offers courses both online and offline for aspiring music therapists.

To uplift music therapy field into the upper level of popularity and practical application, it is essential to have MT departments in the colleges and universities, so that more students have access to the course. Moreover, people aspire for researching in the scope. "Faculty should be appropriately educated in music therapy and with substantial exposure to clinical and laboratory medicine or should be appropriately educated in classical music. The training institution should provide and maintain appropriate academic and technological resources. The faculty use of music therapy should emerging in four areas:

- In clinical and laboratory medicine
- In psychology
- In special education
- In research certification course."^{xxi}

The students should be able to design, utilize individual music experiences to access, treat and evaluate patients. There should be adequate and convincing fellowship programs in the field regarding related sub-topics like music & psychology, music & Yoga, *Melakarta* Raga system, Music & spirituality, and music as therapy.

"According to the world federation of music therapists (WFMT), a person appropriately educated in music therapy should have ability to use music through systematic planning to provide opportunities for the following:

- Anxiety and stress reduction
- Non-pharmacological management of pain and discomfort
- Positive changes in emotional state
- Relaxation
- Decreased length of stay in hospice
- Emotional intimacy with patients and caregivers."^{xxii}

- **Regular MT workshops in schools, IT-companies, government sector, and residential societies to spread awareness**

Music is involved implicitly during the rituals and entertainment tours, but it is essential to feel its existence. Instead of making it play in the background, active listening and singing must be practiced by the people so that it can help healing. This information can be shared by organizing regular music therapy workshops within the residential areas and workplaces. Most people die to sing and dance but cannot manage this in their routine busy life. Especially the frustrated lot in government sectors, banks, who work twenty-four seven require a musical dose in their offices to subside their negative emotions, gossip tendencies etc. The music therapy team should be skilled enough to be able to convince the management. Mostly, people do not have time to listen to their favorite music actively for ten minutes. Spreading awareness about music listening while executing the daily household plays a vital role. As listening to music has the capacity to initiate a multitude of cognitive processes in the brain, it might be assumed that music also influences stress-related cognitive processes and, therefore, physiological responses.^{xxiii}

Dr. Vinaya Nair, music therapist in Niramaya clinic, Secunderabad, in her therapy sessions, makes the patient recalls how they danced on songs and encourages them to start enjoying music and dance even in their busy life as well. These frequent music therapy workshops make people realize the importance of positivity, childishness, smiles, playfulness, mischiefs: which keeps away from stress and diseases.

- **Various fields which can be linked with MT: Aromatherapy, Reflexology, Acupuncture, Yoga**

Indulging other various fields like acupuncture, Reflexology, Reiki, aromatherapy with music may prove an added advantage for its promotion and practice. These fields are gradually emerging as the side-treatments and might progress fully among the rich and sophisticated lot, therefore, connecting music with the fields may be considered a significant step for music therapy promotion. Harmonic Medicine is the model using the theory that the body rhythms synchronize to an outer rhythm applied for therapeutic purpose, can restores the energy balance in acupuncture channels and organs and the condition of well-being.^{xxiv}

Music and acupuncture: Music-Acupuncture is a pleasant and powerful sound therapy that increases life energy and improves health. This method simply removes stress, tensions and blockages from vital organs, body systems, meridians and chakras and giving the body a free flow of life energy. This method is already common in Sweden and Spain. It balances your physical body with the 5 elements: heart-small intestine, spleen-stomach, lungs-large intestine, kidney-bladder and liver-gallbladder. The effect

of Music-Acupuncture is like a cleaning shower or deep massage on quantum, cell and molecular level. Music Acupuncture uses sounds instead of needles, which is far more efficient. The treatment balances all our systems, revitalizing the body and giving us power, increased health and life quality. The result is total harmony physically, emotionally and mentally. Music-Acupuncture is a way to higher consciousness and divine health.^{xxv}

Reiki and Music: Reiki is an ancient Japanese healing practice which is spiritual, vibrational and used to uplift the balance within the human system. “Reiki does not involve physical manipulation or the ingestion or application of any substances but works with the subtle vibrational field thought to surround and penetrate the body.”^{xxvi} It simply involves therapeutic touch, healing touch and develops spirituality. Reiki has been practiced a lot throughout the world including India. Reiki along with music has also been started and is considered as more beneficial in many cases. For instance, music like ‘*To eternity and beyond*’ by Ashaneen or ‘*I lift my hands*’ by Carl Borden transcends the healing cells and makes the balance perfect. With same concept, having Reiki practices in music therapy clinics (other way round) might also be beneficial for bolstering the stream.

Aromatherapy - Another field of using essential oils or natural oils extracted from flowers, bark, stems, leaves, roots or other parts of a plant, used for mood enhancement, better cognition, pain relief, is also gaining momentum among the corporates and well-to-do masses. Music therapy clinics may have these services too for an added advantage for the patients and for boosting the sound therapy industry as well.

Likewise, services like reflexology, color-therapy, Yoga, aerobics, laughter therapy, may be included in the music therapy clinics to attract the patients and common people.

- **Increase of Music Therapy clinics**

Dr. Vinaya Nair shares her experience on why it is important to have MT clinics in majorities of cities. “Majority of the people do not show up for the treatment for the fear of non-sustenance and irregularity. People ask me whether they can continue the treatment even when they are out of town... And I go unanswered because I can’t guarantee that.”^{xxvii} For the proper flourishing of the field, it is essential that there should be increased number of therapy clinics in the maximum cities.

- **Awareness to subside general temperament about medication**

Allopathy driven masses: There are a few issues, in terms of the mentality of the people in India, which may be the element to prevent music therapy from growing and must be checked. According to Mr. Aurelio, Director of Svaram Musical Instruments Research Station and Director and Trustee, Mohanam Cultural Centre situated at Auroville Community, Pondicherry, “Despite many myths and legends about the magic of music we don’t find very many direct references in the scriptures or contemporary music practice about healing with sound or music therapy. As is so typical in many other areas of the Indian tradition, much is shrouded in mystery of the sacrosanct past and there is also a strain of resistance of approaching the subject too directly and rationally.”^{xxviii}

Not only in our country but the natural human tendency is to get gravitated towards faster and easier treatments. Therefore, everyone is inclined towards surgeries, antibiotics, and strong steroids because these are superfast and easy way-out, however, they are more body-weakening methods. Therapies like music, Yoga, acupressure, are comparatively slow in nature but heal one from the roots and immunize the body. Especially music therapy is pretty much abstract. It does heal but in the deepest level that physical body might not realize.

Another myth is: **costliest the treatment, effective it is.** People are ready to spend five-six lakhs in surgeries and medications but do not believe in upgrading the lifestyle. However, Yoga, exercises and fitness has received much larger place since a decade because of the rigorous effort of Baba Ramdev. But majority of Indians have probably made medication and formal treatment their lifestyle. Therefore, believing in the cheaper and deeper methods like music therapy still grabs a backseat in Indian masses, which should be changed by frequent promotion and awareness of music therapy in music education.

Doctor’s misguidance and ‘make money’ attitude: Majority doctors in the hospitals recommend medicines and avoid guiding about therapeutic methods other than allopathy and antibiotics. Even in the normal problem which can easily be treated by Yoga, stretching, they prescribe antibiotics till the extent of the body getting resistant of that medicine and heavier dose (steroids) are required. This is an unethical business and must be checked. For instance, a dozen researches have proved that cancer is nothing more than a degeneration in the cells and lack of oxygen in the body which can be treated by Yoga and singing bowl within months, even at the last stage. But cancer patients still undergo ample of surgeries and chemotherapies by doctor’s

misguidance.^{xxix} Doctors should recommend Yoga and natural therapies and of course guide the patients about healthy lifestyle.

- **Overcoming Common Myths About Music Therapy**

I have interviewed some of the musicians and maestros to gauge how they feel about music therapy. As predicted, they were not very convinced with the stream. “Music therapy is a wrong field. Music is obviously a great thing for relaxation and subsiding stress but cannot cure diseases. It cannot mend the broken bones; cannot treat chronic diseases like Cancer, Hepatitis, Dengue etc.”^{xxx} says Dr. Ojesh Pratap Singh, a vocalist and professor in Music department, University of Delhi. This statement is partially true and pragmatic in day to day scenario. Likewise, an IT-sector guy remarks logically, “These days hospitals are practicing playing tunes at the time when people sit and wait impatiently outside the O.T. for their familiar while operation is held inside. This is disgusting! How can a person enjoy music at that very hour?”

Explanation: Music works on the root level. Music therapy never claims to combat cancer or dengue, neither it can treat broken bones. But it definitely empowers from within and increases the inner ability and resilience to fight with diseases coolly and prepares us for the situation. For instance, person waiting outside the O.T is facing the most stressful situation and he is full of tension and anxiety. Whereas, practically, he should more resilient and stronger to bear any bad news. One might not be listening to the tunes, but the passive listening of the background tunes helps one mollify that anxiety, stress and uplifts one to be powerful in situations. Similarly, doctors constantly switch on the music in the operation theatres, to avoid panicky in the emergency and disastrous situations.

“The music has what is called Binaural Beats. These beats are incorporated in the music, and they are set to different frequencies to stimulate your brain. Binaural Beats was discovered in 1893 by Heinrich Wilhelm Dove, and it works by broadcasting two different frequencies in each ear. The frequencies are set in the music, and are different for whatever problem you have, the music may sound the same, but are totally different. The music is soft and calming, with sounds of waterfalls and different types of animal sounds, it’s like you’re out in the woods, it’s great, very relaxing.”^{xxxi}

The tunes and rhythm transcend the contentment level in certain mishap and problems. Sound therapy has an inevitable power to uplift the positivity and ‘feel good’ levels with time. Tunes may not work overnight but soothes the body cells, mind and

soul. For instance, one meets an accident and finds himself entangled beneath the broken car. Obviously, the victim will be taken nowhere other than the hospital, but if the person is musically sound or might listen to the sonorous tunes in the hospital while treatment, tunes might alleviate his anxiety and stress formed by the situation and might be directed towards logical solutions instead of worrying. Anxiety and stress block our brain functioning and reduces the cognitive ability.

“Drug therapy is not preferable due side effects, drug-interactions, dizziness, risk of falling and adverse effect of increasing agitation. Agitation during bathing, in strange circumstances, during food intake, etc. may be due to minor fear, inner complex, and such behavior can be corrected easily with music therapy.”^{xxxii}

Dr. T.V. Sairam rightly states, “Whatever could be the mechanism, it is a plain fact that music affects and alters the mood. By selecting a right kind of music, mankind can derive immense benefits in overcoming many an ailment of the day including depression, stress, and stress-related disorders.”^{xxxiii}

Diseases are psycho-somatic: Researches have enormously proved that almost all the diseases are psycho-somatic means involving both body and mind. 90 percent of the diseases are the degeneration in the body parts due to improper lifestyle, awful eating habits, stress and negligence in the mind functioning, negative thoughts etc. According to Dr. Vinaya Nair, music therapist in Niramaya clinic, Secunderabad, “Even the diseases like cancer, Dengue, Hepatitis, are psycho-somatic diseases and breeds 75 percent due to the mental stress, lack of acceptance and inner power. People who chill out in their daily life activities, take blink decisions, never regret their actions, never think too much for the future, don’t worry for their kids, normally never face these diseases from occurring and keep healthy.”^{xxxiv} Mental diseases like dementia, Alzheimer, autism, Parkinson in the late 60s are also the root cause of stressful, over-busy, tension-oriented life, which can be handled by music in the vast manner. Therefore, even if the musical tunes are used for relaxing mind and one take it as a routine in the longer run, chances are good that one can cure diseases by healing the mind.

“Music therapy as a tool in spiritual healing. Both music and spirituality function on the symbolic level, allowing for communication, transformation, and growth. Music therapy can encourage altered states of consciousness, providing the environment for symbolism and spiritual growth. Myths and rituals foster a shared symbolic reality that often expresses basic cultural and societal values.”^{xxxv}

According to Greek medical theory, there are four human temperaments/personality types - sanguine, melancholic, choleric, phlegmatic. Each is associated with one of the 4 body juices, or humours – blood, yellow bile, black bile, phlegm – and one of the 4 elements – air, fire, earth and water. According to the beliefs of the day, illness was a result of biochemical disturbances, namely the imbalance of one or more of the body juices. Music was believed to have an influence on the nervous system, resulting in a return to harmony of the body juices.^{xxxvi}

‘Follow the league’ attitude: Dr. Vinaya Nair states that, “Promoting music therapy among Indian population is both tough and easy job.” On one hand, people at first might distrust the idea because they are in the mode of taking expensive and fast recovery of antibiotics. In addition, people in India (majority) get glued up with the most expensive treatment. Unlike the westerners, we are more innocent and flexible and do not go with the scientific proof and logic. We tend to follow something if other 200 people are following it.

Attractive Infrastructure: Ambience matter a lot these days. Music therapy clinics should be more elegant and cleaner in terms of visual impression. “People get attracted with the look and feel of the clinic. Therefore, one must maintain a fascinating, fragranced, infrastructure with appropriate lighting, etc. to settle the patients. My idea is not to misguide or hypnotize the patients but to provide them in what they feel pleasure.” Specifies Dr. Vinaya Nair.

Conclusion

As more and more people opting for non-invasive systems of alternative and complementary medicines, the future for music therapy seems to be quite promising and bright. Moreover, we have seen in this lesson that the recent scientific research in the areas of mental ailments, stress, functioning of the brain and a host of other subjects has thrown open a new endorsement for the ancient concepts of therapeutic values in sound and music.

Music therapy in India is just evolving and there is a need to develop practice and research to bring to the International forefront, the therapeutic utility of the great treasure of the unique Raga system of music and the positive approach of the Indian healing traditions advocating health. Indian Music Therapy has a lot to learn from the

West since the West has seen the development of this field over a period of 50 years. In the United States, you have been a pioneer in establishing Music Therapy competencies through rigorous research and in a way, have given a direction to large professional organizations like the American Music Therapy Association, which is doing a great deal of work regarding competencies and levels of practice now.

Promoting the root-level treatments like music therapy among Indian masses is extremely essential not only in the context of medicine and treatment but also in terms of spirituality and wisdom. People, in current situation, are highly misguided and are frustrated by the constant requirement of drugs and steroids. They highly need the guidance on grass-level systematic healing instead of unguaranteed symptomatic treatments. Music therapy has an abundance scope in India and we, the team, should not leave any stone unturned to transcend it in the higher stages of treatment.

I conclude my paper with an excellent saying by Swami Paramanand:

“There are certain things that have universal attributes, like music. Something of greater magnitude is conveyed by them. They connect us with the universal storehouse of life and knowledge.”

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Glossary

- i. *Sadaja, Rishaba, Gandhara, Madhyama, Panchama, Dhaivata and Nishada* – Full names of seven Indian Notes respectively: Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni.
- ii. *Sringar, Hasya, Karuna, Vira, Raudra, Bhayanak, Vibhatsa, Adbhuta*: Eight prime *rasa* or human emotions stated by Maharishi Bharata in the epic Natyashastra. These eight emotions are: love, Laughter, compassion, heroism, wrath, fear, disgust, and wonder respectively.
- iii. *Bilahari*: A karnatik raga.
- iv. *Naa Jiva Dhara* – Song or Padam composed by Thyagaraja.
- v. *Chaintanya Sampradaye*: Vaishnava Religious movement founded by Chaitanya Mahaprabhu for worshipping Lord Vishnu. *Vallabha Sampradaya* is another religious Krishna-centered cult founded by Vallabhacharya in the Braj region of India.
- vi. *Sanathan Dharma* – Another name for the oldest religion in the world **Hinduism**. It means “the eternal tradition”. Also, it’s called *Vedic* dharma.
- vii. *Fungama*- Modern Slang for fun and Hungama (celebration).
- viii. Gayatri mantra: A popular Sanskrit Mantra: *Om bhur bhuvah swah Tat savitur varenyam Bhargo devasya dheemahi Dhiyo yo nah prachodayat!!*
- ix. *Melakarta Ragas*- 72 Parent ragas in Carnatik Classical Music.
- x. *Svaram*- Indian Notes.
- xi. *Mohanam, Shankara, Hindol, Patdeep, Puriya*, -Name of the North-Indian or Hindistani Ragas.
- xii. Raga *Chikitsa- Healing through Ragas*
- xiii. *Chakras- Energy Centers or Consciousness*.
- xiv. *Deshi-margi Sangeet, Laukik-Alaukik; Saamik-Aarchik*: Ancient classification of the music genres: Folk and classical

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- xv. *Udgeeth*- articulation of the mantra. One of the four steps in *Prabandh*, Ancient classical music genre.
 - xvi. *Samadhi*- penance, trance
 - xvii. *Savitri/Veda mata*- Savitri, Goddess of Vedas, Lakshmi Ji
 - xviii. *Munis*- Sages
 - xix. *Om*- Cosmic Sound.

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