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Healing Comfort from German Dr Cordula Dietrich through 'MusicTherapy' using 'Body Tambura'

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Exclusive Report by Alfie- Team Mangalorean (with inputs from Jerardine D'Souza-Founder Director,MAA)

"Musictherapy with the Body Tambura is purely opening up new vistas and window of new strategic holistic approach to treatment in palliative care. It has an effect on Body, Mind and Spirit dimensions of the patient in terms of a deep holistic relaxation and significant reduction of physical pain. Music therapy can bring relief in dying patients. Music therapy is intensively used in Palliative Care" - Dr Med Cordula Dietrich- Psychiatrist, Psychotherapist, Relaxationtherapist, Musictherapist-Berlin, Germany.

Mangaluru: Research has shown that music has a profound effect on your body and psyche. In fact, there's a growing field of health care known as music therapy, which uses music to heal. Those who practice music therapy are finding a benefit in using music to help cancer patients, children with ADD, and others, and even hospitals are beginning to use music and music therapy to help with pain management, to help ward off depression, to promote movement, to calm patients, to ease muscle tension, and for many other benefits that music and music therapy can bring. This is not surprising, as music affects the body and mind in many powerful ways.



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havoc on the body, and can help keep creativity and optimism levels higher, bringing many other benefits. Music can bring lasting benefits to your state of mind, even after you've stopped listening. Music has also been found to bring many other benefits, such as lowering blood pressure (which can also reduce the risk of stroke and other health problems over time), boost immunity, ease muscle tension, and more. With so many benefits and such profound physical effects, it's no surprise that so many are seeing music as an important tool to help the body in staying (or becoming) healthy.

With all these benefits that music can carry, it's no surprise that music therapy is growing in popularity. Many hospitals are using music therapists for pain management and other uses. Music therapists help with several other issues as well, including stress. While music therapy is an important discipline, you can also achieve many benefits from music on your own. Music can be used in daily life for relaxation, to gain energy when feeling drained, for catharsis when dealing with emotional stress, and in other ways as well. Music can be an especially effective tool for stress management, and can be used in daily life.



Music plays an important part in the range of therapies and carefully selected music can facilitate emotional self-expression and provide a supportive and non-threatening environment with opportunities to to confront fears and discuss concerns. Music Therapy can be performed by using a special instrument called 'Body Tambura', which was first invented by Mr Deutz on Berlin-Germany in the year 2004. The beauty of this instrument is that it is very simple requiring no musical experience or training and can be played by anyone. It can be helpful in a number of different clinical situations due to its efficiency in significantly reducing anxiety, distress and fear. Differing from the traditional Indian tambura, the body tambura is rectangular in shape, made of lightweight wood, with a concave base designed to fit comfortably on the chest or back of a person lying down.

In recent years the Body Tambura, a new instrument in the field of music therapy inspired by the classical Indian Tambura, has received increasing attention by German music therapists working in palliative care or with coma patients. The original Indian Tambura is a long-necked plucked lute with four to six wire strings: Plucking the strings in a regular pattern creates a base tone harmonic resonance, which is called bordun or drone function. The notes of Tambura are not part of the melody itself, but support and sustain the melody by providing a colorful and dynamic harmonic resonance field of basic tones.





The New Year 2015 has indeed started with the remarkable goal in the palliative care programme - The First Geriatric Palliative Care Course in India, Manipal University in association with MediAcion Germany had its third session at KMC Hospital, at Attavar. Dr. Jochen Becker, CEO, MediAcion directed the Course, and was organized by Dr. Prabha Adhikari, Head Geriatrics, KMC. As a part of the course, Dr. Cordula Dietrich, who works under Dr. Becker conducted a brilliant mind altering "Music Therapy" using the instrument "Body Tambura". She played it for the terminally ill patients in the Hospital ward, who were "Magically" calmed and slid into a soothing sleep. It was truly a 'Seeing is Believing' experience. I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Cordula and interact with her to get more details about 'Music Therapy' using 'Body Tambura'.

The participants got the fruitful essence of music therapy, which was conducted by Dr. Cordula Dietrich. She has a wonderful vision to improve the palliative care patients' quality of life through music. She brought the musical instrument namely 'Body Tambura', which is very lighter and easier to carry. The music makes to create a positive impact in all the souls of human beings (irrespective of the conditions of human being). She also mentioned that the palliative care is opposite to curative medicine, which is the most valuable keywords in conveying about palliative care to others.





Dr Cordula Dietrich explained about the importance of palliative care music therapy in a comprehensive way. The music therapy creates harmonious relationship between the therapist and the patient. There are two types of music therapy - Active Music Therapy, and Receptive Music Therapy. By using the musical instrument called 'Body Tambura', the palliative care patients would feel comfortable and peace in their mind. It started right from the ancient period onwards and the music makes every souls to react in a positive way. People from across the world know the importance of the music and the research has shown that palliative care patients have improved with the help of the music therapy. She emphasized more the "Body Tambura" which has a real sense of bringing positive change in palliative care patients.

Dr Cordula Dietrich conducted the practical session, where she took the "Body Tambura" and demonstrated it for the participants. Later, she called one by one to use the 'body tambura' to feel as active and receptive music therapy. Each and every one, who used the body tambura shared their experiences as to how did they undergo with the feelings. Whoever used the body tambura felt comfortable because they experienced that the physical pain has somewhat has reduced. Using the 'Body Tambura' on a palliative care patient, Dr Cordula Dietrich kept on playing the body tambura for about 15 minutes and noticed the change in the patient. The patient was calmly listening to the music, which was tuned in body tambura and induced her to sleep. The patient expressed that she felt comfortable and peace in her heart with the help of the music.



Speaking to me Dr Prabha Adhikari said, "The suffering terminally ill people cant be put at ease even with medication, this therapy is truly a mind opener, and we will get a "Body Tambura' and use it in the ICU". Also talking to me my buddy, Er.Jerardin D'souza, Founder

Director, Mangalore Alzheimer's Association- MAA- said, "This 'Magic' instrument 'Body Tambura' should be used by all leading Hospitals. Doctors and medical staff should be trained to use this, I have witnessed the Magic Effect it had on the terminally ill". Er D'Souza is participating in the Palliative Course and has created lot of awareness on Alzheimer's Disease [AD] and Palliative Care. He was also featured on Radio Sarang for an hour long "jana Dhvani" Phone in , interactive Program recently, where the rural people called in to know about AD.

What a 'Mind Altering' Experience the 'Body Tambura it' was.! Dr Cordula's spiritual journey to reach out to the suffering more than what her 'Allopathic' training could do, by learning Music Therapy and then easing the Pain of the terminally ill , by using it on them, truly opened our mind and eyes. It was indeed a great experience meeting Dr Cordula and 'Learn' about 'Music' the way she showed it. The highly medically qualified gathering was moved beyond belief. All were unanimous in vouching for the 'Trance' Dr Cordula cast by her ' Body Tambura' experience.



It was truly an honor for me to witness doctors of the Calibre of Dr. Prabha Adhikari, wanting to get the 'Tambura' and urge the management to incorporate it in the system, specially for the Terminally ill in the ICU. Witnessing the way how Dr Cordula used the 'Body Tambura' on an elderly lady in the Ward, put her to rest, fully relaxed and soothed, was something to be seen to be believed. Indeed it was a great Experience for everyone present.

Explaining to me about Musictherapy, Dr Cordula Dietrich said, " Musictherapy is the he idea of harmonizing the human soul through music is more than thousands of years old. In ancient times music expressed the cosmic harmony and symmetry and was a mirror of the cosmic laws. Health was closely related to musical rules, whereas sickness meant, that the "human instrument "has not been tuned well. In our modern time the kind of musictherapy, I have the honour to present here, includes the cultural background, psychodynamical and biographical factors of both patient and therapist and last but not least creates on the waves of sounds a confidential therapeutic interpersonal relationship between the therapist and his patient".

She further added that "The modern interdisciplinary research on music therapy is concerned with: the sensation and the effect of music on the patient; With the underlying neurobiological factors and with psychology, comprising emotional and developmental aspects in these interactive processes. There are two main areas of musictherapy namely the active form and the receptive form.

Active musictherapy: By professionalizing the field of music as therapeutic, a psychoanalytical based music therapy was developed, which is used in clinical settings. (Prof.Langenberg, Berlin, 1998) This analytical approach deals with the conscious and unconscious interaction between the therapist and his patient, established by sounds of music. Thus, an interactive process of treatment comes into being and is expressed by the free musical improvisation of both therapist and patient. This form is guided by the following rules: We both, therapist and patient play, 1. whatever comes into our minds, and 2. let us guide by what wants to be expressed, even if we have the impression that it may be absurd or without any sense.



There are great numbers of instruments available to inspire the patient to express himself with a piano, cello, violin, percussion instruments, xylophone and so on. In the interactive analytical musical encounter feelings, phantasy's and images arise from the soul, which may represent symbols and ancient patterns of inter-human relationships or conflicts of the past, which later on can be worked out.

Receptive Musictherapy: The receptive musictherapy refers to the hearing of music as compared to the active mutual improvisation on musical instruments. This kind of receptive musictherapy is indicated, when the direct bi-personal improvisation with the affective interaction between two subjects (therapist and patient) could be too early because the patient may be too much frightened. In this interpersonal receptive setting the therapists function is holding and not confronting. But through the mediation of deep trust it is possible

to activate the resources of the patient to enable him to face for example frightening fears and defense mechanisms.

There are large number of instruments, which are used for receptive musictherapy as gongs, rainsticks, ocean drums, soundbeds, monochords and the Body Tambura. These instruments produce a kind of monochrome sound, which takes the patient into a trance like state of consciousness. Also programs of classical music are used by therapist in receptive musictherapy to work on suppressed inner conflicts. The two examples of Receptive musictherapy in palliative care are- The Body Tambura; and the Guided Imagery in Music (GIM)".



When I asked her what problem does a terminally ill or dying patient has to face in general, Dr Cordula said, " He/She may be confronted with: -strong physical pain; anxiety, stress, depression, change of mood and mode; and the need to let go all the surroundings, like house,job, environment,physical abilities, mind functions, personal freedom and all kind of relationships.

"What kind of support or end-of-life-care may the terminally ill or dying patient need?" I asked, for which Dr Cordula replied saying, "It is important, that he/she will experience trustful interpersonal relations, providing feelings of holding, acceptance and understanding. It happens often, that words cannot express their deepest feelings, emotions and desires. In this ambivalent situation music in general or the sound of a musictherapeutical instrument like the Body Tambura (new technology) can facilitate, what is impossible to be expressed in words. Without words it helps vicinity to occur thus lightening the process of letting go".



Explaining about the "Body Tambura", Dr Cordula said it is a string instrument design to be placed on the human body. It was invented in Berlin/Germany in 2005 .This easy to handle body instrument is meant for receptive musictherapy with bedridden clients. It is made of naturally grown wood to optimize the vibration, which can be heard and felt by the patient. It has a length of 70 cm, 33cm in width and 8cm height. Its weight is 2200g. It shall be played equally with the tips of the middle fingers of both hands alternately. The instrument is very compact and can be flexibly used. It is tuned on a-d-d-D 7x4 times. The single tones fuse into one sound carpet. On the energy level the sound produces a feeling of being lifted up while being grounded and hold securely"..

About GIM (guided imagery in music), Dr Cordula said " GIM is a music assisted transformational therapy, that offers persons the opportunity to integrate mental, emotional, physical and spiritual aspects of themselves. (Definition of the Association of guided imagery and music). The characteristic feature is a permanent dialogue between music, client and therapists.

Explaining about the use the Body Tambura in the field of receptive musictherapy, Dr Cordula said, " We have already published a study inApril 2014 in the BMC Open Access Journal of Palliative Care. This study on the Body Tambura was done at Lazarus Hospice Berlin in cooperation with Charite Medical University Berlin. The author is Dr. Teut. The study in St Joseph's Hospice Dindigul District in Tamil Nadu in cooperation with Gandhigram University will be published in May 2015 in the Indian Journal of Palliative Care, Delhi."

While concluding her interview with me, Dr Cordula Dietrich said, " Musictherapy with the Body Tambura is purely opening up new vistas and window of new strategic holistic approach to treatment in palliative care. It has an effect on Body, Mind and Spirit dimensions of the patient in terms of a deep holistic relaxation and significant reduction of pain. Palliative care patients can also benefit from music in general. For example with GIM receptive musictherapy patients may imagine things, that were impossible to put into words before. Music

can built trust and touch the soul. The sound of the Body Tambura and Music in general can facilitate, what is impossible to be expressed in words during the last phase of life before death. Without words it may be supportive in the process of letting go ”.

Dr Med Cordula Dietrich - A Brief Profile:



- 1986 - 1987 : studies in art history, Italian language and psychology at the university of Bonn
- 1987-1993 : study of human medicine university of Bonn/Germany
- 1993 : State exam in Human Medicine University of Bonn-Germany.
- 2000 - 2002 : dissertation about siddhamedicine – the introduction of a traditional holistic art of healing in South India, University of Cologne
- 2002-2004 : study of musictherapy at the university of arts / Berlin-Germany.
- 2004 : examination : specialist in psychiatry and psychotherapy / Berlin-Germany.
- Since 2005 : practicing in my own private practice in Berlin/ Prenzlauerberg as psychotherapist, musictherapist and relaxation therapist
- From 2009-2011: further training in GIM (Guided Imagery in Music)/ Berlin
- Since Dec 2011 : GIM – therapist, member of the AMI, GIM-fellow
- Since 1993 : classical voice training Bonn/Cologne/Berlin

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<p>Kadengodlu Shankara Bhat, India Jan 12, 2015</p> <p>Dear Sharia Padithere, namaskara.</p> <p>Just one clarification please from you based your in-depth Sharia knowledge:</p> <p>Is this MUSIC therapy allowed for faithful Muslims also? I know that Aurangajeb used to severely punish all those involved in music & had banned music completely. Isn't it? Please correct me if I am factually wrong.</p> <p>Do you agree with O.R. Pai-maam, "Well, Music is supposed to relax us"?</p>
<p>Jossie Mendonca, UAE Jan 12, 2015</p> <p>A great report Alfie. Truly excellent. It's great to see collaboration between nations for a good cause. The concept of the body tambura is simply out of the box and deserves widespread recognition.</p> <p>Cheers mangalorean.com for keeping us enlightened with such wonderful & refreshing articles.</p>
<p>alwyn, Canada Jan 12, 2015</p> <p>Thank you for the article and for sure music is the relief and healing stress depression negative mindset build by external sources jealousy and many evil effects caused by our own negative feelings towards others. God bless this person coming up with best therapy that what these western people are good for experimental research development etc.</p>
<p>Student Nurse, India Jan 12, 2015</p> <p>Excellent report by Alfie of Mangalorean.com- gives elaborate info on 'Musictherapy'.</p>

Thank you Sir and mangalorean.com

Original R.Pai, USA

Jan 11, 2015

This is a good example of 'Indian' mindset that has the tendency to blindly believe in West/ Western people. Imagine an Indian talking about 'tambura' and its healing powers - our folks would have immediately rejected it as RSS propoganda!!

Well, Music is supposed to relax us. It is nothing new. There is an entire genre of relaxation music that one can listen to. It helps in relaxing, getting better sleep etc. I am somewhat concerned with playing musical instrument inside a hospital. Does't it create noise pollution? Why can't we play the same music using headphones? Is this scientifically studied and approved by regulatory bodies? I also get very nervous when Physicians start talking about 'soul'. Have we scientifically proved that there is a 'soul'? Just curious.

MIHIR, India

Jan 11, 2015

regards and appreciate the effort that has been taken by the Doctors to create the awareness amongst ppl that suffering is not the end. Appreciate the journalist Mr.Alfie for bringing this news to light as not many would have spread this key note--

swati, India

Jan 11, 2015

thank you sir for giving this valuable information for the news and the clarity of the article about music therapy and its use in recent medicine

jerardin dsouza, India

Jan 11, 2015

Mr Alfie deserves all appreciation for the comprehensive & beautiful report on 'Body Tumbura' & Music Therapy by the German Dr Cordula Dietrich. This is something I witnessed. When terminally ill people cant be relaxed bt allopathic medicene, this therapy truly worked. The Allopathic doctors were convinced that it should be incorporated. I thank Mr.Alfie for his God given talent of reporting in detail & clearly. Madam Violet of mangalorean.com deserves salutes for being useful to society by creating awareness on useful news. Mangalore Alzheimer's Association -MAA- is deeply appreciative of your commendable service . Also on behalf of KMC , Dr.Prabha Adhikari, conveys her gratitude & appreciation.---Jerardin D'souza--Founder Director-M.A.A.

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