

Beats, Breath, Belonging: Drumming and Mindfulness to Support Whole-Person Wellness



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Today's session

- Explore the benefits of combining drumming and mindfulness to support emotional well-being, cognitive engagement, and social connection in older adults.
- Engage in a drumming and mindfulness experience where you'll experience techniques designed to promote presence, emotional regulation, and group connection.
- Discuss ways to implement drumming-based mindfulness practices in your existing programming.
- Questions



When you hear the word
"mindfulness" what comes to mind?



Rhythm is a powerful, underused tool to engage in mindfulness.

Rhythm provides us with:

- Structure (predictable patterns)
- Sensory input (sound + vibration)
- Social connection (shared experience)

Rhythm is innate....



Heartbeat



Breathing



Walking Patterns

Mindfulness = paying attention to the present moment

But the anchor doesn't have to be silence.

It can be:

- Breath
- Movement
- Music
- Rhythm

More than
a fad
exercise
program....



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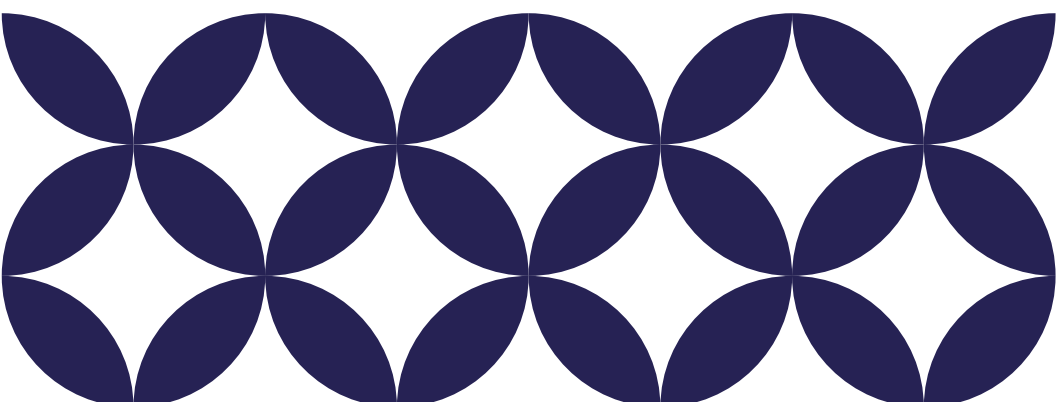
»»» Benefit #1: Emotional Well-Being

Effects of Group Drumming Interventions on Anxiety, Depression, Social Resilience and Inflammatory Immune Response among Mental Health Service Users. Perkins, Ascenso, et al. 2016

- Participants experienced:
 - A 38% reduction in depression
 - A 20% reduction in anxiety
 - A 23% increase in social resilience.

These positive changes remained stable at a 3-month follow-up

Also...The Power of Music!



»»» Benefit #2: Cognitive Well-Being

Drum Communication Program Intervention in Older Adults With Cognitive Impairment and Dementia at Nursing Home. Miyazaki et al. 2020

- Participants experienced significant improvements in general cognitive and executive function scores, as well as Motor & Physical Improvements.
- Difficulty imitating commands and gestures, but retain rhythm skills and exercise-induced by rhythm
- Auditory-motor entrainment – a powerful phenomenon and therapeutic gateway



»»» Benefit #3: Social Well-Being

Making music for mental health: how group drumming mediates recovery Perkins et al. 2016

Three overarching themes:

- Drumming as a form of non-verbal communication, as a connection with life through rhythm, and as a grounding experience that both generates and liberates energy
- Connection: feelings of belonging, acceptance, safety and care, and new social interactions
- Learning as an inclusive activity where the concept of mistakes is dissolved and there is musical freedom

Interpersonal synchrony: when people's behaviors or movements become coordinated in time





Drumming + Mindfulness

Feel → Emotional well-being

Think → Cognitive engagement

Connect → Social well-being

Notice while we drum...



- What you're feeling in your body.
- The vibration when the sticks hit the ball.
- What happens to your attention.
- What happens to your sense of connection with the people around you.

Bringing the program to life!

Equipment

Mindfulness – Purposeful breathing, posture, themes/intentions

Drumming – One off, combinations, call backs

Thank you! *Questions?*



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