

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is music therapy?

A. Music Therapy is a kind of psychotherapy which aims to use music to change the client's current situation for the better, to heal aspects that want healing and to promote growth and development.

Q. Who is music therapy effective for?

A. It can be effective for anyone who enjoys music or who has a liking for a particular style of music.

Q. I really like listening to music however I have never played music. Even if I can't play, can I still take part in music therapy?

A. As music therapy is different to a singing or instrument lesson, even if you don't play anything, you can still take part. You also don't need to practice.

Q. Can I take part with my child?

A. In general, at Kokoro Talk Music, we encourage the mother of the child to be in the same room during the music therapy session (this is different to most music therapy sessions for children). This participation can take many different formats: Parents can take part, can follow the therapist step-by-step and in the case where a parent may take over from the therapist in certain activities, especially for the child who normally looks to mother for assurance or to help complete tasks, together we can adjust any activity to suit you.

Q. What is music therapy most often effective for?

A. Music therapy uses the power of music to draw out a person's inner energy. By 'inner energy' we mean creative power. We often see that by promoting this creative power, each individual can naturally begin to face themselves and can then try to reach their aim of improvement.

Music therapy has demonstrated effectiveness in supporting development, managing aspects of autism, relieving hypersensitivity, enabling improvement for those with depression, alleviating paralysis and muscle tension, reducing the symptoms of psychosomatic illness and in helping those with cognitive impairment or communication difficulties to improve

Q. Are you able to come to our home?

A. We are able to deliver sessions in your home, however please note that for those who live far away, the session fee will be slightly increased and other specific costs will be incurred (i.e. commuting costs). We will travel to you by car as we need to bring the musical instruments so please inform us of a car park or possible place to park near your house.

Q: Who is Music Therapy designed for?

A. From babies to elderly people, music therapy is for anyone who would like to try a psychotherapy which uses music.

Q. I don't have any particular disabilities; therefore, can I receive music therapy?

A. Music therapy is psychotherapy. If you have the intention of receiving music therapy as a form of psychotherapy, then you can partake whether or not you have any disabilities. 仮に、綺麗になるため、痩せるため、美しく年を重ねるため、for example, Music therapy could also help those who want to feel pretty, who want to lose weight(???), who build up years full of beautiful experiences, who want to secretly practice a song to then surprise their friends etc. (意味が合っていますか？)

Q: Will my mother wait in a separate room during the session?

A. In general, at Kokoro Talk Music, we encourage the mother of the child to be in the same room during the music therapy session, no matter what age the child may be. (This is different to most music therapy sessions provided for children). However, if the mother wishes to encourage the child's independence, once the child is primary school Year 3 or above, after thorough discussion with the therapists, the mother may wait in a separate room or leave and return to pick up their child at the end of the session. In general, children of junior high school age and above, or children in high school special support classes and above tend to receive sessions on their own. If the mother of a high school age student is present in the session, they usually relax in the massage chair at the far end of the room, pretending not to see or hear their child.

Q. Is there anything we should prepare in advance?

A. Those receiving music therapy do not need to prepare anything. However, for the purposes of keeping appropriate records, for evaluation and in order to plan the following session, we will take sound and video recordings of each session. If you would like a copy of these recordings, please bring a USB memory stick capable of holding 8GB of data or more. Also, if you would like to take a copy of the sheet music of any songs we sing together home with you or to create your own collection of songs, please bring a clear file with you so we can create your 'My File'. For those who wish to play piano or recorder etc, as the sessions progress there may be a small amount of preparation needed. However this can be done at your discretion and there is no problem in coming to the first few sessions empty handed. You don't need to bring slippers. In principle we don't allow food and drink in the music studio. However, please feel free to bring water-based drinks or any beverage that won't cause a problem if it were to be spilt on an instrument.

Q. Is it possible to not come for a scheduled period but rather a one-off session?

A. Yes, this is possible.

Q. What are the effects of Music therapy/is music therapy effective?

A. There are many different techniques for evaluating whether music therapy is effective or not; it also seems possible that if the person receiving therapy thinks that it is effective, it is and if they think it isn't, then it isn't. Though, if we say that it is effective to begin with, we may see a change in the client's wish to achieve communication. The desire to communicate with someone, to have someone listen to them can come rushing to the fore. Therefore, in order to activate this desire and to enable the client to express this desire, we must search for a method to do so within a broad field. Even more valuably, effects one may never have thought of can occur, along with the opposite: client's may realise a difference in what they thought to be true and the reality, leading to different results to what was initially hoped for.

Q: Do I have to pay for a trail session?

A. For an individual child's session at Kokoro Talk Music Studio, a phone call is made in advance to the carer of the child and the necessary information about the current condition of the child is discussed. The plan of approach is tailored to the individual and a unique plan is created for each person. We also provide an individualistic service for adults, created after meeting and discussing with the person in question. We use music in these sessions which would only bear results for the particular person in question. Therefore, a lot of labour goes into each session. However, the music studio's music therapy activities are not done for profit. The session and membership fees which we receive from each client using our studio or receiving therapy from us, contributes to covering our management costs as a registered non-profit organization. Therefore, regrettably we are unable to provide a free trial session.

Q. Which would be best, a group music therapy session or an individual music therapy session?

A. In general, music therapy is an individualistic therapy; however group therapy sessions are available. There are cases where group therapy sessions are necessary but in order to carefully and thoroughly achieve results for each person, we prefer to take an approach which caters to the individual's needs. Group therapy can be provided for clients who wish to focus on general aims such as improvement of communication, strengthening their ability to adapt to different environments and supporting advancement in various skills. Also, it may suit some clients well if within a group session, we focus on providing plenty of opportunity to communicate with others, rather than expecting a personal improvement. We also have a group for psychiatry patients where we use music to foster an actual consciousness regarding turning outward, instead of turning inward. We also use music as a method to simply teach how to receive another person's speech, another person's created sound and music. In doing this, we aim to help mitigate a patient's unpleasant symptoms. In order to investigate fully to the slightest degree the various developmental disabilities a child of school age may have, we provide individual therapy sessions rather than group sessions. This is the same for elderly people with a degree of Dementia. However there are cases where one-

to-one sessions can create an atmosphere or an image of 'being taught' which can lead to the client feeling nervous, overly anxious and can cause them to want to rebel against the session. With the exception of psychiatric patients, where possible, we can assemble an independent group for around 3-6 people for those who would benefit from a small group therapy session. However, this is totally different to the group sessions we provide at our contracted facilities. Here, we follow the order of the facility, rather than each individual, and our sessions are in accordance with the care giving terms and conditions and/or the therapeutic plans of the facility.

Q. How frequently should I attend music therapy sessions?

A. We recommend attending music therapy sessions at our studio once every 2 weeks. Occasionally, for cases where a concentrated course of care is necessary, we will provide weekly sessions however, a frequency of once fortnightly sessions is generally easier to sustain, is less of a strain on expenses and is easier to incorporate into your daily life and to fit around other activities. According to your wishes we can be flexible regards frequency of sessions however, for those wishing to see an actual improvement we strongly advise fortnightly sessions as much as is possible, so as not lose the progress made in the previous session. However please bear in mind that only one session a month before the client has entered school may easily result in a halt in progress.

Q: What happens in a music therapy session?

A. Sessions vary from person to person, Depending on the client (and their stage in development/infancy). Sessions can include the singing of songs, playing of instruments (piano, synthesizer, Hammond organ, melodica, various percussion instruments, recorder etc), composing, improvising, therapy using songs from musicals, speaking/chatting, exercise and movement therapy by using an exercise ball, relaxing in the massage chair etc. In addition to the general way we employ music in our sessions, we have also held activities such as playing background music on the synthesiser whilst therapist and a child client enjoyed 'travelling the world!' using the Google Earth application, pretending to be a proud baritone with a male adult client, singing classical songs in German, using the full session time to perform the client's requested songs, in a concert like style for a child who had not yet started school, creating personal songs with lyrics written from the heart for a female client, adding sound effects to a story read aloud for another female client and much more.

Q: What kind of music do we listen to in music therapy? (If thinking of music therapy as a passive form of therapy)

A. There are 2 broad categories of music therapy: 'Active' music therapy, where the client participates in making music, and 'passive' therapy which includes activities such as listening to a relaxing CD or live performance and then speaking about the image this created for the client. at Kokoro Talk Music, we provide active music therapy sessions. However, if a client wishes to receive passive music therapy, we can accommodate this also.

Q: Are the contents of our discussions kept in strict confidence? Is our data

protected?

A. All music therapists, who are members of the Japan Society for Music Therapy, must adhere to the Duty of confidentiality and ethical code stipulated in the organisation's regulations. Furthermore, Kokoro Talk Music declared their commitment to the safeguarding of personal information and Privacy Policy announced in the 2017 General Meeting of the Japan Society for Music Therapy. We can provide a written pledge for those who wish.

Q: Can we request a particular therapist?

A. Yes you can.

Q: Who receives music therapy?

A. Originally, most of our clients were children, especially children on the autistic spectrum, with intellectual difficulties or those with multiple and profound disabilities. Our adult clients tend to be those coping with depression, adults with developmental disabilities, those suffering from psychosomatic illnesses and those with disabilities caused by cerebrovascular disease. Recently, those seeking support for their mothers who have fallen ill with dementia have taken part in sessions with us.

Q: What is most often discussed?

A. Many of our clients express their concerns that when their child received the standard medical examination at 3 years old, they were informed that their child was in part or wholly behind the development rate expected. Therefore a course of therapy was prescribed and these parents discuss with us a wish to undertake music therapy concurrently for a period in order to support their child's development. The second most commonly discussed concern is how to support adults with developmental disabilities or psychiatric illnesses in order to reduce their feelings of isolation within society and to improve their social situation through music therapy.

NPO Kokoro Music studio operates in the basement of a family house; it has a kind of hidden cove feel with its low ceiling and the instruments and toys seemingly squirreled away. We feel this somewhat secluded atmosphere can help to put our clients at ease.

Q: How long until I can expect to see results?

A. In the case of children, if sessions are attended at a frequency level of 6-12 times within a 3 -6 month period for those with a mild disabilities, 24-48 times within a 1 -2 year period for those with mid-level disabilities and 72-96 sessions within a 3-4 year period for those with severe disabilities, we are confident to say that you will be able to see effects and feel as though a particular aim has been achieved. In the case of adults, you may be able to notice effects yourself, though there is no unconditional rule due to the wide variety of people who attend our sessions. There are also cases where the actual person concerned may not consider what we, as therapists, consider to be a result or effect. One main aim of the music therapists is to establish a relationship with the client where they can relax and begin to deepen their communication with each other. This is a result demonstrated in music therapy but it does take time to achieve. There are clients who by the end of a session seem relaxed and able to communicate with the therapists, though by the time they come

to the following session, their nervousness has returned. For some clients this happens repeatedly, in which case we can adjust the session time period. Incidentally, the standard amount of time needed for the introduction period is roughly 6 sessions.

Q: Can we receive therapy as a parent and child?

A. If by this, you mean that you also intend to receive the therapy for your own purposes, we would recommend that you do not receive therapy with your child but rather in separate therapy sessions. However, if your intention for receiving music therapy together is so that you can further understand what your child enjoys and how to share this enjoyment together at home, then a joint session would be beneficial for both mother and child. In general, we do encourage mothers and fathers to participate in their child's therapy sessions. However, many parents have expressed a wish to simply be present in the same room during the session, rather than being an active participant. This is most common among parents who have brought their children to music therapy sessions with the aim of supporting their child's development or for the improvement of a particular aspect.

Q: Am I able to change the date and/or time of an appointment?

A. Please contact us by phone or email any time. We request that in the case of cancellation, whether it be a morning or an afternoon session, that you inform us by 9am on the day of the scheduled session. However in some cases such as a sudden fever, illness, onset of flu or in the case of an emergency, earthquake or typhoon, we understand that this may not be possible and an exception shall be made. In the case that no contact is made and the client is absent without giving notice, we shall also take into account whether it was a rare occasion of forgetfulness or if the general health of the client or client's mother is poor. Apart from these exceptions, we request that the client pays for the therapists' commuting fee and for the fee of the scheduled session in the case of a last-minute cancellation, absence without notice or forgetfulness leading to repeated missing of sessions.。

Q: Are music therapists effective by solely performing music?

A. That is how we would like it to be. In order for that to happen, we make the greatest efforts to adapt the sounds and music we make according to the responses and facial expressions of the participants.

Q: Do I need to buy any musical instruments?

A. No, not especially. If you would like to, we can help in this matter.

6 hour 30 mins