

WHAT MAKES DRUMMING SO FANTASTIC ON SO MANY LEVELS?

BESIDES THE FUN, THE FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE, THE EDUCATIONAL BENEFIT, THE PHYSICAL EXERCISE, THE MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT, THE CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND LEARNING? IS N'T THAT ENOUGH? There is more.

I personally want everyone to know about Remo's amazing work with Barry Bittman MD on the health benefits of drumming. I also prefer Remo drums and other percussion products above any other! Go to www.remo.com)

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Biological Benefits of Drumming

Remo's Health Rhythms Division is on the forefront of establishing a solid foundation for proving the biological benefits of drumming. Neurologist Barry Bittman, M.D. and his renowned research team discovered that a specific group drumming approach significantly increased the disease fighting activity of circulating white blood cells (Natural Killer cells) that seek out and destroy cancer cells and virally-infected cells. Along with conventional medical strategies, Dr. Bittman includes group drumming in all of his disease-based programs at the Mind-Body Wellness Center in Pennsylvania.

The Wisdom of the Ancients

While the foundations of wellness are unique to each of us, when it comes to our basic needs, we share much in common. Physical, emotional and spiritual components of well-being are sacred and inseparable.

According to Alicia Clair, Ph.D., MT-BC, Professor and the Director of Music Therapy at the University of Kansas, "Customarily people have interpreted good health as the absence of illness or disease, but more recently wellness has come to a new meaning, feeling as good as one can feel regardless of diagnosis. This new interpretation of wellness is reflected in a shift from medical professional control and management to individuals' assumed responsibility for 'feeling good.' It is broadly understood that 'being well' results from engagement in activities that lead to and maintain health."

To a great extent, the lifestyle choices we choose today will certainly be reflected in the future we create one step at a time. For health is not a goal-- it is a journey traveled throughout our lifetime.

Barry Bittman, MD and Anthony DeFail summed it up in their book, Maze of Life: "It's the way you choose to live your life that counts. Ultimately it's a matter of choice."

And where do these choices lead?

They pave the way to a path of personal discovery where the elements that have particular meaning for us become the building blocks for creating a balanced and healthy life.

What are these elements?

While so many exist, the most basic ones are reflected in an "attitude" of wellness which includes diet, exercise, nurturing, social support, spiritual practice, intellectual stimulation, stress reduction, coping skills and creative expression.

The challenge for each of us is finding time for creating a healthy balance. It's not surprising that in our fast-paced society it's difficult to establish a routine that allows us to blend our wellness choices in a healthy manner. And that's precisely where this form of music-making fits in.

Group Empowerment Drumming harnesses so many elements of wellness in one activity that anyone can enjoy. According to Karl Bruhn, Father of the Music-Making and Wellness Movement, "without the obstacle of a challenging learning curve, group drumming is an enjoyable, accessible and fulfilling activity from the start for young and old alike. From exercise, nurturing and social support, to intellectual stimulation, spirituality and stress reduction, group drumming stimulates creative expression that unites our minds, bodies and spirits!"

It is truly an extraordinary blend of time-tested elements that simply make sense in the overall scheme of maintaining and preserving the gift of a healthy life. Yet there's more.

Drumming can also serve as a rather effective means for restoring a sense of inner balance amidst the incredible challenges of life. Referring to a "HealthRHYTHMS" session held for students and parents one year after a tragic high school event, Christine Stevens, MT/BC said, "Parents and children came to our drum circle silent, apprehensive and disconnected. At first it was difficult to even maintain eye contact. Knowing words could never communicate what each of us felt that day, we slowly began drumming together. The sadness we shared was overwhelming at first, as tears dampened our hands and instruments. Yet as we drummed, renewed support for each other and a collective sense of **hope for a better tomorrow gradually replaced our despair**. Our experience was more than therapeutic-- it connected us on many levels."

IMPACT ON IMMUNE SYSTEM

a healthy immune system is the key component to preventing infectious diseases. We are all exposed to millions of germs every day, so our reliance on our own immune system to fight off most potential infections is indisputable.

What do we mean it can strengthen the immune system? The study of 111 Group Empowerment Drumming participants showed a statistically significant increase in natural killer cell activity after a one-hour group session. Natural Killer cells (NK) are the white blood cells that seek out and destroy cancer and virally infected cells. Additionally, the protocol appears to reverse specific neuroendocrine and neuroimmune patterns of change associated with the classic stress response.

GENOMIC IMPACT

"Stress is really a component of every disease," says James Rosenbaum, MD.

This groundbreaking study published in the February 2005 issue of the international research journal *Medical Science Monitor* shows for the first time that playing a musical instrument can reverse multiple components of the human stress response on the genomic level. We know from previous studies that Group Empowerment Drumming reduces stress, burnout, improves mood states and boosts the immune system. This study looked at the effects of Recreational Music Making (RMM) at the genomic level and demonstrated not simply a reduction in stress but a reversal in 19 genetic switches that turn on the stress response believed responsible in the development of common diseases. This study also "extends our understanding of individualized human biological stress responses on an unprecedented level". (Bittman, B., 2005)

All this information is courtesy of Remo, and Barry Bittman, founder of HealthRHYTHMS. To learn more about Remo percussion, and HealthRHYTHMS Visit www.remo.com