

MIND MATTERS



8 WEEK GROUP DRUMMING PROGRAM

For Stress Relief and Nervous System Regulation



DRUMMING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Introduction

Our earliest experiences of safety and security are closely connected with rhythmic patterns with this commencing with our mother's womb - a place filled with rhythm, from the pulsating heart to the expanding and contracting lungs.

"Don't quit. Never give up trying to build the world you can see, even if others can't see it. Listen to your drum and your drum only. It's the one that makes the sweetest sound".

Simon Sinek

The drum, provides an avenue for creative expression and the release of emotion in a safe and constructive way. The drum connects us to the natural world through our own, forgotten, inner rhythms and provides us with an avenue for fun, excitement and joy.

Drumming in all its different forms is a powerful instrument for healing: physically, socially and emotionally.

It is for some, a chance to put away thoughts of the past or the future and just become absorbed in the present without stress or worry. Or it is a way to release pent up emotion in a safe and proportional manner. Drumming offers a way to connect to others without fear or shame and a way to explore their own creativity and identity. The physicality of drumming can also assist people with sensory processing and motor coordination.

**"Dear Music,
Thank you for always clearing my head,
healing my heart and lifting my spirits".**

Lori Deschene

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Today in a world of cognitive processing many of us have lost touch with rhythms that surround us: rhythms that are experienced predominately intuitively and act as essential guides to understanding the world around us and our own place within it. Drumming offers a path to our own inner spirit and a connection to the world around us that transcends language.

Winkelman, 2003, Drumming imposes a neurological pattern on the brain that typifies general altered states of consciousness and mediation (enhanced Alpha wave production and brain wave synchronisation). These physiological changes are associated with healing and psychological and physical well-being.

Drumming induces relaxation, reduces tension and anxiety and facilitates cognitive emotional integration and social bonding and affiliation.

Rhythm exercise according to Perry, 2007 have been found to be beneficial by acting in support of regulation of homeostatic states.

A fundamental understanding is that rhythms give us insight into our relationship with others and the world around us and that stable and balanced rhythms are often important requisites for health and happiness.

Examples include: sleeping patterns, financial stability, relationships, diet, mood changes, self-image and drug use.

Drumming is usually seen as a group activity and it provides a number of advantages that individual therapies cannot replicate and these include the therapeutic factors incumbent in group work:

- Developing social skills by watching others – social learning and engagement theory
- Interpersonal learning and insight
- Guidance
- Universality and hope
- Altruism
- Disclosure and catharsis
- Belonging
- Acceptance
- Normalisation

The group drumming promotes a range of social skills including listening skills, problem solving and empathy. It also builds confidence and self-esteem. In the group all member are equal and the sound created by the group reflects the strengths of each member of the group. At the same time group members learn the vital lesson that much of our individual happiness and success depends on others, that we share in common much more that we differ, and that we all need to find ways of working together to achieve our goals ... we are born into a group and we seek our and connect with groups.

"When a group of individuals becomes a 'we', a harmonious whole, then the highest is reached that humans creatures can reach".

Albert Einstein.

Information for **ndis** Participants

If you are an NDIS participant, it is important to establish whether or not this group drumming program for stress relief and nervous system regulation is in line with your goals as outlined in your plan. For example, you may have a goal to improve your communication skills, or to improve your relationships with others. You may have a goal to improve your ability to recognise and manage your emotions. You may have a goal to improve your daily living skills, build confidence and manage trigger responses by expanding your skills and resources. These types of goals and others may be achieved by attending this group program. As Mind Matters Consulting Services is not a registered NDIA provider, your plan would need to be plan-managed (by financial administration) or self managed to access the funding to attend this program. The program can be attended multiple times to improve and enhance the skills and resources and build on confidence and social connection by finding safety and group support.

The program is an adjunct to individual therapy and is to enhance and support the participant to gain improved and specific regulation skills.

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DRUMMING FOR CALM PROGRAM SUMMARY AND COST

Background

This program has been developed from the Rhythm2Recovery program booklets. It doesn't follow a specific theme or topic, rather it is created to provide a program that is of general interest to a variety of participants. Many existing programs that offer support are heavily discussion based - cognitive narrative and for many people that can be confronting, activating and isolating and if English is a second language it can be even more challenging.

Drumming at a basic and beginners level allows a fun way to explore emotions, feelings and find ways of regulation through drumming exercises specifically created for theme based exploration. Rhythmical music - which is drumming has been shown to mediate the release of certain neuropeptides that are associated with increased trust and reduced anxiety. Coupled with the synchronisation of both motor and sensory neural networks rhythmic music can increase empathy, social bonding and communication. (Overy, 2021).

A loss of emotional control, emotional reactivity into survival states, and low levels of emotional regulation are common contributing factors to stress and distress and leads into reduced mental health. Research in the field of neuroscience has shown that rhythmic based exercises can mediate the primal brain areas that directly impact an individuals response to stress and assist with regulating these unconscious survival responses. The program integrates emotional regulation exercises and metaphors for exploring the themes as detailed.

"The earth has music for those that listen".

Shakespeare.

The format of this program is an integrative model of practice that combines experiential therapy techniques, neuroscience, Polyvagal Theory, Resource and affect regulation skills through a Polyvagal lens and the mind body connection that incorporates the somatic narrative of the body.

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Program Goals

The overall goal of the program is to:

- Create a safe space and place for engagement and expression of feelings
- Reduce reliance on language and the story
- Improve mind body connection and awareness
- Increase and improve nervous system regulation
- Inspire creativity
- Focus on personal growth
- Encourage self-responsibility
- Provide them with tools and regulation strategy to take away and practice and
- Resource the participant to recognise how to regulate their nervous system in healthy ways

"A drum is a voice, alive and feeling as with any voice. When it speaks we must listen and honour the message with our best and noblest selves, for it is a voice with great power and it is a gift to us from a greater being. If we do this, then our lives will be full and happy".

Louis W. Ballard, Quapaw-Cherokee.

The Program

- Facilitated group led by a:
 - Psychotherapist (Kaye Griffin) and
 - and Animal Assisted - Canine Trained in Animal Assisted Therapy - Emmie (Alaskan Maslamute)
- 8 weeks for 2 hours on a set day
- Theme based exercises with drumming:
 - Safety, self care, values and boundaries
 - Stress response and trauma
 - Tolerance and empathy
 - Autonomy and responsibilities
 - Mental health and triggers
 - Feelings and emotions (anxiety, anger, depression, grief and loss)
 - Trust, honesty and change
 - Wellness and personal growth

The Costs

- \$1,200 (+GST) per person for the entire 8 week program
- Includes: use of drums, percussion instruments, light morning tea, handouts, resources and regulation strategies and summaries to take away.

Numbers

Minimum of 8 participants and a maximum of 14.

Dates

Groups dates will be advised in the 2025-2026 financial year - after 1 October 2025. Interest in the program earlier can be explored - email info@mindmatterscounselling.com with details of the interest and timing.

Interested

Contact Kaye Griffin for further information, registration form and payment details by email to:
kayegriffin@mindmatterscounselling.com

Registration

Registration and full payment is required 3 weeks before the group commences - that is, the first week of the month prior to the group starting.

Team Building

The DRUMMING FOR CALM PROGRAM can be run at an organisation for staff to explore personal growth, team building and inspire creativity.

NOTE

- This program is not group therapy
- Participants must be 15 years or older
- All participants will need to complete a confidential participation form
- It is hoped that participants are already connected with a counsellor, social worker or psychologist

I hope that this program is of interest and I look forward to answering your questions and exploring this further.