



Dignity Through Music: Community Music Groups for Older Adults

Rachelle Morgan, MA, MT-BC

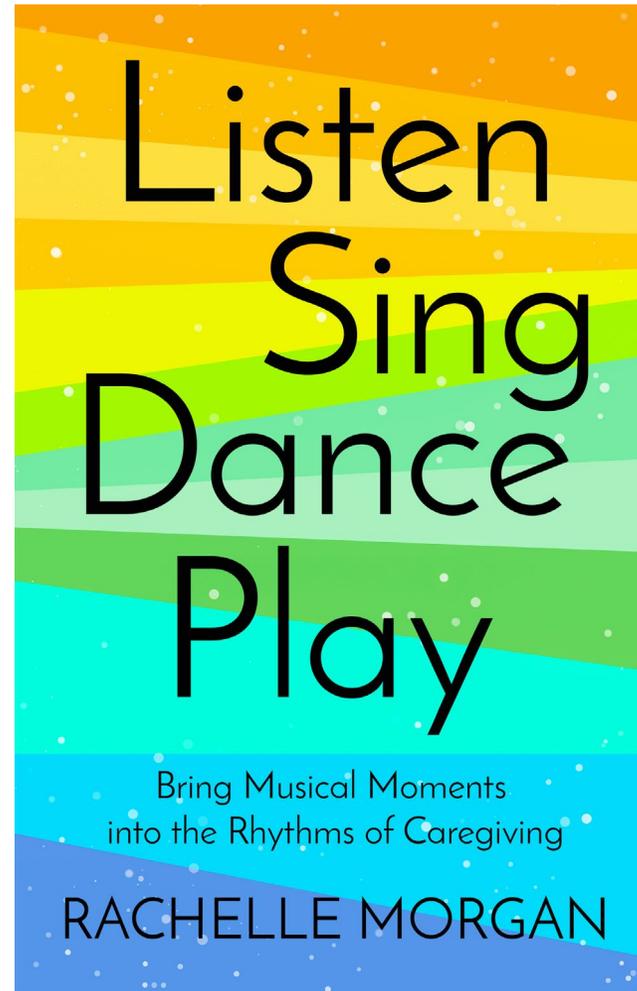
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A Little Warmup!

- ▶ A noisy noise annoys an oyster.
- ▶ Eleven benevolent elephants.
- ▶ Chester Cheetah chews a chunk of cheep cheddar cheese.

About your presenter

- ▶ Sign up on the clipboard for more info
- ▶ New book coming out November 2022 - sign up for more info



Learning objectives

- ▶ Participants will identify three potential benefits for people with medical diagnoses such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's from participating in community music groups.
- ▶ Participants will identify three potential benefits for care partners from participating in community music groups.
- ▶ Participants will describe two ways in which community music groups help participants tell their story to the wider community.

Alzheimer's Jam Session

- ▶ Meets on the third Thursday from 2:30-3:30 at the Central Resource Library in Overland Park, KS
- ▶ Led by the Alzheimer's Jam Band
- ▶ Designed for low-pressure, in-the-moment engagement in the music
- ▶ No pre-planned program
- ▶ Caregivers welcome
- ▶ Participants can bring their own instruments or use provided rhythm instruments
- ▶ Participants can sing, listen, or make song requests

Parkinson's Choir

- ▶ Sponsored by Parkinson's Foundation and Westchester Village
- ▶ Meets on Tuesdays from 10:45-11:45 at the Lenexa Senior Center and via Zoom
- ▶ In its third year
- ▶ Structured rehearsals: body and vocal warmups, song practice, cool downs (and kazoos!)
- ▶ Participants access practice videos on YouTube
- ▶ Designed to help with maintaining vocal function and good posture
- ▶ Caregivers welcome
- ▶ Participants help with selecting repertoire and instrumentation
- ▶ Performances
 - ▶ Live concert
 - ▶ Video watch party

“Early Morning Rain”

- ▶ Was part of the Parkinson’s Disease Singing Festival in Iowa in 2022
- ▶ [Video link](#)

Giving Voice Chorus

- ▶ Based in the Twin Cities
- ▶ People living with dementia, caregivers, and volunteers
- ▶ Sing familiar songs and new ones, too, in three-part harmony
- ▶ Volunteers help provide “a welcoming, dementia-friendly environment”
- ▶ Weekly rehearsals and a performance at the end of each session
- ▶ Participants get a binder full of music and practice CDs

Benefits of Participation

- ▶ Joy of making music
- ▶ Doing something that's not disease-oriented (but where the disease is still understood)
- ▶ Building relationships with peers
- ▶ Getting to tell their story
 - ▶ To others who understand
 - ▶ To the wider community
- ▶ Parkinson's choir: maintaining vocal function, maintaining posture
- ▶ Alzheimer's jam: accessing long-term memories, experiencing focus and cognitive organization

Benefits for the Caregivers

- ▶ Respite
- ▶ Building relationships with other caregivers
- ▶ Seeing their care partner from a different angle (role shifting?)

Telling their story

- ▶ Get to show their families, friends, and the wider community that they are **LIVING** with their diagnosis

From Stuart Munro, M.D.

I have been a member of the Parkinson's choir for a year and a half now. In fact, tonight will be my third family concert. I would like to thank the Parkinson's Foundation for their generous support over the years of the existence of the choir.

I would simply like to say that I have observed how much the choir means to many of us. Today, for example, when Anastasia announced that we had been granted another year of support there was a spontaneous display of enthusiasm from the members. I believe it was Joanne who spoke for the rest of us when she said that it is the best part of each week.

It may seem like a small thing, but it is very large gift to us Parkies. I hope it can continue for many years to come...

Sincerely,

Stuart Munro

Telling their story

- ▶ Get to show their families, friends, and the wider community that they are **LIVING** with their diagnosis
- ▶ [“Parky Pride” song and testimonials](#)

Potential barriers to community music groups

- ▶ Covid-19 pandemic
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Finding an appropriate space for jam sessions/rehearsals/performances
- ▶ Financial considerations
- ▶ Challenges in spreading the word

Contact Info and More Resources

Rachelle Morgan, MA, MT-BC

Board-Certified Music Therapist

Owner - Soundscaping Source LLC

RMorgan@soundscapingsource.com

<http://soundscapingsource.com>

