

# The Walk of Life sparks brain regeneration in Parkinson's patient

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Hi

I thought you might be interested in the story below from Chroma Therapies.

Also please find attached a special white paper on 'Taking Music Therapy into the Mainstream' which highlights how music therapy can make a real difference in the lives of people with acquired brain injuries.

Do let me know if you want any more information.

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The pulsing beat of the Dire Straits song Walk of Life has helped a Parkinson's patient recover balance and brain function.

Scientists have discovered that certain rhythms allow the brain to by-pass sections that have been damaged by stroke, traumatic injury or degenerative diseases such as Parkinson's and dementia.

Rhythmic beats or songs with a strong connection to the patient have been shown to reactivate nerve cells and reboot the brain's sensory pathways to enable patients to communicate or recover physical ability.

"The emphatic rhythm and strong melody found in songs like the 'A Message to You Rudy or Dire Straits' Walk of Life make them songs ideal in the rehabilitation of speech, language and cognitive functions," says Daniel Thomas managing director of Chroma Therapies, the UK's only national provider of arts therapies services, which is staging a major acquired brain injury conference on March 15.

"There is strong neurological evidence that music activates many different areas across the brain. The motor system is very sensitive to picking up cues from the auditory system so when we hear music, particularly pulse or rhythm, it kicks straight into the motor system going around the brain," according to eminent music therapy professor Dr Wendy Magee, from Temple University Philadelphia.

"Music can engage alternative pathways for a specific function, such as language, depending on the size of the lesion or even effect changes to brain structures. Studies have shown that music might excite activity around small lesions to activate function and, with larger lesions, it seems the healthy side of the brain might take on roles and mechanisms the damaged side was previously responsible for."

Also speaking at the Chroma conference, Dr Tamplin of the University of Melbourne, added: "The brain uses different areas to produce words through singing than damaged speech and language areas do.

"Rhythmic music has an amazing effect on movement coordination. Music can bypass damaged areas in the brain, providing a scaffold to do the part of the work the brain is not doing in coordinating movement. But there is also the basic 'use it or lose it principle' and music stimulates movement. When you

exercise muscles they get stronger and the more you exercise, the stronger you get. In the gym, you work out longer and harder with music that motivates you.”

Daniel expanded: “We are currently treating a client who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease about two years ago and while he listens to the radio, he has never played an instrument or ever experienced arts-based therapy but had heard of neurologic music therapy through a family member and felt it would be something to try.

“While he worked with an occupational therapist his condition continued to deteriorate but within a few neurologic music therapy sessions, he began to notice improvements in his balance and gait and importantly for him in his confidence. His OT also noticed a difference in his gait and balance.

The conference is taking place on 15 March 2018 at the British Medical Association House in London. The all-day event titled ‘Arts Therapies and Brain Injury: Optimising Outcomes Across Assessment, Treatment and Care’ is set to host seminars and workshops based on Arts Therapies and its use within brain injury rehab.

#### About Chroma

Chroma is the UK's leading national provider of arts therapy, using music, drama and visual arts to help people of all ages facing issues ranging from neurological damage such as dementia through to emotional and social problems. The company's client base includes schools, hospitals, local councils, businesses and individuals, and it has strong links with leading arts therapy organisations across the world, often acting as a leader in pioneering new techniques and new thinking. Arts therapy is an official allied health profession, has been practiced in the UK for more than 70 years and enjoys a well-researched evidential base.

[www.wearechroma.com](http://www.wearechroma.com)

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