

Research Project MUSIC THERAPY Cecil Du Valle



## What is Music Therapy?

Music communicates with us in a different way from words and can reach parts of the brain that other modalities may find difficult or impossible to access. Most of us respond to music in some way and music therapists build on this innate response and the unique qualities of music to establish connections with their client. Working at a pace based on the client's needs and using instruments that need no specific musical skills, music can be co-created with the music therapist providing a channel for self-expression for those whom words are either absent or an inadequate form of expression and communication.

Music therapy's creative approach can be a valuable part of the care of people with *sensory, physical, learning* or *neurological* disabilities, as well as *emotional* or *behavioural* difficulties. As a therapy, it is used regularly in the UK in health, education and social service settings to facilitate physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual development, well being and an evolving sense of self-worth.

**My Research** has begun with an application to study with one of Britain's foremost scholars in the music therapy field, Professor Leslie Bunt who lectures at the University of the West of England in Bristol. You can find information about Leslie Bunt through the usual Internet search engines as well as within his recent books, *The MUSIC THERAPY HANDBOOK* or *MUSIC THERAPY, An art beyond words*. I have been attending weekly classes in Bristol since January of 2006 that begin with lectures in Psychology in the morning and music and music therapy lectures and workshops during the afternoon. There are 12 other students of varied backgrounds and nationalities within the class.

I spend one day a week working with severely disabled and autistic children at a unit connected to a primary school in Cornwall. There is a trained music therapist that has been working with me in my training. I am spending my first year researching work with children, my second year researching work with adults and my third year working in a psychiatric unit working with the disturbed. Once this is completed, I will write a thesis, which will conclude my research. My intentions are to help those in Cornwall that could possibly benefit from music therapy as well as to teach and promote its benefits within the county.

