



Symphony

MMTF Newsletter
Spring/Summer 2023
Volume 34

MAYA'S MUSIC THERAPY FUND

CHANGING LIVES, ONE SONG AT A TIME
SINCE 1989

As we move into our 35th year of service to the community of people with severe developmental disabilities, we are proud to say that we are a success. When Maya's first began services, we provided Music Therapy to a small number of children in an after-school program. We have thrived and expanded and developed to where we are today.

Since our last newsletter was published a year ago, Maya's Music Therapy Fund has a new member of the Board and we are thrilled that Carl Whitaker has joined us. Carl

comes with extensive experience of serving on not-for-profit Boards and has special skills in communications.

We recently held a strategic retreat with the assistance of Board Consultant JoAnn McNutt from Board First Consulting Group and have reaffirmed our mission and vision positions. Look at our website where we always keep you informed of any major changes to our organization.

Joanna Smith has taken over as our Executive Director and we are excited that we are expanding our services thanks to a dedicated grant that we

received from the California Arts Council to provide Music Therapy to the After School Programs of the George Miller Center at both their Concord and Richmond locations.

With all that said, we are still highly dependent on our loyal and growing circle of support and are counting on you, our donors, to maintain and increase your generosity and contributions. You may use the enclosed envelope to mail a check, or donate online at mayasmusic.org.

Joanna A. Cooper, MD
Co-Founder and Chairperson

ROB'S INTERVIEW WITH JENNY



I recently interviewed one of Maya's Music Therapy Fund's newest clients, Jenny. She began individual TeleMusicTherapy sessions earlier this year during which we sing, listen to music, and talk about our favorite songs. Jenny just recently bought a clarinet so we have started playing clarinet duets virtually, too. Jenny has also been attending the weekly DPRC group with Titia over the last year. Without further ado, below is our conversation.

Hi Jen! When did you start going to DPRC and first attended music with Titia? I think it was last year (2022).

What do you enjoy most about music with DPRC? Everyone is nice and positive, and they are very funny. We've been friends now for like a year.

What does it mean to you to keep seeing your friends online and staying in touch through music? It's awesome because we've got this thing in common. Sharing music and being able to laugh about songs. It's nice to have time with friends.

What do you like most about sharing music? Everyone has different genres. It's good to hear new music 'cause there are some good singers I never knew existed.

What music do you play when you're feeling happy? A lot of country like Kane Brown. He's my favorite right now.

You sang a Kane Brown song for our Spring Music Festival this year! Do you have a favorite memory of singing for others? It was at Christmas one time. I sang a song in front of the whole church all by myself, and it was really awesome. It felt really nice.

Was it scary too? Yeah, I was a little nervous.

How did it feel to put yourself out there and succeed in front of everyone at church? It felt really nice, and then it was over. It was a big boost. Like a self-esteem boost.

What music do you play when you're in need of a pick-me-up? There's this singer Natalie Jane. She's awesome. And I'm Her is a little different. It's calming, I guess.

I hear and see so many animals in your home during our sessions. How many pets do you have and what are their names? 3 small dogs and a bird. So that's 4 pets. Stella is a terrier mix, and a bichon named Booboo, and the purebred dachshund is Bailey.

What's your favorite instrument? Clarinet, I first started playing it in my middle school band.

Do you have a favorite song to play on clarinet? Don't know yet, I haven't decided. I just got back into it.

How does it feel to be playing clarinet again? It's amazing actually. I really missed it.

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Our 2023 Zoom Festival was generously sponsored by
Sutter East Bay Medical Group
David & Betty Pollack

If you are interested in sponsoring our 2024 Festival, or providing an ongoing sponsorship for a deserving client, please contact us!



We are sad to announce the passing of our Executive Director, Charlie Pollack, on February 5, 2023, due to complications after open heart surgery. Charlie had been our Executive Director for the past 10 years and was the husband of Maya's co-founder and chairperson, Joanna Cooper. He came to know Maya in 1986 and saw how music therapy improved her life until her death in 1988. He became a member of our board in 2006 and, prior to becoming Executive Director, served as Treasurer.

Charlie was an extremely generous person, not only to his family but towards his community and causes which were important to him, including local and national political issues. His generosity was a part of his personality, readily providing his time, advice, and guidance to those who came to him.

We send our deepest sympathies to Charlie's family, friends, and community.



Maya's is thrilled to announce that we are recipients of California Arts Council's Creative Youth Development grant! This grant provides two years of fully funded weekly music therapy sessions to youth with developmental disabilities at the George Miller Center after-school programs at Richmond and Concord. Through music therapy sessions and performing at our Spring Music Festival, students will gain new musical, cognitive, and social skills. The California Arts Council is a state agency with a mission of

strengthening arts, culture, and creative expression as the tools to cultivate a better California for all — we are grateful for this funding and are excited to work with more youth!

MUSIC THERAPY IRL AGAIN!

Rob Cheifetz

Obviously the COVID-19 pandemic has presented many challenges in our field which we largely adapted to by doing TeleMusic Therapy online through Zoom and Doxy.com, as well as wearing masks and upping our sanitation game. And now, surprise! Returning to in-person sessions has proven to be another challenge that requires more than just tapping our heels and saying "There's no place like 2019... there's no place like 2019..."

We are thankful for our clients who have joined us on this wild ride onto the internet, the donors who have unwaveringly believed in our vision, and everyone on the other side of the screens helping to make TeleMusic Therapy happen. And now we ask for your patience again as we navigate our way back to the face-to-face "IRL" (in real life) music therapy sessions of our post-pandemic world. There is no

substitute for the therapeutic value of music-making in person, however there are new limitations and adaptations we'll need to consider to ensure the safety of both clients and therapists going forward.

One of the primary challenges to returning to in-person sessions is the need to wear masks to protect our under-prepared immune systems from even the common cold. Singing is a vital part of what we do, and it has been shown to have numerous physical and emotional benefits. Singing can also be a high-risk activity in terms of spreading COVID-19 or any respiratory illness. When singing, people produce more respiratory droplets and aerosols than talking, which can increase the risk of transmission.

Another challenge is the need to sanitize instruments and equipment between sessions. We often use shared instruments, such as drums or

boomwhackers, which can increase the risk of transmission if not properly sanitized. To address this challenge, we plan to be diligently cleaning and disinfecting instruments between sessions.

Despite these challenges, there are many benefits to returning to in-person sessions. For many clients, music therapy provides a sense of connection and community that is difficult to replicate virtually. In-person sessions also allow us therapists to better observe and respond to nonverbal cues and to tailor interventions to the specific needs of each client. Music therapy is an inherently interactive and dynamic process, and in-person sessions allow for a more organic therapeutic experience.

With creativity, careful planning, and your help, we are excited to be transitioning many of our group music therapy sessions back to in-person this Spring.

Maya's Music Therapy Fund

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Looking for other ways to donate? Donor-Advised Funds and Planned Giving are two examples of how you can take advantage of tax saving while donating to your favorite charitable organization, Maya's Music Therapy Fund! Donor-Advised Funds are administered by a third party and created for the purpose of managing charitable donations over time while providing immediate tax advantages. Planned Giving uses estate and tax planning to provide for charity and heirs in ways that maximize gifts and/or minimize impact on the donor's estate. Talk to your financial planner.

Maya's Music Therapy Fund

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SOME COMMENTS FROM OUR CLIENTS AND COMMUNITY

MMTF has been a godsend for our family. The staff are so caring and encouraging. They make our daughter feel special and cherished. This has greatly enhanced her self-confidence and improved her quality of life.



I have seen improved fine motor skills (by playing a variety of instruments); increased listening skills (knowing when to join in on a song by singing or playing an instrument);

increased social/participation skills (taking turns and participating appropriately with others in a group); improved attention span (listening to a song completely) and improved communication skills (by choosing which song or instrument to play).



It helped me communicate with other people in the other groups who use music to communicate.



It has been a life saver for us, helping us to develop an emotional and loving connection with our son. We will

forever be grateful for our experience with Maya's Music Therapy Fund.



As a care giver, I have witnessed that the music class has brought so much joy to my client's life.



My son is non-verbal. The sessions allow him to express himself and release any pent-up emotion(s) in a way that he is unable to do verbally.

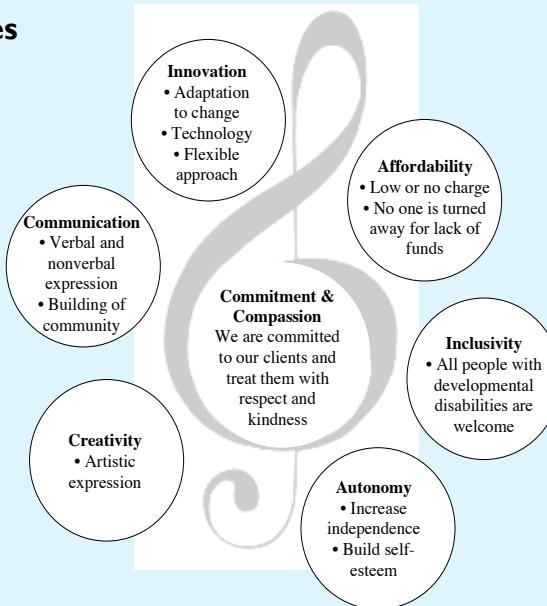


Maya's meets her where she is; not looking down, or so far up she can't reach. This helps her relax and interact.

Mission — Vision — Values

Our **mission** is that Maya's Music Therapy Fund unlocks the potential and enriches the lives of people with developmental disabilities through music therapy.

Our **vision** is to empower people with developmental disabilities to increase autonomy, build community and expand artistic expression, while improving physical, social, and cognitive skills.



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