

David Spak, BA Professional Drummer and World Percussionist.

After graduating from Boston's prestigious Berklee College of Music, I started my professional music career in Nashville TN in 2000. Since then, I am grateful that my career has taken me to the heights of the music industry. I have received a Grammy Award and seven Grammy nominations as a percussionist from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences (NARAS). I've written songs that have reached the top 5 on the Billboard Music Charts and have played drums and percussion on recordings that have sold over 10 million records. I have toured throughout the world and recorded with superstar artists like Blake Shelton, as well as many other multi-platinum artists including, India Arie, Lady Antebellum, Chicago, and Mindy McCready.

After many years of touring, recording and producing, my passion for music and drumming evolved into a different direction in which I began to realize the connection between rhythm and good health. Rhythmic patterns of activity in the human body affect every aspect of our daily lives. I became profoundly interested in learning more about music cognition, frequency, vibration and how to use rhythm as "medicine". I began working at Vanderbilt University Hospital where my interaction with children and adults struggling with behavioral and mental health issues, along with my many years of musical experience, allowed me to develop and create my own unique therapeutic drumming program called DRUMinSYNC.

DRUMinSYNC is an evidence-based whole person strategy using rudimentary rhythmic exercises and techniques to reduce stress, burnout and compassion fatigue, along with improvements in cognitive behaviors, mood enhancement, creativity, and self-esteem. I have applied my strategy in schools, hospitals, support groups, community outreach programs and working with individuals. Studies have shown that group drumming not only has a positive effect on anxiety, depression, and social resilience,¹ but enhances specific immunologic measures associated with natural killer cell activity and cell-mediated immunity.²

DRUMinSYNC works with children and adults with social, emotional and behavioral trauma and disorders, as well as physical disabilities, disorders and limitations in a one on one or group setting.

DRUMinSYNC has developed programs for clients with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, agenesis of the corpus callosum, perinatal stroke, selective mutism along with autism, sensory processing disorder, ADHD, ADD and ODD.

DRUMinSYNC has been published in peer reviewed medical journals like *Journal of Holistic Nursing*.³ and Vanderbilt University's, *The Empowered Nurse*⁴, documenting the successful rebuilding of neural pathways in the brain of an 11 year old with Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum through drumming. Research projects are currently underway focusing on several DRUMinSYNC programs, measuring the effectiveness in relieving a wide variety of maladaptive behaviors and emotional struggles.

My professional experience and background with drumming has led me on a very rewarding path. I have been invited to give keynote speeches, presentations, and demonstrations at various national conferences Associations, and companies such as the International Association for Music and Medicine, Tennessee Nurses Association, American Society for PeriAnesthesia Nurses, Vanderbilt Ingram Cancer Center, Alive Hospice, Vanderbilt School of Nursing, Harmony Foster Care and have led several professional practice boards at Vanderbilt University Medical Center.

David Spak is a husband and father of four children who lives and works in Franklin, TN

References

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