

*Biomedical Music
Therapy: Research-Based
Foundation of the Effects
of Music - An interview
with Dale Taylor*

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Introduction

The idea of doing an interview with Dr. Dale Taylor was born, when I was teaching “Theories in Music Therapy” at the University of Windsor in Canada. My students became very excited about Dr. Taylor’s explanations of the functioning of music on the human brain, as described in Darrow’s textbook *Introduction to Approaches to Music Therapy*, which we used in class. The content resonated with all of us, as it takes “the myth and magic out of music therapy.” Having known Dale for more than four years through AMTA’s International Relations Committee (IRC), I decided to interview him in order to lift his theory out of the text book, and give it life through his voice, his personal experiences and anecdotes.

Dr. Taylor earned his bachelor degree at the University of Kansas, worked in general hospitals and psychiatric institutes during his clinical career, served 35 years as founding Director of the Music Therapy Pro-

gram at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, served 8 years as Chair of the Department of Allied Health Professions, as well as Editor of the International Journal of Arts Medicine. He served as the Secretary/Treasurer of the International Arts Medicine Association, over two decades on NAMT and AMTA Assembly of Delegates, as AMTA's Certification-Registration Committee Chair, as National Coordinator of Student Affairs (USA), and as President and Vice President of AMTA's Great Lakes Region. He is the originator of the Biomedical Theory of Music Therapy, authored *Biomedical Foundations of Music Therapy*, and his research is published in *Music Therapy Perspectives*, the *Journal of Music Therapy*, and in many books edited by colleagues.

During this year's AMTA Regional Music Therapy conferences, I took the opportunity to meet with Dr. Taylor and his great wife Jennifer at the Sheraton hotel in Detroit to talk about his motivation behind the development of the Biomedical Theory of Music Therapy, as well as his founding principles, applications, and much more. In this interview, Dale tells his story and shares his vision with readers and listeners of *Music Therapy Today*. Join me in the quest to understand the power of music on the human brain.

Interview

Question: What is Biomedical Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 1.mp3 \(1,6 MB\)](#)

Question: What was your thought process and motivation behind developing the Biomedical Theory of Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 2.mp3 \(4,1 MB\)](#)

Question: What are the biomedical foundations of music as therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 3.mp3 \(2 MB\)](#)

Question: What happens when we utilize music therapy interventions?
And what is the role of a music therapist?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 4.mp3 \(1,7 MB\)](#)

Question: Where do professionals successfully apply the Biomedical Theory of Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 5.mp3 \(2,2 MB\)](#)

Question: Is there any research regarding what happens in the brain?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 6.mp3 \(1,1 MB\)](#)

Question: What does it take to practice Biomedical Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 7.mp3 \(1,2 MB\)](#)

Question: What is the difference between Biomedical and Neurological Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 8.mp3 \(2,6 MB\)](#)

Question: What is the current status of Biomedical Music Therapy in the broader picture of music therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 9.mp3 \(2,1 MB\)](#)

Question: How does the medical field respond to Biomedical Music Therapy?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 10.mp3 \(3,8 MB\)](#)

Question: What is your vision? Where do you want to see Biomedical Music Therapy headed in the future?

[TAYLOR_TEXT 11.mp3 \(1 MB\)](#)

Thank you, Dale, for making this interview happen, and for giving the field of music therapy a framework for understanding the effects of music.

Topic related resources:

Altenmüller, E., Gruhn, W., Parlitz, D., & Kahrs, J. (1997). Music learning produces changes in brain activation patterns: A longitudinal DC-EEG study. *International Journal of Arts Medicine*, 5 (1), 28-33.

Darrow, A.-A. (Ed.). (2004). *Introduction to approaches in music therapy*. Silver Springs, MD: The American Music Therapy Association, Inc.

Pratt, R. R. (1999). Listening to music during surgery: A program of intermountain health. *International Journal of Arts Medicine*, 6 (1), 21-30.

Pratt, R. R. (1989). A brief history of music and medicine. In M. H. Lee (Ed.), *Rehabilitation, Music and human well-being* (pp.1-12). Saint Louis, MO: MMB Music, Inc.

Spintge, R. & Droh, R. (1987). Effects of anxiolytic music on plasma levels of stress hormones in different medical specialties. In Pratt (Ed.), *The Fourth International Symposium on Music: Rehabilitation and human well-being* (pp.88-101), Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Taylor, D. B. (1997). *Biomedical foundations of music therapy*. Saint Louis, MO: MMB Music, Inc.

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<http://www.centerformusictherapy.com/>

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<http://members.aol.com/musictherapycc/page4.html>

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