

DRUMS ALIVE® – POWER BEATS

Carrie Ekins



Drums Alive a new dimension in fitness...Enter the magical arena of drumming and fitness!

Drums Alive join the dynamic movements of aerobic dance with the pulsating rhythms of the drum. It is a unique sensory/motor program that is designed to give the mind and body instant feedback through continuous movement and rhythmical flow. It is a program that utilizes “**whole brain**”- “**whole body**” thinking by developing sensory motor reflexes and kinesthetic awareness. The physiological and psychological benefits are numerous including; those found in traditional forms of aerobic fitness but, drumming has also been found to improve and increase the neurological connection between the 2 brain hemispheres. This Synchronization of the hemisphere has been shown to stimulate Alfa Brain Wave activity which can lead to higher levels of concentration sensory, motor improvement, and an overall sense of well being.

Laboratory research by Neher [Andrew Neher, *A Physiological Explanation of Unusual Behaviour in Ceremonies Involving Drums*] showed that drumming produces changes in the central nervous system. The rhythmic stimulation affects the electrical activity in 'many sensory and motor areas of the brain. The single beat of a drum contains many sound frequencies, and accordingly it simultaneously transmits impulses along a variety of nerve pathways in the brain. Recent research (Bittmann., Magazine Alternative Therapy, January 2001) has also shown that there is a positive influence on the human immune system and drum therapy is being used throughout the world in a variety of therapy programs.

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Rhythm and music have been an integral part of our lives throughout history. It has always been associated with spirituality, songs of worship, rites of passage, chants, praise and has also been accepted as a healing strategy. Music and rhythm bond people together, it is a way of communication and of celebration. Our first experience with rhythm began safe within in our mother's womb. The two rhythms joined together creating a peaceful and calming song. Rhythmically we are most drawn to the patterns that emulate the ongoing dance of life, the heartbeat, ocean tides, lunar cycles, and the rise and fall of our breath.

Rhythm and movement in the form of drumming and dance are ancient technologies for raising energy, inducing ecstatic experience, as well as providing a sense of community. Rhythmical movement is an aesthetic experience and aesthetic pleasure. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze recognised that musical rhythm depended absolutely on motor consciousness for its fullest expression. That expression is found in the powerful rhythms and dynamic dance of the Drums Alive program.

The Drum

The drum is one of the most ancient instruments dating back tens of thousands of years. It has been used for generations. Drumming captures the heart of most that encounter it and connects us with the deeper rhythms of life. It has the potential of allowing the mind, body, soul, nature, spirit, and the cosmos dance to share their intimate dialogue and speak in a tongue that unites us all. Drumming is a powerful experience and most simply, it is FUN!

Drums Alive Essential Principles

- Posture and Alignment
- Natural Breathing - rhythmical breathing
- Movements are fluid and continuous through a full ROM
- Upper and lower body move in synchronized harmony
- Neuromuscular Rhythmical/Movement patterns are developed to stimulate the 2 brain hemispheres.
- Energy is focused and concentrated
- The mind is open to cognitive and creative experiences
- Practice “whole brain” communication (3 dimensional patterns)
- Proper build up and break down of both Rhythm and or Movement patterns
- Provide time for creative expression and moments for powerful release of stressors.
- Allow time to calm down and experience the slower rhythms to activate and increase Alpha Brain wave activity.
- Let your spirit fly and enjoy the essence of your movement!
- Keep the playful heart of a child

Drums Alive Class Design

Warm up – the drum beat should be approximately 120 -140 BPM. Integrate simple rhythms and movements before building complex patterns. Teach the appropriate terminology for the class such as: Single Beats, Double Beats, Side Beats. Side Clicks, ect...

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Power Beats, Cardiovascular training – This journey should last between 15 – 30 min. Gradually build patterns in intensity and complexity. At the end of this section rhythms can increase to 160 -180 BPM for a few minutes to allow for personal expression and a state of euphoria.

Wellness Beats, (Trance and Slower rhythmical beats) – This journey last around 10 – 15 min. The Drum beat is around 120 – 130 BPM. Chill down and allow the alpha waves to be activated. Keep the rhythms and movement patterns simple and easy to follow.

Cool down and relax – during this journey it is important to allow the body, mind and spirit to calm down, recollect and to relax. Ensure time to stretch the muscles and enjoy the kinesthetic stimulation of the ball. Fill your body, mind and spirit with positive thoughts and healing energy.



**It's time to stop thinking of the drum as just a musical instrument.
Start thinking of it as a unifying tool for every family,
A wellness tool for every retiree,
And an educational tool for every classroom.”**

- Remo Belli -