

Music On Prescription



As a professional actor, singer and musician, I have enjoyed a varied career in West End Theatre and Television and was lucky enough to have been brought up in a family where music and singing was a constant source of enjoyment and fun.

I believe that music and song is a powerful and tuneful tonic that can ease the feeling of isolation, initiate interaction, create fun and laughter and improve health and well-being.

It is for this reason, I have, for the past 12 years (under my banner of Music On Prescription), been visiting Residential Homes, Hospitals, Hospices and Day Centres singing songs mainly from the 1950s (Buddy Holly, The Everly Brothers, Dean Martin, Elvis Presley and Doris Day!).

I specifically sing songs from this era as I know it is a period of time that reminds most, if not all residents of their courting, dancing and younger years. It is a style and genre I love to sing and more importantly, they are classic songs that people know, enjoy, remember and relate to.

I enjoy people's company and feel that I am able to communicate and engage whilst being aware of and sensitive to individual needs. During and following a concert, I always feel uplifted and inspired. Often people will sing along, laugh and joke and residents, visitors and staff will enjoy a dance together (be they seated or standing) with occasional hand jiving of course!



Every concert is different but my focus is always on the audience. It is *their* concert. I make certain everyone is comfortable, chat to everyone in the room and perform as if it were a concert at the Albert Hall (a stage I have had the good fortune to perform on). I ignore age which is easy to do especially when the room is filled with banter, laughter and everyone singing along to 'A Teenager in Love'! It is always extra special when a staff member tells me that the concert made a significant difference to a person (or persons) who usually never take part and resulted in a positive outcome for them and the group.

I am delighted and moved by how a song can connect to someone in the room. If you look into their eyes, you can see them remember. They are back in a time, in a place, if only for a moment. Residents often chat to me after a concert to tell me how a song evoked a special memory and/or reminded them of someone dear to them. Occasionally, someone will appear to be distant or asleep throughout the concert and as I'm leaving will open their eyes and tell me they enjoyed the songs and concert very much. They were listening; they just chose to take part in their own private way.

Although it's great fun, I take what I do seriously and I always think of my dear Mum. Whenever I was with her I would always play my guitar and sing for her and her imaginary presence at every concert acts as a guide and reminder. How would she like to be treated? The answer is always with dignity, respect and a smile and to sing and play the very best I can. Humour and interaction is a very important part of my concert too. My Mum sadly passed away late last year aged 92. I have always ended each concert with her favourite song and will continue to do so as a dedication to her and everyone in the room.



The New Year brings new beginnings for me as I have recently moved from Oxfordshire to West Sussex (Worthing) and although I shall miss the many residents, families, friends and staff I have had the pleasure to know and sing for, I am now excited and thrilled to introduce myself to new places and new faces and continue to do what I love doing.... It's fun, always a privilege and a pleasure when I'm asked back!

Read more about Chris and his work at:

<https://chrisbeck.co.uk/music-on-prescription/>

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