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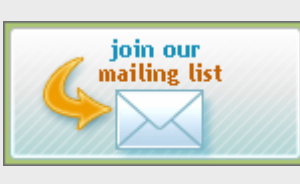
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"Joanne Lara knows that the brain needs the body to move. In this DVD she gives the gift of her artful knowledge to children with autism, helping them to fulfill their wholeness and their potential."  
 - *Martha R. Herbert, Ph.D., M.D.*  
*Director TRANSCEND / Professor Harvard Medical School*

aut-erobics® was developed as a new, first of its kind, sensory integration. This easy to follow instructional DVD combines music and movement for individuals with autism. [more...](#)



Special Needs Network's 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Tools for Transformation Conference

**Friday, April 16 8:30am-11am**

Legislative Breakfast  
 California Science Center  
 700 Exposition Park Drive  
 Los Angeles, CA 90037

**Saturday, April 17 9am-4pm**

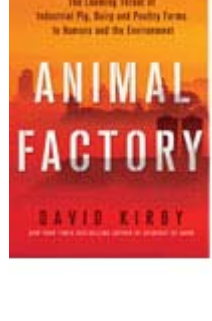
Tools for Transformation Conference  
 Junior Blind of America  
 5300 Angeles Vista Blvd,  
 Los Angeles, CA 90043

Every April, during National Autism Awareness Month, SNN sponsors its annual free parent/professional conference, Tools for Transformation, held at the Junior Blind of America in Los Angeles. The conference begins with a Legislative Breakfast on Friday April 16, at the California Science Center from 8:30am-11am, in which participants are provided with updated information on legislative initiatives that impact the health, education and disability communities. The all-day conference on Saturday, April 17, gives participants the opportunity to participate in 12 interactive workshops, attend an Awards Luncheon, and gather information from over 40 resource providers who provide critical information on autism interventions, medications, therapies and advocacy strategies.

Dear Joanne,

**ANIMAL FACTORY**

by David Kirby



"A propulsive chronicle. Thanks to Kirby's extraordinary journalism, we have the most reliable, irrefutable, and unforgettable testimony yet to the hazards of industrial animal farming." BOOKLIST

"Immensely readable, should be required reading for anybody concerned with how CAFOs are changing the nature of livestock farming." LIBRARY JOURNAL

Phil Waigand "The Beat" Music & Horse Therapy



**"THE BEAT": Opening a New Door of Empowerment by Phil Waigand**

The three basic rhythms of "THE BEAT" are the heartbeat, the hoof beat, and the drum/music beat. These rhythms can be used to

empower people. An example of how I use "THE BEAT" is by having horse and music therapies overlap through familiar songs used in both music therapy and therapeutic horse sessions. However, "THE BEAT" concept is not limited to therapeutic uses. It is also used in dressage freestyle, drills, rodeos and other venues such as "Dancing with Horses".

**The Power of The Beat**

I first noticed the power of "THE BEAT" ten years ago. For a year my wife and I were foster parents to a 17 year old youth who had recently been paralyzed and was confined to a wheelchair. He had also experienced abuse and neglect which created obstacles of anger and frustration that were more difficult than his paralysis. We discovered the two activities that helped alleviate his anger and frustration were listening to musicals and fishing.

Since that time I've worked with many other youth. I worked with a Down's youth and a non-verbal autistic youth who responded profoundly to "freeing activities" such as drum lessons, music therapy and horse therapy. When I accompanied him to his private drum lessons, I was amazed at his focus and ability to communicate. The autistic youth participates in both music and horse therapies. After attending sessions with him I noticed the similarities between both therapies. During his music therapy session he is more focused and task oriented and during his horse therapy session he is more relaxed.

**What is a Music Therapy Session Like?**

The session is based mainly around the rhythmic flow of the music. The therapist does a brief warm up by greeting the participants and having them greet each other. Then the group may sing and/or listen to a song to set the mood for the session. A next step may be having the participants select various drums or musical instruments so they can play to the beat of the music that is being played. The entire group becomes more focused and task oriented during the process of selecting music, musical instruments, singing and listening.

**Tap into the Motivational Beat of the Music**

The same rhythmic energy demonstrated in a music therapy session can easily be incorporated at appropriate times into therapeutic horse sessions. The familiar songs used in music therapy can be played during therapeutic horse sessions. Just using music for 5 to 10 minutes can be very beneficial. For instance arm movements could be done as a warmup to perky music and the session could be closed to calm and relaxing music.

Music can also be used to inspire the choreography of a simple equestrian drill team routine. Don't overlook the fun, creative and motivational aspects of the beat of the music.

**"THE BEAT" Goes National and International**

"THE BEAT" which was recently discussed under the title of "Riding with Rhythms" from the perspective of a NARHA instructor in the NARHA magazine, *Strides*. Rocking Rehab, a NARHA Pediatric Hippotherapy Facility located in New Jersey sometimes does music therapy sessions after the rider's horse lesson. *Voices*, an international music therapy newsletter, recently had an article from Cuba in its October 2007 issues about the ways music and horse therapies can overlap. Lastly, at the XII 2006 International Therapeutic Riding Conference in Brazil, a paper was given on "Mozart, My Horse & Me" which is 100% about how the rider and horse connect to music.

**In Conclusion**

"THE BEAT" is truly about how the basic rhythms of life can work in harmony to empower. Music and physical movement have a natural connection. An incredible way to experience "THE BEAT" is creating a situation where the ride and horse can connect to the beat of the music.

Phil Waigand is from Arlington, Texas and has BA Degree in Sociology. He has been extremely active for the last 15 years as a disability advocate and community planner. He has received several awards for bringing awareness to the disability field through programs such as "Disability Arts Month" and he continues his non-stop advocacy for "THE BEAT".

**Nicky's World Director: Sharon Hensel-Cohen M.S.,C.C.C.**

Building a Community for Limited Communicators & Their Families



Mission: To provide the individual and their family with a place of their own where they can grow literacy, communication, friendships and a community to turn to and support them in order to improve their quality of life.

Every beginning is couched by the knowledge that the "Only constant is Change". Nicky's World is intent on supporting this community of limited and/or non-verbal individuals and their families to develop and move towards resolution of their needs, while supported by professionals and families whom are all experts in this area. The concept of Nicky's World was built with the idea that a community without voice was isolated and had little hope to grow towards quality of life and change in all environments. Nicky's World will have classes, parental and professional presentations and workshops, support groups, family outings, drum circle, music and movement classes and much more! Membership will have tiers of involvement based upon class attendance, both without and/or with minimal charges.

**Joanne Lara Autism Movement Therapy classes: Friday's 3:00- 4:00pm**

**NormalFilms**

Sponsored by Autism Movement Therapy



**FREE FILM SCREENINGS**

For April's Autism Awareness Month

NORMAL PEOPLE SCARE ME

THE

SANDWICH KID

ARTS

Join us for one, two, or all three films in support of autism awareness

Meet some of the Young Adults in the film

(Line up date and location to be announced)



**Healing Thresholds**

Connecting Community and Science to Heal Autism

**Chicago Area Workshops**

**Autism Movement Therapy Workshops**  
[Autismmovementtherapy.com](http://Autismmovementtherapy.com) Sat & Sun March 13 & 14, 2010

**Saturday, March 13**  
 Hubbard Street Dance Center  
 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
 (312) 850-9766

**Sunday, March 14**  
 Dance Center Evanston  
 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
 (847) 328-6683



"Repetitive rocking motion that requires a person to continually find and redefine their balance stimulates areas of the brain where learning receptors are located."

*Temple Grandin, PhD Professor, Author & Autism Advocate*

"Fabulous! Above & beyond my expectations. Understanding how the sequencing & patterning effect the brain is monumental to the work that I do with my clients with autism. Thank you Joanne."

*Jenna W, Behavior Therapist, Los Angeles, CA*

With Joanne Lara, MA Special Education, BA Dance. She has appeared on: FoxNews.com, ABC? Eyewitness News, KCNN 88.5 FM, AutismOne Radio, The Denver Post, UPL.com, and Forbes Magazine, among others. Lara is a core adjunct professor at National University in the Department of Special Education. She has a B.A. in Dance from the University of South Florida.

**Register online: [www.autismmovementtherapy.com](http://www.autismmovementtherapy.com)**

Designed for parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, caregivers, dancers, professionals, and individuals on the Autism Spectrum to develop skills and strategies for instruction of Autism Movement Therapy®.

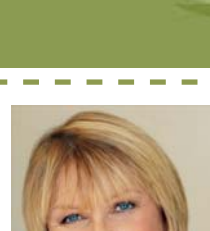
Participants receive Autism Movement Therapy® Handbook & aut-erobics DVD.

**Saturday, March 13**  
 Hubbard Street Dance  
 1:00-4:00 p.m.  
 \$150.00  
 (312) 850-9766

**Sunday, March 14**  
 Dance Center Evanston  
 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
 \$165.00  
 (847) 328-6683

**Register online: [www.autismmovementtherapy.com](http://www.autismmovementtherapy.com)**

**Local Sponsor:** Healing Thresholds



Joanne Lara MA, is a professor at National University in Los Angeles, California. Lara earned her master's in Special Education; Moderate/Severe & Multiple Disabilities from California State University, Northridge and her B.A. in Dance from the University of South Florida. She holds a California Moderate/Severe Education Specialist K-12 teaching credential and taught in the Los Angeles Unified School District for over 10 years, where she worked exclusively with students with autism. Founder of Autism Movement Therapy and [aut-erobics](#), Ms Lara teaches Autism Movement Therapy classes in Van Nuys, Ca where she has her private consultation practice. For more info call 323 240-0361

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[www.autismmovementtherapy.com](http://www.autismmovementtherapy.com) or [www.theautismexpert.com](http://www.theautismexpert.com)