


Being *Musically* Fit



Music
has the power to
make us dance like no
one is watching, sing
till our throats hurt, and
stamp our feet
uncontrollably.

Have you ever thought about how music affects your many moods? It's indescribable how much a song can impact your life. Music is a very powerful neurological tool that helps us change our mindset and mood. Think about a time when either an instrument or a song struck a chord and helped you feel better.

Research has proven how music promotes intelligence, helps us focus better, improves our mental health, strengthens the immune system, boosts one's self-confidence and self-esteem. People use music and a variety of musical instruments, including their voice to express their emotions, various gestures as well as expressions. This allows one to build a connect within and outside too.

Although music may begin as a pure artistic expression with entertainment purposes, it is now known that music has the ability to influence physiological processes, hence improving physical and mental health.

Dr. Hanser, the President of The International Association of Music and Medicine, claims that anyone can adapt some of the techniques used by trained music therapists to increase music's mental-health advantages in their lives. One of them is what she refers to as "deep" or "active" listening: rather than listening to music as background noise, set aside time to focus on what you're hearing, noting any feelings, memories, or bodily sensations (such as a slowing of your heart rate or the desire to get up and dance) that arise as you listen.

Psychologist Heather Craig writes that music therapy has been found to increase quality of life, and has measurable effects on outcomes before, during, and after treatment. Music is known to influence one's mood. It affects the neocortex of our brain, which relaxes us and lowers impulsivity, due to its rhythmic and repetitive elements. On dull days, I tune into my favourite songs to manage my emotions, cope with stress and get on with my tasks.

Some songs that uplift me up are: **LIFE** by Ivy Sole **HEAD ABOVE WATER** by Avril Lavigne **IT'S A BRAND NEW DAY** by Bryan Adams







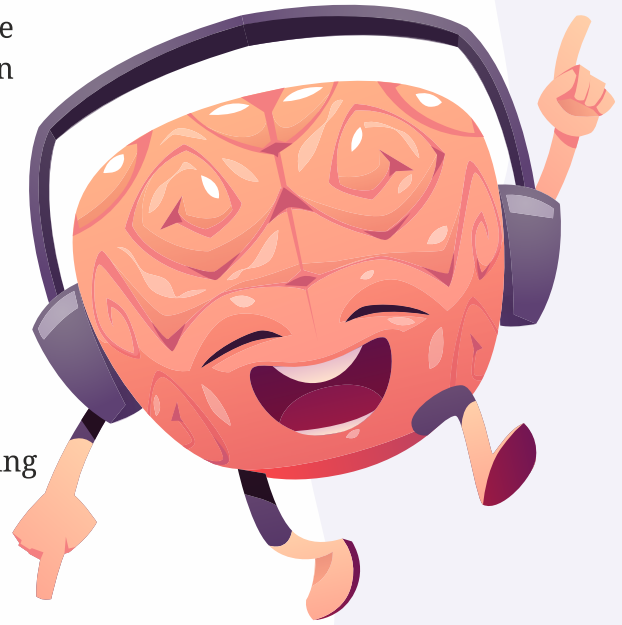
The human brain and nervous system are hard-wired to recognise music and respond to rhythm, repetition, tones, and songs. Is this a natural occurrence or does it have a purpose?

It's impossible to know. Despite this, research demonstrates that music can improve human health and performance. Together let us explore this further:

MUSIC AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE BRAIN

According to neuroscientists, listening to music causes the release of various neurochemicals that are involved in brain function and mental wellness:

-  **DOPAMINE**, a neurotransmitter linked to pleasure and "reward" areas of the brain
-  **CORTISOL** and other stress hormones
-  **SEROTONIN** and other immune-related chemicals
-  **OXYTOCIN**, a neurotransmitter that promotes social bonding



MUSIC AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE BODY

Music has been demonstrated to affect key physiological factors such as blood pressure, heart rate, respiration, EEG readings, and body temperature, according to research.



It can help with
HEART HEALTH



It can assist with
FATIGUE



It can help with
EXERCISE PERFORMANCE



It can help with
PAIN MANAGEMENT



MUSIC AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS:

It's probably no surprise that music has the ability to influence your thoughts, feelings, and behaviours. It is widely acknowledged that both listening to and creating music can have a variety of benefits on our mood. It helps relieve stress, depression and loneliness.

Music can be used to help with mental health in a variety of ways. Many of us listen to music to unwind or entertain ourselves. But how can you put it to use in your everyday life? Take a look at some of the options here:

Focus

Classical music is an excellent aid to concentration. Music at a pace of 60 bpm (beats per minute) improves the brain's ability to process information.

Expressions

Try listening to music for support the next time you're having trouble talking about or expressing your emotions.

A sense of belonging

Music brings people together, whether it's by sharing playlists with friends or meeting new, like-minded people.

Relaxation

Music can promote relaxation of tense muscles, enabling you to easily release some of the tension you carry from a stressful day.

Motivation

Music is able to increase stimulation, as there's a connection between auditory neurons and motor neurons. That's why music often makes us more mobile and motivates our body to move.

Creativity

Listening to happy music promotes more divergent thinking - a key element of creativity.

Benefits of MUSIC

LIMITS OF MUSIC AS A MOOD BOOSTER

Matching music to your present mood can feel validating, but if you let it be for a long time, it can also keep you trapped in a poor emotional state. When you're upset, you can still listen to a sad song. Simply be aware of where it's leading you and shift to something better if you find yourself getting stuck.

If things aren't going well and you don't know what to do, I propose turning on some excellent music and tuning out for a few minutes before trying to work things out again.

ACTIVITY: KARAOKE

Let loose and sing along with family members by hosting a Karaoke night. Make a list of your family favourites and some traditional folk songs along with the ultra-modern remixes. YouTube has a lot of karaoke sing along versions that could be greater starters.

