



Mind: Mind Your Music
Body: Noise on The Body
Spirit: Music for The Mind and Body

Mind Your Music



You're going about

your own business when a favourite old song suddenly begins to play. You're surprised at the lyrics you still remember, and warm memories come flooding in. You smile, start moving to the music, and may even begin singing.

We can all relate to the power of music to take us back in time. The power of music to just make us Feel Good! I've often said that, for me at least, I cannot be sad and sing at the same time! Try it sometime when you are feeling blue and see if it works for you as well.

Music has often been referred to as the universal language. It has the ability to transcend time and place and to evoke strong emotions. Studies have shown that music can help to improve mood, communication, and even retrieve memories previously inaccessible and trapped inside of people living with Alzheimer's Disease. Music therapy has also been shown to reduce anxiety and agitation, ease chronic pain and promote relaxation.

Alive Inside

In 2014, the movie, *"Alive Inside"* was premiered at the Sundance Film Festival where it won the audience award. When I first watched the movie, I was deeply moved and inspired.

Filmmaker Michael Rossto-Bennet filmed Dan Cohen entering nursing homes armed with simple and humble Ipods. He researched the songs individual residents most enjoyed and loaded up a personalized song list.

The results were astounding. Residents, living with Alzheimer's Disease and not able to access memories for years were re-awakened. They opened their eyes, sat straighter, smiled and some began to sing and sway. A number of residents started to speak again, remembering what they were doing when this song first meant so much to them. Family members who previously were not able to engage with their loved one could now communicate and enjoy a level of connection they had not been able to experience for years.

Their website says it best:

"His camera reveals the uniquely human connection we find in music and how its healing power can triumph where prescription medication falls short."



The Right Music from The Right Time

As it turns out, it is not just any music that can stimulate these remarkable results. The music must be meaningful to the individual. Music associated with intense, emotional events, and especially during our formative years have the most impact. For most folks, this would be the music we enjoyed in our teens and early 20s. Some suggest that the music we loved from ages 15 – 25 hold the most promise in rekindling our memories. Known as the ‘reminiscence bump’ we retain more memories during this time than any other life phase.

Music and Your Brain

Music stimulates several different areas of our brain and is especially noted for triggering a dopamine hit. Referred to as the ‘feel good’ hormone, dopamine is part of our reward system.

Laura Ferreri, Associate Professor of Cognitive Psychology, Lyon University was able to show a causal relationship between listening to music and the brain’s release of dopamine: “ *We cannot conclude that taking dopamine will increase your musical pleasure. What we can say is much more interesting: listening to the music you love will make your brain release more dopamine, a crucial neurotransmitter for humans’ emotional and cognitive functioning.*”

In addition to a dopamine hit, other studies have shown that music also stimulates the brain’s visual cortex, associating the music with images and memories.

Conclusion

Whether it is Glenn Miller, Johnny Mathis, Elvis, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Santana, The Boss, or Queen – we each have our ‘era’ we relate to and cherish most. How comforting to know that these songs still live in our hearts and minds, and that they have the power to make our lives better, richer, and more fulfilling!

Rhonda Latreille, MBA, CPCA
Founder & CEO
Age-Friendly Business

Noise on The Body

While music can soothe your soul, noise can hurt your body. Consistent and elevated levels of environmental and workplace noise can cause hearing loss, tinnitus, sleep disturbance, ischemic heart disease, immune dysfunction and even birth defects. The World Health Organization lists noise pollution second to air pollution for the negative impact on our health.

Music for The Mind and Body



“Music can lift us out of depression or move us to tears – it is a remedy, a tonic, orange juice for the ear. But for many of my neurological patients, music is even more – it can provide access, even when no medication can, to movement, to speech, to life. For them, music is not a luxury, but a necessity.”

Oliver Sacks, best-selling author and professor of neurology at NYU School Of Medicine