



Factsheet

Music Listening and Our Mental Health

The good, bad and the very addictive of music

Listening to Music

Most of us listen to music. Some of us listen to music along with doing something like exercise, cleaning, going places. Music can change a mood, set a new mood or make our mood feel better. In fact, research tells us that the right song can activate our body's natural feel good chemicals like endorphins and oxytocin.

But sometimes it is also possible that listening to a certain song may make us feel worse. So it is important to be aware of the effect those songs have on you. When listening it can be good to ask:

- When does it stop being helpful? Sometimes listening to songs that help you vent can be cathartic, like a release. But after that listening to it on repeat might actually make you feel more angry and stressed - this can be the time to change playlists, and use music to move the mood to a more positive place.
- It is also possible that the song might bring back negative memories or experiences, unpleasant feelings and make you spiral instead.
- The same song can do different things at different times. Yes that's right, music can have varying impacts on how we feel.

Knowing how our music choices affect us will help the way we listen to music to bring our mood to a more positive space and feel more in control of our thoughts and feelings.

Ask: In this Music Choice...

Making My Mood Feel Better
energised, happier, relaxed

Keeping My Mood in the Same Place
this is better than your mood getting worse, but can you change songs and boost your mood?

Making My Mood Feel Worse
more stressed, angry, sad, can you use the power of music to boost your mood

Remember what works for you might not work for another person. Check out what other young people and musicians say about their favourite music here www.tuneinnotout.com/music.

Playing Music

Some young people say that playing a musical instrument is a beautiful way to express your thoughts and feelings. There are some inspiring video clips on YouTube to get you started, [this is a great example](#). If you don't play an instrument the ukulele is great for beginners to master a few chords quickly and easily. You can get creative with your friends online to check out ukulele lessons on YouTube!

For those of you who want to make music and are technologically inclined, there are apps you can download like Loop, iKaossilator, Drum Pad Machine (DPM). Don't say we didn't tell you but these can be very addictive but so much fun too especially when there's not much to do!

Let us know how you go, send in a playlist of songs and say a little about the good things that happen with the playlist.

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Thanks to young people for their helpful feedback.