

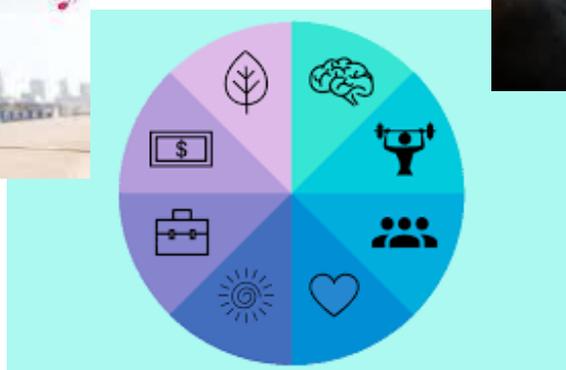
TCNJ RECWELL

Wellness Newsletter

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by Ashley Cox, RecWell Wellness Programs Coordinator



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We know that traditional forms of recreational involvement, such as soccer, tennis, and other sports, involve your whole body and can increase your motor coordination, strength, and ability to plan and execute tasks. However, have you ever thought about the way nontraditional recreational activities can be just as good for you, regarding brain functioning?

This newsletter's emphasis is on music; the benefits of playing instruments, being part of a group of music-makers, and moving to the sounds we hear. First, we will start off with why our well-being can increase through making music.

◆ **Making Music: Wellness through Sound**

Did you play an instrument during childhood? If so, what was it and do you still play it now? In Philadelphia, the Penn Medicine Orchestra began when two students wanted to make time in their schedules to continue to engage in an enjoyable activity – playing music in an orchestra.

The Penn Medicine News article on this topic reports playing an instrument may be an extremely beneficial activity, activating and engaging both hemispheres of the brain. While the right hand controls the bow and the left controls notes played, the person engages the part of our nervous system controlling movement and coordination. As an individual reads music and plans ahead for what comes next, their brain engages in higher level thought processes from the part controlling executive functioning. Lastly, playing as part of an orchestra engages our sensory system in a lot of ways: emotional, visual, and auditory.

(Sepega, 2017)

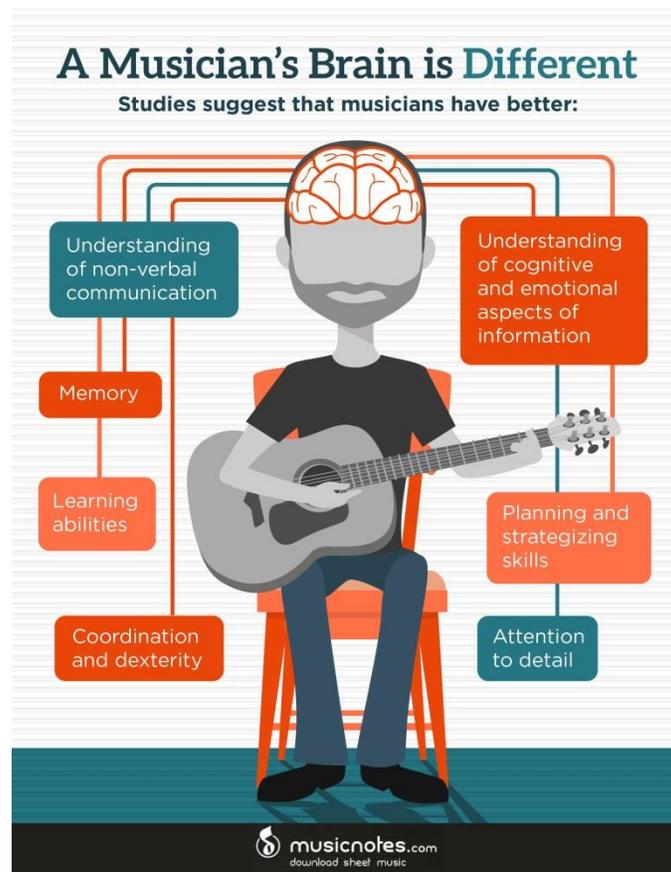
Individual experiences within this orchestral body include:

- “Dorothy Kliniewski, a nurse at HUP who plays the violin, called the numerous rehearsals leading up to the concert ‘the highlight

of my day. It's a huge stress reliever... and it's fun!" (Sepega, 2017)

- “Jose Pascual, MD, a surgeon in the Trauma Center at Penn Presbyterian Medical Center, said, ‘It allows me to pull out of the sometimes psychologically and physically draining day-to-day caring and witnessing of injured patients, particularly those suffering tragic events such as death by gun violence.’” (Sepega, 2017)

The people who make up this orchestra are a great example of what it looks like to work and stay engaged in a meaningful activity, to relieve stress, have fun, and be part of something greater than oneself.



Link to image [here](#).

TCNJ Campus Well: *Related Articles to Benefit You*

Music to Improve Sleep

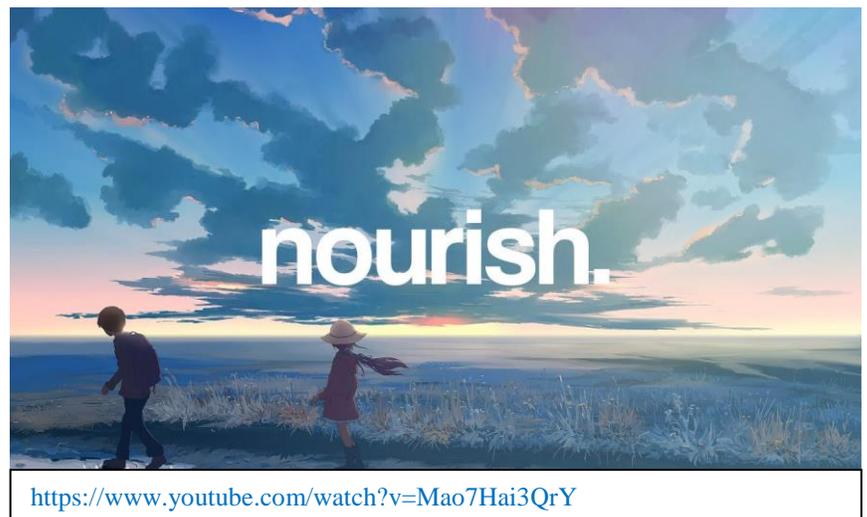
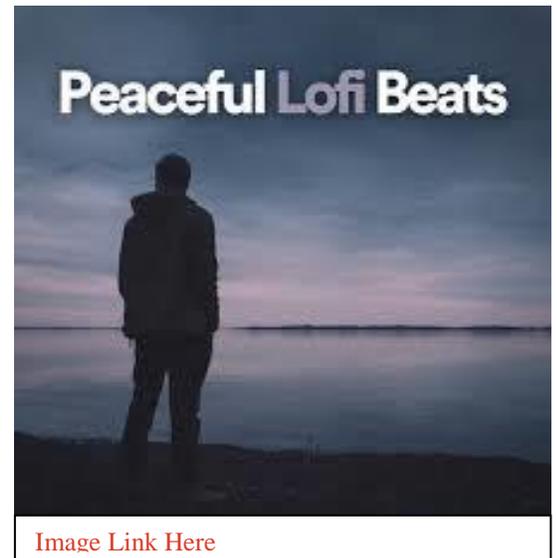
- Article [link here](#)
- Describing how soundscapes including binaural beats, pink noise, and ASMR can be used as sleep aids.

Capture Your Calm

- Article [link here](#)
- Describes eight small steps to take to stress less
- This article lists one effective method of calming stress is by listening to music you love or gets you moving.

How Music Can be a Study Aid

- Article [link here](#)
- Emphasizes that one music style does not fit for all
- Needs to help you focus, & not be distracting
- Lo-fi hip hop, classical, and artists like Enya are some student suggestions



◆ Making Music: Wellness Through Togetherness

We have looked at why listening to music can be beneficial to us, such as enabling focus and releasing stress. While listening or playing music alone, there can be benefits; being part of a group (such as the orchestra example above) can also be helpful. Let's take a closer look at this type of togetherness.

The Greater Good Magazine reports that playing music with others may particularly impact the release of endorphins (good hormone) in our brains. When a study reviewed making music through singing, drumming, and dancing in a group, all reports pointed to participants having higher pain thresholds than listening individually to music. Performing in a group also increased positive emotions. Not only are all these things noted, but the webpage states that coordinating body movements *together*, while listening to music, created a greater sense of oneness with a group of individuals (Suttie, 2016).

Want to bond through music, while being in a group setting? **Come to RYN "Making Music" series** happening over the last two weeks of April.



<https://www.muw.edu/as/music/news/5077-community-invited-to-drum-for-health-saturday>

◆ Making Music: Wellness through Movement

A systematic review of well-being through active participation in dance and music was reviewed; resource article was located in PubMed. Though research in this area is heavily focused on older adults, specifically females, there is still evidence that active participation in dance provides a context for a culturally-appropriate space to enable social participation and building communities. This, in turn, contributes to individual growth and maintenance of wellness in these areas:

1. Cognitive function
2. Physical health
3. Stress reduction
4. Self-perception
5. Mental health

Engaging in music and dance may improve these social determinants of health:

- Stress
- Social isolation
- Autonomy
- Social capital
- Individual well-being



(Sheppard & Broughton, 2020)

Wellness Wheel

Dancing & making music (depending on the instrument) can be physical wellness on the wellness wheel. Making & listening to music, and even dance, could enable mental or spiritual wellness too. What does music mean to you? Why do you dance & play? (explore more with *Refresh Button* below)

References

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EASTER WORD SEARCH



- BUNNY
- BASKET
- GRASS
- BONNET
- EGGS
- SPRING
- CANDY
- SUNDAY
- CHICK
- FLOWER
- HUNT
- PEEPS
- JELLYBEAN
- EASTER
- DYE
- LAMB

Musical Artists:

What genre makes you feel happy?

Fill out this form to be featured in Motivational Monday email!



Image Links:

[Billie Eilish](#)
[Florence & The Machine](#)
[Kenny G](#)
[Labrinth](#)
[Enya](#)



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