

# Music and Mental Wellness

River's Edge Counselling Centre

Wellness Matters Webinar

April 20, 2021

7:00 pm



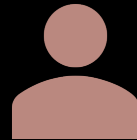
# Overview



Music and the brain

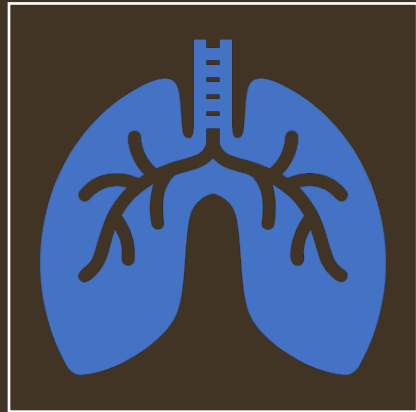


Special features of singing

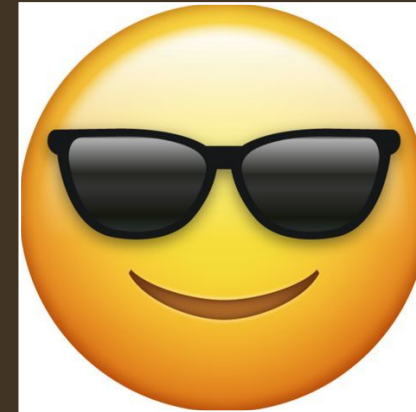


Applications for clients and individual practice

# Activity: no musical experience required!



What's happening in your body as you listen?  
Check in with your heartrate, breathing, muscles,  
etc.



What emotions come up for you as you listen? Can  
you identify or name them?



# Music and the Brain

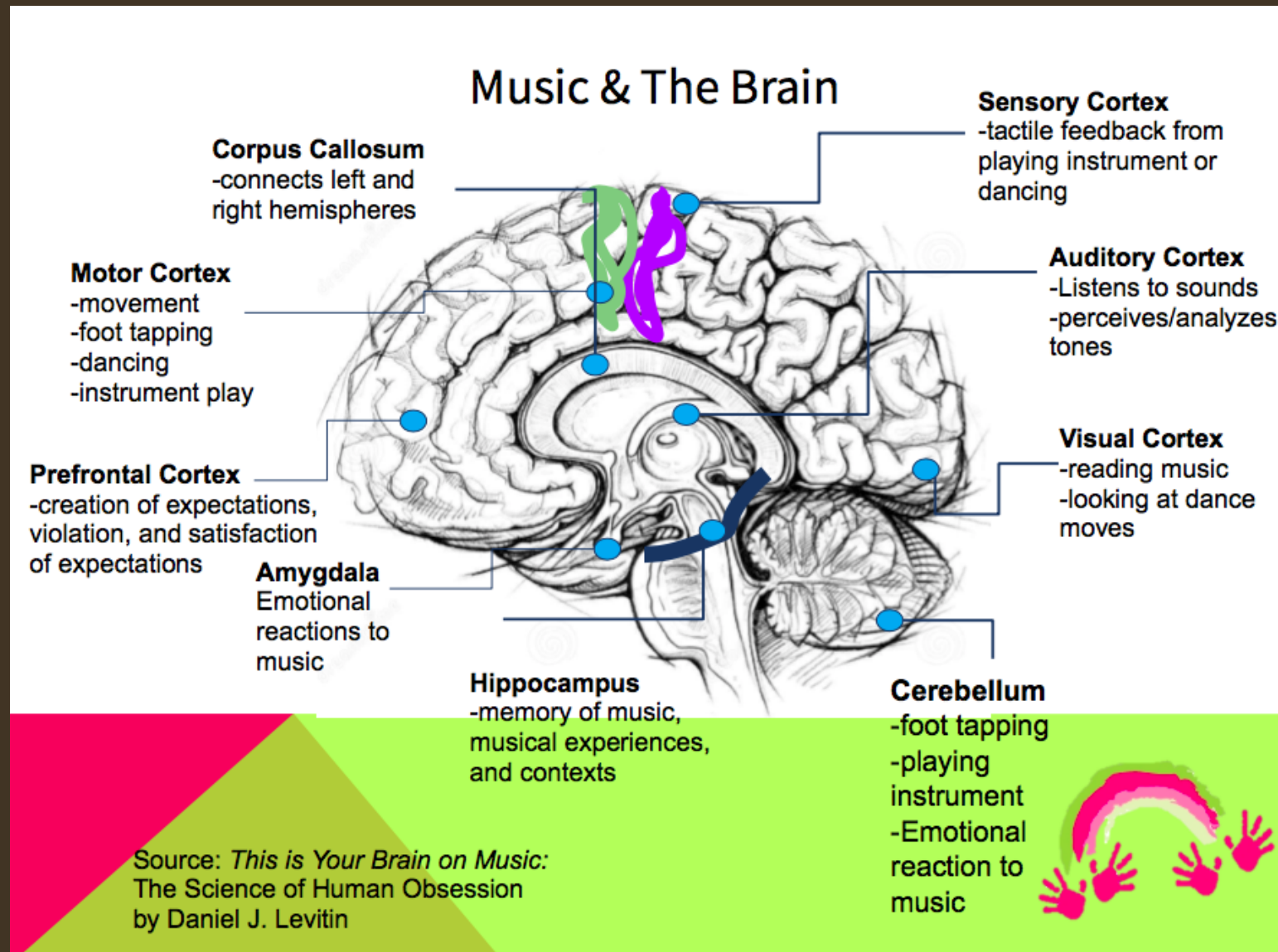


Image retrieved from [therabeat.com](http://therabeat.com)

# Musical elements processed by the brain

Pitch  
(high/low)

Dynamic  
(loud/soft)

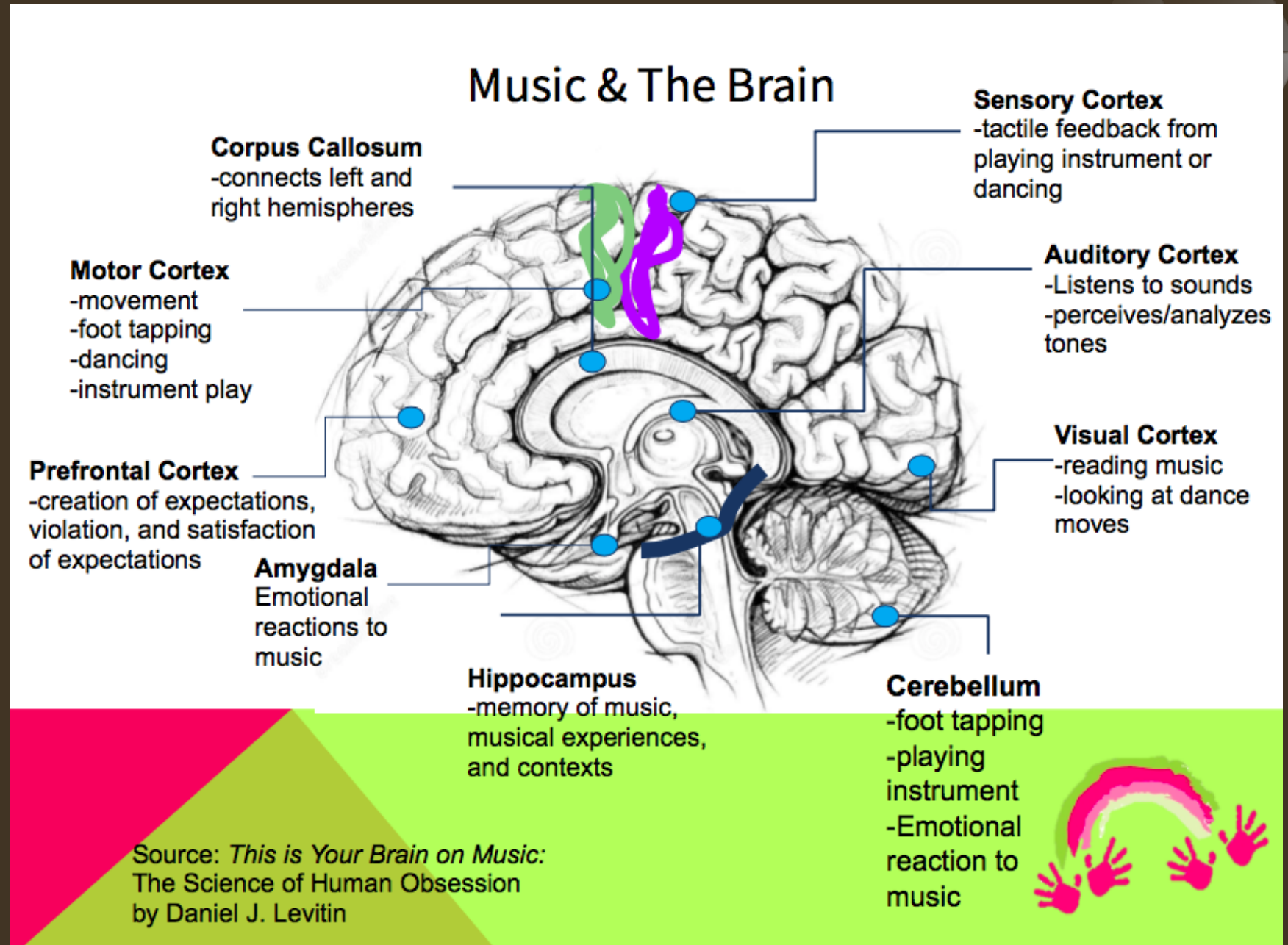
Timbre  
(quality)

Rhythm

Tempo  
(speed)

# Let's consider:

- Rhythm
- Timbre
- Music and emotion



# Positive impacts of music (just a sample!)

## Physiological

- Regulated blood pressure
- Regulated respiration and heartrate
- Reduction in cortisol levels

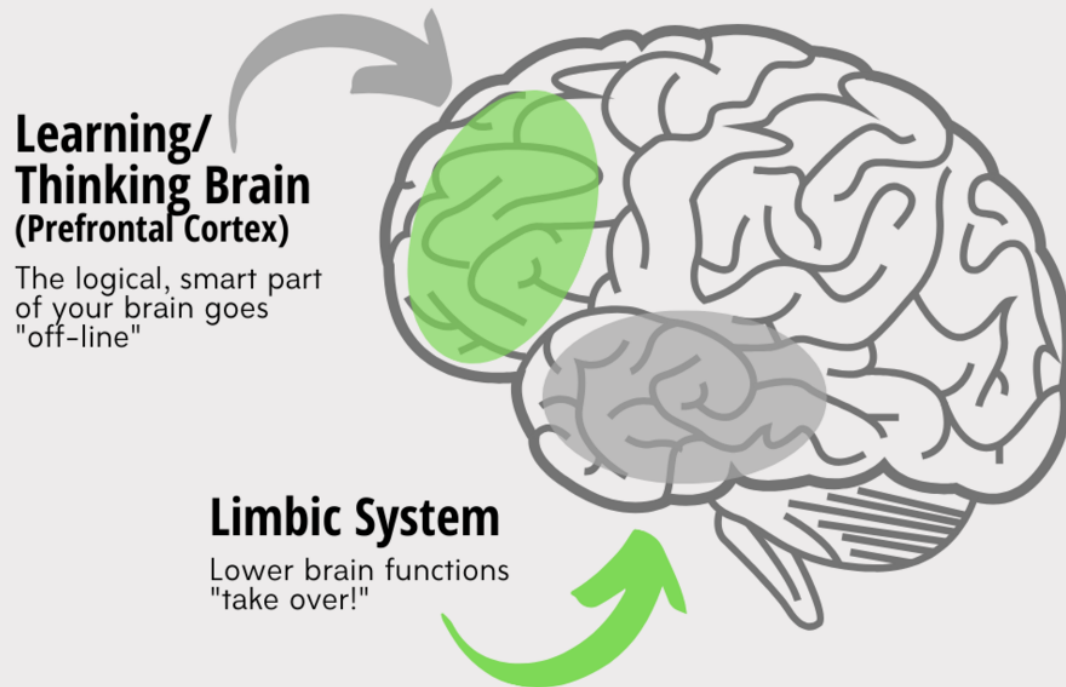
## Cognitive

- Improved short term memory
- Improved spatial reasoning
- Can music delay aging?
  - Increased plasticity

# Fight - Flight - Freeze

What's really happening when we go into...

**"SURVIVAL MODE"**



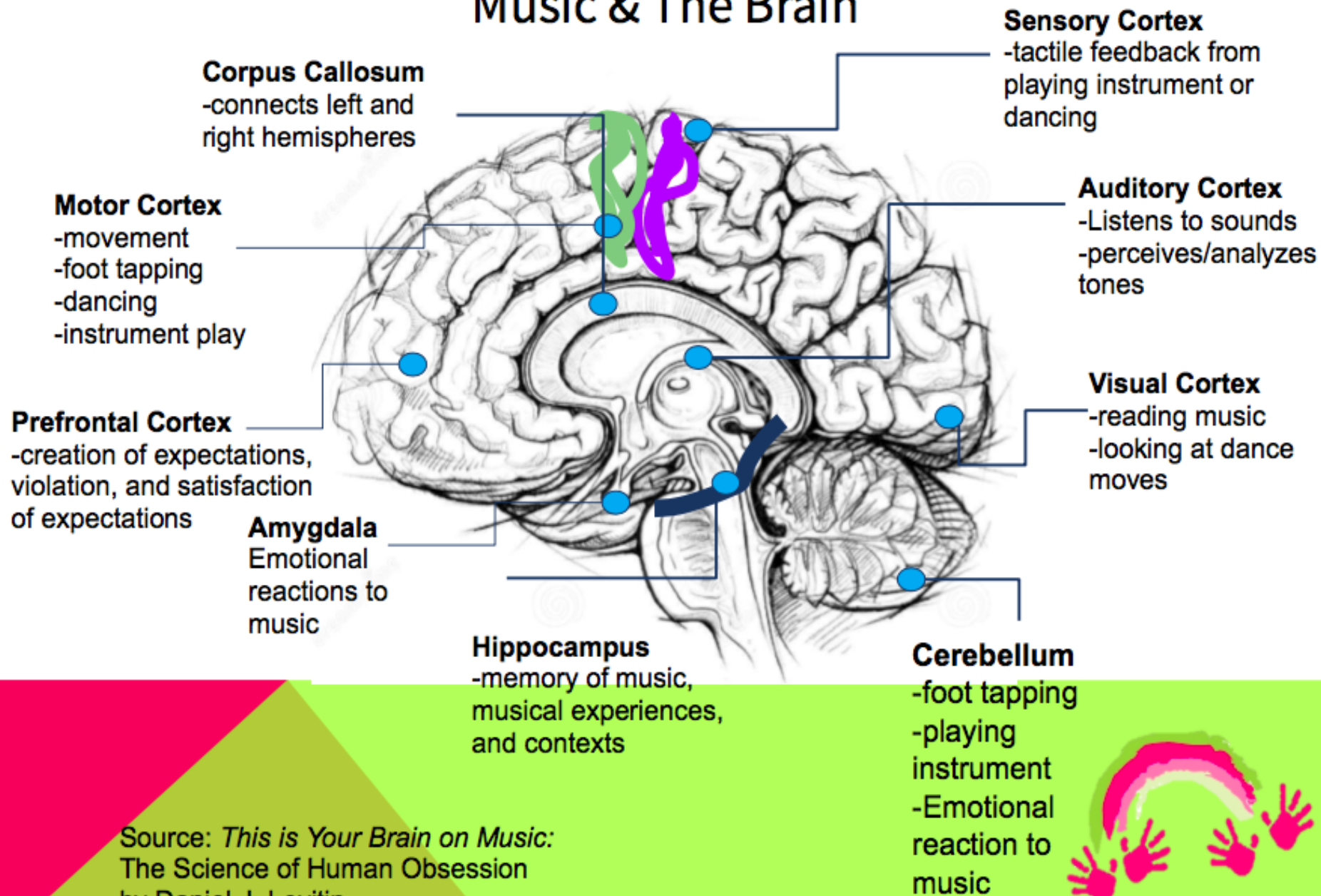
Brain in  
survival  
mode

Copyright © 2019 The Greenhouse KC. All rights reserved. Brain image from Canva.com image database

Image credit: Sara Page, Page press  
Retrieved from The Greenhouse KC



# Music & The Brain



Source: *This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of Human Obsession* by Daniel J. Levitin

# Positive impacts of music (just a sample!)

## Physiological

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# Singing: Special features and benefits

- Breathing
  - Hormone Release
- Language
- Social Connection

# For our clients

- Studies: Music participation linked to decreased symptoms of depression and anxiety, management of chronic pain and of sleep disorders, as well as boosted immune system
- Singing is particularly linked to improved respiration, muscle tension, and cognition (i.e. attention)
- Music Therapy referrals
  - Music Therapist's scope of practice



# Use of music in sessions

- Playlists for home use (grief work, emotion-processing, sleep support)
  - Entrainment
- Musical meditations
- Bring a piece of music to session
- Compose a piece of music



# If you'd like to learn more...

- Article: Music and the brain: the neuroscience of music and musical appreciation (Trimble and Hesdorffer)
  - <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5618809/>
- Article: The science of music therapy, Erika Montgomery (Peterson Family Foundation)
  - <https://petersonfamilyfoundation.org/music-therapy/science-music-therapy/>
- Article: Singing and the Brain, Kelsey Menehan (Chorus America)
  - <https://www.chorusamerica.org/advocacy-research/singing-and-brain>
- Canadian Association of Music Therapists
  - [musictherapy.ca](http://musictherapy.ca)



I'd love to  
hear from  
you!



What are your own experiences with music and wellness?



What did you experience in our listening exercise?



What questions do you have as we end our time together?