

NFA Performance Healthcare Committee presents:

**Musician Mental
Health:**
Triggers and Glimmers



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The benefits of learning a musical instrument





What happens when playing music frequently becomes stressful... exams, auditions, performances, competitions, recordings?



Mental Wellbeing, Health, and Illness

Mental health and mental wellbeing are often used interchangeably, yet research evidences that they are understood and experienced differently:

- Good mental health is not just the absence of mental illness
- Feeling mentally well might occur with a mental illness

Emotional Wellbeing: Awareness and ability to manage and express emotions in a healthy and age-appropriate manner. More generally: feeling good about yourself and your life.

Mental Health: Emotional, psychological, and social state affecting how we think, feel, and act - including how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Mental Illnesses are specific, diagnosable health conditions involving changes in emotion, thinking, and/or behavior.

Healthy Conservatoires Network: UK, Australia, Mexico, Canada

<https://healthyconservatoires.org/>

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Welcome to
Healthy
Conservatoires

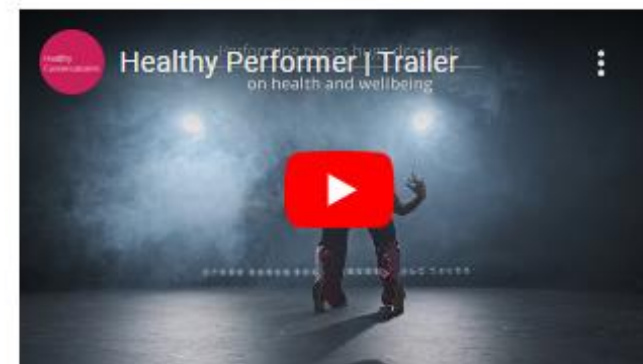
Spotlight



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Healthy Conservatoires Network: Wellbeing Framework



Emotional

Becoming self aware and developing effective coping skills



Environmental

Taking care of the global environment and contributing to the community



Financial

Managing money and living in and planning for financial health



Intellectual

Finding ways to expand and stretch knowledge further to become a lifelong learner



Occupational

Developing career aspirations, thinking forward and accumulating skills for a working career



Physical

Eating well, sleeping well and looking after the body



Social

Creating a sense of belonging while developing strong social networks for support and guidance



Spiritual

Exploring beliefs, values and ethics and creating a sense of purpose and meaning in life



Triggers

- Response to stressors
- Actions or situations which can lead to adverse reactions
- Identified through “red flag behaviors”



Glimmers

- Internal or external cues that promote positive coping strategies
- Help to reset or calm the nervous system

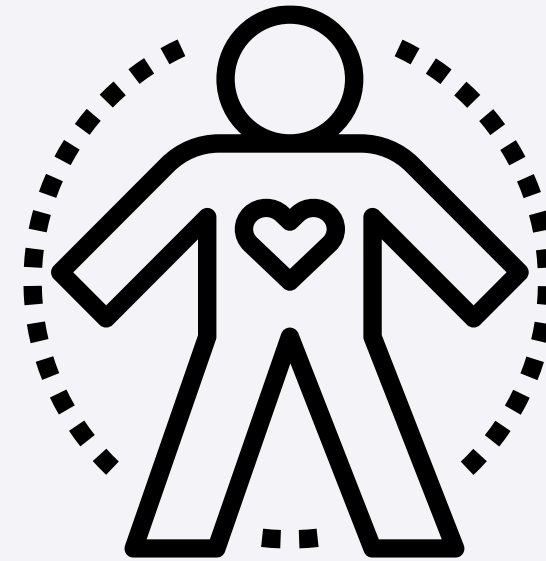
Music Performance Anxiety

Mental



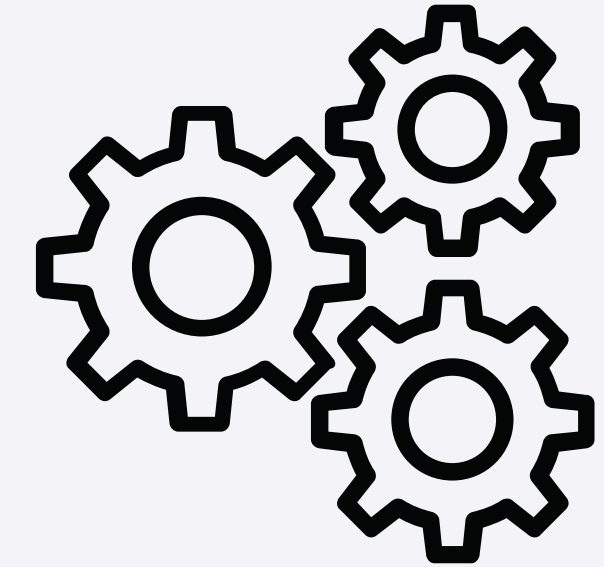
- Negative thoughts
- Critical self-talk
- Worrying
- Ruminating
- Fuzzy thinking
- Memory slips

Physiological



- Racing pulse
- Sweating
- Dry mouth
- Shaking
- Butterflies
- Digestive issues

Behavioral



- Avoidance
- Pacing
- Over-practicing
- Shaking
- Nervous talking
- Feeling frozen

Performance Anxiety



Triggers

- Confrontive coping
- Denial
- Escape-avoidance
- Maladaptive distraction
- Self-blame
- Self-controlling
- Extreme venting



Glimmers

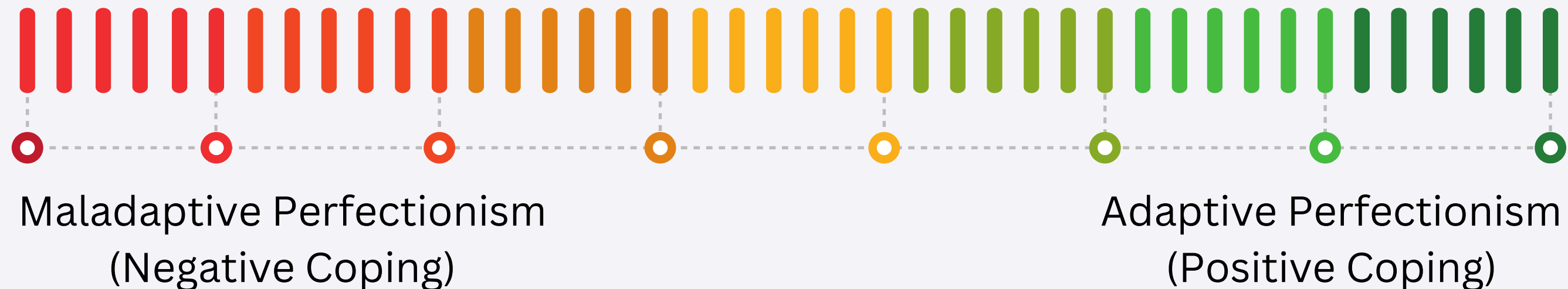
- Adjusting expectation
- Distancing self from situation
- Humor (for small failures)
- Physical release or relaxation
- Playful problem solving
- Positive reappraisal
- Seeking social support

Perfectionism

A **multidimensional personality trait** characterized by:

- Striving for flawlessness
- Setting high performance standards
- Critically self-evaluating
- Concerned with evaluation

Exists on a spectrum:



Perfectionism

Triggers

- Extremely high and unrealistic goals
- Failure = obsession OR avoidance
- Need to avoid criticism, shame, embarrassment, rejection, abandonment
- Achievements = love and respect of others

Glimmers

- Challenging self through reasonably high goals/standards
- Failure = learn and stay engaged
- Can decrease with age (experience)
- Adaptive perfectionism = diligence and balance

Self-Talk

Do you talk to yourself via your inner voice?

Almost everyone has some form of an inner voice...
it's a **basic feature of the mind** and connected to short-term memory.

Our inner voice is a *fast talker*.

Occurs at a **rate equivalent to 4000 words per minute out loud!**

(That's **~28 times faster** than speaking!)

When we experience distress, engaging in introspection (through negative self-talk) often does significantly more harm than good:

- Rumination
- Worrying
- Back-and-forth association

Negative Self-Talk

Triggers

- Believing stressful automatic thoughts
- Not challenging SATs (or lacking a process)
- Rumination, future worrying, fixation

Glimmers

- Challenging SATs through self-distancing: third person, advising friend, neutral observer
- Slowing thoughts: writing, talking aloud
- Reframing thoughts and reinterpreting bodily response

Impostor Syndrome

Context-dependent behavioral phenomenon related to:

- Feelings of self-doubt about one's intellect, skills, or accomplishments
- Feeling positions and accolades were awarded by accident or sheer luck
- Feeling one will be 'found out' as a fraud or incompetent

Multi-layered perspective consists of:

- Individualized level (related to self)
- Interpersonal dynamics
- Societal aspects
- Institutional contexts

Impostor Syndrome

Triggers

- Negative and critical self view
- Being subjected to negative stereotyping
- Questioning whether they belong
- Lacking representation

Glimmers

- Moving away from sole focus on 'fixing' individual
- Building strong networks
- Institutions actively improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

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