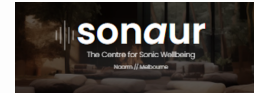


The potential of focused music listening experiences for well-being promotion

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BACKGROUND

Evidence supporting the therapeutic effects of music listening is rapidly growing (Dingle et al., 2021). Recent research demonstrates that communal, focused music listening events help people process difficult emotions (Krause et al., 2024), experience mindfulness and self-compassion (McClymont & Krause, 2026), and that the relationship between self-stigma of help-seeking and future help-seeking intentions is buffered (McClymont & Krause, 2026). With real potential for improving individual well-being, research is needed to understand how focuses music listening experiences are developed as well as their specific well-being impacts.

The present research was guided by asking:

- (1) What outcomes (e.g., benefits to mood, self-regulation, mind/body awareness) arise from people experiencing focused listening experiences?
- (2) What role do programming elements (e.g., physical space, acoustics, music, facilitation) have on people's attendance motivations and outcomes?

METHOD

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Sample: 29 Australian residents who attended a focused listening experience ($n = 4$ sessions) at tender (Melbourne, VIC)

- $Mage = 36.59$, $SDage = 8.26$
- 55.20% female, 44.80% male

Data collection: Individual, online semi-structured interviews (Bhattacharya, 2017)

Data analysis (currently underway):

- Audio recordings → verbatim transcripts (human-checked)
- Inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) with critical friend meetings (Sparkes & Smith, 2014)

REFERENCES

- Bhattacharya (2017). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315231747>
Braun & Clarke (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
Dingle et al. (2021). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.713818>
Krause et al. (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1177/10298649231203628>
McClymont & Krause (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1177/03057356251324825>
Sparkes & Smith (2014). <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203852187>

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The reported outcomes were overwhelmingly positive, including:

- improved mood and well-being;
- being present, calm, and/or relaxed;
- enjoyment;
- promotion of emotion regulation and processing emotions;
- heightened sense of interoceptive awareness;
- feelings of community 'togetherness' (even though they did not talk to each other);
- exploration of new music and new/different ways of engaging in music listening practices.

Design implications: While designed to be an auditory experience, the experience is multi-sensory, with outcomes driven by the combination of the music, the context (including the physical space and regularity of attendance), and the individual.

Barriers

Physical - venue accessibility; low lighting a concern for vision-impairment; seating comfort (use of yoga mats/bolsters)
Programming - cost, venue capacity, attending for full session length (3-hours);
Psychological - attitudes (& "mindset"); anxieties & sensory sensitivities

Enablers

Physical - Movement in space is possible; individual autonomy (e.g., quiet activities done while listening during session)
Programming - an aesthetically pleasing atmosphere; sound quality; facilitator interactions; flexible entry/exit timing
Psychological - Social acceptance; connectedness



More Information
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