

Heather O'Donnell

Pianist, Pedagogue



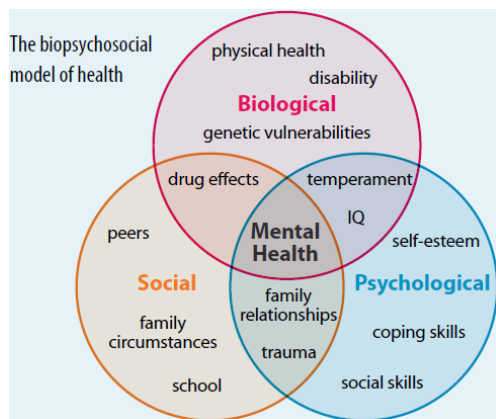
Overview

1. Definition of Health:

„Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.“

World Health Organization, 1948

2. Bio-Psycho-Social Model



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Components of a Musician

1. Physiology/ Anatomy

“The Body as Instrument”

- Basic Physiological/Anatomical organization: bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, fasciae, central/peripheral nervous systems
- Concentration on:
- Shoulder / neck region
- Elbow / hand
- Pelvic Floor
- Breathing: Significance of breathing for the organism (oxygen supply, support of organ functions, physical and mental integration, stress management, expression, emotion); Significance for musicians: diaphragm (support, weight bearing muscles), sound generation, mental and physical integration, attention/concentration

2. Neurology

- Neurological effects of music making: hearing, visual, tactile, emotional
- Long term effects of music-making (and listening) on brain structures
- Music Therapy

3. Psychology

- Effects of stress on the body
- Perfectionism
- Music-making as process vs. music-making as commodity
- Consequences of assuming music as an identity

Maintaining Health

1. Prevention

- Ergonomic measures (i.e. 15/16 piano keyboard, shoulder rests for violinists, straps for woodwind players, weight-reducing accessories (i.e. thumb supports, instrument supports) for various instruments, ergonomic chairs and accessories)
- Posture
- Typical problems encountered with various instruments
- Alexander vs. Feldenkrais Methods– basic concepts, differences
- “Practicing hygiene”
- Warm-up
- Hand exercises (developed by Dr. Harmut Puls, researcher in Sports Medicine and Sports Psychology)
- Protecting hearing

2. Prophylaxis

- Physical Training- Physioprofolaxis
- Stretching- modern sports-physiological approaches to stretching
- Four stretching techniques: dynamic stretching, static stretching, Antagonist-Contract stretching, Contract-Relax stretching; benefits and drawbacks to each
- Strength/Core Training

3. Practicing Strategies

- Mental practice- examples (Gieseking, Rubinstein), neurology, strategies
- Practicing: organization, solution-oriented practice,
- Learning-processes
- Ideokinesis

Responding to Dysfunction

1. Illness / Injury

- Acute Pain / Chronic Pain: definition, difference between acute pain and chronic pain syndrome, affective (emotional) moderators of nociceptive signaling

- Psychosomatic aspects of pain
- Overloaded muscles – pain – response patterns in muscles
- Musculoskeletal dysfunction
- Hypermobility
- Nerve Entrapment Syndromes
- Repetitive Stress Syndromes: Carpal Tunnel, Tendonitis
- Focal Dystonia
- Injury vs. Illness, learning to differentiate
- When to seek medical help- checklist of symptoms, diagnostic measures
- Which type of doctor /therapist to consult (Orthopedist, Neurologist, Physiatrist, Chiropractic Doctor, Rheumatologist, Osteopath, etc.)

2. Rehabilitation

- Retraining of habitualized movement patterns
- Biofeedback
- Stabilization-training (Anke Steinmetz)

Examples of Musicians' Health and Illness throughout history

Case studies including: Robert and Clara Schumann, Leonard Bernstein, Glenn Gould, Leon Fleisher