

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS GUIDE

Taking care of yourself mentally, emotionally, and physically is important. This guide includes information on mental health statistics within the music industry, common mental health concerns, and resources to help you better understand your mental health and wellness.



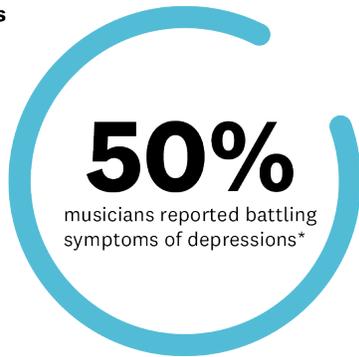
SONGTRUST

Mental Health Statistics

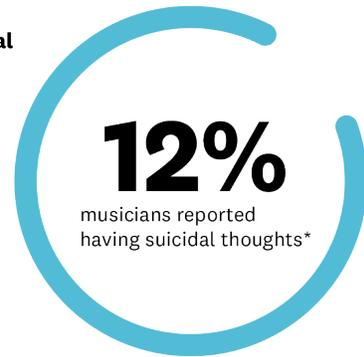
You might be surprised by how common creators experience a mental health concerns, to some degree, in their daily lives. Statistics show how important it is to continue the conversation and ensure that resources are readily accessible to the music industry, and, most importantly, you're not alone:

In a 2018 study from the Music Industry Research Association:

*compared with less than 25 percent of the general adult population

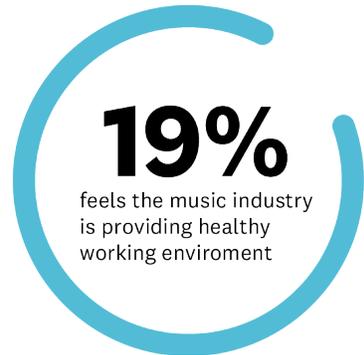
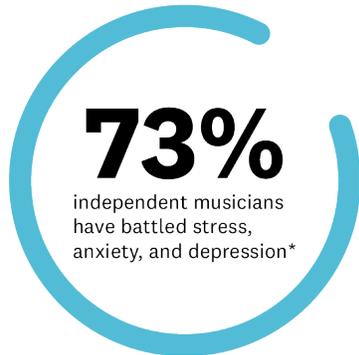


*nearly four times the general population



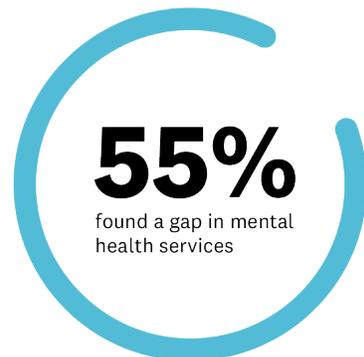
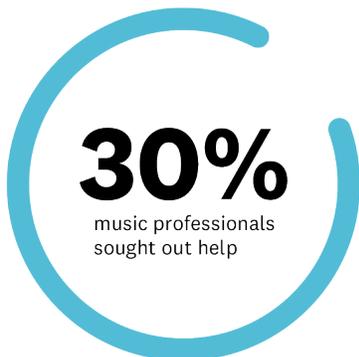
A 2019 study by Swedish digital-distribution platform, Record Union, found:

*from a study of 1,500 independent musicians



A 2019 study by Swedish digital-distribution platform, Record Union, found:

*from a study of 2,211 respondents



Common Mental Health Concerns

Do you feel overwhelmed or anxious at times? Do these feelings persist longer than you'd like? No matter the frequency, you are not alone in your struggles. Mental health is one of the biggest challenges creators face and it's important to have safe spaces and open dialogues so you can better cope when the need arises. Below are some of the common mental health concerns that creators face:

Stress

Stress is the body's alarm system in that it is your body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental, or emotional adjustment or response.

- Stressors can be internal or external
- Can experience fight, flight, or freeze responses

Anxiety

Anxiety is a physiological and physical reaction to a perceived threat consisting of fear, worry, and an intense fear connected to uncertainty.

- Anxiety is normal - we need it when there is a real threat, deadline or to be alert
- 70% of the body's systems are activated when experiencing anxiety
- Fear is similar to anxiety except with fear the threat is present, concrete, or imminent
- Anxiety can manifest in feelings of dread, fear, shakiness, restlessness, agitation, increased heart rate, sweating, chest pains, dizziness, digestive issues

Depression

Depression is described as excessive feelings of sadness, hopelessness, guilt, and/or worthlessness

- Negative thinking patterns make you think you're experiencing fatigue, heaviness, and physical pains which can make small tasks feel like a chore
- Vicious cycles of depression include: Feeling depressed -> low energy, fatigue, decreased interest -> decreased activity and neglect self and/or responsibilities -> increased guilt, hopelessness, an isolation

The Mind

The mind is directly affected by how you cope with a situation. By learning to become an Inner-Scientist of Self, you develop a healthy skepticism of your thoughts. By changing unhealthy thought patterns, we create new, healthier neuro-pathways in our minds. Below are a few techniques to help try the next time you're struggling:

Technique #1: The Three C's

CATCH IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Observe and catch your thoughts
CHECK IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What's the evidence that this thought is true/false?• Is it negative? Is it helpful?
CHANGE IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Find a neutral and/or evidence-based thought and access your logic by thinking what you would tell a friend

Technique #2: Replace Worry with Planning

Create a plan for the worst-case scenario, so that when obsessive thoughts about the worry/fear start, you can remind and utilize your plan to systematically cope.

For example, if being in a crowded room gives you worry or fear, decide what you can do to immediately help ease that worry such as leaving the room, moving to an area with fewer people, or bringing with a friend for support.

Technique #3: Watch Out for the Inner-Critic!

Don't let your own thoughts bully you. Replace negative thinking with a neutral or evidence-based thought, scan for the positive, and plan the next step.

Be the Inner-Scientist of yourself, not the Judge or Critic - this will only impair creativity and self-esteem.

Technique #4: Don't "Should" Yourself

Using the word "should" is a cognitive distortion. It takes you out of reality and creates more shame and guilt. Replace "should" with "the reality is..."

Mind & Body

The mind and body are directly connected. Mindfulness is an important skill that teaches you to be conscious and aware of your body and emotions in the present moment. It's important to stay connected to the "here and now" by reeling the mind back in when it goes too far into the future or past. Below are a few techniques to try:

Technique #1: F.U.E.L

FEEL

- Observe and label what you're feeling

UNDERSTAND

- Why and where are you feeling it in your body (notice physical sensations)

EXPRESS

- Express feelings through journaling, to your support person, pet, spirituality, art, music, etc

LET-GO

- This is the process of directing your mind and body back to the present moment. Give yourself permission to do the next best thing or relax.

Technique #2: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Train yourself to tense and relax each muscle group. This will help with identifying when your body is tense and learning how to get into muscular states of relaxation. Click [here](#) for a video tutorial.

Technique # 3: Bilateral Tapping

Bilateral Stimulation (BLS) is the use of alternating right, left stimulation such as tapping on the knees, legs, or shoulders, tapping toes or feet on the floor, or eye movements. BLS is used to activate and integrate information from the brain's two hemispheres and is used to rebalance the nervous system, activate the parasympathetic restoration cycle, and self-regulation. Click [here](#) for a video tutorial.

Technique #4: Move Your Body

Get your body moving. Integrate yoga, stretching, or any physical activity such as jogging, hiking, or swimming, into your daily or weekly routines. Any activity that releases much-needed endorphins will help to get your body and mind out of a slump.

Relationships & Boundary Setting

We are neuro-biologically wired for connections - we need people. Setting up support systems is important and can be very beneficial to coping and managing your mental health and wellness. Equally as important is knowing who to ask to join your support group and how to set healthy boundaries. Below are a few tips:

Healing Through Relationships

IDENTIFY YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

- Who do you have healthy relationships with and how can you enhance them?
- This may or may not be family. It is important to identify the healthy/rewarding relationships from those that can be negative.

CALL FOR BACKUP

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, reach out to the National Domestic Violence Hotline for help. Your support system isn't only those "at home." <https://www.thehotline.org/help/>

SEEK OUT SUPPORT

- When you need help, go to a therapist, support group, or support community.
- Utilize www.psychologytoday.com/us to find support groups, therapists, or psychiatrists.

Boundary Setting

Boundaries are essential for avoiding burnout and dealing with stressful people and situations. Here are some things to reflect on when creating boundaries:

- What do I need to make my life more manageable?
- Identify expectations/standards
 - What do you expect of yourself and of others?
 - What do others expect of you?
 - Are these realistic expectations?
- Develop a structure to protect your time, energy, and what you value
- Always check that the other person is mentally prepared to provide support
- Remember that others might also be experiencing moments of poor mental health.
- Communicate your boundaries clearly and prepare for violations

Organizations and Resources

Remember that you're not alone - there are many resources and organizations available to help you better cope with the experiences and feelings you have. Below are just a few resources and organizations available:

Stress, Anxiety, Depression Management

National Suicide Prevention Line

Call 800-273-TALK (8255) or chat at <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>

ADAA Online Support Group (Anxiety and Depression)

<https://adaa.org/adaa-online-support-group>

Help Musicians - Mental Health, Vocal Health, and Crisis Help

<https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk/health-welfare/mental-health>

Industry Organizations

Music Minds Matter - Dedicated help services for music industry professionals

<https://www.musicmindsmatter.org.uk/>

Backline - Connecting music professionals to Mental Health & Wellness providers

<https://backline.care/>

MusiCares - A safety net of critical assistance for music people in times of need

<https://www.grammy.com/musicares>

Sleep, Meditation, and Well-Being

Sleep Better Tips from our own Tom Middleton

www.songtrust.com/sleepbettertips

Use the Calm app to help you meditate, sleep, and rest easier

<https://www.calm.com/>

Find a lifestyle app (or riff off their structure) to help keep track of your routines

<https://www.lifewire.com/best-self-care-apps-4585072>

Breathing Exercise for Anxiety

If you're ever feeling overwhelmed, anxious, or tense, try the following breathing exercise to help recenter yourself:

STEP 1:	Start by finding a quiet, comfortable place to either sit, stand, or lay down.
STEP 2:	Once comfortable, close your eyes or focus on something static.
STEP 3:	Breathe in deeply for 4 counts, hold for 7 counts. and exhale for 8 counts.



STEP 4:	Repeat for as long as you need. When finished, slowly open your eyes and shake out the tension.
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Lastly, check out Songtrust's [Social Justice Resource Center](#) for more mental health resources, as well as activism resources, for the following groups:

- BIPOC Community
- Women in Music
- LGBTQIA+ Community
- Immigrants in Music
- Disability Awareness
- Hispanic and Latinx Community
- Asian American and Pacific Islander Community

Don't see resources for you? Let us know at contact@songtrust.com.