

Building Trauma Resiliency: The Impact of Music on the Life of Holocaust Survivors (APA Meeting, Atlanta, 2005)

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Music as Resiliency to Trauma

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Conclusions

1. Resiliency and vulnerability are not mutually exclusive in the same individual.
2. Repeated exposure to traumatic stress may lead to certain vulnerabilities, documented by psychiatry, but in a compensatory fashion in specific areas or contexts, resiliency develops like islands of health that determine survival.
3. The natural laws by which these islands develop are not yet known.

Conclusions (cont'd)

4. There are acquired modalities of expression that enhance resiliency: artistic endeavors, prayer, finding of meaning.
5. Practice of resiliency-enhancing modalities leads to a re-routing of brain circuitry.
6. Music is an acquired but universal method of inducing resiliency.

Conclusions (cont'd)

7. Music is closely related to the relaxation response.
8. Music is related to the finding of historical identity (i.e., past, present, future), which in itself creates more meaning and the will to survive.
9. During and in the aftermath of the Holocaust of World War II, like during other human catastrophes, music played a significant role in instilling hope and the will to survive.

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