

Reference : - When you're down and troubled: Views on the regulatory power of music

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The regulation of mood and emotions through music Several regulative processes of mood and emotions have been comprehensively discussed by Gross (1998, 1999; Gross & Thompson, 2007). One of these strategies was attention deployment, that is, choosing a focus of attention in each situation. Two strategies that account for attention deployment are: (1) Distraction, that is, the shift of attention either from one emotional aspect of the situation to another, or from one event to another; and (2) Focusing, that is, the utilization of cognitive resources to increase attention on a target emotion. We suggest that distraction and focusing can serve as relevant strategies for mood regulation through music. While distraction enables individuals to divert their attention from bad emotional experiences to contradictory emotions, for example, to happiness in music, the strategy of focusing on bad emotional experiences through music listening allows people to connect with their emotions by, for instance, listening to sad music. In line with Gross's (1998) theory, which defines emotion regulation as being derived from conscious or non-conscious effort, the decision to listen to music to regulate a bad mood can be not only habitual but also made volitionally and with full awareness. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that some people who tend to listen to music while in a bad mood are (1) aware of the fact they choose music to regulate their bad mood, and (2) can report whether they prefer to listen to sad or happy music when in a bad mood.

The study examines how individuals use music to regulate emotions, especially during a bad mood. It proposes that the decision to listen to music is an active choice influenced by the individual's emotional state and regulation strategies. The study finds that people who turn to music in a bad mood tend to focus more on their emotions rather than using distraction strategies. Those who prefer listening to music in a bad mood believe strongly in its power to regulate emotions.

The study also investigates the choice of sad or happy music in a bad mood. It suggests that listeners of happy music in a bad mood tend to score higher in mood repair than those who choose sad music. However, both groups show similar attention to their emotions. The findings also indicate that older individuals are more likely to choose happy music in a bad mood, aligning with the positivity effect observed in late adulthood.

Despite the study's contributions, it acknowledges limitations, such as a non-random sample and the need for further research to explore individual differences, including gender and musical training. The study concludes by emphasizing the significance of these findings for understanding mood regulation strategies and their implications for fields like music therapy, especially in addressing the emotional needs of individuals in late adulthood.