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APRIL 2021, ISSUE 1.

# The Mostly Mad News

*A Mostly Mad Music Newsletter.*



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## STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH - MORE IN THIS ISSUE.

Stress Awareness Month is held every April to increase public awareness about both the causes and cures for this epidemic.

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## A word from the CEO

Esther Pavel-Wood

Music brings us together. It connects us. At Mostly Mad Music we believe that if we can connect with each other, we can heal and be stronger. And after last year, with a global pandemic, civil unrest and increasingly polarized political and social views, music has become even more important to even more people.

I have had conversations with people from the United States about how they use music to escape, with people in Cuba about the sorts of music they turn to when depressed and with people in India about how music helps them get to the gym when they're feeling crippled by social anxiety. I have got into discussions with people about music on street corners, in shops, at bus stops and on trains. I have spoken to people from all walks of life and from all around the world. I have learned that the importance of music for mental health is *far* bigger than a single organization like Mostly Mad Music. For those of us who battle negative thoughts, who live with mental illness, who struggle, music can be a lifeline. Music can be the thing which keeps us in this world; our lighthouse in stormy weather. I am deeply grateful to all the people who have supported and encouraged this initiative. This, our first newsletter, is dedicated to all of you.

# Technostress: How music can help

By Elisabeth Wulf. Content Marketer, Editorial.

Let's face it — Zoom fatigue has turned into everything fatigue. For many countries, April is a month where we acknowledge stress, the effects stress can have on us mentally and physically and ways we might address it. There are so many types of stress I could point to during [2021 Stress Awareness Month](#). Even the idea that there are various classifications and reasons for stress is stressful in and of itself. So I have decided to highlight a form of stress that you may be experiencing unknowingly: [technostress](#). For the past year, I, like so many people, have been working and studying remotely. To put it plain and simple, I stare at a screen of some sort all day, more often than not, my laptop screen. I saw this tweet the other day, and it spoke to me on a spiritual level.

*another day of staring at the big screen while scrolling  
through my little screen so as to reward myself for staring at  
the medium screen all week.*  
Twitter / @delia\_cai

It feels like many of us live in a constant Black Mirror episode. Black Mirror is a British dystopian science fiction anthology television series created by Charlie Brooker, which looks at the unimagined consequences of new technologies in contemporary society. I hadn't heard of the term technostress pre-COVID, but the concept has been around for awhile. The widely-researched term technostress, commonly accredited to psychologist Craig Brod, was introduced in 1984, the same year the world gained the legendary Macintosh. Hairstyles and shoulder pad popularity have changed since the '80s, but the meaning of technostress hasn't. As far as I understand, technostress is characterized by how people react to technology. It can refer to the psychological stress and lowered sense of wellbeing that arises when either a person is consistently exposed to too much digital information and multitasking, or they struggle to healthily cope with difficulties brought on by (new) technology.

A [review](#) included in the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences says that technostress can lead to "antisocial behavior, anxiety, depression, heart disease, headaches, and muscle cramps." This sound familiar?



Say hi to Elisabeth Wulf, our US correspondent.

## Switch on to switch off.

COVID has brought with it increased levels of distress, ultimately leading to potential mental and emotional burnout for some (or many) people. The cycle continues when common symptoms of technostress manifest in irritability, cynicism, and panic attacks.

But the source of technostress can be the same thing we use to de-stress — technology (or music via a technological device). Listening to relaxing music [has been shown to stimulate](#) the dorsal amygdala, connected to the 'positive emotion' network. [Another study](#) showed that biological indicators of stress (increased cortisol hormone levels, heart rate, and blood pressure, etc.) were also reduced by listening to relaxing music. So what is relaxing music? Well it differs from person to person, but there are some general principles. Try something with a slow beat, preferably instrumental and avoid repetitious or catchy lyrics and melodies. We can get so used to our stress that it feels normal. I especially become aware of this when someone asks something along the lines of, "are you stressed?" When I start to think about that, sometimes I don't know what it's like not being stressed.

It's important to be aware of technostress induced mental fatigue and potential pandemic burnout – but it's also important to realize that you can incorporate relaxation practices, such as listening to music, into your lifestyle management plan, your wellness or recovery plan or your everyday life.

[Check out our relaxing music suggestions in the section below.](#)



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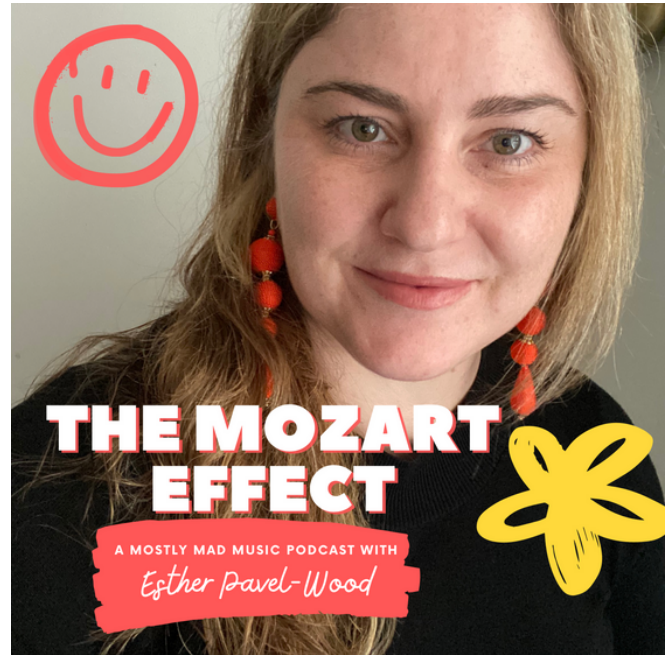
## Projects and Collabs

### Exploring schizophrenia and creativity in collaboration with One Door Mental Health

Mostly Mad Music is producing an exciting documentary with [One Door Mental Health](#) which explores the relationship between mental illness (psychosis) and creativity. Dreams, hallucinogenic drugs, psychosis. Is it all just a spectrum of alternative realities? And how does that translate through a creative lens into art, poetry, writing and music? We will be presenting this unique documentary experience at Schizophrenia Awareness Week at the end of May. You can buy tickets for the One Door Symposium and the documentary screening [here](#):

### The Mozart Effect - a Mostly Mad Music Podcast hosted by Esther Pavel-Wood.

Our podcast launched several week ago and we are almost in the top 25% of podcasts worldwide already! Subscribe to The Mozart Effect - a podcast designed to bring you into a world where music meets mental health and science. You can find us on all the usual platforms [here](#):



We will be using the podcast platform to go in-depth into topics such as music as a mood regulator, exploring mental illness, creativity and the “tortured artist” myth, analyzing the music science of memory and sleep, discussing the power of music to connect and heal and considering the role of music in inspiring social change and revolution. We’ll talk to musicians, artists and writers as well as therapists, activists, academics and people with lived experience. If there’s an interesting topic that involves music and mental health, then we’ll discuss it.

## This month’s music suggestions.

From the Mostly Mad Music community.

This month’s theme is about lowering stress. Some of our favourite playlists are linked up below. Whether you need help unwinding, falling asleep or just mellowing out and feeling good, you should be able to find something you like.

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- [EDM or electronica](#)
  - [Instrumental jazz](#)
  - [Classical](#)
  - [Introspective \(electro alt pop/rock\)](#)

