

THE AGEING SOCIETY



MAKING MUSIC ENHANCES WELL-BEING AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN OLD AGE

Regular singing or playing an instrument in old age has positive effects on mental and physical health. Empirical studies show that singing in a choir improves well-being and quality of life; it increases social connectedness and can positively affect the immune system (Clift, Hancox, Staricoff & Whitmore, 2008). The present study with elderly amateur musicians from senior orchestras (N = 308, mean age = 71 years) shows that gains in vitality and quality of life, connectedness to other people, the challenge of mental, physical and sensorimotor skills and the experience of meaning are among

the most important effects of music making. In advanced age, the importance of music appears to be higher than at any other stage in life. These and other results suggest that active music making is a powerful resource for coping with ageing / old age. Not only does it offer the opportunity to participate in culture, it also conveys, among other things, subjective well-being, social connectedness, quality of life and is therefore an effective contribution to psycho-social health.



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