

Module code:
BMPF7013

Module title:
Designing an Artefact
Independent Study Module

Practice as Research: The ethical and practical adaptation of MPA interventions to meet the needs of the modern singer seeking a self-management approach.

Sarah Martin

Student Number: 2244162

Word Count (Component 1): 5952

Word Count (Component 2): 4935

Contents

Component 1	4
Rationale	4
Justification	5
Best Practice Influences	7
Theoretical Influences	8
Methodological Influences	10
Aims & Objectives	13
Objectives	14
Expected Learning Outcomes (LO) & Assessment Criteria (AC)	15
Timescales and review dates	16
Critical Review	16
Concrete Experience	16
Reflective Observation	17
Abstract Conceptualisation	19
Active Experimentation	19
Component 2	22
Introduction	22
Know That	23
Best Practices within Grey Literature	23
White Literature	27
CBT	27
PST and Sports Psychology	28
ACT	29
Know How	31
Grey Literature Influences	31
White Literature Influences	35
PST Influences	36
CBT Influences	39
ACT Influences	42
Know What	44
Reflective Conclusion	48
Reference list	50
Appendices	59
Appendix 1 - Artefact: MPA Journal. Title: "MPA & Me"	59
Appendix 2 - Grey Literature Analysis Spreadsheet - Full Version	92

List of Figures

Figure 1: Grey Literature Analysis - Template of Table	8
Figure 2: The cyclical process of praxis for the creation of an MPA journal	13
Figure 3 - Grey Literature Analysis (Condensed version).	24
Figure 4: The “ACT Hexalfex”	30
Figure 5: Breathing Exercises	32
Figure 6: Performance Prep Planner Exercise	33
Figure 7: Performance Day Planner Exercise	34
Figure 8: Daily Practice Routine Exercise	35
Figure 9: Ethical Disclaimer	36
Figure 10: Intrinsic Goal Setting Exercise	37
Figure 11: Tracking Intrinsic Goals Exercise	38
Figure 13: Anxiety ABC’s Exercise	41
Figure 14: Thought Labelling Exercise	43
Figure 15: Visual Scanning Exercise	44
Figure 16: Condensed version of grey literature analysis showing exercise frequency only	45

Component 1

Rationale

The artefact that I will create throughout this programme of study will be designed to provide singers experiencing Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) with practical tools to relieve, mitigate and prevent debilitating symptoms. The inspiration for this artefact stems from my professional experience as both a contemporary music lecturer within an HE institution, and as a vocal coach with my own private voice studio business. Within my practice, I have encountered many aspiring singers facing difficulties surrounding MPA. For many of my students, MPA does not just impact their performance capability, with unpleasant symptoms affecting their stage presence or vocal delivery, but can have a detrimental impact on their general wellbeing. These experiences observed within my work reflect what is reported across much of the existing literature. Studies focusing on the mental health of contemporary musicians have highlighted that MPA can contribute to psychological distress in singers (Fernholz *et al.*, 2019; Herman and Clark, 2023; James and Shipley, 2022; Kenny, Davis and Oates, 2004). The experience of MPA can be attributed to many occupational stressors for musicians, including (but not limited to) social expectations to sound or perform to a certain standard (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; McHenry, Evans and Powitzky, 2016), the pursuit of perfectionism (Bascomb, 2019; Besharat *et al.*, 2014; Butković, Vukojević and Carević, 2021; Mor *et al.*, 1995) or the pressure to excel as a “lead” or solo performer (Bartlett, 2014; Gross and Musgrave, 2020).

Whilst research that examines performance anxiety in musicians is rapidly expanding, singers in particular are still largely underrepresented in research that focuses on MPA across the performing arts (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022), despite some studies suggesting that their common position as the ensemble lead may make them especially vulnerable (Loveday, Goss and Musgrave, 2022; Vaag *et al.*, 2015). As a result, further inquiry focusing on coping strategies that support the specific needs of vocalists is warranted. As a professional vocalist and vocal coach myself, my position as an insider researcher means I am well placed to address this gap through my ability to critically analyse existing literature

from the singers perspective. My professional experience in this area serves as the fundamental inspiration for the creation of my resource within this project.

Past studies have shown that there are specific challenges unique to professional musicians that make it difficult for them to access professional help for debilitating MPA. For example, the time restraints associated with freelance performance work often means that in-person therapies and treatments are not easily accessible to vocalists (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2018; Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020). Additionally, many musicians have been reported to avoid treatment altogether due to perceived stigmas surrounding MPA within the music industry (Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020). For those that do wish to seek support for MPA, the literature suggests that vocal coaches or music teachers are often the “first port of call” (Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, 2025; Mazzarolo, Burwell and Schubert, 2023). However, many educators do not feel adequately trained by their employer to support their students effectively with mental health concerns, including performance-related anxiety (Gulliver *et al.*, 2018).

Justification

In an attempt to address the need for accessible, affordable alternatives for the singers I encounter in my own practice, I intend to create a resource presented as a workbook or “journal”, consisting of a variety of short exercises in two different categories: short, practical exercises designed to relieve MPA symptoms quickly and effectively, and exercises designed to be worked on across a period of time, to help singers self-manage MPA long term. For the purpose of this study, the terms “self-management” and “self-help” will be used interchangeably to describe how singers will engage with my artefact for the purpose of MPA support. “Self-management” refers to the ongoing role that an individual plays in their own care over an extended period of time (Corbin and Strauss, 1988, as cited in Mulligan, 2019). Whilst this term is usually used to describe the management of chronic illness, a recent study by Huang and Song (2021) used this term to describe how college students develop their own strategies to cope with MPA. “Self-management” can also refer to interventions designed by professionals to promote self-management for individuals (Huang and Song, 2021; Mulligan, 2019), highlighting the appropriateness of this terminology to describe my own artefact. The term “Self-help” in the context of anxiety treatment refers to interventions that individuals can work through without the presence of a therapist, often presented in the form of books (Cuijpers and Schuurmans, 2007). Whilst the intention of this artefact is not to

replace or deter students from seeking professional psychological or medical treatment for debilitating MPA (which will be stated within a disclaimer on the first page), its value lies in offering a simple, quick and effective resource that can assist singers when they do not feel comfortable or able to access other forms of support. A journal-style resource can be accessed at home, at university, or backstage at a performance, and does not require the presence of a voice or psychology professional. My artefact will be designed to allow singers flexibility in how and when they engage with MPA interventions. It is important to note however, that despite the need for a flexible and accessible approach to MPA treatment, to ensure that this journal is ethically sound, contact details for mental health crisis services will be provided at the beginning of the book, alongside the disclaimer discussed above.

As previously discussed, the literature highlights that whilst some singers feel uncomfortable with seeking professional MPA treatment (James and Shipley, 2022), there are many singers that prefer to engage with support from a trusted vocal coach/music teacher (Mazzarolo, Burwell and Schubert, 2023; Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020). In these circumstances, I foresee this journal serving a secondary purpose as a beneficial resource to support in-person MPA support within my own practice. For singers that prefer to utilise in-person support, such a resource could be used within the voice studio as a place for the student to record feelings, symptoms and progress, much like a practise journal. Within my current practice, students are encouraged to engage with practice journals to record their performance progression. The integration of a more formalised approach to monitoring MPA interventions through this journal-style artefact could be a beneficial addition to this practice, serving students that struggle with MPA in a beneficial way.

Finally, the exploration of MPA intervention theories to underpin the creation of this journal will provide a crucial foundation of knowledge that could be integrated into the existing vocal performance curriculum within my place of work. It is imperative that music colleges and conservatoires do more to educate students on coping strategies for MPA to prevent debilitating symptoms from affecting the well-being of future professional musicians (Heyman, Perkins and Araújo, 2019). As outlined in the “Aims & Objectives” section below, it is my long term ambition to integrate MPA education and interventions into a formalised curriculum as a means of prevention within aspiring singers, as this is something not currently in place within my institution. Education on coping strategies for MPA has been recommended within the literature as a vital component of prevention (Spahn, 2015). It is vital that contemporary music colleges, such as mine, prepare students for the psychological challenges that come with a career in popular music. This journal will be the first resource that I create as part of this long term aim, with the intention of continually expanding my

theoretical understanding and practical experience to inform the creation of a curriculum that delivers these concepts in the future.

Best Practice Influences

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is frequently cited as best practice in the treatment of MPA (Gómez-López and Sánchez-Cabrero, 2023; Kenny, 2011; Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020), however, there are a wide variety of clinical and non-clinical approaches to MPA interventions that are discussed in current peer-reviewed literature. These include (but are not limited to) Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; Kenny, 2011, Gómez-López and Sánchez-Cabrero, 2023), Psychological Skills Training (PST), Biofeedback Training (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; Kenny, 2011), Music Therapy (Kenny, 2011), The Alexander Technique (Kenny, 2011, Klein, Bayard and Wolf, 2014) mindfulness and meditation techniques (Kenny, 2011, Gómez-López and Sánchez-Cabrero, 2023), medication and expressive writing (Gómez-López and Sánchez-Cabrero, 2023). As a voice practitioner with no previous experience of formal psychological training, it is imperative that my artefact is underpinned by research to ensure that the exercises that I design are both valid and ethically sound. However, the process of determining best practices for the theoretical underpinning of my artefact is complex.

Whilst many of these interventions have been found to positively correlate with the reduction of MPA, a systematic review by Kenny (2011) highlights potential limitations within the research of each treatment. For example, many Music Therapy trials are based upon small sample sizes, yielding insignificant results (Kenny, 2011), suggesting a lack of high quality studies to support its effectiveness. Additionally, whilst Biofeedback may have shown some positive implications on performance quality, results for the reduction of MPA are inconsistent (Kenny, 2011), which suggests a need for further study. Furthermore, Kenny (2011) highlighted that The Alexander Technique and ACT lack substantial empirical backing, however, this claim should be interpreted with caution due to the age of the source. A review of literature surrounding MPA treatments in classical and CCM singers highlights that PST has been shown to effectively reduce MPA symptoms in musicians, but studies with large sample sizes that focus specifically on singers are currently lacking (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022), suggesting a gap in the literature. Whilst CBT has been proven effective across a wide breadth of research (Kenny, 2011), it is also often cited as the most frequently studied treatment (Burin and Osório, 2016; Kenny, 2011; Nagel, 2010). CBT is a therapeutic approach that is usually administered by a clinical professional (Kenny, 2004), and self-help

techniques for MPA that are rooted in CBT are currently under-researched. This highlights the validity of CBT, but also suggests a gap in the literature for quality research that examines the effectiveness of other treatments. Other forms of self-help techniques for mitigating MPA, such as PAJ, are also currently under-researched within white literature.

Taking all of these complexities into account, to ensure that I focus my research on the theories and interventions that are most appropriate for the creation of an MPA self-management resource, I will begin my research process with a rigorous analysis of existing MPA self-help resources, presented in the form of grey literature. This will help me to determine if and how other artefacts, similar to my own, approach the synchronisation of theory with practical application. I will use the following table as a template to compare each artefact, to determine the frequency in which key exercises and theoretical approaches are used across existing self-help material (Figure 1). From this, I will further explore key concepts that emerge using peer-reviewed literature to ensure accuracy and viability.

Figure 1: Grey Literature Analysis - Template of Table

Artefact	Author		Reading content	Diagnostic Tools	Practical Exercises			Additional Notes
	Insider researcher	Psychology professional						
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

Theoretical Influences

As discussed under “Best Practice Influences”, peer-reviewed literature surrounding theories and interventions for MPA is vast, with many treatment approaches lacking empirical evidence to support their effectiveness (Kenny, 2011). Three interventions that do have strong empirical backing include CBT (Kenny, 2011), PST (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018; Pecun, Collins and MacNamara, 2016), and ACT (Clarke, Osborne and Baranoff,

2020; Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018; Viator, Levy and Murphy, 2024). Therefore, in conjunction with the use of grey literature to help me understand how theories surrounding MPA treatments are applied practically within other existing resources, these three interventions will be explored further in the development of my artefact within Component 2.

CBT is often regarded as the “gold standard” of MPA treatment (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; Kenny, 2011), suggesting that research surrounding this treatment option will serve as an invaluable influence in the creation of exercises for my artefact. As an intervention, it helps those suffering with anxiety address negative thought patterns that lead to unwanted or maladaptive behaviours (Spahn, 2015). As I am not a trained practitioner in CBT, and my MPA journal will be designed for use in instances where therapy is not an appropriate choice of treatment for the singer, my artefact will not claim to offer CBT a treatment for MPA. However, as CBT is considered one of the most effective interventions for reducing debilitating MPA symptoms, further exploration of self-help exercises rooted in CBT will be beneficial to underpin the creation of my own artefact.

PST, rooted in Sports Psychology, refers to the psychological training that athletes receive to help them achieve optimum performance under high pressure. By comparison, research into the performance psychology of athletes versus musicians is more advanced (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016), and as a result, much of the peer-reviewed and grey literature surrounding MPA references PST as an effective, transferable intervention, due to the similarities and shared experiences of athletes and musicians (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018; Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016).

Finally, ACT is a “new wave” form of therapy that focuses on psychological flexibility to cope with negative emotions rather than eradicate them (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018). This approach is intriguing, as it aligns with the idea that MPA in healthy quantities facilitates high levels of focus and encourages the pursuit of high standards, contributing to optimum performance in a positive way (Butković, Vukojević and Carević, 2021b). Musicians impacted by MPA often prioritise improving performance quality over eradicating the experience of MPA (Juncos *et al.*, 2017). ACT has become an established treatment for social anxiety disorder - as MPA is often categorised (Kenny, 2011) - with recent clinical trials highlighting its effectiveness (Clarke, Osborne and Baranoff, 2020; Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018; Viator, Levy and Murphy, 2024).

For the purpose of this study, other forms of MPA treatment outside of CBT, PST and ACT will not be further examined based on the current lack of sufficient empirical evidence to

support their effectiveness (Kenny, 2011). However, the exploration of other treatments including Music Therapy, The Alexander Technique and Biofeedback will be highly valuable avenues for further study in future projects.

Methodological Influences

My extensive experience as both a performer and as a mentor for aspiring singers has given me valuable insight into the unique and individual challenges that come with the experience of MPA. Consequently, my epistemological stance aligns with interpretivism, which views human experiences as inherently subjective (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016). In recent years, my status as a researcher has enabled me to draw from empirical research to inform best practice within my work. To enable me to build upon this process of connecting theory and practice for the purpose of this study, my methodological approach will be centred around Nelson's model of "Practice as Research" (PaR). Nelson's PaR is an interdisciplinary methodological approach where creative practice is regarded as a central mode of inquiry in arts-based research (Nelson, 2022). At the core of PaR is praxis. Praxis refers to the interaction between practice - the practical undertaking of a task ("doing") - and theory - the process of critical reflection ("thinking") to generate new insights (Nelson, 2022). In the context of my own professional practice as a teacher, the cycle of "doing" and "thinking" - teaching and reflecting- is at the heart of continuous personal development, with reflective practice shown to support positive outcomes in educational settings (Sellars, 2012). For the purpose of this study, praxis will be a cyclical process that is central to the development of my artefact. Step one will begin with critical reflection of my professional experiences. In light of the preliminary preparations required to complete this project, I will utilise Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb's ELT) to facilitate a meaningful evaluation of my current practice. This will ensure that the core of my creative process revolves around the needs of singers seeking self-managed MPA support, based upon what I have observed as an insider researcher. Kolb's ELT is widely recognised as an effective model of reflective practice, with a simple four part process that is useful for complex subject matters (Akella, 2010; Kolb, 1984):

- Part one involves a reflection upon concrete experience, referring to the direct participation of an activity (Akella, 2010);

- Part two is the reflective observation and analysis of the outcome of said activity (Akella, 2010);
- Part three is abstract conceptualization, where concepts, ideas and theories are formulated (Akella, 2010; Kolb, Boyatzis and Mainemelis, 1999);
- Part four refers to active experimentation, where these concepts can be actively tested (Kolb, Boyatzis and Mainemelis, 1999).

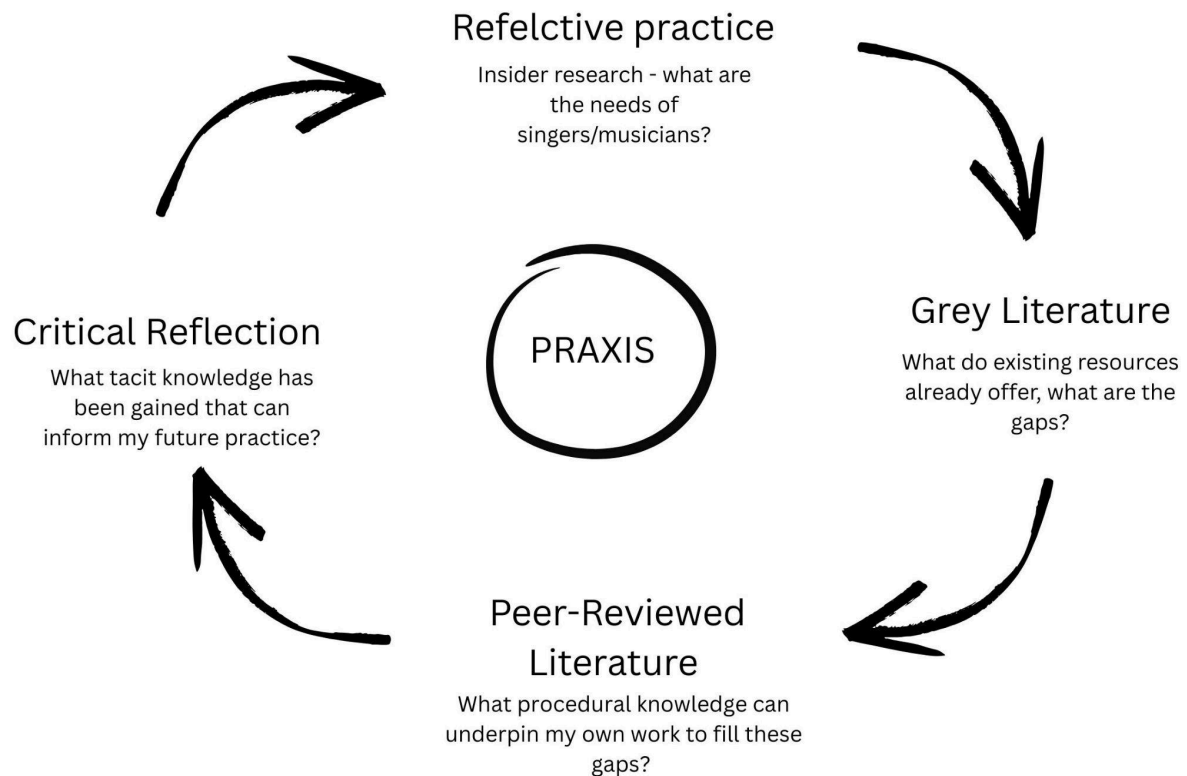
The next stage of praxis will involve expanding and refining my artefact's design through the exploration of both grey and white literature. Reflecting on my findings—combined with my lived experience—will inform the direction of my research. This process aligns with “Know-That” in PaR, which refers to the propositional or academic knowledge that is primarily obtained through reading (Nelson, 2006; Nelson, 2022). As part of an extensive literature review, I will begin by analysing grey literature, in the form of existing MPA self-help resources, as discussed in the “Best Practice Influences” section above. This will be based upon a “Lineage of Practice” review, in which the reliance of peer reviewed literature is deemed insufficient in certain fields of arts-based research (Nelson, 2022; Winter, 2022). For the purpose of this study, grey literature will be addressed first to provide a clear overview of the current gaps in the field of self-help MPA resources, from which the most relevant theoretical frameworks for further exploration will be determined. This is essential for the creation of a product that best serves the needs of musicians seeking resources that facilitate the self-management of MPA, and my positionality as an insider researcher will support me in ensuring this is achieved. Following this, the extensive exploration of relevant theoretical frameworks and peer-reviewed literature be used to ensure rigour and validity in the development of the exercises included in my artefact (Winter, 2022). The marriage of grey and white literature in this way will ensure that my artefact is both relevant and credible.

The second phase of inquiry in Nelson’s PaR is referred to as “Know-How”, which refers to the procedural knowledge that is obtained through the extensive experience of doing, creating, performing or being (Nelson, 2022). In PaR, this requires documentation (Nelson, 2022). The exercises that I choose to include and design for the purpose of my artefact will be underpinned by the knowledge gained from engagement with existing MPA resources and peer-reviewed literature, and my perspective as a voice practitioner will enhance how each exercise is designed and adapted to ensure practicality, functionality and accessibility

for singers experiencing MPA. This creative process relates to the component of praxis referred to as “doing”, and will be documented under the subheading “Know-how”, as per Nelson’s model. I hypothesise that this consolidation of knowledge obtained from both literature and my own professional observations will have a profound impact on my current professional practice, allowing me to understand how theory and practice can be synthesised to create tangible MPA support tools that will benefit my own students.

Finally, the process of making tacit knowledge explicit through critical reflection forms the final part of Nelson’s model that is referred to as “Know-what” (Nelson, 2022). Critical reflection and reflexivity are going to be critical throughout this process due to the complex nature of my topic. The credibility and functionality of my design relies on praxis, but with a particular focus on reflection: New knowledge obtained through literature requires reflection against my professional observations, to ensure it meets the needs of my target audience. The way my professional observations impact my design choices will also require reflexivity to minimise bias and ensure validity. Throughout this study, reflexive journaling will allow me to keep track of how my research shapes my ideas, thus deepening my understanding of my process (Meyer and Willis, 2018), and enable me to effectively reflect upon my initial learning objectives. This stage concludes the cycle of praxis for the purpose of this study, however, the cycle continues upon the completion of my artefact. I intend to develop my MPA resource further as part of a wider curriculum that can support student musicians with challenges relating to mental health and anxiety, as outlined below under ‘Aims & Objectives’. This will mean the cycle starts again, by reflecting on how this research process impacts my professional practice, and using this to direct future research (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The cyclical process of praxis for the creation of an MPA journal



This stage concludes the cycle of praxis for the purpose of this study, however, the cycle continues upon the completion of my artefact. I intend to develop my MPA resource further as part of a wider curriculum that can support student musicians with challenges relating to mental health and anxiety, as outlined below under ‘Aims & Objectives’. This will mean the cycle starts again, by reflecting on how this research process impacts my professional practice, and using this to direct future research.

Aims & Objectives

Based on my professional experience, I believe this kind of resource can meet the needs of aspiring singers by providing cost-effective, easy access to exercises and techniques for mitigating MPA without the need for a voice or psychology professional to be present.

Aim 1

- To create a meaningful impact in the prevention of debilitating MPA within aspiring singers through my practice as a music lecturer, vocal coach and voice researcher.

Objectives

- I will develop a journal-style resource that supports the self-management of MPA for aspiring singers struggling with MPA, with evidence based exercises drawn from ACT, CBT, and sport psychology
- I will embed the knowledge, skills and resources obtained throughout this project into a set of exercises that can be used in my own practice.

Aim 2

- To gain expertise within the field of MPA prevention by identifying and synthesising effective MPA interventions from interdisciplinary research into a cohesive, accessible resource for singers.

Objectives

- Throughout this project, I will critically analyse key research, theories and practises relating to MPA interventions within existing literature to identify relevant exercises from ACT, CBT, and sports psychology, selecting those best suited for self-help practices.
- Obtaining high quality, peer reviewed studies on effective MPA treatments and interventions in the voice studio/classroom, will be a priority throughout this project for the future development of this resource.

Aim 3

- To develop a curriculum that educates aspiring musicians studying at Higher Education level on the mental health risks of working as a professional musician.

This includes preventative strategies for managing general well-being and music performance anxiety.

Objectives

- I will explore and critically analyse grey literature, as well as peer-reviewed studies, to build a foundation of knowledge surrounding existing MPA interventions. The exploration of theory behind each of the exercises included within my MPA artefact will be expanded into educational resources in the future.

Expected Learning Outcomes (LO) & Assessment Criteria (AC)

LO1: To develop a comprehensive understanding of commonly used and effective MPA interventions based on a variety of theories and techniques.

AC1: I will have created a series of exercises designed to help mitigate MPA, based upon peer-reviewed research and high-quality grey literature.

LO2: To gain a robust awareness of existing resources to determine how my own resource could help to fill potential gaps in the market and meet the needs of aspiring singers, who may not have the finances, time or awareness to access other forms of MPA treatments.

AC2: My artefact will be primarily practical and easy to access on-the-go, addressing current gaps in the market.

LO3: To understand how an impactful and engaging journal-style resource may be presented through the analysis of existing similar products.

AC3: My artefact will be presented in a similar format to other existing anxiety workbooks/journals, however, mine will be centred around the needs of professional and aspiring musicians. This will be made explicit through the language, imagery and design features used within the resource.

Timescales and review dates

	January				February				March				April				May				June
Module 5: Processes	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK1	WK2	WK3	WK4	WK1
Determining the "Why?" / Introductory Lectures and initial Reading. Create a blank template for artefact.																					
Solidify aims & objectives. Exploration of the literature / Identify key MPA interventions.																					
Write the Introduction / Rationale for Component 1. Revise Kolb's reflective model.																					
Begin writing the Programme of Study plan for Component 1.																					
Populate artefact based upon literature findings. Begin writing Component 2. Complete artefact.																					
Write Critical Review / Reflective Summary to conclude Component 1.																					
Final edits and conclusions / Embed artefact into appendices / Referencing check. Submit draft 12/6/25.																					
Editing from draft feedback / Check final formatting and layout / Finalise word count.																					
Final submission: 2nd June 2025. Plagiarism check and submission via Turnitin.																					Deadline

	Mon AM	PM	Tues AM	PM	Weds AM	PM	Thurs AM	PM	Fri AM	PM	Sat AM	PM	Sun AM	PM
Sourcing and reading of key literature	X		X		X		X					X		X
Writing tasks to be completed each week	X		X		X		X					X		X
Creative development of artefact	X		X		X		X					X		X
Tutorials and proof reading	X		X		X		X					X		X

Key:

[Grey Box] = Allocated time

[X Box] = Time blocked out for work, social life and rest

Critical Review

Concrete Experience

In my professional practice as both a singer and a vocal coach, I have experienced and observed the significant impact that MPA can have on musicians. The effects of this have been particularly prevalent within my role as lecturer in a contemporary music institution, in which I have witnessed the significant challenges that facilitate MPA within student musicians, such as peer-on-peer comparison, expectations to manage heavy workloads, and perfectionistic tendencies. Within the literature, student musicians are often cited as vulnerable to poor mental health (Clements, 2022; Vaag, Bjerkeset and Sivertsen, 2021; Koops and Kuebel, 2019), with MPA recognised as a key contributing factor (Curtis, 2019; Barros *et al.*, 2024; Dews and Williams, 1989). This has driven my previous research to examine the cause of this. As a result, I gained a robust understanding of the potential triggers that may exacerbate MPA within student singers, including (but not limited to) high expectations from faculty (Carroll, 2021), competitive institutional environments (Curtis, 2019) and a perceived lack of performance experience (Barros *et al.*, 2024).

Reflecting on this experience (Kolb, 1984), the exploration of causal factors has highlighted that there is an urgent need for effective, appropriate MPA support resources for

singers and music students. Whilst the knowledge of MPA etiology has enabled me to adapt my teaching style to facilitate student well-being, by integrating concepts such as autonomy-supportive teaching underpinned by Self-Determination Theory (Bonneville-Roussy, Hruska and Trower, 2020; Herrera *et al.*, 2021), for the purpose of this study, I recognised that the essential next steps for developing my current practice would involve shifting my focus to interventions and treatments of MPA to further enhance my practices in offering effective MPA support.

Reflecting on my practice prior to this study (Kolb, 1984), my approach for offering advice for mitigating MPA has previously centred around my own personal experiences as a performer. Early on in my own career, I experienced significant feelings of MPA and imposter syndrome as a result of industry rejection, but financial issues and fears of stigma prevented me from accessing professional help. My experience mirrors the difficulties faced by musicians as reported within the literature, in which traditional forms of MPA treatment have been shown to present social, emotional and financial challenges for many singers (Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020). My personal approach to mitigating these challenges began with journaling, through which I engaged with goal setting, productivity checklists and positive affirmation exercises as a form of self-help, with profound results. In my own practice, I have observed the benefits of journaling within my students as a means of promoting positive patterns of thinking, goal setting, and performance preparation, resulting in increased confidence and improved performance quality. This experience (Kolb, 1984) is the main inspiration behind the creation of an MPA journal, however the reflection of my professional practices thus far (Kolb, 1984) has highlighted the need to expand my research into effective interventions and treatments in order to create effective, accessible exercises, underpinned by theory, in a format that promotes the self-management of MPA.

Reflective Observation

Many of the concepts, ideas and exercises that I learned throughout my own self-help journey have informally influenced my practice as a vocal coach when encountering students that experience high levels of MPA, as until now, this is the only knowledge I had obtained on this topic. One study by Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos (2025) found that vocal coaches can use their extant knowledge to support students in improving MPA symptoms. This study was centred around the concept of musical improvisation techniques being taught as a means of ameliorating MPA, and was conducted on the premise that additional training in effective MPA support strategies may be too expensive or time consuming for singing

teachers (Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, 2025). In the preliminary phases of this project, I recognised that the knowledge I have obtained through my own self-help practices holds value for my students. However, it also became clear that I have an ethical responsibility as a voice practitioner to ensure that my practice undergoes continual development, supported by evidence-based research. Relating my professional experiences specifically to the work of Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos (2025), I have observed in my own practice that improvisation, for example, is often a significant trigger of MPA for many singers, highlighting that in instances where my extant discipline specific knowledge alone is insufficient, it is essential that I have access to a variety of approaches that are supported by empirical evidence. As highlighted by Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, (2025), formal training in psychology-based interventions, such as CBT, PST ACT, is lengthy and costly, and therefore not appropriate for the purpose of this study. As a result of shifting my focus from causational factors to interventions, I recognised that engaging with peer-reviewed literature will enable me to develop my knowledge in this area adequately for the creation of a valid and effective resource. This will also provide me with transferable knowledge of MPA interventions that can be utilised within my own practice as a lecturer and vocal coach.

Before undertaking an extensive analysis of peer-reviewed literature, in light of the preliminary preparations for this project, one crucial observation (Kolb, 1984) was the need to address best practices in this field before exploring influences for theoretical underpinning. As discussed under “Best Practice Influences”, there is an overwhelming amount of research that explores a huge variety of recognised MPA interventions. Many of these approaches, such as Music Therapy, Biofeedback and The Alexander Technique lack empirical evidence to support their effectiveness (Kenny, 2011). Psychological interventions such as CBT, PST and ACT, are clinical treatments that are usually practiced by a trained psychologist, which presents ethical and practical challenges surrounding the adaptation of these approaches for the purpose of a self-help resource. This observation has revealed that exploring how these challenges are approached with existing resources is going to be a crucial first step to determine how this can be achieved within my own artefact, before filtering down into my own professional practice.

Abstract Conceptualisation

The methodical analysis of existing grey literature, discussed under “Best Practise Influences”, will not only enable me to understand how theory is applied practically and ethically within existing MPA resources, but it is also a crucial component for determining any potential gaps in existing MPA resources that may not currently serve the needs of singers seeking to self-manage performance anxiety. This will be used to inform design and presentation choices within my artefact. To ensure validity and credibility within my artefact, I have determined three MPA interventions - CBT, PST and ACT - to be used as the theoretical underpinning of my artefact. The effectiveness of these three treatment approaches is supported by empirical evidence (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022), however, the ethical challenges of including these in my artefact, discussed under “Reflective Observation” means that an extensive literature review will be required to explore the following research questions:

- Can exercises and treatment approaches from CBT, PST and ACT be adapted to suit the needs of singers as part of a self-help approach to MPA treatment?
- What are the potential ethical and logistical implications of adapting exercises from CBT, PST and ACT for the purpose of self-help MPA interventions?

The analysis of grey literature will be relied upon if peer-reviewed literature does not sufficiently address these new areas of learning.

Additionally, from an ethical standpoint, it is important to ensure that my journal explicitly states that it is not designed to replace professional help for those that are suffering with severe MPA, however, it is equally important that the exercises within the journal have an evidence-based theoretical underpinning for quality assurance purposes. For this reason, I will need to examine both grey and white literature to determine the most ethical approaches to signpost professional treatment within my artefact.

Active Experimentation

As discussed, the first step taken to prepare for the creation of my artefact will begin with the exploration of Best Practices, which involves the analysis of existing MPA resources in the form of grey literature. To ensure validity and rigour, all grey literature will be subject to a

strict inclusion criteria, inspired by Adam's framework (Adams, Smart and Huff, 2017). This framework provides strict guidance for the inclusion of grey literature, such as determining the relevance of an artefact, the potential impact of each artefact, and how it can supplement peer reviewed literature (Adams, Smart and Huff, 2017; Winter, 2022). To help me determine which grey literature sources will bear the most relevance and impact to my own artefact, the following inclusion criteria will be utilised: firstly, MPA resources must be designed for the primary consumption of musicians seeking help with music performance anxiety. I intend to use the search terms including "music performance anxiety", "performance anxiety", and "MPA" interchangeably, to account for the wide variation of terminology related to this topic. After each of these terms, I will insert key words including "book, workbook, exercise book, journal, workbook, worksheets, resources, and self-help tools", to generate a list of recommended resources. Resources that are applicable to other disciplines, such as music teachers or other types of performing artists, may be included, providing they are primarily targeted to musicians. Secondly, resources will have product reviews of 4 stars or above. This is to ensure that resources included in this study are regarded as good quality or good value for money by consumers, or fall into the category of "bestsellers". In turn, this criteria will hopefully direct my search to a sample of resources that are easily accessible, as they will appear as "recommended" within online search engines. Finally, all resources in this study must be considered as "affordable". Therefore, I will exclude any resources that are priced higher than fifteen pounds. Resources that are accessible via an online library, such as the UWTSD library, will be included, as this suggests that these resources are likely to be available to other music students. Additionally, resources that are easily sourced more affordably second hand will also be included. This criteria has been determined and carefully considered through my perspective as an insider researcher, as this approach will enable me to find the most easily accessible and affordable resources available.

Following this, an extensive review of literature that examines CBT, PST and ACT will be undertaken to determine if and how these interventions may be adapted as part of a self-help MPA resource. Acting as an insider researcher, designing a resource that seeks to cater to singers experiencing MPA in the modern music industry, I recognise the importance of including the most relevant and up-to-date literature possible. However, to ensure access to a wide enough scope of high quality peer-reviewed literature, I will conduct my literature review with studies dating from the year 2000 onward. Peer-reviewed studies that indicate how these three approaches may effectively and ethically adapted for the purpose of a

self-help resource will take priority, however, if this is insufficient, grey literature that meets the criteria of “Tier 2”, as outlined by the Kepes Framework (Kepes *et al.*, 2012), will be included. This includes dissertations, unpublished academic or government reports, technical reports and conference papers (Kepes *et al.*, 2012).

As discussed under “Methodological Influences”, the marriage of grey and white literature will ensure my artefact falls in line with current best practices whilst maintaining a strong theoretical influence. The cyclical process of praxis, as outlined in Nelson’s PaR, in which critical reflection (thinking) and creative practice (doing) are used to generate new insights, (Nelson, 2022) will be essential in the exploration of my research questions, and to ensure that my aims and objectives are met. Praxis and continual reflexivity will ensure that the practical application of theory within my artefact adequately successfully meets the needs of the singers experiencing MPA that I have encountered within my own practice.

Component 2

Introduction

Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) is the experience of persistent apprehension leading up to a performance (Kenny, 2011), with a spectrum of cognitive, emotional and physical symptoms that can impact performance quality and psychological well-being (Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, 2025; Herman and Clark, 2023). It is estimated that up to 25% of professional musicians and 35% of student musicians experience debilitating performance anxiety (Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020), with studies showing that singers may be particularly vulnerable in roles such as soloist or ensemble leader (Loveday, Goss and Musgrave, 2022; Vaag *et al.*, 2015).

Categorised as a form of social anxiety (Kenny, 2011), MPA is conventionally treated through pharmacological or psychotherapeutic means (Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, 2025), however, barriers such as perceived stigma (Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020), time restraints (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2018) and potential performance implications (James and Shipley, 2022) present accessibility challenges for musicians. Many singers seek assistance from a trusted vocal coach (Heasman-Cossins, Winter and Juncos, 2025), however, teachers often feel inadequately trained to support mental health concerns, including MPA (Gulliver *et al.*, 2018). This underscores the need for resources that support the self-management of MPA when other treatment options are not feasible.

Self-management resources, designed by professionals, can contribute to the effectiveness of self-help (Huang and Song, 2021).

Based on these considerations, I have developed a journal-style resource with exercises underpinned by CBT, PST and ACT practices. Inspiration from existing MPA resources in the form of grey literature, as well as my own professional experiences, has also influenced my design choices to ensure an ethically sound, credible and accessible artefact. Nelson's (2022) PaR model is used to demonstrate how an extensive literature review, practical application of knowledge and critical reflection has shaped the successful outcome of the design.

Know That

Best Practices within Grey Literature

Journaling has been shown to positively correlate with the reduction of mild to moderate anxiety in medical students (Mercer, Warson and Zhao, 2010). In particular, positive affect journaling (PAJ), that focuses on the reflection of positive emotions and experiences, has been shown to reduce feelings of anxiety (Smyth *et al.*, 2018). Currently, there is a lack of research that explores the impact of journaling on MPA in musicians specifically, but there is evidence to suggest that similar tools, such as performance diaries, may assist the self-management of MPA (Huang and Song, 2021). Many existing MPA self-help resources take the form of self-help books. Self-help books are an affordable and accessible approach to personal development (Bergsma, 2007). Whilst self-help books are considered less effective than in-person therapy, they hold value for musicians that may otherwise choose to avoid treatment (Cuijpers and Schuurmans, 2007). The potential advantages of self-help books specifically for musicians with MPA remains under-researched. As a result, a thorough analysis of the following MPA self-help books was undertaken to determine current best practices for the creation of an MPA journal. Findings were recorded within a table for clarity purposes (Figure 3).

Based on my professional observations of singers facing time restraints, self-help books are often time consuming to engage with, due to lengthy reading material outweighing the balance of practical exercises. I would posit that a highly practical journal-style resource is more accessible for singers in MPA inducing situations, such as backstage, or before an audition. As a result, I have chosen to focus my analysis of existing resources primarily on their practical components, coding the exercises in each book into categories and examining how these are presented.

Figure 3 - Grey Literature Analysis (Condensed version).

Full table is presented in Appendix 2.

Artefact	Practical Exercises							
	Mindfulness	Acceptance	Breathwork	Planning & Prep	CBT	Reflection on Achievements	Goal Setting	Exposure
The Mindful Musician (Book) Vanessa Cornett, 2019	Worksheet, audio guides			Creating a plan for a gig, create a performance kit, writing lists in advance of what you need to take to a performance (p. 208)			Use of SMART targets, worksheets, "Contract with myself" task. Partaking in affirmations. Create a musical bucket list.	
ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021)	Meditations with specific exercises - picture frame (ACT for musicians, page 52)	Tug of War with anxiety, learning to "drop the rope" (Juncos, 2015) , the Finger trap metaphor (ACT for musicians, p.70, resisting unwanted behaviours.					As part of a performance barriers, setting performance goals (p. 114)	FEEL exercises (Feeling Experiences Enriches Living; Eifert and Forsyth, 2005). Values-guided exposure exercises

Performance Strategies for Musicians, David Buswell (2006)	Categorised as "hypnosis" - mindfulness exercise - close your eyes, and find 3 things you can see, hear and feel, then repeat but find 2 things, then repeat but find one thing (p.66)		Breathing exercise "in 2 3 4, hold 2, out 2, 3, 4 ,5 ,6, hold 2" to promote relaxation	Discusses effective performance preparation, and includes information and exercises around practising and MST	Although they are not classified as CBT explicitly, there are exercises designed around changing negative thought processes in a chapter called "Changing limiting beliefs" (p.118)	Encourages healthy performance reflection to let go of feelings - contains a word bank to help musicians identify their emotions (p.214-215).		
Managing stage fright - A guide for musicians and music teachers by Julie Jaffee Nagel (2017)			Breathe in through the nose for four counts, out through the mouth for four counts, then repeat but with positive images in mind, then repeat whilst visualising a successful performance		Chapter 9 provides information about CBT, and provides some exercises based upon CBT that singers can use to reframe negative thought patterns			
Keeping your Nerve - Confidence Boosting Strategies for Musicians and Performers by Kate Jones (2000)	Mindfulness practise - lying down and focusing on different parts of the body and the breath (p. 15)					There are tips within this book that help musicians reflect on their performance in a positive light		

The Musician's Way - A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness by Gerard Klickstein (2009)			2-1 breathing: empty the lungs first, and then inhale for a short amount of counts, and exhale for twice as long (similar to 7/11 breathing) p. 167	Includes a template and a model example of an effective practise schedule (p. 8-9). In chapter 8, this book offers lots of advice on preparation for mitigating MPA. On page 163, there is a template of a "pre-performance inventory" - a checklist to help musicians prepare on the day of a performance. On page 218, there is a pre performance timeline template		This book encourages musicians to reflect on performances and provides a template for post-performance reflection that asks musicians to state positive achievements, things they would like to improve upon, and active steps to take moving forward (P.203)		
---	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

From this analysis, I have determined that each resource included in this study is written by an insider researcher, with previous music performance experience. Each resource also has a strong theoretical underpinning, ranging from CBT (Nagel, 2017), to Neuro Linguistic Programming (Buswell, 2006), sports psychology (Cornett, 2019) and ACT (Juncos and Pona, 2021). This is not always explicitly stated, but is evident within the narrative of each book. This reinforces the value of my position as an insider researcher, and highlights that a strong theoretical underpinning in psychotherapeutic research is best practice for the purpose of my artefact. As a result, concepts from PAJ have informed the design of my artefact, with a focus on expressing positive emotions, however, the theory underpinning each exercise in this journal is derived from peer-reviewed literature surrounding three effective MPA treatment approaches: CBT, PST and ACT.

White Literature

The seminal work of MPA researcher Dianna Kenny highlights that there is a lack of quality research within the field of MPA intervention (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018). Kenny (2011) found that popular approaches such as The Alexander Technique, music therapy and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) treatments, such as meditation and yoga, were not supported by sufficient evidence. The justification for the selection of these three interventions to underpin my journal is outlined as follows.

CBT

CBT is a psychotherapeutic intervention that is often regarded as best practice in the treatment of MPA (Gómez-López and Sánchez-Cabrero, 2023; Kenny, 2011; Shaw, Juncos and Winter, 2020). CBT is based upon a combination of behavioural and psychological interventions, designed to restructure maladaptive thought processes that can trigger problematic behaviours (Kenny, 2004; Kenny, 2011; Spahn, 2015). When practised with a therapist, CBT has been clinically proven to improve symptoms of anxiety (NHS, n.d.). In addition to therapy, CBT requires patient commitment, practice and real-life application (Kenny, 2004; Spahn, 2015), which is often prescribed in the form of practical daily exercises based upon what is discussed in therapy (NHS, n.d). These may include keeping a “Thought Record”, to track negative thinking patterns and actively practise reframing them in a more positive light (an exercise referred to as “Catch it, Check it, Change it”); using a “Worry Tree” to separate solvable problems from hypothetical worries; creating an action plan of steps to

regain control of anxious thoughts (including setting aside designated “Worry Time” to prevent worries from spiralling throughout the day) and mindfulness techniques, such as meditation (NHS, n.d.). The NHS website proposes that, whilst a full course of CBT requires therapy, many of these exercises can be tried at home as a form of self-help for those experiencing anxiety (NHS, n.d.). In my professional practice, I have observed how negative thought patterns can spiral and exacerbate MPA. To promote positive thought patterns, effective performance preparation and cognitive awareness, exercises inspired by these self-help techniques have been included within my resource. As my journal cannot ethically claim to offer a full course of CBT, CBT therapy is signposted as a recommended form of further treatment to ensure ethical best practice.

PST and Sports Psychology

In my current practice, I have observed how the process of setting short and long-term goals can help singers feel a greater sense of achievement, productivity and self-esteem. In support of this, Kenny (2011) highlights that goal setting and goal attainment, particularly when a goal is perceived as challenging, has been used within sports psychology for decades, and positively correlates with performance enhancement and psychological wellbeing (Kenny, 2011). Sports psychology supports athletes with performance anxiety management and performance enhancement simultaneously (Kenny, 2011), mirroring the desires of musicians (Juncos *et al.*, 2017). The exploration of sports psychology in reference to treatment of MPA has been widely explored, as, like musicians, professional athletes are expected to deliver optimum performance under tremendous pressure (Hatfield, 2016; Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016). Psychological Skills Training (PST) was developed by sports psychologists to enhance athletic performance and physical self-satisfaction (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; Weinberg and Gould, 2023). PST is the practice of mental skills training, through approaches including behaviour modification, cognitive therapy, progressive muscle relaxation (Weinberg and Gould, 2023), and most predominantly, goal setting (Hatfield, 2016; Weinberg and Gould, 2023). The similarities between the experiences of professional athletes and musicians suggests that much of this type of psychological training is transferable to the treatment of MPA within musicians (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022; Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018).

One important consideration for including exercises based upon sports psychology within my own artefact has been factors that differentiate the experiences of musicians from athletes (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016). For example, many professional vocalists

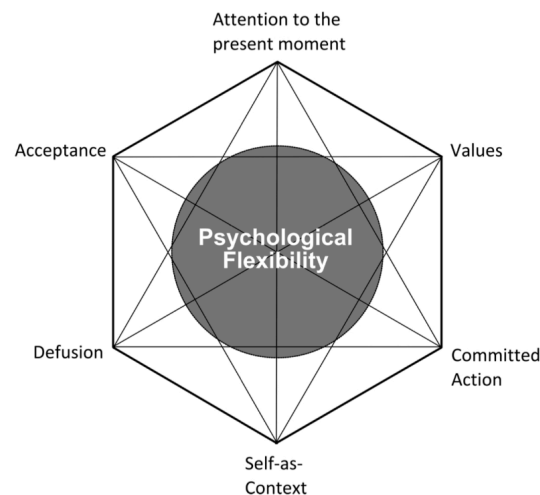
experience a deeply emotional, personal connection to their art, and are expected to express these emotions outwardly to an audience whilst maintaining optimum technique (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016). Whilst audience communication and emotional expression also applies within sport (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016), I would posit that for musicians, the expectation to deliver emotionally authentic performances makes it challenging to keep emotions under control, potentially exacerbating MPA. Contrastingly, athletes may train to prevent their emotions interfering with performance by channeling their emotions into intrinsic motivation. These differentiating experiences suggest that exercises rooted in sports PST may require different approaches and terminology to suit the unique needs of musicians (Pecen, Collins and MacNamara, 2016). For example, one study that compared different approaches to goal setting within musicians and swimmers (both suffering with performance anxiety) found that musicians benefited most from intrinsic goals, such as enjoying the music, as opposed to performance based goals, such as impressing the audience (Lacaille, Whipple and Koestner, 2005; Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2000). As an insider researcher, my personal understanding of the vocalist experience has allowed me to draw elements from sports psychology with appropriate consideration of the artistic and emotional demands of singing (Henshaw and Collyer, 2022).

ACT

Singers that I have encountered within my own practice typically only address debilitating MPA symptoms when they experience negative implications on performance capability. In many cases, singers recognise that mild pre-performance nerves can actually increase focus and connection to their work (Kenny, 2011). ACT is based upon the principle that unwanted negative experiences are not something that should be avoided, but instead, accepted for what they are, which is simply a thought, a feeling or a sensation (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018). It is often classified as a “third wave” therapy; a form of therapy developed over the last two decades, built upon cognitive behavioural interventions with the inclusion of mindfulness and acceptance principles (Kenny, 2011). Whilst there have been previous studies that have cautioned a lack of empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of new wave therapies such as ACT (Kenny, 2011), newer research has suggested that ACT may be equally as effective as CBT for treating social anxiety (Craske *et al.*, 2014; Kocovski *et al.*, 2013). Unlike CBT, which seeks to reframe problematic thought processes in a more positive light, ACT reduces the toxic impact of negative emotions, such as anxiety, by encouraging acceptance of them as part of normal life (Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018). ACT posits that this can be achieved through the six behavioural processes of psychological flexibility

known as the “ACT Hexaflex” (Juncos and Pona, 2021). These processes are ‘Attention to the present moment’ (or “Mindfulness”), “Values”, “Committed Action”, “Self-as-context”, “Defusion” and ‘Acceptance’ (Figure 4).

Figure 4: The “ACT Hexaflex”



(Batnik *et al.*, 2016, Hayes *et al.*, 2006, as cited by Juncos and Pona, 2021)

Although ACT as therapeutic intervention is usually administered by clinically trained practitioners, it acknowledges the value that other professionals, such as voice teachers, can bring in support of singers experiencing MPA. Therefore, ACT does not require clinical administration, provided that non-clinical practitioners are trained in ACT principles and understand when it is important to refer students for further treatment. “ACT for Musicians” (Juncos and Pona, 2021) is an important resource that provides a series of exercises based on ACT specially designed for the treatment of MPA. Within this book, Juncos and Pona, (2021) provide exercises that target psychological flexibility across all six of these processes. Many of the exercises, such as mindful breathing, visual scanning and thought labelling (Juncos and Pona, 2021) work practically within a journal resource. Like CBT, further treatment options for ACT will be signposted within my MPA journal to ensure ethical practices are upheld.

Know How

My experience of MPA, both personally and within my professional practice, has led me to understand that it is both complex and subjective. This, combined with the ethical obligations that come with subject matters regarding mental health, has influenced a strong theoretical underpinning within my artefact, ensuring validity within the design. This section, in line with Nelson's PaR "Know How" framework (Nelson, 2022), will discuss how my three chosen psychological theories (PST, CBT and ACT) have influenced the development of my artefact. However, I will firstly address how grey literature, in the form of existing MPA resources, has been used to influence design choices to fulfil the needs of my target audience, in line with my methodological approach as outlined in Component 1.

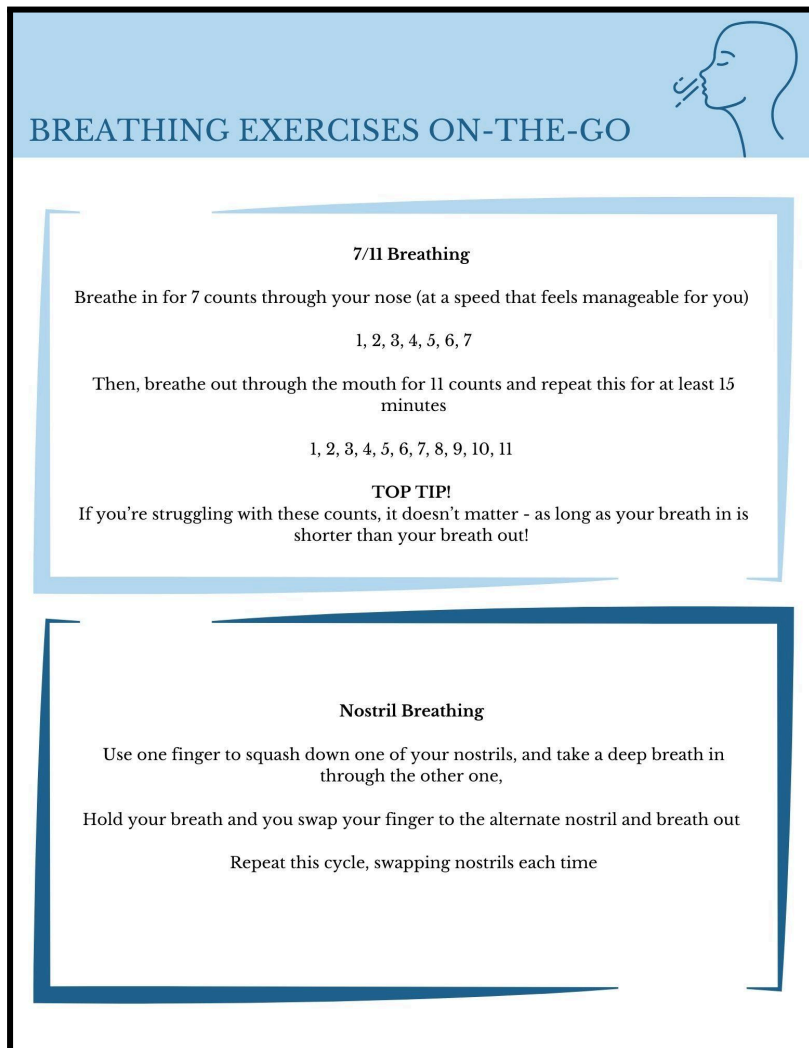
Grey Literature Influences

My professional observations have highlighted a gap for journal style resources that focus specifically on relieving MPA. This has inspired the highly practical nature of my own artefact (see appendix 1). The presentation of my artefact has a strong creative underpinning. Engagement in creative tasks is well evidenced in the support of mental well-being (Jean-Berluiche, 2024; Leckey, 2011), and therefore, design choices have been made with this in mind. Additionally, colours that are generally considered to be calming, such as greens, blues and yellows (Bandara and Hettiarachchi, 2022) have been favoured in the design approach, and colours found to be conducive with feelings of stress or anxiety, such as red and black (Bandara and Hettiarachchi, 2022), have been avoided.

Whilst many of the existing MPA resources are not designed to function as workbooks themselves, references to practical exercises, such as breathing techniques for relaxation, are included in all of the available resources included within this study (Buswell, 2006; Cornett, 2019; Nagel, 2017; Juncos and Pona, 2021; Klickstein, 2009). With support from peer-reviewed studies, highlighting the positive effects of breathing techniques for the relaxation of the nervous system (Jerath *et al.*, 2015, Su *et al.*, 2010), I have included a series of breathing exercises inspired by those existing resources, as well my existing pedagogical knowledge (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Breathing Exercises

Full journal can be found in Appendix 1



Additionally, the inclusion of exercises centred around performance preparation have been included based upon my findings within existing grey literature. Many of the existing MPA resources referenced adequate preparation as an essential component for reducing performance anxiety (Cornett, 2019; Jones, 2000, Klickstein, 2009), confirming what I have observed within my own professional practice. In support of this, a number of studies have found that one of the most common triggers of MPA within musicians is lack of preparation (Kenny, 2011; Osborne, Greene and Immel, 2014). “The Mindful Musician” (Cornett, 2019) and “The Musicians Way” (Klickstein, 2009) provided templates of detailed pre-performance inventories, incorporating checklists, schedules and daily practice routines to help musicians gain control of MPA. In my own artefact, I have adapted these to suit the needs of singers by including discipline specific checklist categories and terminology (Figures 6, 7, 8).

Figure 6: Performance Prep Planner Exercise

PERFOMANCE PREP PLANNER

Anxiety often occurs when we feel overwhelmed, out of control or underprepared. In the lead up to a gig, an audition, a recital or an exam, use the template below to help you schedule in practice time, time for learning new material, rehearsals, preparing your equipment/instrument, contacting the client/venue, or anything else you need to do to ahead of time to ensure a successful performance. Feel free to use this 6 week template, or fill in the blank one on the next page however it best suits you.

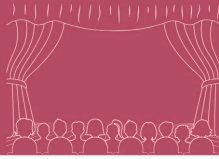
EVENT DATE			
DATES	TO DO	RESOURCES	CHECKLIST
WEEK 1:			
WEEK 2:			
WEEK 3:			
WEEK 4:			
WEEK 5:			
WEEK 6:			

PERFOMANCE PREP PLANNER

EVENT DATE			

Figure 7: Performance Day Planner Exercise

PERFORMANCE DAY PLANNER



Use this planner to ensure you are fully prepared on the day of an important performance. This will help to minimise stress!

EVENT

DATE TIME OF ARRIVAL

ADDRESS

Personal Preparation		Equipment, Logistics, Materials	
Warm up/ Practice		Music / Lyrics to be printed	
Rest / Relaxation		Instrument / Microphone	
Meals / Snacks		Gear	
Performance Outfit		Clothing	
Personal Grooming		Transport	
Water		Backstage water/ Snack	

Figure 8: Daily Practice Routine Exercise

DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE

PRACTICE SESSION GOALS

1.....
2.....
3.....

Time slot	What I will practice	Resources needed

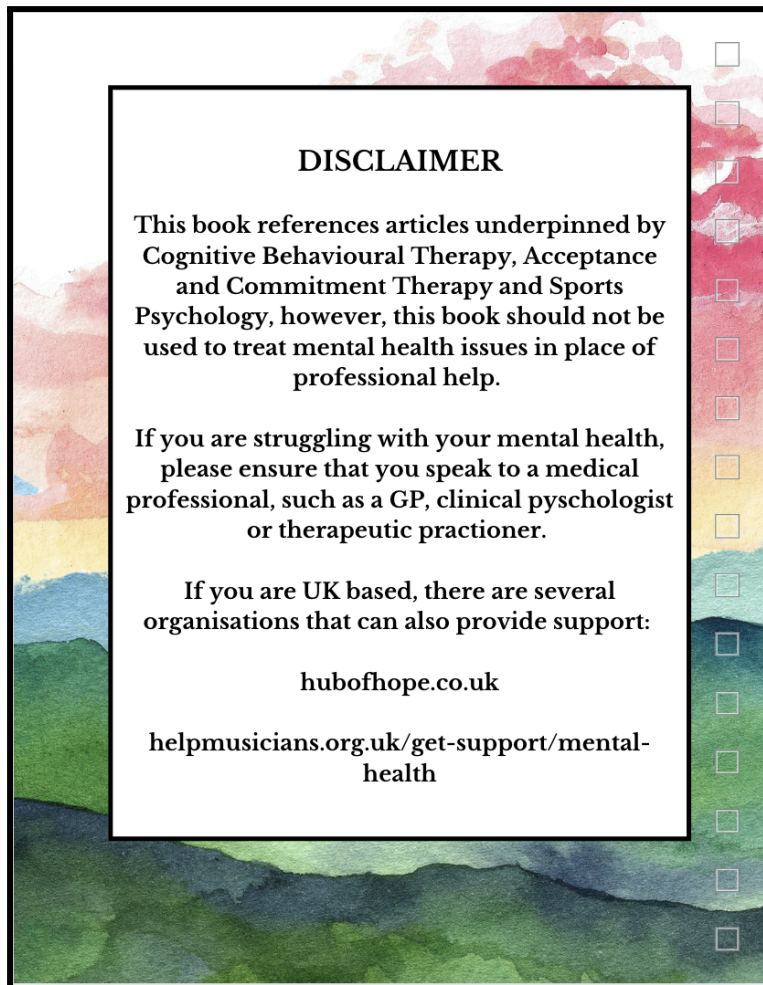
NOTES FOR NEXT SESSION

1.....
2.....
3.....

White Literature Influences

As discussed, the inclusion of exercises underpinned by psychotherapeutic interventions requires careful ethical consideration. As self-help exercises have been shown to be less effective than in-person therapy for the treatment of anxiety, it was essential for my artefact to signpost additional treatment options and professional services that can support musicians who face on-going mental health struggles (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Ethical Disclaimer



PST Influences

Inspired by PST in sports psychology, I have included several exercises that incorporate goal setting with my journal. Goal setting is a core component of PST, in which the primary focus is performance enhancement and self-satisfaction (Hatfield, 2016; Munnik, Turner and Leon, 2023), both of which I would suggest are primary concerns for performing singers. Notably, goal orientation has been shown to impact performance outcomes, with performance based goals, such as performing flawlessly, proving maladaptive (Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2000), and intrinsic goals, such as having fun, showing more positive performance outcomes (Lacaille, Whipple and Koestner, 2005; Lacaille, Koestner and Gaudreau, 2007). Based on my experience, I would posit that whilst setting intrinsic goals may not provide immediate physical relief from MPA symptoms, it may subconsciously

relieve internal pressure, which may be particularly helpful for singers that are prone to maladaptive perfectionistic tendencies. The exercise shown in Figure 10 is designed to help singers gain a basic understanding of intrinsic goal setting and how to utilise it in their own practice.

Figure 10: Intrinsic Goal Setting Exercise



INTRINSIC GOALS

Intrinsic goals help us find personal satisfaction. They are there to help you find joy in your work, pursue personal growth, or contribute to something you are passionate about. Sometimes, achievement based goals, such as getting booked in an audition or achieving a flawless performance can add to our feelings performance anxiety, and they're not always attainable! Intrinsic goals can help us feel more positive, and remind us of why we make music in the first place. Here are a few examples of intrinsic goals:

To enjoy the music I am performing

To connect with the lyrics emotionally

To feel a sense of calm during my performance

To focus on why I love to sing

To have fun on stage with my ensemble

What are some intrinsic goals that you would like to achieve in your performing?

-
-
-

As a performer myself, I recognise that this exercise may present challenges for musicians in different performance situations. For example, when a performance event has financial or social implications attached to it, such as an audition, it may be easy for musicians to prioritise performance-based goals, such as performing flawlessly or impressing the audition panel. As these kinds of goals have been proven detrimental to performance outcomes (Lacaille, Koestner and Gaudreau, 2007; Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2000), I have incorporated an intrinsic goal tracker exercise that encourages habitual intrinsic goal setting for every kind of performance (Figure 11). An opportunity to reflect on the success of intrinsic goal setting creates an opportunity for singers to make this a routine part of all performance preparation.

Figure 11: Tracking Intrinsic Goals Exercise

TRACKING INTRINSIC GOALS



Try setting some specific intrinsic goals for upcoming performances/events/auditions/recitals. After the event, reflect on what helped you achieve your goal, or what held you back.

Use the example below as a guide!

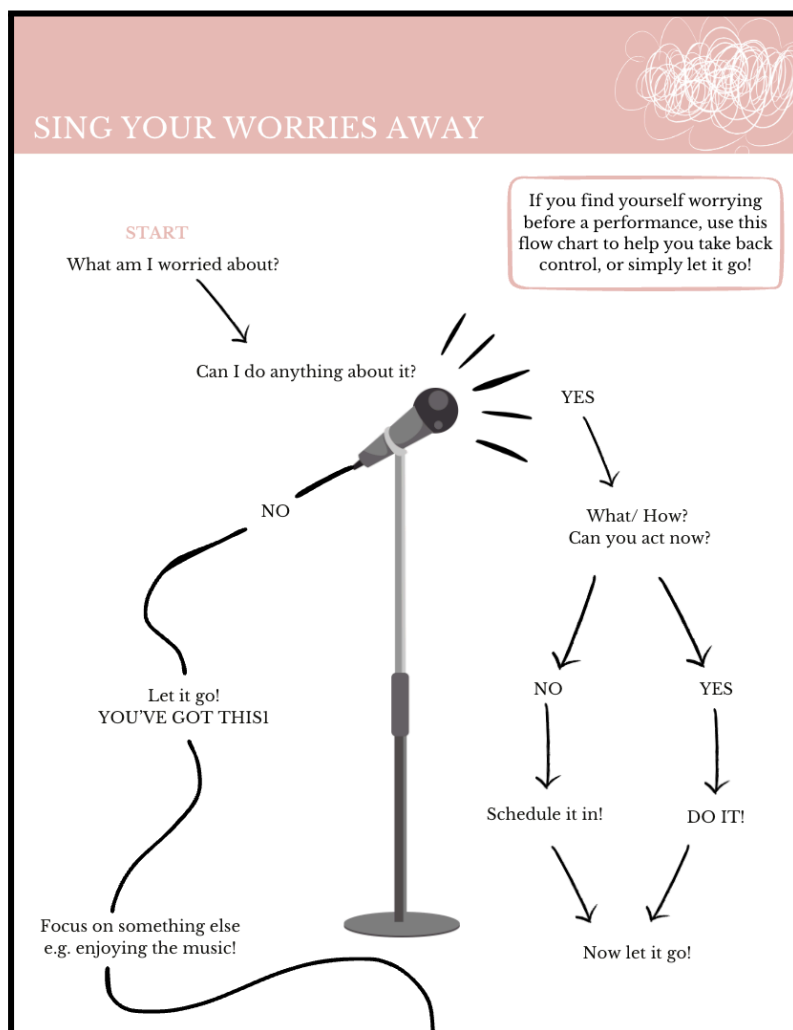
Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
1st of May	Audition for jazz band	<i>During my performance, I want to connect emotionally with the lyrics and forget about everything else!</i>
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		
<i>During the audition, I feel nervous during the first verse. However, in the chorus, I closed my eyes and imagined I was singing to a loved one. I pictured their face in my mind and sang from the heart. This helped me to find aa connection and get lost in what I was singing, which felt great!</i> <i>Next time, I will start focusing on this before I go in for the auditon to help me get in the zone.</i>		

Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		

CBT Influences

One of the challenges most prominent in the creation of this artefact has been the ethical inclusion of exercises rooted in CBT. To overcome this, self-help techniques, as recommended by the NHS (n.d.), have been used as a basis for exercises underpinned by CBT. Terminology and presentation style has been adapted to suit the needs of singers, based on my professional observations. For example, the “Worry Tree” exercise (Butler and Hope, 2007; NHS n.d.) is a structured way of separating hypothetical worries and actionable problems to gain control over anxiety (Butler and Hope, 2007). As a vocalist, I recognise the value of this exercise, as hypothetical ‘what ifs’- such as worrying about forgetting the lyrics- often exacerbate MPA, diverting energy that could be better spent on practice. Adapted from Butler and Hope’s (2007) “Worry Decision Tree”, I have created a version that can be used in the lead up to a performance. I have based my design around a microphone to provide a relatable and engaging visual representation of the exercise (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Worry Decision Tree Exercise



CBT has also influenced my artefact through the incorporation of an exercise utilised in “Managing Stage Fright” by Nagel (2017), underpinned by Rational Emotional Behaviour Therapy (REBT), an early branch of CBT developed by Albert Ellis (David *et al.*, 2005; Nagel, 2017). The exercise involves reframing negative thought processes through an “ABC” model, in which “A” refers to an event, “B” is the beliefs upheld about said event, and “C” is the emotional, behavioural and cognitive outcomes of said beliefs (David *et al.*, 2005; Nagel, 2017). Musicians are encouraged to try altering their preconceived beliefs (“B”) to positively impact performance outcomes (“C”) (Nagel, 2017). This exercise is reminiscent of a recommended NHS (n.d) self-help technique known as “Catch it, Check it, Change it”, which is also centred around reframing negative thoughts to change behavioural outcomes. Within “Managing Stage Fright”, Nagel (2017) explains the principles of the ABC model, and provides examples of how it can be utilised for mitigating MPA. I have adapted a more practical version of this exercise, centered around the same principles, for musicians seeking practical MPA support on the go, in line with my aims for this project. This consists of instructions and examples of the ABC model, followed by a practical opportunity for singers to try it for themselves (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Anxiety ABC's Exercise

ANXIETY ABC'S

A B C

This exercise will help you to identify negative reactions to events that might trigger MPA, and help you to replace unhelpful thoughts and feelings with more positive ones.

A

Next to the Letter A, write down an important event (such as a gig, an audition)

B

Next to the letter B, write down any thoughts or feelings that you're experiencing surrounding that event

C

Next to the letter C, write down what you think the outcome of the event might be

EXAMPLE:

A B C

Here is an example of an event (A), followed by some unhelpful thoughts and feelings (B). These negative thoughts are likely to contribute towards a neagative outcome (C):

A

An upcoming audition for a meaningful opportunity

B

I am nervous about making mistakes, which makes me feel sick when I think about the audition

C

I will be too nervous to perform to the best of my ability and fail at the audition

If we can reframe our B (our thoughts and feelings) in a more positive light, it can help us to focus on a more positive outcome (C):

B

I have practised extremely hard and I have performed my piece many times with no mistakes

→

C

I trust myself to do my best and I am happy knowing that that's all I can do

TRY IT YOURSELF:

A B C

A (event)

B (thoughts, feelings)

C (outcome)

Are your thoughts and feelings about A helpful or unhelpful? (B)
 As a result, is your outcome positive or negative? (C)
 Can you reframe your B to create a more positive C?

NEW B

→

NEW C

ACT Influences

ACT is used as the theoretical underpinning for exercises that are designed to promote acceptance within my artefact. Drawing on my professional experience, I would posit that the principle of acceptance supports the view that MPA should not be eliminated, but rather channelled to enhance performance- a central concern for many vocalists that experience it. This promotes a healthy and adaptive experience of pre-performance adrenaline, as opposed to debilitating pre-performance anxiety. This principle is mirrored across much of the ACT research (Clarke, Osborne and Baranoff, 2020; Juncos and de Paiva e Pona, 2018; Viator, Levy and Murphy, 2024). One of the “Hexaflex” processes that ACT utilises to promote acceptance is “Defusion”, which seeks to reduce the magnitude of unpleasant thoughts (Juncos and Pona, 2021). This can be achieved through several techniques, but for the purpose of my artefact, the approach known as “Thought Labelling” is particularly appropriate. This exercise involves recognising and recording negative thoughts, with the intention of preventing them from manifesting subconsciously throughout the day (Juncos and Pona, 2021). As an insider researcher, I understand that for many singers, the experience of subconscious anxiety leading up to performance, often triggered by a seemingly insignificant thought, can often have a tremendous negative impact. Juncos and Pona’s (2021) version of “Thought Labelling” has therefore been adapted and included within my journal to allow singers to catch these early negative thoughts, and prevent a ‘snowballing’ effect that may result in high levels of anxiety (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Thought Labelling Exercise

THOUGHT LABELLING

When we write down our thoughts, or “label them”, we are less likely to let them consume us mindlessly for the rest of the day. You can label things you are feeling or thinking, things that you have an urge to do or not do, sensations you might be experiencing, memories, or mental evaluations that you may be having.

Once you get the hang of this, you will start to notice that these kind of thoughts becoming fleeting, and will pass you by no problem!

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

I notice I am feeling stressed about that high note

I notice I am thinking about the voice crack in my last gig

I notice the urge to call in sick for rehearsals

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

THOUGHT LABELLING

Use these blank pages to practice this exercise regularly!

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

I notice...

Additionally, ACT posits that mindfulness is a skill that can help musicians gain control over anxious thoughts during a performance, allowing them to maintain “attention in the present moment”, as per the ACT Hexaflex (Juncos and Pona, 2021). ACT researchers Juncos and Pona (2021) recommend a variety of exercises centred around mindfulness, but one approach that appropriately meets the practical requirements of my artefact is based on ‘visual scanning’ (Juncos and Pona, 2021). This involves selecting a highly detailed object, such as an ornate picture frame, and focusing on the details in a “scanning” motion whilst working through a breathing sequence, allowing musicians relief from mental distractions (Juncos and Pona, 2021). The discreet and accessible nature of this exercise makes it easy for singers to complete this backstage, on public transport, or in an audition waiting room, without drawing attention to themselves. As a result, this exercise may be appealing to singers who are cautious of perceived stigmas surrounding MPA, justifying its inclusion within my artefact. Figure 15 demonstrates how this exercise is presented within my journal.

Figure 15: Visual Scanning Exercise



Know What

Throughout the process of the artefact design, I became overwhelmed with the amount of available interventions and exercises that could be considered for inclusion. To help me narrow this down, I conducted an in-depth analysis of the existing MPA resources available to me, to determine which kinds of exercises appeared most frequently. Compiling my findings into a spreadsheet (Appendix 2), I was able to code the exercises within each artefact into categories to determine the frequency of each type. For example, three out of eight resources included goal setting exercises, five included mindfulness activities, and all of them included breathwork (Figure 16).

Figure 16: Condensed version of grey literature analysis showing exercise frequency only

Full version found in Appendix 2.

Categories of Exercises	Frequency	Name of titles
Mindfulness	5	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022) Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) Keeping your Nerve (Jones, 2000) ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021)
Breathwork	6	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022) Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) Managing Stage Fright (Nagel, 2017) ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Planning & Preparation	4	Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) Keeping your Nerve (Jones, 2000) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Reflection (Achievements, values)	5	Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) Keeping your Nerve (Jones, 2000) ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Goal Setting	3	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022)

		Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019)
Exposure	2	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022) ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021)
Managing impact of thoughts	2	ACT for Musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021) Managing Stage Fright (Nagel, 2017)
Identifying Triggers	4	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) Managing Stage Fright (Nagel, 2017) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Visualisation	3	Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) Managing Stage Fright (Nagel, 2017) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Progressive Muscle Relaxation	4	Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) Managing Stage Fright (Nagel, 2017) Keeping your Nerve (Jones, 2000) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)
Practise Journaling	2	The Anxiety Workbook (Barnes, 2022) Performance Strategies for Musicians (Buswell, 2006) The Mindful Musician (Cornett, 2019) The Musician's Way (Klickstein, 2009)

With this detailed insight into the exercises included within other MPA resources, I was able to cross reference these categories against the theories analysed within peer reviewed literature to determine how these could be adapted to ensure an effective and valid output. However, I felt confronted by the number of approaches and theoretical underpinnings that were highlighted in existing MPA resources. For example, the ABC model presented in

“Managing Stage Fright” (Nagel , 2017) felt reminiscent of the principles of CBT although author Nagel (2017) cited Rational Emotional Behaviour Therapy (REBT) as the theoretical underpinning. As REBT was unknown to me, I turned to peer-reviewed literature to explore this concept further. I discovered that REBT is recognised as one of the earliest forms of CBT, created by Albert Ellis in 1955 (David *et al.*, 2005). REBT specifically is centred around changing irrational beliefs, and has been highlighted as an important form of CBT in the realm of sports performance (Munnik, Turner and Leon, 2023). This experience highlighted to me the complexity of the psychological interventions used to treat MPA, showcasing how theories and terminology may have expanded and developed over time. Therefore, in order to fulfil my long term aim of building my expertise in MPA interventions to support aspiring singers (Aim 2, outlined within Component 1 of this paper) without pursuing clinical psychological training, a process of extensive reflexive research will be essential to ensure that my subject expertise is robust. The process of reflexivity will ensure the appropriate and ethical practical application of interventions within my practice.

My contextual knowledge of certain MPA interventions, such as goal setting, developed and changed throughout the research process. When exploring the theory behind goal setting within PST for athletes and how this can be applied within musicians, I discovered several studies that found performance-related goals to be associated with negative emotional outcomes for musicians, and intrinsic goals, centred around enjoying the music, saw increased positive performance experiences (Lacaille, Whipple and Koestner, 2005; Lacaille, Koestner and Gaudreau, 2007). As a result, I chose to adapt the goal setting exercises within my own journal to focus on intrinsic goal setting, as opposed to performance-based goals. As part of my reflexive practice throughout this design process, I realised that, as a musician myself, my own tendencies of perfectionism may have influenced my approach to goal setting previously. For example, discussing a performance goal such as “staying relaxed on the high note” with a student of mine would have previously been standard practice, mirroring the way I have often set goals for myself relating to optimum technique in the past. My research into PST and adaptive goal setting practices is one example of how I have developed my expertise within the field of effective MPA interventions, contributing to the fulfilment of Aim 2. As a result, in line with Aim 1, I have incorporated intrinsic goal setting into my professional practice when working with students. Reflecting on this insight, I am aware that this adjustment will require regular reflexive practice, with careful consideration of my language choices, to ensure my own experiences of perfectionism do not influence my approach to goal setting with students in a way that is potentially harmful.

Furthermore, another example of how my contextual knowledge of MPA interventions developed throughout this process is my approach to mindfulness techniques through the exploration of ACT. Through my analysis of existing MPA resources, I discovered that the concept of mindfulness was cited regularly in different forms as a way of reducing symptoms of anxiety (Barnes, 2022; Buswell, 2006; Cornett, 2019; Jones, 2000). Many of the exercises that I encountered, such as isolating and tensing different muscles within the body (Jones, 2000), were familiar to me, as I have utilised them informally within my own practice with consistent success. Conflictingly, upon exploring literature on this topic, the seminal MPA research of Kenny (2011), highlighted that whilst a small number of studies found that mindfulness techniques positively correlated with the reduction of stress and anxiety, there is a lack of empirical evidence that supports its effectiveness as a standalone MPA intervention. However, emerging studies in ACT, of which mindfulness is a key component (Juncos and Pona, 2021), highlighted effective results in the reduction of MPA symptoms (Clarke, Osborne and Baranoff, 2020; Viator, Levy and Murphy, 2024). As my journal does not claim to offer a full course of ACT, the inclusion of mindfulness based approaches within my own artefact required careful consideration. My professional observations of the positive effects of mindfulness techniques for the reduction of MPA, combined with the recent emerging evidence in support of ACT, were used to justify the inclusion of exercises built on these approaches with my artefact. However, further research will be required to build upon this knowledge for the fulfillment of my long term aim of creating a viable curriculum that supports singers with MPA, in line with Aim 3.

Reflective Conclusion

A highly practical and accessible MPA journal rooted in CBT, PST and ACT principles addresses the need for alternative MPA support for singers that wish to avoid conventional treatments, such as therapy, due to perceived stigma or time restraints. The process of creating this resource has provided me with valuable foundational knowledge of effective MPA interventions and how these can be ethically and logistically adapted for the purpose of a self-help resource. The success of my initial learning outcomes (LO) can be measured through the critical reflection of my current practice as a lecturer and vocal coach, post-completion of this artefact (Nelson, 2022). Within my practice as a vocal coach, the theoretical knowledge I have obtained throughout this process has influenced my approach to MPA support, in line with LO1. For example, my approach to goal setting has been adapted to incorporate intrinsic goals to promote positive performance outcomes (Lacaille, Koestner and Gaudreau, 2007). For students that I encounter within my practice as a

lecturer in a contemporary music college, my resource is best placed as a downloadable PDF within the institution's virtual learning platform, to allow students easy and anonymous access.

Addressing my initial research questions, the analysis of existing MPA resources and grey literature highlighted ways that practical exercises rooted in CBT, PST and ACT can be ethically and appropriately adapted for the purpose of the self-management of MPA, in line with LO2: however, self-help techniques alone do not form a full course of treatment. One limitation of this is that self-help interventions for anxiety have been shown to be less effective than in-person therapy (Cuijpers and Schuurmans, 2007). However, self-management techniques for coping with MPA specifically require further research to determine the full scope of potential advantages and disadvantages in cases where singers feel that other forms of treatment are not accessible. Additionally, this highlights an urgent need for further study surrounding the stigmatisation of MPA, and MPA treatment, within the music industry, to fully address the implications of this on the well-being of musicians. Within my own practice, next steps include the development of my artefact into a curriculum that educates singers on the mental-health risks involved with a professional music career, including MPA. To help me achieve this, I would recommend that further study into MPA interventions, using large sample sizes and high quality methodologies, is required.

Reference list

- Adams, R.J., Smart, P. and Huff, A.S. (2017) 'Shades of Grey: Guidelines for Working with the Grey Literature in Systematic Reviews for Management and Organizational Studies', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 19(4), pp.432–454. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12102>
- Akella, D. (2010) 'Learning together: Kolb's experiential theory and its application', *Journal of Management & Organization*, 16(01), pp.100–112. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1833367200002297>
- Bandara, K.M.S. and Hettiarachchi, A.A. (2022) 'Impact of Colours in Classroom Interiors on Mental Health Undergraduates with Reference to Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels', *FARU Journal*, 9(2), p.54. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4038/faruj.v9i2.174>
- Barnes, A. (2019). *The Anxiety Workbook*. London: Summersdale Publishers.
- Barros, S., Marinho, H., França, A.B. and Pereira, A. (2024) 'Music performance anxiety: A study of anxiety predictors in higher education music students in Portugal', *International Journal of Music Education*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/02557614241280040>
- Bartlett, I. (2014) 'Reflections on Contemporary Commercial singing: An Insider's Perspective', *Voice and Speech Review*, 8(1), pp.27–35. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2013.829711>
- Bascomb, J. (2019) *Performing Arts and Performance Anxiety*. Masters thesis. Marshall University. Available at: <https://mds.marshall.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2189&context=etd> (Accessed 6 May 2024).
- Bergsma, A. (2007) 'Do self-help Books help?', *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 9(3), pp.341–360. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-006-9041-2>
- Besharat, M.A., Issazadegan, A., Etemadinia, M., Golssanamlou, S. and Abdolmanafi, A. (2014) 'Risk Factors Associated with Depressive Symptoms among Undergraduate Students', *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*, 10, pp.21–26. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajp.2014.02.002>
- Bonneville-Roussy, A., Hruska, E. and Trower, H. (2020) 'Teaching Music to Support Students: How Autonomy-Supportive Music Teachers Increase Students' Well-Being',

Journal of Research in Music Education, 68(1), pp.97-119. Available at:
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429419897611>

Burin, A.B. and Osório, F.D.L. (2016) 'Interventions for Music Performance anxiety: Results from a Systematic Literature Review', *Archives of Clinical Psychiatry*, 43(5), pp.116–131. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1590/0101-608300000000097>

Buswell, D. (2006). *Performance Strategies For Musicians: How to overcome stage fright and performance anxiety and perform at your peak... using NLP and visualisation*. UK: MX Publishing.

Butković, A., Vukojević, N. and Carević, S. (2021) 'Music performance anxiety and perfectionism in Croatian musicians', *Psychology of Music*, 50(1), pp.100-110. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735620978692>

Butler, G. and Hope, T. (2007) *Manage your Mind: The Mental Fitness Guide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Carroll, E. (2021). *Stress and Burnout Among Undergraduate Music Education Majors: An Examination of Trends, Influences, and Coping Mechanisms*. Honours Project. Bowling Green State University. Available at:
<https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1824&context=honorsprojects>
(Accessed 14 May. 2025)

Clarke, L.K., Osborne, M.S. and Baranoff, J.A. (2020) 'Examining a Group Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Intervention for Music Performance Anxiety in Student Vocalists', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01127>

Clements, L. (2022) *Equity global scoping review of factors related to poor mental health and wellbeing within the performing arts sectors*. Available at:
<https://www.equity.org.uk/media/hwignp3cu/mental-health-report.pdf> (Accessed 4 Mar. 2025).

Cornett, V. (2019). *The Mindful Musician: Mental Skills for Peak performance*. Kettering: Oxford University Press.

Craske, M., Niles, A., Burklund, L., Wolitzky-Taylor, K., Plumb Vilardaga, J., Arch, J., Saxbe, D. and Lieberman, M. (2014) 'Randomized Controlled Trial of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for Social Phobia: Outcomes and Moderators', *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology Association*, 82(6), pp.1034–1048. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0037212>

Cuijpers, P. and Schuurmans, J. (2007) 'Self-help interventions for anxiety disorders: An overview', *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 9(4), pp.284–290. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11920-007-0034-6>

Curtis, J.N. (2019) 'The mental health of musical theatre students in tertiary education: A pilot study', *Studies in Musical Theatre*, 13(3), pp.333–348. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1386/smt_00011_1

David, D., Szentagotai, A., Eva, K. and Macavei, B. (2005) 'A Synopsis of Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT); Fundamental and Applied Research' *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 23(3), pp.175–221. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10942-005-0011-0>

Dews, C.L.B. and Williams, M.S. (1989) 'Student Musicians' Personality Styles, Stresses, and Coping Patterns', *Psychology of Music*, 17(1), pp.37–47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735689171004>

Fernholz, I., Mumm, J.L.M., Plag, J., Noeres, K., Rotter, G., Willich, S.N., Ströhle, A., Berghöfer, A. and Schmidt, A. (2019) 'Performance Anxiety in Professional musicians: A Systematic Review on Prevalence, Risk Factors and Clinical Treatment Effects', *Psychological Medicine*, 49(14), pp.2287–2306. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0033291719001910>

Gómez-López, B. and Sánchez-Cabrero, R. (2023) 'Current Trends in Music Performance Anxiety Intervention', *Behavioral Sciences*, 13(9), pp.720–720. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs13090720>

Gross, S.A. and Musgrave, G. (2020) *Can Music Make You Sick?: Measuring the Price of Musical Ambition*. University of Westminster Press.

Gulliver, A., Farrer, L., Bennett, K., Ali, K., Hellsing, A., Katruss, N. and Griffiths, K.M. (2018) 'University Staff Experiences of Students with Mental Health Problems and Their Perceptions of Staff Training Needs', *Journal of Mental Health*, 27(3), pp.247–256. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09638237.2018.1466042>

Hatfield, J.L. (2016) 'Performing at the Top of One's Musical Game', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01356>

Heasman-Cossins, C., Winter, D. and Juncos, D. (2025) 'Using Vocal Improvisation Within the Vocal Coaching Studio to Mitigate Music Performance Anxiety: An Exploratory Study of Three Cases', *Music & Science*, 8. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/20592043251327047>

Henshaw, A. and Collyer, S. (2022) 'Under Pressure: Reports of Performance Anxiety Across Multiple Singing Genres', *Journal of Singing*, 78(5), pp.583–590. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.53830/jeta7812>

Herman, R. and Clark, T. (2023) 'It's Not a Virus! Reconceptualizing and de-pathologizing Music Performance Anxiety', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1194873>

Herrera, D., Matos, L., Gargurevich, R., Lira, B. and Valenzuela, R. (2021) 'Context Matters: Teaching Styles and Basic Psychological Needs Predicting Flourishing and Perfectionism in University Music Students', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.623312>

Heyman, L., Perkins, R. and Araújo, L.S. (2019) 'Examining the Health and well-being Experiences of Singers in Popular Music', *Journal of Popular Music Education*, 3(2), pp.173–201. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1386/jpme.3.2.173_1

Huang, W.-L. and Song, B. (2021) 'How Do College Musicians self-manage Musical Performance anxiety: Strategies through Time Periods and Types of Performance', *International Journal of Music Education*, 39(2), pp.95–118. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761421990800>

James, A.S.M. and Shipley, M. (2022) 'Music Performance Anxiety in Musical Theater Performers: a Pilot Study', *Journal of Dance Medicine & Science*, 26(4). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.12678/1089-313x.121522c>

Jean-Berluche, D. (2024) 'Creative Expression and Mental Health', *Journal of Creativity*, 34(2), pp.1–6. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.yjoc.2024.100083>

Jerath, R., Crawford, M.W., Barnes, V.A. and Harden, K. (2015) 'Self-Regulation of Breathing as a Primary Treatment for Anxiety', *Applied Psychophysiology and Biofeedback*, 40(2), pp.107–115. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10484-015-9279-8>

Jones, K. (2000) *Keeping Your Nerve*. London: Faber Music.

Juncos, D.G. and de Paiva e Pona, E. (2018) 'Acceptance and commitment therapy as a clinical anxiety treatment and performance enhancement program for musicians', *Music & Science*, 1, pp.1-17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059204317748807>

Juncos, D.G., Heinrichs, G.A., Towle, P., Duffy, K., Grand, S.M., Morgan, M.C., Smith, J.D. and Kalkus, E. (2017) 'Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for the Treatment of Music Performance Anxiety: A Pilot Study with Student Vocalists', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00986>

Juncos, D.G. and Pona, E. de P. e (2021). *ACT for Musicians: A guide for using Acceptance and Commitment Training to enhance performance, overcome performance anxiety, and improve well-being*. Compton Publishing.

Kenny, D.T., 2004 'Treatment approaches for music performance anxiety: What works?' *Music Forum* 10(4), pp. 38-43. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Dianna-Kenny/publication/237413984_Treatment_Approaches_for_Music_Performance_Anxiety_What_works/links/0046351bfae7fc4c1b000000/Treatment-Approaches-for-Music-Performance-Anxiety-What-works.pdf (Accessed: 30 Mar. 2025).

Kenny, D.T. (2011). *The Psychology of Music Performance Anxiety*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kenny, D.T., Davis, P. and Oates, J. (2004) 'Music Performance Anxiety and Occupational Stress Amongst Opera Chorus Artists and Their Relationship with State and Trait Anxiety and Perfectionism', *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 18(6), pp.757–777. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.janxdis.2003.09.004>

Kepes, S., Banks, G.C., McDaniel, M. and Whetzel, D.L. (2012) 'Publication Bias in the Organizational Sciences', *Organizational Research Methods*, 15(4), pp.624–662. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428112452760>

Klein, S.D., Bayard, C. and Wolf, U. (2014) 'The Alexander Technique and musicians: a systematic review of controlled trials', *BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine*, 14(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/1472-6882-14-414>

Klickstein, G. (2009). *The Musician's Way - A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness*. Oxford University Press.

Kocovski, N.L., Fleming, J.E., Hawley, L.L., Huta, V. and Antony, M.M. (2013) 'Mindfulness and acceptance-based group therapy versus traditional cognitive behavioral group therapy for social anxiety disorder: A randomized controlled trial', *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 51(12), pp.889–898. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2013.10.007>

Kolb, D.A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development*. London: Prentice-Hall.

Kolb, D.A., Boyatzis, R.E. and Mainemelis, C. (1999) 'Experiential Learning Theory: Previous Research and New Directions', *Perspectives on Thinking, Learning, and Cognitive Styles*, pp.227–248. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410605986-9>

Koops, L.H. and Kuebel, C.R. (2019) 'Self-reported mental health and mental illness among university music students in the United States', *Research Studies in Music Education*, 43(2), p.129-143. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1321103x19863265>

Lacaille, N., Koestner, R. and Gaudreau, P. (2007) 'On the Value of Intrinsic Rather than Traditional Achievement Goals for Performing artists: A short-term prospective study', *International Journal of Music Education*, 25(3), pp.245–257. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0255761407083578>

Lacaille, N., Whipple, N. and Koestner, R. (2005) 'Reevaluating the Benefits of Performance Goals', *Science & Medicine*. 20(1), pp.11-16. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/48710939>

Leckey, J. (2011) 'Therapeutic Effectiveness of Creative Activities on Mental well-being: a Systematic Review of the Literature', *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 18(6), pp.501–509. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2850.2011.01693.x>

Linnenbrink, E.A. and Pintrich, P.R. (2000) 'Multiple pathways to learning and achievement', *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation*, pp.195–227. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-012619070-0/50030-1>

Loveday, C., Musgrave, G. and Gross, S.-A. (2022) 'Predicting anxiety, depression, and Wellbeing in Professional and Nonprofessional Musicians', *Psychology of Music*, 51(2), pp.508-522. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/03057356221096506>

Mazzarolo, I., Burwell, K. and Schubert, E. (2023) 'Teachers' Approaches to Music Performance Anxiety management: a Systematic Review', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1205150>

McHenry, M.A., Evans, J. and Powitzky, E. (2016) 'Effects of Bel Canto Training on Acoustic and Aerodynamic Characteristics of the Singing Voice', *Journal of Voice*, 30(2), pp.198–204. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvoice.2014.11.009>

Mercer, A., Warson, E. and Zhao, J. (2010) 'Visual journaling: an Intervention to Influence stress, Anxiety and Affect Levels in Medical Students', *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 37(2), pp.143–148. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2009.12.003>

Meyer, K. and Willis, R. (2018) 'Looking Back to Move Forward: The Value of Reflexive Journaling for Novice Researchers', *Journal of Gerontological Social Work*, 62(5), pp.578–585. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01634372.2018.1559906>

Mor, S., Day, H.I., Flett, G.L. and Hewitt, P.L. (1995) 'Perfectionism, control, and Components of Performance Anxiety in Professional Artists', *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 19(2), pp.207–225. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02229695>

Mulligan, K. (2019) 'Self Management Interventions' in: C.D. Llewellyn, S. Ayers, C. McManus, S. Newman, K.J. Petrie, T.A. Revenson and J. Weinman, (eds.) *Cambridge Handbook of Psychology, Health and Medicine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.305–308.

Munnik, J.B., Turner, M.J. and Leon, R. (2023) 'Recommendations for Integrating Psychological Skills Training (PST) into Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy (REBT)', *Journal of sport psychology in action*, pp.1–12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/21520704.2023.2245359>

Nagel, J.J. (2017). *Managing Stage Fright: A Guide for Musicians and Music Teachers*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nagel, J.J. (2010) 'A Review of Selected CBT and Psychodynamic Literature', *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*, 25(4), pp.141–148. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/48710739>

Nelson, R. (2006) 'Practice-as-research and the Problem of Knowledge', *Performance Research*, 11(4), pp.105–116. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528160701363556>

Nelson, R. (2022). *Practice as Research in the Arts (and beyond)*. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

NHS (n.d.). *Online Self-help CBT Techniques - Every Mind Matters*. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-wellbeing-tips/self-help-cbt-techniques/> (Accessed 30 Mar. 2025).

Osborne, M.S., Greene, D.J. and Immel, D.T. (2014) 'Managing Performance Anxiety and Improving Mental Skills in Conservatoire Students through Performance Psychology training: a Pilot Study', *Psychology of Well-Being*, 4(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13612-014-0018-3>

Pecen, E., Collins, D. and MacNamara, Á. (2016) 'Music of the night: Performance practitioner considerations for enhancement work in music', *Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology*, 5(4), pp.377–395. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1037/spy0000067>

Pecen, E., Collins, D.J. and MacNamara, Á. (2018) 'It's Your Problem. Deal with It.' Performers' Experiences of Psychological Challenges in Music', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 8. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.02374>

Rehman, A.A. and Alharthi, K. (2016) 'An introduction to research paradigms An Introduction to Research Paradigms', *International Journal of Educational Investigations*, 3(8), pp.51–59. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325022648_An_introduction_to_research_paradigms (Accessed 20 April. 2025).

Sellars, M. (2012) 'Teachers and Change: the Role of Reflective Practice', *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 55(5), pp.461–469. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.09.525>

Shaw, T.A., Juncos, D.G. and Winter, D. (2020) 'Piloting a New Model for Treating Music Performance Anxiety: Training a Singing Teacher to Use Acceptance and Commitment Coaching With a Student', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00882>

Smyth, J.M., Johnson, J.A., Auer, B.J., Lehman, E., Talamo, G. and Sciamanna, C.N. (2018) 'Online Positive Affect Journaling in the Improvement of Mental Distress and well-being in General Medical Patients with Elevated Anxiety symptoms: A Preliminary Randomized Controlled Trial', *JMIR Mental Health*, 5(4). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2196/11290>

Spahn, C. (2015) 'Treatment and Prevention of Music Performance Anxiety' in: E. Altenmüller, S. Finger and F. Boller, (eds.) *Progress in Brain Research*. Oxford: Elsevier. Available at: [doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2014.11.024](https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.pbr.2014.11.024), pp.129-140.

Su, Y.-H., Luh, J.-J., Chen, H.-I., Lin, C.-C., Liao, M.-J. and Chen, H.-S. (2010) 'Effects of Using Relaxation Breathing Training to Reduce Music Performance Anxiety in 3rd to 6th Graders', *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*, 25(2), pp.82–86. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21091/mppa.2010.2016>

Vaag, J., Bjerkeset, O. and Sivertsen, B. (2021) 'Anxiety and Depression Symptom Level and Psychotherapy Use Among Music and Art Students Compared to the General Student Population', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.607927>

Vaag, J., Bjørngaard, J.H. and Bjerkeset, O. (2015) 'Symptoms of Anxiety and Depression among Norwegian Musicians Compared to the General Workforce', *Psychology of Music*, 44(2), pp.234–248. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735614564910>

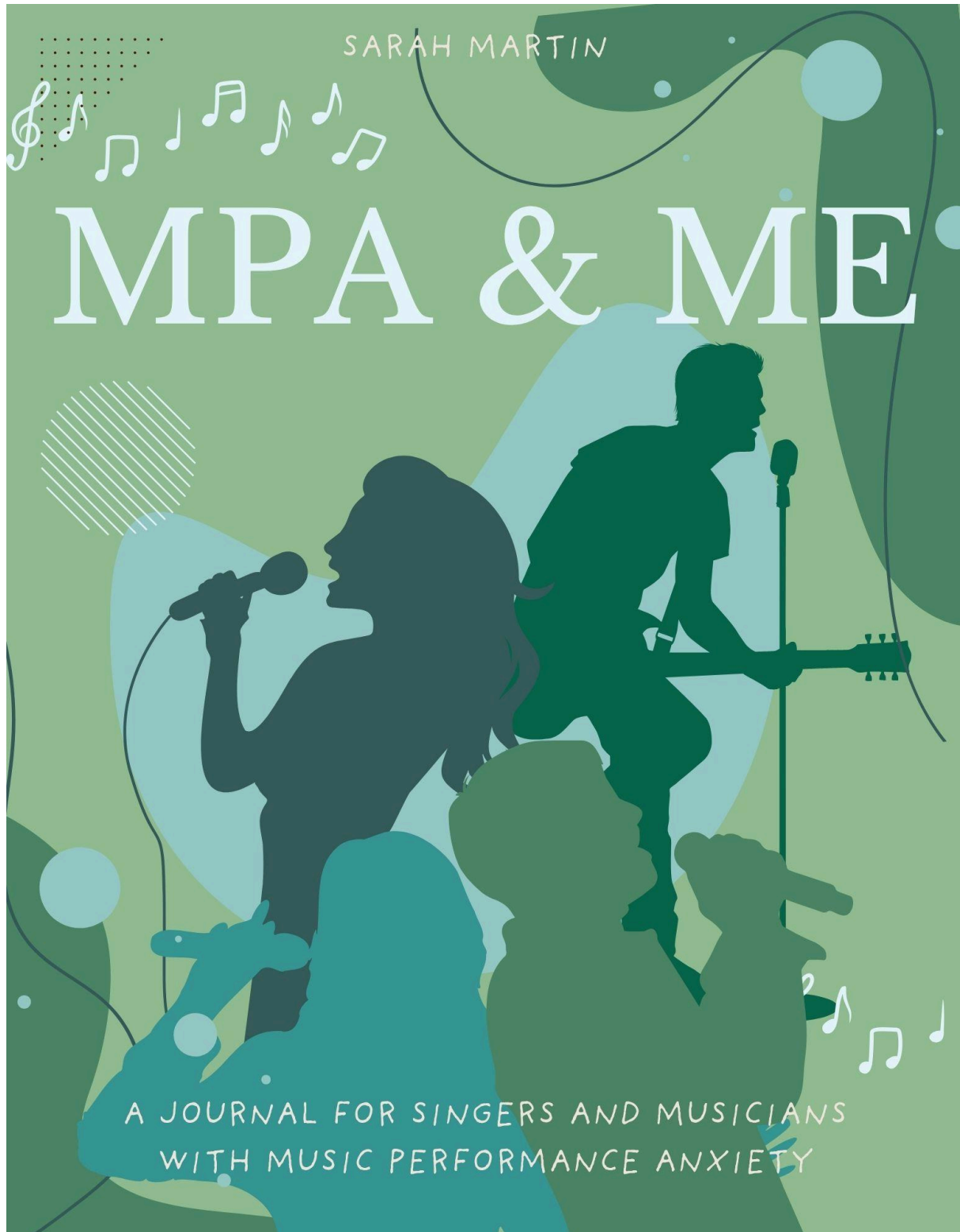
Viator, T.L., Levy, J.J. and Murphy, B.A. (2024) 'Exploring the Relations among Psychological Flexibility, Music Performance Anxiety, and Perceived Performance Quality with University Music Students', *Music & Science*, 7. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/20592043241268665>

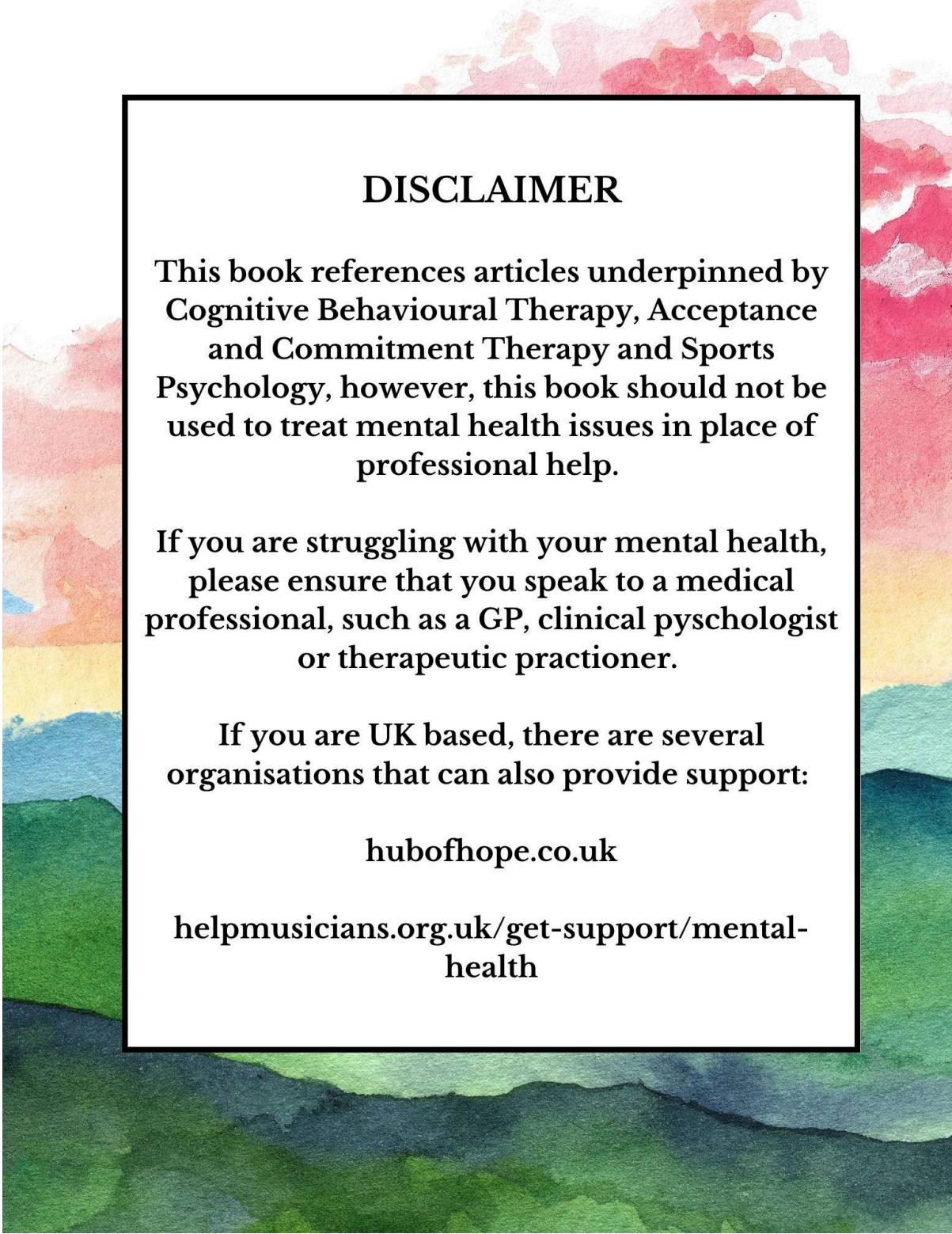
Weinberg, R.S. and Gould, D. (2023) *Foundations of Sport and Exercise Psychology*. USA: Human Kinetics.

Winter, D. (2022) 'Exploring the Narrative: Voice Practitioner Research and the Literature Review Process', *Voice and Speech Review*, pp.1–20. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2022.2144971>

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Artefact: MPA Journal. Title: "MPA & Me"





DISCLAIMER

This book references articles underpinned by Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy and Sports Psychology, however, this book should not be used to treat mental health issues in place of professional help.

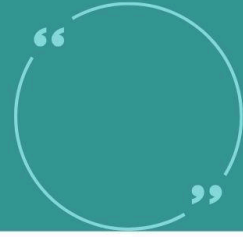
If you are struggling with your mental health, please ensure that you speak to a medical professional, such as a GP, clinical psychologist or therapeutic practitioner.

If you are UK based, there are several organisations that can also provide support:

hubofhope.co.uk

helpmusicians.org.uk/get-support/mental-health

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“It is a bad sign if musicians aren’t nervous at all, it can often give a blasé feel to the performance. I do recognize that nerves give my performance a certain extra adrenalin, even if they do make me suffer.”

Steven Isserlis (Cellist)

(Jones, 2000)

MPA & ME: TRIGGERS



What makes you feel anxious about performing music?

By identifying triggers, you can start to notice when anxious thoughts might start to creep in, and this can help you look out for anxiety in the future. Music Performance Anxiety is very normal - writing down your thoughts and feelings can help you accept that anxiety is a very normal part of anxiety.



Example:

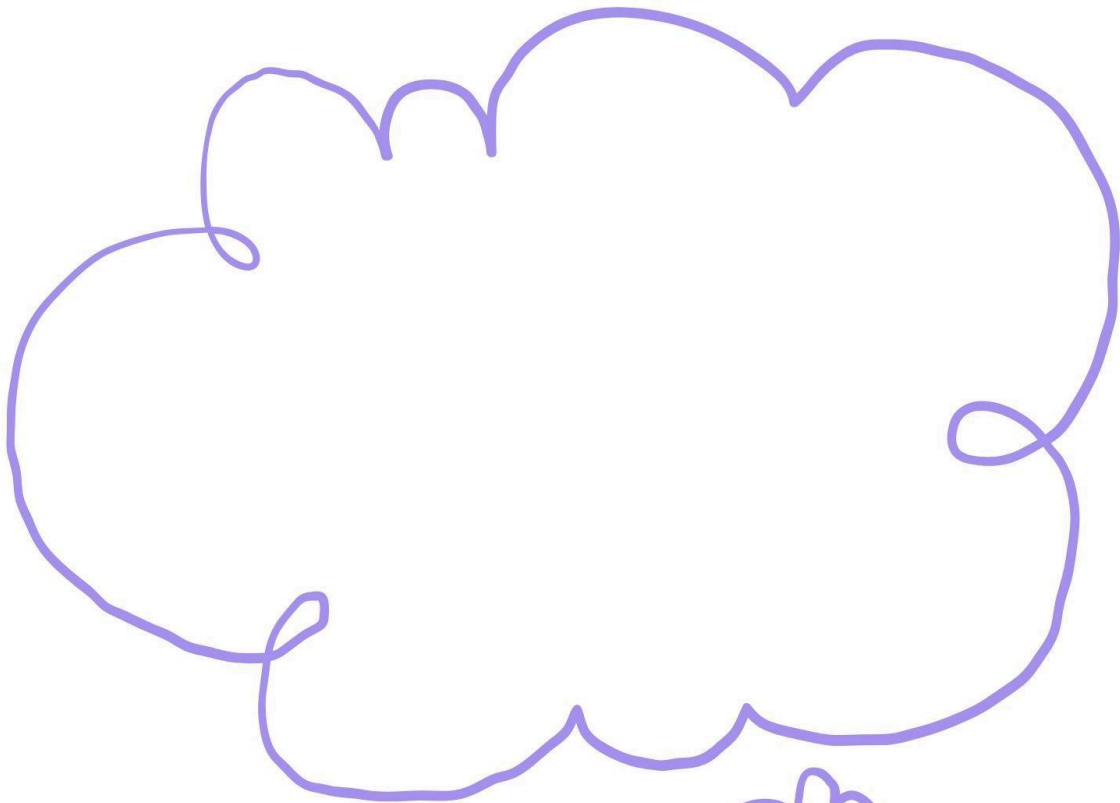
I feel anxiety that I will make a mistake during a tricky song. If I do, I worry people might think I am not a good enough performer.

MPA & ME: SYMPTOMS



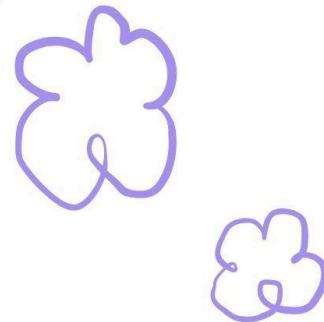
What are the main symptoms of your performance anxiety that bother you the most?

These may be physical symptoms, such as shaking or sweating, negative thought processes, such as feeling ashamed or feeling fear, or unhelpful behaviours, such as avoiding a performance.



Example:

Leading up to a performance, I feel scared that I will let my singing teacher down. This makes my throat close up and feel scratchy, and I tend to use that as an excuse to get out of performing.



MPA & ME: DESIRED OUTCOMES



What would your desired outcome be if anxiety was removed from your experiences of performing music?

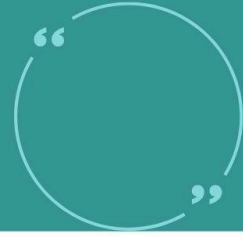
Having a goal for overcoming music performance anxiety can help you to measure progress and see how far you have come in the future!



Example:

In the days leading up to a performance, I want to be able to feel excited and trust myself that I will perform to the best of my ability.

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“ I think you have to have a certain tension in yourself to make an interesting performance. Nervres create excitement in the hall.”

Christian Lindberg (Trombonist)

(Jones, 2000)

SUCCESS JOURNAL



Fill out this page whenever you need a dose of positivity, or to remind yourself that you have lots of things to celebrate and be proud of within your music. You can also set yourself some positive actions to take to help you feel positive about the future.

THREE THINGS I AM GOOD AT/ PROUD OF

- 1
- 2
- 3

THREE THINGS I AM GRATEFUL FOR

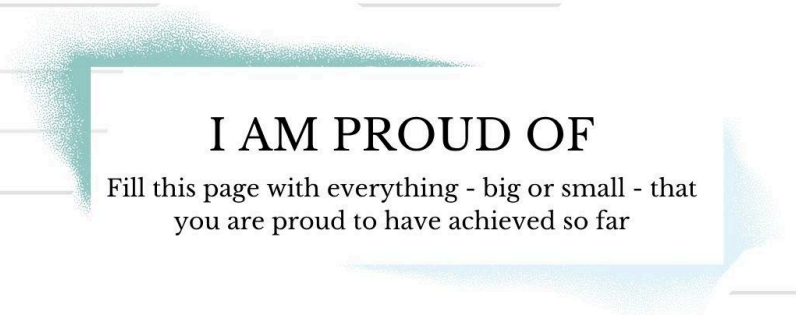
- 1
- 2
- 3

THREE THINGS I HOPE TO ACHIEVE

- 1
- 2
- 3

THREE STEPS I CAN TAKE TO GET THERE

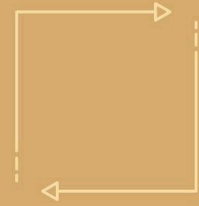
- 1
- 2
- 3



I AM PROUD OF

Fill this page with everything - big or small - that
you are proud to have achieved so far

VISUAL SCANNING



Here is an ornate frame with lots of detail. When you're feeling anxious, trace your eyes slowly around each segment of the frame, noticing all of the details, patterns, shadows and edges. Really take your time and move your eyes slowly round each side of the frame, one at a time.

As you do this, breathe in the following sequence:

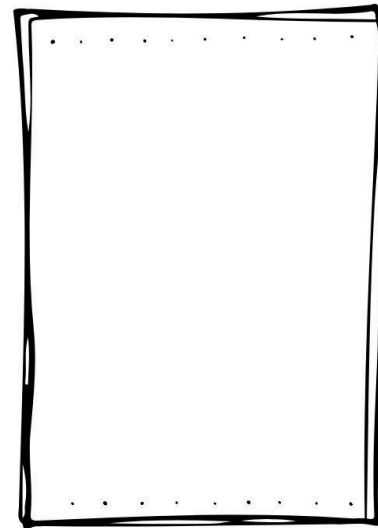
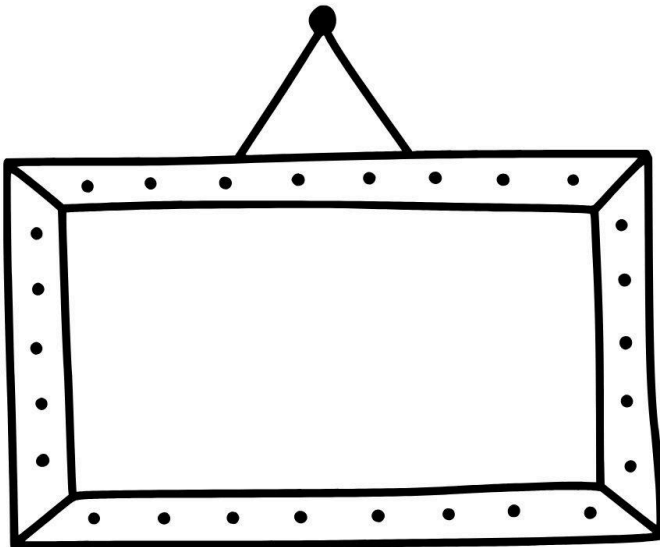
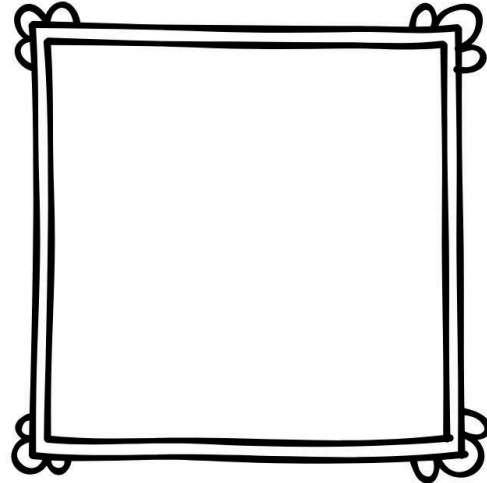
In: 1, 2, 3, 4 | Hold: 1, 2, 3, 4 | Out: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

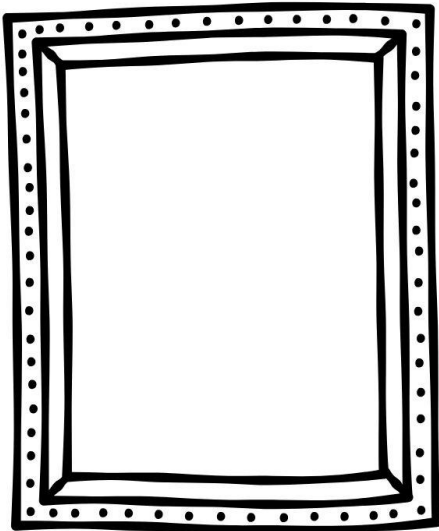
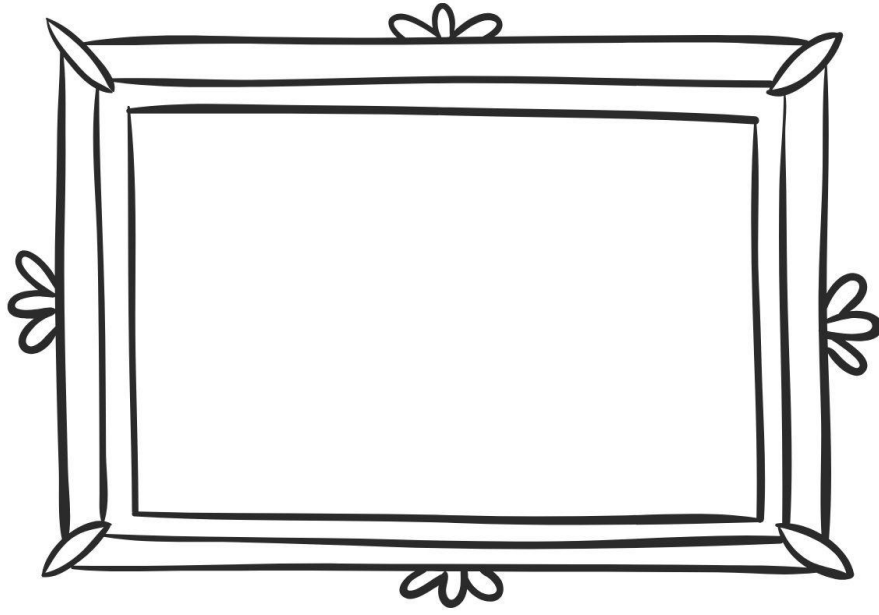


Cut and stick some images of things that relax you - a loved one, a scene from nature, your pet... You can then look at these as you complete the breathing exercises provided to help you return to a state of calm.

Breath in and count to four
1, 2, 3, 4
Hold your breath and count to four
1, 2, 3, 4
Exhale and make your breath last four counts
1, 2, 3, 4
Repeat

TOP TIP!
Dry Mouth? Imagine a coin placed under your tongue





Start by emptying your lungs

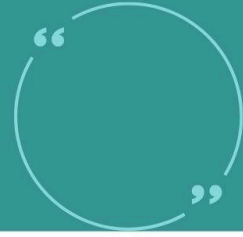
Then, take a deep breath in and as the air enters
your lungs, mentally say "IN"

As the air then leaves your body, mentally say
"OUT"

Repeat this as a cycle for several minutes



QUOTE OF THE DAY



“Performing is not about having warm hands or hitting every note. It is about conveying the music. You can’t hope for miracles, you can only do your best. Listen to the music and try to convey that.”

Steven Isserlis (Cellist)

(Jones, 2000)

BREATHING EXERCISES ON-THE-GO



7/11 Breathing

Breathe in for 7 counts through your nose (at a speed that feels manageable for you)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Then, breathe out through the mouth for 11 counts and repeat this for at least 15 minutes

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

TOP TIP!

If you're struggling with these counts, it doesn't matter - as long as your breath in is shorter than your breath out!

Nostril Breathing

Use one finger to squash down one of your nostrils, and take a deep breath in through the other one,

Hold your breath and you swap your finger to the alternate nostril and breath out

Repeat this cycle, swapping nostrils each time

BREATHING EXERCISES ON-THE-GO



7/11 Breathing

Breathe in for 7 counts through your nose (at a speed that feels manageable for you)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7

Then, breathe out through the mouth for 11 counts and repeat this for at least 15 minutes

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11

TOP TIP!

If you're struggling with these counts, it doesn't matter - as long as your breath in is shorter than your breath out!

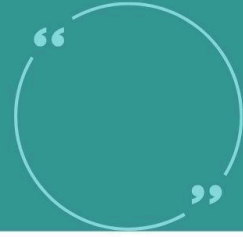
Nostril Breathing

Use one finger to squash down one of your nostrils, and take a deep breath in through the other one,

Hold your breath and you swap your finger to the alternate nostril and breath out

Repeat this cycle, swapping nostrils each time

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“The chances are that 90% of the audience don’t know how to play the piece your playing. I’ve never been to a concert where people are impatient with the performer. You have the benefit of their goodwill.”

Elvis Costello (Singer)

(Jones, 2000)

PERFORMANCE PREP PLANNER



Anxiety often occurs when we feel overwhelmed, out of control or underprepared. In the lead up to a gig, an audition, a recital or an exam, use the template below to help you schedule in practice time, time for learning new material, rehearsals, preparing your equipment/instrument, contacting the client/venue, or anything else you need to do to ahead of time to ensure a successful performance. Feel free to use this 6 week template, or fill in the blank one on the next page however it best suits you.

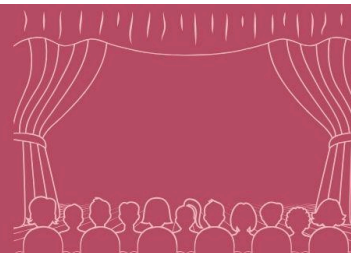
EVENT DATE			
DATES	TO DO	RESOURCES	CHECKLIST
WEEK 1:			
WEEK 2:			
WEEK 3:			
WEEK 4:			
WEEK 5:			
WEEK 6:			

PERFORMANCE PREP PLANNER



EVENT			
DATE			

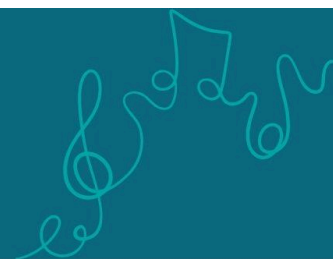
PERFORMANCE DAY PLANNER



Use this planner to ensure you are fully prepared on the day of an important performance. This will help to minimise stress!

EVENT			
.....			
DATE		TIME OF ARRIVAL	
ADDRESS			
Personal Preparation		Equipment, Logistics, Materials	
Warm up/ Practice		Music / Lyrics to be printed	
Rest / Relaxation		Instrument / Microphone	
Meals / Snacks		Gear	
Performance Outfit		Clothing	
Personal Grooming		Transport	
Water		Backstage water/ Snack	

DAILY PRACTICE ROUTINE



PRACTICE SESSION GOALS

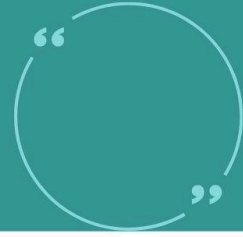
- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

Time slot	What I will practice	Resources needed

NOTES FOR NEXT SESSION

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“The moment I began to lose some of my nerves was when I started working with composers. Then it wasn’t about comparing myself... it was about communicating what the composers were writing. My music became uniquely about communicating music and nothing else.”

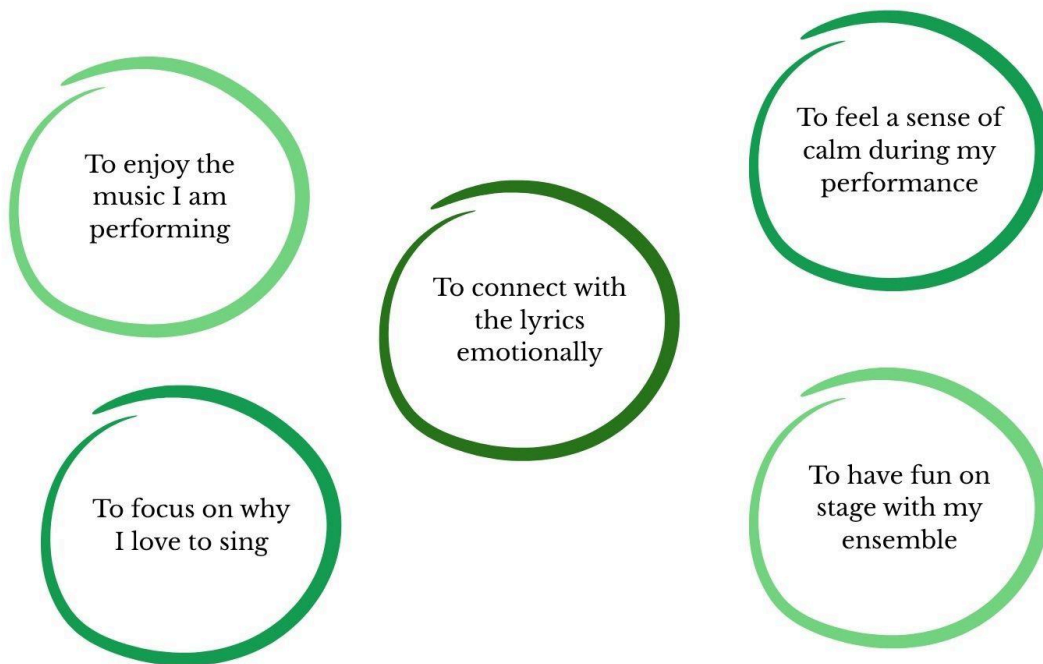
Joanna McGregor (Pianist)

(Jones, 2000)

INTRINSIC GOALS



Intrinsic goals help us find personal satisfaction. They are there to help you find joy in your work, pursue personal growth, or contribute to something you are passionate about. Sometimes, achievement based goals, such as getting booked in an audition or achieving a flawless performance can add to our feelings performance anxiety, and they're not always attainable! Intrinsic goals can help us feel more positive, and remind us of why we make music in the first place. Here are a few examples of intrinsic goals:



What are some intrinsic goals that you would like to achieve in your performing?

1.
2.
3.

TRACKING INTRINSIC GOALS



Try setting some specific intrinsic goals for upcoming performances/events/auditions/recitals. After the event, reflect on what helped you achieve your goal, or what held you back.

Use the example below as a guide!

Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
1st of May	Audition for jazz band	During my performance, I want to connect emotionally with the lyrics and forget about everything else!
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		
During the audition, I feel nervous during the first verse. However, in the chorus, I closed my eyes and imagined I was singing to a loved one. I pictured their face in my mind and sang from the heart. This helped me to find a connection and get lost in what I was singing, which felt great! Next time, I will start focusing on this before I go in for the audition to help me get in the zone.		

Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		

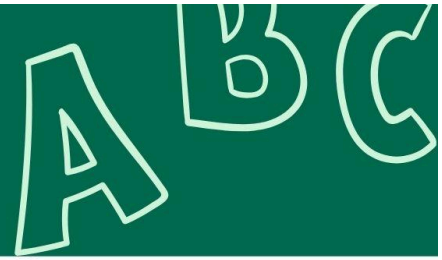
TRACKING INTRINSIC GOALS



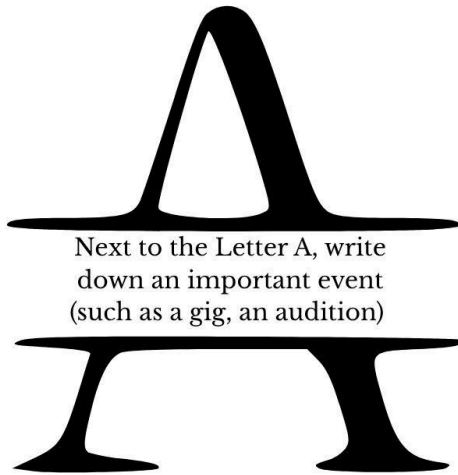
Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		

Date of event	Event details	Intrinsic goal for this event
Reflection - did you achieve your intrinsic goal? If so, what worked? If not, what will help you achieve it next time?		

ANXIETY ABC'S



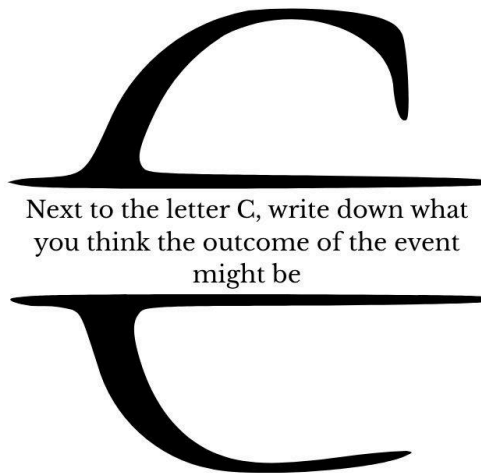
This exercise will help you to identify negative reactions to events that might trigger MPA, and help you to replace unhelpful thoughts and feelings with more positive ones.



Next to the Letter A, write down an important event (such as a gig, an audition)



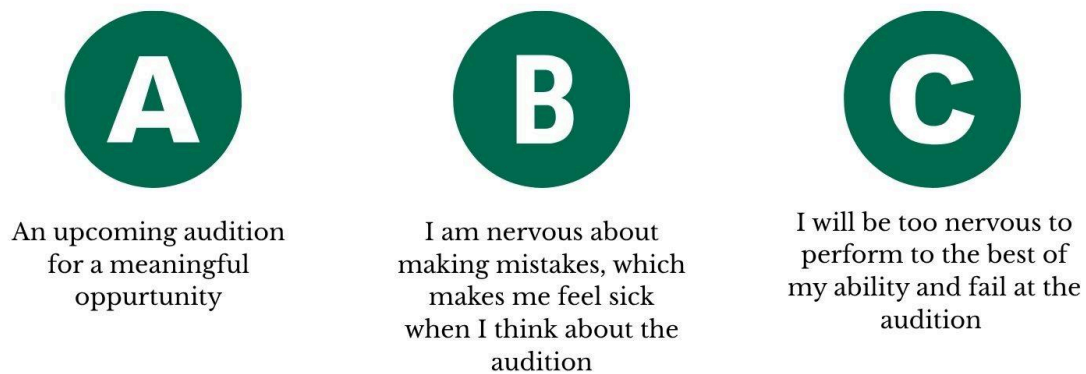
Next to the letter B, write down any thoughts or feelings that you're experiencing surrounding that event



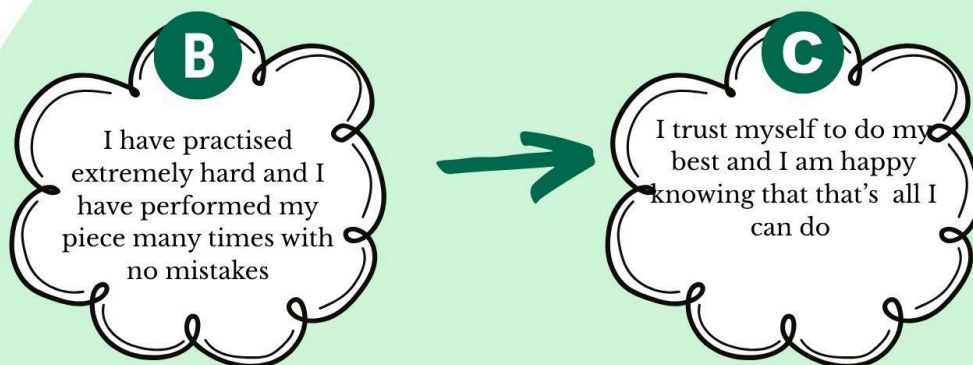
Next to the letter C, write down what you think the outcome of the event might be

EXAMPLE:

Here is an example of an event (A), followed by some unhelpful thoughts and feelings (B). These negative thoughts are likely to contribute towards a negative outcome (C):



If we can reframe our B (our thoughts and feelings) in a more positive light, it can help us to focus on a more positive outcome (C):



TRY IT YOURSELF:

A B C

A (event)

B (thoughts, feelings)

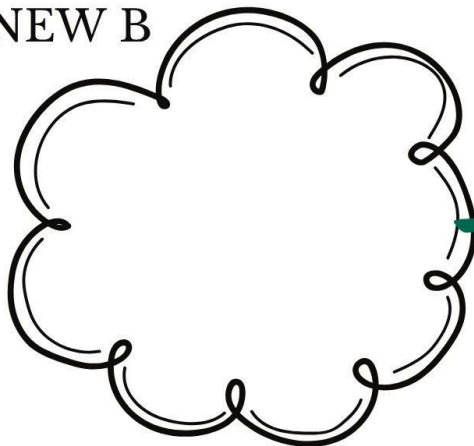
C (outcome)

Are your thoughts and feelings about **A** helpful or unhelpful? (B)

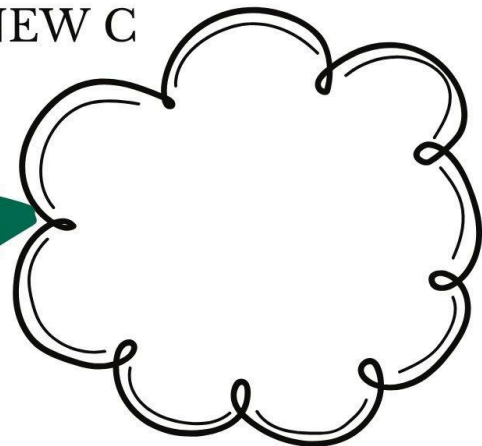
As a result, is your outcome positive or negative? (C)

Can you reframe your **B** to create a more positive **C**?

NEW B



NEW C



SUPPORTIVE SELF STATEMENTS



Are you struggling to frame your B in a more positive light? Or, do you just need some positive affirmations to remind you that you've got this?! Check out these supportive self statements that might be able to help you:

IF I MAKE A MISTAKE, I KNOW I
CAN CARRY ON AND RECOVER

I TRUST MYSELF
TO DO A GOOD JOB

MISTAKES ARE NOT FAILURES

I CAN PICTURE MY
PERFORMANCE GOING
SUCCESSFULLY

I KNOW I AM WELL
PREPARED TO DO MY BEST

I CAN USE MY
BREATHING
TO HELP ME
FEEL CALM
BEFORE MY
PERFORMANCE
BEGINS

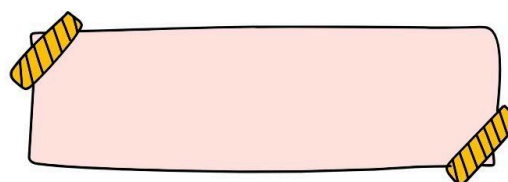
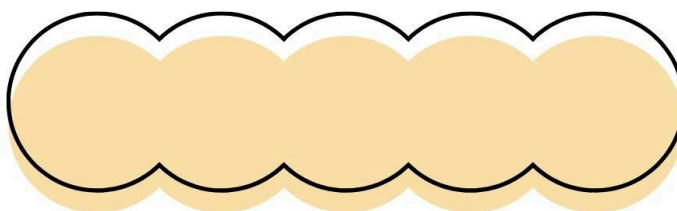
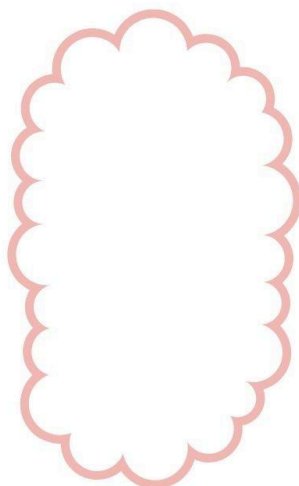
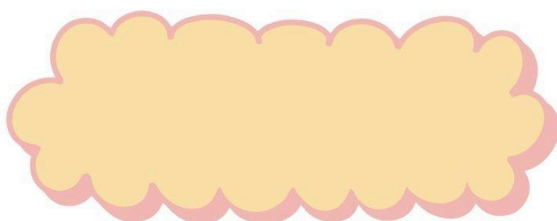
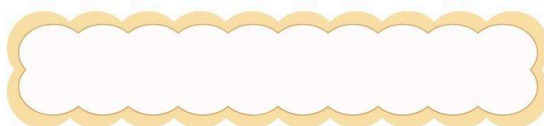
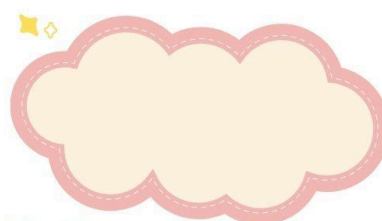
I JUST NEED TO FOCUS ON MY
PERFORMANCE IN THE MOMENT

I CAN IMAGINE ENJOYING MY
PERFORMANCE

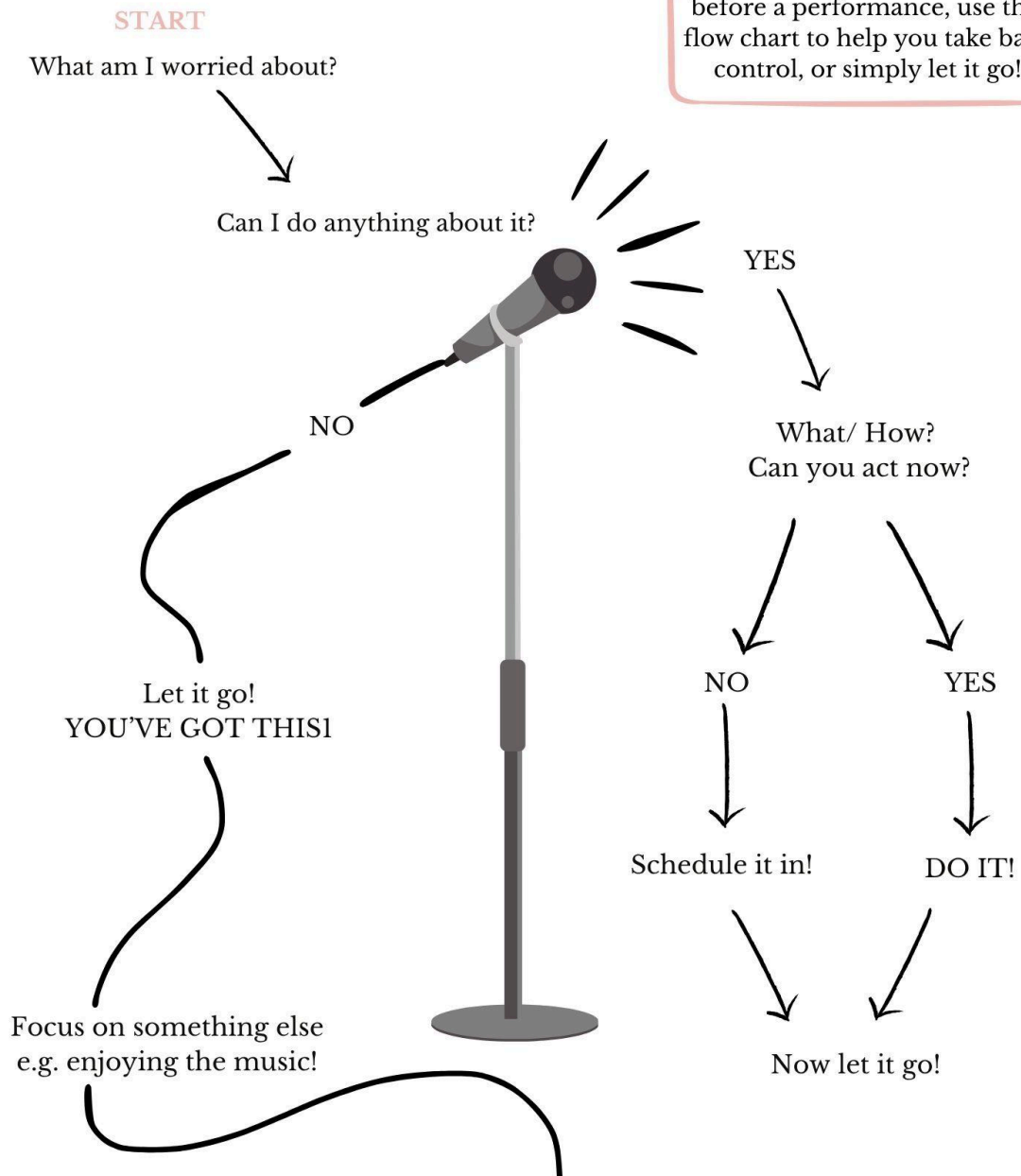
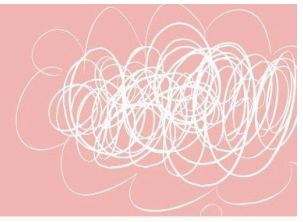
MY SUPPORTIVE SELF STATEMENTS



Think you've got the hang of it now?! Write some of your own supportive self statements below. You can come back and read these when you need to show yourself some kindness...



SING YOUR WORRIES AWAY



If you find yourself worrying before a performance, use this flow chart to help you take back control, or simply let it go!

THOUGHT LABELLING



When we write down our thoughts, or “label them”, we are less likely to let them consume us mindlessly for the rest of the day. You can label things you are feeling or thinking, things that you have an urge to do or not do, sensations you might be experiencing, memories, or mental evaluations that you may be having.

Once you get the hang of this, you will start to notice that these kind of thoughts becoming fleeting, and will pass you by no problem!

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

I notice I am feeling stressed about that high note

I notice I am thinking about the voice crack in my last gig

I notice the urge to call in sick for rehearsals

I notice...

I notice...

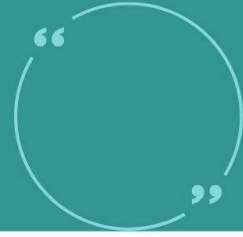
I notice...

THOUGHT LABELLING



Use these blank pages to practice this exercise regularly!

QUOTE OF THE DAY



“Remember the audience are there because they want a pleasant evening with some marvellous music. You are their guide in this tour through the land of music. They are not there to find fault and criticize. If there are some critical people who, you imagine, want you to go wrong, then the odd note here or there will make them happy, so you will have pleased somebody even then!”

Dame Gillian Weir (Organist)

(Jones, 2000)

Appendix 2 - Grey Literature Analysis Spreadsheet - Full Version

Artefact	Author		Reading content			Diagnostic Tools
	Insider researcher	Psychology professional	Information	Tips & Tricks	Case studies	
The Mindful Musician (Book) Vanessa Cornett, 2019	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE
			Information on mindful performance psychology and sports psychology	Includes practise strategies, preparation strategies, the importance of mental rehearsal		Anxiety, mindfulness, concentration. Irrational thoughts activity.
ACT for musicians (Juncos and Pona, 2021)	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE
	Juncos is an amateur musician	Juncos is a clinical psychologist	Part 1 explains all about ACT, Part 2 gives information about mindfulness, emotional acceptance and willingness, defusion.			ACT based process measures: The Philadelphia Mindfulness Scale, The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire-2, The Believability in Anxious Feelings and Thoughts (BAFT) The Valued Living Questionnaire (VLQ). Symptom based measures: The Anxiety Control Questionnaire (ACQ), Kenny Music Performance Anxiety Inventory (KMPAI), Experiential Shame Scale (ESS).

	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE
Performance Strategies for Musicians, David Buswell (2006)	Pianist, organist and choir leader	Qualified master practitioner in NLP	This book states it can be used by all performers, including athletes, public speakers etc. It is based mainly on Neuro Linguistic Programming Techniques (NLP)	Gives preparation tips, and tips of how to engage in mental rehearsal		A word bank exercise to help performers identify the emotions they are feeling p. 214

	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE
Managing stage fright - A guide for musicians and music teachers by Julie Jaffee Nagel (2017)	Piano player			This book mainly focuses on tips and tricks for music teachers for supporting students in different scenarios in which MPA may prevent itself. It also offers guidance and advice about when music teachers should signpost students to seek professional help (p. 166-167)		Symptoms chart (p.20)
Keeping your Nerve - Confidence Boosting Strategies for Musicians and Performers by Kate	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE

Jones (2000)						
	Flute player	A professional counsellor for musicians		Lots of tips and tricks regarding preparation and effective practise, mindfulness, and how to enjoy practising and performing	Includes case studies with professional musicians to highlight that MPA happens even to the best and most refined musicians (p.17)	
	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE
The Musician's Way - A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness by Gerard Klickstein (2009)	Classical guitar player			Lots of guidance for successful practice,	Includes quotes from professional musicians about their experience/advice about MPA and being a musician throughout the book	
	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE
The Anxiety Workbook - Anna Barnes (2022)			This book contains small snippets of information about what anxiety is and how it may feel			

Artefact	Practical Exercises							
	Mindfulness	Acceptance	Breathwork	Planning & Prep	CBT	Reflection on Achievements	Goal Setting	Exposure
The Mindful Musician (Book) Vanessa Cornett, 2019	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE
	Worksheet, audio guides			Creating a plan for a gig, create a performance kit, writing lists in advance of what you need to take to a performance (p. 208)			Use of SMART targets, worksheets, "Contract with myself" task. Partaking in affirmations. Create a musical bucket list.	
ACT for musicians (articles, books) Juncos, 2017 Link , Juncos, 2015 Link	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE
	Meditations with specific exercises - picture frame (ACT for musicians, page 52)	Tug of War with anxiety, learning to "drop the rope" (Juncos, 2015), the Finger trap metaphor (ACT for musicians, p.70, resisting					As part of a performance barriers, setting performance goals (p. 114)	FEEL exercises (Feeling Experiences Enriches Living; Eifert and Forsyth, 2005). Values-guided exposure exercises

		unwanted behaviours.						
	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE
Performance Strategies for Musicians, David Buswell (2006)	Categorised as "hypnosis" - mindfulness exercise - close your eyes, and find 3 things you can see, hear and feel, then repeat but find 2 things, then repeat but find one thing (p.66)		Breathing exercise "in 2 3 4, hold 2, out 2, 3, 4 ,5 ,6, hold 2" to promote relaxation	Discusses effective performance preparation, and includes information and exercises around practising and MST	Although they are not classified as CBT explicitly, there are exercises designed around changing negative thought processes in a chapter called "Changing limiting beliefs" (p.118)	Encourages healthy performance reflection to let go of feelings - contains a word bank to help musicians identify their emotions (p.214-215).		
Managing stage fright - A guide for musicians and music teachers by Julie Jaffee Nagel (2017)	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE

			Breathe in through the nose for four counts, out through the mouth for four counts, then repeat but with positive images in mind, then repeat whilst visualising a successful performance		Chapter 9 provides information about CBT, and provides some exercises based upon CBT that singers can use to reframe negative thought patterns			
	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE
Keeping your Nerve - Confidence Boosting Strategies for Musicians and Performers by Kate Jones (2000)	Mindfulness practise - lying down and focusing on different parts of the body and the breath (p. 15)					There are tips within this book that help musicians reflect on their performance in a positive light		
	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE

Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness by Gerard Klickstein (2009)			2-1 breathing: empty the lungs first, and then inhale for a short amount of counts, and exhale for twice as long (similar to 7/11 breathing) p. 167	Includes a template and a model example of an effective practise schedule (p. 8-9). In chapter 8, this book offers lots of advice on preparation for mitigating MPA. On page 163, there is a template of a "pre-performance inventory" - a checklist to help musicians prepare on the day of a performance. On page 218, there is a pre performance timeline template		This book encourages musicians to reflect on performances and provides a template for post-performance reflection that asks musicians to state positive achievements, things they would like to improve upon, and active steps to take moving forward (P.203)		
The Anxiety Workbook - Anna Barnes (2022)	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE

	This journal states in the introduction that is based upon mindfulness techniques that are often used by therapists		Pages 36 and 37 contain breathing exercises that are centred around mindfulness - such as alternate nostril breathing		This journal states in the introduction that is based upon CBT techniques that are often used by therapists		Page 21 asks the reader to make a list of goals that they would like to achieve - what are their ideal outcomes from overcoming anxiety? There is also a template of a goal setting checklist for goals for the future (p. 140-142)	This workbook has a whole chapter around facing fears (Part 4, Facing your Fears) with exercises to help with this, such as creating an anxiety action plan
--	---	--	---	--	---	--	---	---

Artefact	Practical Exercises Continued						Additional Notes
	Defusion (Managing thoughts)	Reflecting on Values	Identifying Triggers	Visualisation	Progressive Muscle Relaxation	Practise Journal	
	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	
The Mindful Musician (Book) Vanessa Cornett, 2019			Write down emotional triggers when you notice them and note how you might try to respond differently next time (p. 197)			Daily & Weekly Journal templates, checklist	Focus on organisation as an intervention for anxiety. The book contains tips on when to get help - this is an ethical consideration (pp. 69-70)
	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	

(Juncos and Pona, 2021)	Meditations, Language based exercises that aim to reduce the literality of one's language. Vocalizing thoughts - I notice I am having "____" thought, known as Thought Labelling, (ACT for musicians, p. 92) - Writing down fused thoughts (ACT for musicians p.84). Having gratitude for the brain "Thanks brain for that thought" (p. 95)	Identifying performance related values (p. 123)					
Performance Strategies for Musicians, David Buswell (2006)	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	This book has a disclaimer that techniques and procedures outlined in the book should be done at the consumers own risk - ethical consideration. There is a further This book didn't contain a practise journal template, but it discussed appropriate practise and preparation -
				Visualisation and disassociation to reduce anxiety and improve focus (p. 82 onwards)	Tense one muscle at a time whilst breathing deeply to help relax the body (p.60)		

						page 150 shows a practise routine broken up in 30 minute chunks	disclaimer regarding working on phobias, stating that phobias or PST should only be worked on with a trained NLP Practitioner (page 134-135).
	TRUE	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	FALSE	
Managing stage fright - A guide for musicians and music teachers by Julie Jaffee Nagel (2017)	Similar to defusion - referencing the ABC model of anxiety, by Albert Ellis. This is based on Rational emotive behaviour therapy (p. 25). A refers to an important event (a gig, an audition). B represents thoughts, feelings and bodily sensations. C refers to the outcome of the event. Letter B cards -		ABC model of anxiety, to help musicians identify how they are feeling in the wake of a major event, such as a performance (Chapter 3)	Whilst breathing, visualise relaxing imagery or visualise a successful performance	Tense one muscle at a time whilst breathing deeply to help relax the body (p.23)		This book seems to be aimed more for musicians and music teachers working together in person, rather than self help - it's predominantly aimed at music teachers

	supportive self-statements (p.30)						
Keeping your Nerve - Confidence Boosting Strategies for Musicians and Performers by Kate Jones (2000)	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	
					Provides tips, such as practising yoga or Alexander Technique to promote relaxation (p. 15), but doesn't offer specific or unique exercises for this		
The Musician's Way - A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness by Gerard Klickstein (2009)	FALSE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	TRUE	This book contains a disclaimer, encouraging musicians to seek psychological and/or medical advice before making changes that may affect health or wellbeing (preface section). Chapter 2 focuses on conquering performance anxiety, but the whole book is designed to help you become the most effective
		This book states the importance of performing should be centred on the message/meaning behind the music (p. 147)	There is information that may help musicians understand what can cause MPA (P.140-141)	This book discusses soothing imagery to help musicians relax (p. 169)	Tense one muscle at a time whilst breathing deeply to help relax the body (p.168)	Includes an entire chapter on building a successful practise routine	

							musician possible. This book also advises musicians when it might be time to consider professional help.
	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	FALSE	FALSE	TRUE	
The Anxiety Workbook - Anna Barnes (2022)			This book provides activities and information to help anxiety sufferers identify what causes them anxiety to help them recognise symptoms in the future (p. 16)			There are templates for creating schedules for healthy habits within this book (page 100-101) and planning a healthy nighttime routine. There is also a template for a weekly planner (p.122-125) designed to help the reader break down big tasks into smaller, more manageable chunks	This book includes a disclaimer, stating that it is not intended to replace medical advice

This spreadsheet can also be viewed via the following link:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/e/2PACX-1vSudr1CDdus9xGaX27xuS_Mb2eX_osKhMRLRI8onZPf8i-b7izUrjfwggyZ6qterGAuQHNN7u1BkgnL/pubhtml