

MINDY PETERSON

Enhancing Life With Music

Mindy Peterson is a nationally certified music teacher and host of the podcast, *Enhance Life with Music*. This show is unique because it explores the power of music through the lens of science, health, sports, entertainment, business, and education.

She started teaching piano lessons when she was in high school, but in college, Mindy had a revelation:

“I very quickly realized that the music majors live music. I love music, but I also love health and wellness, fitness, and food.

“Over time, I paid attention to conversations with friends in which they revealed how music had affected their lives, but it was clear that they didn’t even realize it. I searched and found there were no podcasts highlighting the fact that whether we realize it or not, and whether we’re musicians or not, music is all around us, and it influences our lives.”



Mindy became very interested in studies on the effects of music on brain development, or cognition in older adults, as well as its effect on athletic performance, which has been called “legal doping”—a drug-free way to impact performance up to 15%.

“We’ve had Olympic coaches on the show talking about how they use music with the people they’re training to enhance their performance.

“Also, in an episode with Adam Gallagher, it was fun to see how the worlds of music and boxing intersect with the ring walk. He has a background in music as well as psychology, and he is a certified boxing coach who has worked with world champions to help them set up their ring walk music. In preparation for our conversation, I looked at some ring walks and found they were like Broadway shows. They set the stage... literally. It was fascinating to have Adam give us a peek behind the curtain and help us understand what goes into the music

selection, what it means to the audience and to the boxer, and the considerations they factor into the musical selection.”

Mindy is equally fascinated with the finding that music is the last part of the brain to fade for people who have dementia or Alzheimer’s.

“There’s a documentary about patients who are virtually unresponsive and don’t recognize their loved ones because of the effects of Alzheimer’s or dementia, yet when they hear music that was important to them, possibly when they were young, they come alive in an almost eerie way. It’s like they wake up and start talking about that time in their life. It’s not a cure. It doesn’t last indefinitely. But for minutes, or even an hour, they’re lucid and can recall things about the artist or composer or that time in their life. They may have heard the song at a dance or when they met their loved one. It’s really powerful to see what music can do with the brain.”

In a similar vein, some of the show’s episodes focus on the power of lyrics and



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how music helps us process trauma.

“Whether trauma is caused by the pandemic, or sexual assault, or a veteran’s traumatic events while in military service, music might help. If the show can help make the world a better place... if it can help even one veteran, it would mean a lot to me. People might discover how music can help them process trauma, heal a little bit, and maybe share their experience with their family in a way that they haven’t been able to before.”

Mindy has also led a broader discussion about creative expression in challenging times. She explained: *“On the show, we’ve talked with psychologists who reframed the restrictions of the pandemic, pointing out that they can be catalysts for creativity.*

We can use this time to jumpstart our creative juices.”

With a passion for music education and advocacy, Mindy feels more can be done. *“We all have the curse of knowledge. It’s a term that was popularized by Chip and Dan Heath in their book Made to Stick, and it refers to the concept that when we know something, we assume everyone else knows it, too. As musicians, we know how powerful music is. We understand music’s worth and simply assume other people understand it too, so we don’t always do a very good job of educating and increasing awareness among non-musicians of the value and transformative power that music brings to our human journey.*

“To me, music education is the greatest

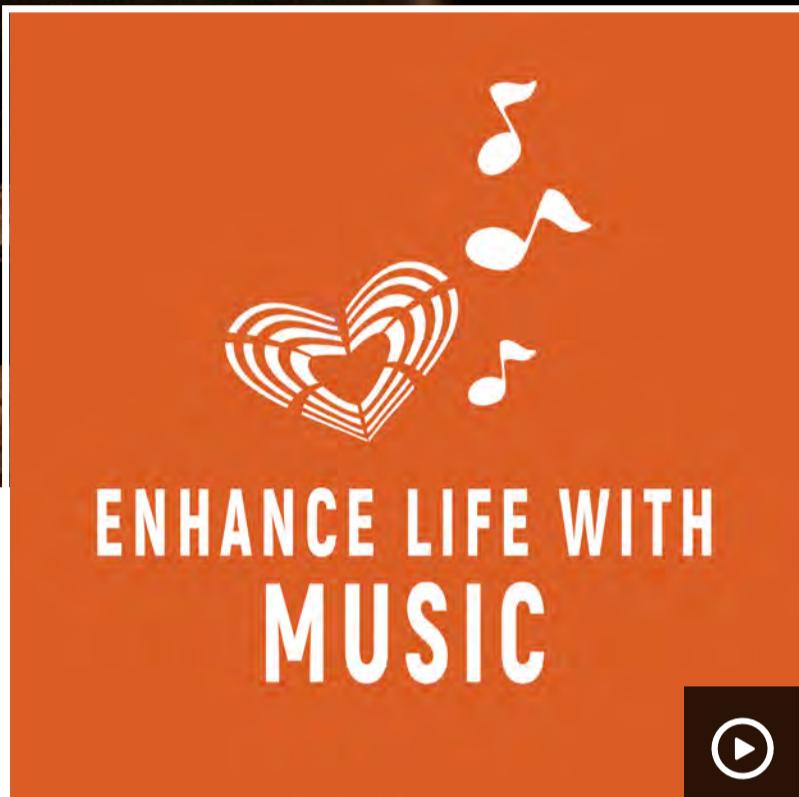
“Leader in sports streaming”
Forbes

“A great cable TV alternative”
tom’s guide

“The best service for sports fans”
GIZMODO



Mindy playing the piano at her studio's spring piano recital



job security that we have as musicians. It's another term for 'music advocacy,' which is actually about educating people and making them aware of the merits of music. When our communities are aware and educated about that, they're going to want to invest in musical education and musical experiences.

"Playing a small part in this type of education is very rewarding for me. I'm constantly getting out of my comfort zone and growing and learning new things, whether it's about marketing or social media, or which headphones or microphone work best, or how to be a better interviewer. Not to mention, I have the incredible opportunity to speak with lots of inspiring people who are doing amazing things with music."

When she's not making or listening to music, Mindy enjoys spending time with her husband and two teenage children, daughter Adrian and son Eric.

"Our family activity when I was growing up was waterskiing. My dad is in his seventies now, and he is still barefoot skiing. In terms of my hobbies, I would say those have definitely changed during the different stages of life, but I consistently love to read. If I had to pick a favorite book, it would be Better Than Before by Gretchen Rubin."

It's clear that Mindy believes that music can make life better. With *Enhance Life with Music*, she invites you to unleash the power of music in your life! 



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