

**A Change Is Gonna Come:** Two clinicians' view on the music industry's mental health crisis, the impact of COVID-19 and how we can build a healthier future (a.k.a. "The White Paper")

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## **1: Challenge and Opportunity**

In 2019, the music industry was a massive machine, generating over \$40 billion: \$20+ billion in recorded and streaming music and \$20+ billion in touring revenue<sup>1</sup>. Tens of thousands of concerts were played. Thousands of albums were recorded and released. More than 100,000 individuals were employed by the industry, from artists, producers, managers and record-label executives to touring crew members, venue staff and merchandise vendors.

By early 2020, the music industry as we knew it was dead.

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, touring revenue has plummeted, production companies have folded and agencies have laid off their staffs. Venues have turned down their house lights for the last time. Recording studios have shuttered, songwriting sessions have gone quiet and new music production is at a relative standstill. And many of those 100,000+ individuals are struggling to cope with unemployment, dwindling savings and an uncertain future.

Along with its financial impact, the pandemic has also shined a spotlight on perhaps the greatest threat to the music industry's survival: a growing mental health crisis that has been looming for years, evidenced by staggering rates of depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicide among industry members. Year by year, the trend has only worsened.

As clinicians on the music industry's front lines, we have watched its members grapple with the above, as well as the devastating effects of the pandemic on their careers, identities and lives. We've also glimpsed the resiliency of these individuals as they've fought to take control of their mental health, many for the first time.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ifpi.org/ifpi-issues-annual-global-music-report>, [https://www.iq-mag.net/2019/09/global-live-music-ticket-sales-top-25bn-pwc-outlook-2019/#.X\\_JLeS3b1QI](https://www.iq-mag.net/2019/09/global-live-music-ticket-sales-top-25bn-pwc-outlook-2019/#.X_JLeS3b1QI)

Indeed, we believe that as the industry largely lays dormant, right now presents a potent — and perhaps once-in-a-lifetime — opportunity to stem the tide of the mental health crisis and usher in bold, systemic change.

Over the last 12 months, the authors have analyzed the industry's mental health crisis, its etiology and contributing factors and have begun to develop the blueprint for a healthier industry, including the theoretical framework and its practical applications. The results of those efforts are contained in this paper.

## **2: The Mental Health Crisis — Causes and Costs**

### Causes

Throughout our years of clinical work, we have witnessed first-hand the psychological mayhem that the music industry can wreak. We have seen this in clients from A-list superstars to road crew members and everyone in between. We have listened to their experiences of anxiety and depression, performance-related pressure, isolation, substance abuse and feelings of insecurity and judgment. And we have heard repeatedly how the *music industry itself* plays a pivotal role in these struggles.

Several factors contribute to the mental health issues commonly seen within the industry. Some of these are systemic in nature, while others are more contextual.

### **Systemic factors**

#### *Lack of a Governing Body*

The music industry can be best characterized as a decentralized network of miniature ecosystems: no governing body, no uniform set of rules and regulations, no union representing performers and crew members — and no centralized place for individuals to access support in times of need. Instead, there exists a patchwork system of entities, none bearing responsibility for providing support and mental health care. It is up to the individual to navigate the process of seeking clinical support.

#### *Relationship Structures*

Artist-Manager: Industry relationship dynamics are confusing and non-uniform. One notable example is the artist-manager relationship. Some contracts define the artist as a client of the manager or management company, while others state the opposite. Many artist-manager

relationships are even less-defined and, in a throwback to the industry's early days, still function by "handshake" (i.e., without a written contract). The same non-uniformity is true for artist-agent relationships. This lack of formality can cause worry and insecurity for all parties involved.

**Crew-Employer:** Touring crew members are in similarly complex situations. They may be employed by the artist they tour with, the artist's management or by a third-party production company. Crew members often work with multiple artists/tours per year, each with a different set of expectations, compensation packages and social norms. Few crew members have long-term job security and many survive from one tour to the next, resulting in significant financial stress and anxiety. Furthermore, the lack of health benefits for touring personnel (even those employed full-time or on retainer) often means they have minimal access to mental health care, and adequate support can be cost-prohibitive.

**Label-Artist:** For decades, the major record labels have wielded tremendous power and influence over artists, many of whom report feeling taken advantage of by unfavorable contracts that may leave them in sizeable debt to their label. Artists can also experience significant psychological distress as they wrestle for a larger share of profits, more creative control and increased support for their projects. Labels generally do not offer health insurance to their artists.

## **Contextual Factors**

### *Streaming and Metrics*

The shift towards streaming-based revenues has inexorably impacted the recording segment's mental health. With streaming services paying a fraction of a penny per stream, newfound financial anxieties and pressures have emerged. For example, one leading service's algorithm pays only once a stream reaches 30 seconds, but there's a 35% chance a song will be skipped before that time. (This means that artists, writers and producers must hold the listener's attention for at least 30 seconds in order to be compensated.) This often results in sacrificing creativity for the sake of increased streams as well as pressure for increased output. Artists, writers and producers report feelings of creative inauthenticity, frustration and a joyless writing/recording process — all of which negatively impact their mental health.

In addition, song metrics are shared in real-time and publicly accessible — which means that creators are constantly aware of the *value* of their work to their audience. If a song does not perform to expectations, it can lead to feelings of low self-worth and depression and even shaming on social media. In our clinical practices, we frequently see artists struggle with the

“compare and despair” mentality: judging their personal worth based on the performance of their recent releases compared to their peers’.

### *The Need for Increased Touring*

From the outside, the touring lifestyle may look glamorous — “Sex, Drugs and Rock n’ Roll” being the oft-used trope. But a closer examination shows how it can wreak havoc on the mental health of those actually living it.

As recording revenues have decreased, the need for touring has increased, and touring now accounts for a much more substantial piece of the revenue pie. This generates an unhealthy feedback loop for touring professionals: more intensive touring → more time away from home and longer hours → isolation and strained relationships → increased use of drugs and alcohol as a coping tool → more isolation and strained relationships. Grueling hours, lack of privacy and late nights of cross-country travel frequently lead to bouts of insomnia, anxiety and depression.

### *Pre-Existing Mental Health Issues*

Many individuals enter the industry with mental health struggles that have been present for years. Touring crew may be drawn to the lifestyle as a means of emotionally distancing from their home life. Artists and creatives, many of whom by nature are emotionally labile, often refuse potentially helpful psychoactive medication out of concern for dampening creativity. Individuals with mental health struggles are also often drawn to the industry because of its (perceived) non-judgmental, accepting, anything-goes atmosphere. When those with pre-existing mental health issues are thrown into a high-pressure, competitive environment, the outcomes can be devastating.

### *Resistance to Change*

For decades, the music industry has resisted adaptation in the face of its mental health crisis — after all, the show must go on. But when it does so without regard for the costs, mental health is deprioritized in the interest of keeping the machine churning.

We’ve heard this directly from industry executives, who have shared that both artists and crew members are often seen as “cannon fodder” to be pushed through unsustainable touring itineraries and demanding schedules in order to deliver creative output and profit lines. With minimal mental health support, when burnout or worse occurs, artists and crew are then quickly replaced by the next eager individual.

Yet the industry has been slow to implement changes — or even fully acknowledge the need for specialized mental health services. If the industry wants to ensure its survival in the coming decades, it must start investing in the well-being of its members. The human and economic costs that have been willingly absorbed are no longer viable.

### The Human Cost

A major research study through the Tour Health Research Initiative (THRIV) recently sought to quantify and understand the mental health toll on today's music industry. THRIV, co-founded by Dr. Chayim Newman along with touring veteran Ryan George (Arcade Fire, Death Cab for Cutie, Jack White, etc.), conducts thorough, methodologically sound scientific research on mental health in the industry.

Prior to the pandemic's onset, considerable data was collected to understand the extent of the mental health struggles within the touring sector. Between February-March 2020, THRIV's Touring Health and Wellness Survey, the largest of its kind in terms of scope and scientific rigor, collected responses from over 1,100 touring professionals worldwide. The data paints a disturbing picture. A few preliminary findings:

- 34% of respondents reported suffering from clinical levels of depression
- 70% reported trouble sleeping
- 83% reported feeling overworked and some degree of burnout (50% of respondents reported working more than 14 hours a day while on tour with less than one hour of break time, and often for more than five days in a row without an off-day)
- 79% reported experiencing significant worry regarding their financial stability, while 37% were "very strained" by it
- 45% reported drinking alcohol regularly
- 74% reported that touring strained their relationships
- 62% reported having little or no plan for life after touring
- 26% reported serious suicidal ideation (either a previous suicide attempt or considering suicide within the past year and formulating a plan for how to do it)
- 58% reported having lost a tour colleague to suicide
- Only 17% reported attending therapy even monthly (or more often)

The above data confirms our clinical experience of an environment that takes a profound toll on the mental, physical and emotional health of the individuals involved. This toll includes rates of depression, anxiety, burnout and addiction exponentially higher than in the non-industry population (i.e. 34% depression vs. 7% for the general population<sup>2</sup>, 26% suicidal ideation vs. 4% for the general population<sup>3</sup>). At its most extreme, it includes the premature deaths of individuals across the industry via suicide and drug overdose. While the highest-profile suicides receive extensive media coverage, those of less visible industry staff go largely unnoticed. And despite all the above, few individuals receive any measure of regular mental health support.

### The Economic Cost

The mental health crisis carries a substantial economic cost for the industry. High-profile tour cancellations in recent years have included legs of Kanye West's Saint Pablo tour (he was hospitalized for a psychotic episode), Justin Bieber's Purpose tour (due to depression and exhaustion), Selena Gomez's Revival world tour (also due to anxiety and depression), Summer Walker's Over It tour (social anxiety) as well as several cancellations from artists including Brian Wilson, Demi Lovato and Aaron Carter stemming from more serious mental illness. Other artists chose to complete their tours while cancelling lucrative meet & greets for each tour stop. Former One Direction star Zayn Malik cancelled multiple solo dates in recent years due to severe performance anxiety, often at the last minute and at significant cost.

Many of the above cancellations were large-scale arena or stadium tours, which often gross more than \$500,000 per show. In general, tour-leg cancellations due to mental health issues have led to tens of millions of dollars in lost revenue. Furthermore, cancelled tours may already have expended significant sums on production, marketing, venue and local vendors/staffers, only some of which may be recoupable via cancellation insurance. The financial impact of these cancellations functions in a ripple effect. Those directly impacted are the artist, promoter and the venue. Less-direct impacts are felt by the artist's management, agency and label.

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2019). *National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2017* (NSDUH-2016-DS0001). Retrieved from <https://datafiles.samhsa.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> Piscopo K, Lipari RN, Cooney J, Glasheen C. Suicidal thoughts and behavior among adults: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. NSDUH Data Review; Department of Health & Human Services, 2016.

To illustrate the interplay between the human and financial costs, when tours are cancelled, crew members are generally left scrambling to find employment or recoup the lost income. The vast majority of crew members are hired without formal written contracts, and so they lack legal recourse to pursue compensation. Most are also loath to approach management or the hiring artist to ask for payment, as they fear being “blacklisted” and losing future employment opportunities. Tour cancellations thus leave the industry’s most vulnerable members in the worst place financially, putting further strain on their mental health.

Many of the human and economic costs could be averted if the industry adequately prioritized mental health. Who should shoulder that responsibility remains to be determined.

### **3: Accountability**

Over the course of the pandemic, we’ve facilitated hundreds of hours of support groups and participated in dozens of podcasts and workshops, all serving to foster dialogue about the mental health status of the industry and its members. There is unanimous agreement across all sectors that the costs have become untenable and change is necessary: Artists, agents, managers, label executives, publicists, promoters and crew members all agree. No one agrees, however, on who should be responsible for implementing, overseeing and enforcing change — and, above all, absorbing the cost.

It is understood that a measure of accountability for mental health lies with the individual. We are each responsible for investing in our own well-being. But the hundreds of artists and industry members we’ve spoken with submit that additional responsibility — and the concurrent opportunity to spearhead change — lies with one of several groups:

#### 1. The Labels

Perhaps the most obvious source of responsibility (and the opportunity for leadership) lies with the record labels. Labels are already invested in — and stand to profit heavily from — their artists’ careers; they would benefit greatly from the artists’ improved mental health. Additionally, labels can often be a source of increased stress for artists through everything from unfavorable contracts to cramming more tour dates and promotional engagements into already overwhelming schedules. It has been suggested that artists be treated as employees by the

labels, receiving employee rights and mental health benefits. “After all, it isn’t a product labels are investing in, but rather artists’ ability to have a lengthy and productive career.”<sup>4</sup>

Labels like Canada’s Royal Mountain Records recognize their responsibility. In February 2019 the label launched a fund that gives every act on its roster \$1500 to spend on mental health, wellness, or addiction recovery. While this is a relatively modest sum relative to the cost of quality mental health care, it is an enormous recognition of labels’ responsibility to their artists’ mental health. (Perhaps as a label founded and run by artists, they know what is at stake<sup>5</sup>.) Likewise, the small Atlanta-based label Love Renaissance (LVRN), distributed by Interscope, recently established a “health and wellness division” that aims to provide ongoing mental health support for artists as well as label staff<sup>6</sup>.

We are hopeful that other labels will take inspiration from Royal Mountain and LVRN and work to provide more substantial mental health support for label staff, artists and even artists’ touring crew.

## 2. The Management Companies

Similar to the labels, management companies’ profitability is directly linked to the sustained success of their artists. Better-selling records and more streams, longer and bigger tours and more merchandise sold lead to a better bottom-line for management, whose profits are often computed as a fixed percentage of the artist’s overall revenue.

The manager-artist relationship is also often intimate and personal, meaning if and when an artist struggles, management is often among the first to notice, placing managers in a unique position to support any mental health issues that arise. While most, if not all, management companies openly acknowledge the importance of maintaining their artists’ mental health, few absorb the cost of those needs, and even fewer invest in the mental health of the crew members they contract to support those artists.

One model for a mental-health-conscious management company is Denver-based 7S Management, home to Nathaniel Rateliff & The Night Sweats and a host of other successful acts. They’ve had a wellness coach and yoga instructor join their bands on tour, funded therapy

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurastudarus/2017/11/09/why-its-crucial-that-record-labels-pay-musicians-mental-health-care/?sh=773c008d6d0f>

<sup>5</sup> <https://royalmountainrecords.com/pages/mental-health-initiative>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.fastcompany.com/90504709/lvrn-launched-mental-health-division-combat-depression-anxiety-music-industry>



sessions while on the road and emphasize health via personal training and fitness classes on tour. Most significantly, these initiatives are offered to the artists *and* touring crew members. Management understands that “living on the road is hard on minds and bodies. Taking proactive steps to ensure our family is well is important for the business aspect of it, but we also truly do love each other like family and want to take care of people.”<sup>7</sup>

### 3. The Promoters

In terms of the touring sector, perhaps those in the best economic position to support industry members’ mental health needs are the promoters, especially the major players. The large promotion companies profit from every level of the touring industry: their subsidiaries sell the concert tickets, own and operate the venues, manufacture and sell the merchandise, produce the major music festivals and manage some of the artists. They stand to gain immeasurably by supporting the mental health of tour professionals.

Since 2019, in the aftermath of the suicides of several high-profile touring artists, companies such as Live Nation have attempted to better support touring mental health by investing in several small initiatives. While this is a major step forward for promoters in general, these initiatives are extremely limited in scope and incommensurate with the extent of the mental health crisis and the organizations’ footprints in the industry. There are numerous other opportunities for promoters to support and invest in a healthier industry.

### 4. The Shared Model

Perhaps most effective would be a model of shared responsibility, with labels, management companies, promoters and other stakeholders all contributing resources to support industry members’ mental health. Shared responsibility will, however, require several conditions: collaboration among the disparate parties that make up the industry; agreement on the division of financial responsibility; and, ultimately, a centralized body to supervise the development and implementation of the right mental health resources — a task requiring clinical acumen, a thorough understanding of the music industry and its unique mental health challenges and trust of the myriad parties involved.

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<sup>7</sup> Personal email correspondence from Kari Nott of 7S Management to Dr. Chayim Newman, September 1, 2020.

## **4: Steps to a Better Future**

### **A Paradigm Shift**

Over the past few years, various music industry stakeholders and members have approached the authors to provide crisis management solutions. These have included mental health “check-ins” with a given organization’s staff and the creation of emergency-driven proposals for more comprehensive mental health programs as well as frantic phone calls seeking mental health resources for various teams and artists. Once the crisis is resolved, there is generally a long period of “radio silence” — until the next crisis. This model is both inefficient and dangerous. While individual crises may be averted, the underlying core issues remain largely ignored.

The music industry must evolve a new paradigm to address its mental health crisis. This comprises the shift from a reactive to a proactive mindset and the prioritizing and implementation of preventative mental health strategies.

- *Budget Allocation for Mental Health Services:* There is no way around the fact that this *will* cost money. Sustained change will require industry leaders to find ways to include mental health services in their yearly operational budgets, artists’ recording budgets and touring budgets. While these upfront costs may seem hard to justify in the short term, they will undoubtedly yield healthier outcomes over the long run and also save the costs of engaging crisis services. (For example, the cost of just one 30-day stint in rehab — a common crisis intervention — typically ranges from \$12,000-\$60,000.) Preventative health care is always a shrewder investment.
- *Increased access to care:* Specialized mental health services must be expanded and made accessible to individuals at all levels of the industry. Too often, these services are only available or affordable to A-list artists and executives, thereby excluding thousands of industry professionals who have limited financial resources and are often under-insured. Existing organizations are limited in their capacity to manage the volume of requests received from such a large industry, leaving many who would benefit from access to care unserved. Additionally, these organizations typically operate outside the industry. Those in need are thus required to go through extra steps to access care, resulting in critical delays in receiving support. This can often dissuade people from seeking help altogether.

The above paradigm shift will create an environment receptive to the implementation of practical strategies and interventions.

## Practical Applications

### 1. Clinical Services

Clinical support has direct repercussions in terms of lives rescued and improved. For larger corporations in the industry that offer some clinical services via Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), care is often provided by clinicians with limited experience and minimal or no knowledge of the industry's unique challenges. Touring professionals and smaller organizations without the resources to provide behavioral health coverage are often left without ready access to any clinical services whatsoever.

The future model for clinical services must span five categories: consultation, education, assessment, therapy and follow-up. Below is an illustration of how provision of these services might look within the touring sector of the industry. As stated above, it begins with allocating resources to mental health in the budgeting for a tour. Those funds would then be directed in several parallel streams:

- **Consultation:** With the guidance of clinical experts, incorporating mental health considerations in the planning and routing of tours. This may include re-examining the number of consecutive show days; factoring in the adverse effects of repeated long, overnight drives and including more dedicated travel days; and scheduling off-days in locales where individuals can access mental health and well-being resources.
- **Education:** Pre-tour workshops and group training for touring personnel facilitated by experienced clinicians, with the aim of providing tools for self-care and management of mental health challenges.
- **Assessment:** Clinically driven identification of individuals on tour with mental health needs/pre-existing challenges will be invaluable in terms of earmarking additional support and offering preventative interventions.
- **Therapy:** Provision of ongoing mental health support for all touring party members (performers and crew) by experienced clinicians. This includes real-time crisis management as well as regular availability, either in person (as feasible) or virtually via phone and online sessions.

- Follow-up: Increased access to ongoing clinical services for touring personnel post-tour or between tour legs. This ensures continuity of care and better clinical outcomes.

## 2. Education and Training

Across industry sectors, increased education is critical to the improvement of mental health outcomes. Educational programming, delivered by mental health experts with substantial industry experience, can take a variety of forms:

- Broad psychoeducation regarding mental health: This includes workshops and seminars fostering conversations around mental health and mental health struggles, destigmatizing mental illness and encouraging an environment conducive to open dialogue about mental health.
- Education regarding personal mental health care: This includes workshops, seminars and training courses serving to educate industry members as to how to better care for their own psychological, emotional and interpersonal needs.
- Training on supporting others' mental health: This includes workshops, seminars and training courses, often designed for those in leadership roles, providing education about the mental health vulnerabilities prevalent within the industry, identification and support of those deemed to be at high risk and navigation of access to proper clinical care for those in need.

## 3. Scientific Research

While the clinical and educational components provide direct impact, effective change begins with research. With a thorough understanding of the issues, their underpinnings and their consequences, we can begin to explore and develop effective ways to address challenges. Unfortunately, most of the available “solutions” with respect to improving industry members’ mental health have been anecdotal — that is, based on the limited experience and opinions of a few individuals, rather than on a comprehensive understanding of the issues.

Historically, this is likely due to the music industry’s insular nature. The industry is generally inaccessible to outsiders lacking the “right” connections or credentials. As such, scientific

researchers have had little opportunity to study its workings from the inside. This void has been filled via two insufficient approaches:

1. Scientific research from the outside: This takes the form of research conducted by competent researchers but without access to the industry. Data is limited to what is publicly available and sample sizes tend to be small. The accuracy of the information is questionable, as industry professionals may be hesitant to disclose vulnerable information, such as substance use and mental health issues, to an outsider.
2. Pseudo-scientific research from the inside: This takes the form of well-intentioned research conducted by those within the industry who are neither scientists nor trained research professionals. These studies are often not methodologically sound, do not consider the psychometric details of the research and are not approved by an ethics review board — a standard safeguard for all human studies. This often leads to inaccurate conclusions and ignores the potential risks to subjects that may accompany participation in research.

Ultimately, in order to facilitate genuine and enduring improvement in its members' mental health, the industry as a whole must invest in scientific research conducted by trained professionals operating from inside the industry. This research must minimally comprise two phases:

Phase 1: Exploratory research seeking to better understand the factors and components impacting the health and mental health of the music industry. This may examine both correlates and underlying causal factors. THRIV's Touring Health & Wellness Survey, launched just prior to the pandemic, is one such example.

Phase 2: Controlled trials of interventions. Clinical professionals, using the data from Phase 1, develop interventions to address and improve the mental health of industry members, and those interventions are then rigorously tested. Randomized, controlled trials allow for assessment of the effectiveness of these interventions, their suitability for the population and to confirm that they are replicable.

Acknowledging the mental health crisis and declaring commitment to change are just the starting points: The paradigm shift and its practical applications are a momentous undertaking

and will not happen overnight. They must be enacted with patience and care in order to ensure their sustainability.

## **5: Our Vision**

Our years of clinical experience in the music industry have confirmed again and again that its mental health challenges are widespread and systemic in nature. We've helped artists rebuild their lives after being crushed by the industry's unrelenting pressure. We've listened to individuals describe financial stress, relationship turmoil and divorce, all effects of extended stints on the road. We've heard how long hours in the studio can lead to insomnia and how drugs and alcohol become relied upon to find creative "magic." We've seen how the lack of job security can foster a constant state of psychological threat. We've supported individuals through band breakups and distressing emotional experiences stemming from sexual assault and harassment, gender inequalities and racism.

While much of the industry has remained idle during the pandemic, the contributing factors behind its mental health crisis have been exposed like never before. As we've laid out above, the consequences of the industry's structures, relationship dynamics, changing economics and lack of organized leadership and a governing body are finally being acknowledged.

It is clear that there is an industry-wide readiness for change and enthusiasm about creating a healthier future. Sustained change, however, is incredibly difficult. The road ahead is arduous and long, requiring a seismic shift in values, resource allocation and industry norms. Effective leadership is needed to encourage and support every aspect of this shift. But while the road is daunting, the industry need not go it alone: It must trust in experienced professionals to guide the conversations and provide efficient, context-appropriate interventions to address the issues.

The music industry as we know it may have died as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic; now is the time for a rebirth. This paper outlines the beginnings of the blueprint for a healthier industry, including its theoretical framework, delivery of clinical services, research programming, education and training. In 2021, we stand prepared to walk hand in hand with the music industry into a brighter future.

## Who We Are

**Dr. Chayim Newman** holds his PhD in Clinical Psychology from Yeshiva University. He completed his Residency at London Health Sciences Centre and has worked in numerous respected clinical settings including New York Presbyterian Hospital, Montefiore Medical Center, The Albert Ellis Institute and Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. He has studied mindfulness and meditation disciplines with several of this generation's preeminent teachers.

Dr. Newman's clinical practice, specializing in clinical care for the music industry, focuses on the use of a variety of therapeutic modalities (Acceptance and Commitment Therapy or ACT, CBT, Mindfulness, traditional psychotherapy) in the treatment of difficulties with anxiety and stress, depression, stress-related medical illness and other psychological/emotional issues. With more than two decades of experience in the music industry — as a touring performer, event producer and artist liaison — Dr. Newman possesses a first-hand understanding of the unique challenges and stresses facing industry members.

Dr. Newman is the co-founder of the Tour Health Research Initiative (THRIV), the leading organization dedicated to conducting research on health and mental health in the touring music industry ([www.tourhealth.org](http://www.tourhealth.org)). He is the primary clinical advisor to Backline.Care and, along with Zack Borer, is the co-creator and co-facilitator of the weekly Come Together music industry online support groups.

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**Zack Borer** is a licensed psychotherapist based in Los Angeles. Zack holds a Masters in Marriage and Family Therapy from Nova Southeastern University. He has worked in a variety of clinical settings including inpatient and outpatient addiction treatment centers, community mental health clinics and private practice.

After over a decade as a working musician and songwriter, Zack entered the mental health field out of a desire to help music industry professionals as they grapple with the unique struggles that come with being in a challenging and complex business. Zack works with artists and their support staff to enhance their emotional wellbeing and to help mitigate the acute mental health crises that have become commonplace in the music business.

In addition to his private practice, Zack is the co-founder and Clinical Director of Backline.care ([www.backline.care](http://www.backline.care)), a national non-profit organization that connects music industry professionals and their families to trusted mental health and wellness resources.

[www.zackborer.com](http://www.zackborer.com)