
THE HARMONY HANDBOOK

VOL. 1

Resources for Music Therapists
Working With Adolescents & Adults
in Mental Health Treatment

WORKSHEETS

INTERVENTIONS

MEDITATIONS



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Introduction

As a music therapist working in mental health, you have the privilege of bringing the power of music into an individual's recovery and healing process. Often a light during dark times, your role is valuable and can make an important difference in the human lives you touch. Since many great privileges come with challenges, this eBook is meant to help you through your work as a mental health professional by providing resources, ideas, and interventions for your clientele.

The contents of this eBook were developed through my work facilitating music therapy groups in inpatient, outpatient, and private mental health settings with adults and adolescents. Since 2006, I have practiced music therapy with clients with mood disorders, psychosis, anxiety disorders, trauma, eating disorders, dissociative disorders, drug and alcohol addiction, sex addiction, PTSD, personality disorders, and those in treatment for grief, stress management, self-harm, or suicidality. Over the years, I have identified ten common themes that almost every client could relate to, and developed interventions around each theme, refining them over time. All ten are included here.

This eBook is divided into three sections: worksheets, interventions, and meditations.

- Worksheets may serve as assessment tools, self-reflection tools, session openers, or topics for discussion.
- Interventions are presented in ten themes, each with instructions and accompanying worksheets to facilitate a structured and goal-oriented session.
- Meditations may be used to open or close sessions, and support the interventions.

Please use your own discretion when implementing these interventions, and adapt them to your clientele. The instructions given are suggestions, do not feel obligated to follow every single step. A successful session often has more to do with how the intervention is carried out by the therapist, rather than what the intervention is. Use your own creativity, personality, and strengths when facilitating these interventions, and use these materials as a starting place for your own ideas to generate.

I leave you with two suggestions before using this material in your music therapy practice:

1. **Know your clients, and take care of them.** Mental health encompasses a wide variety of client populations. These interventions will be different for each. Know your population, and your clients' goals. Help them celebrate their strengths and face their challenges.
2. **Know yourself, and take care of you.** Knowing your personal style of music therapy will help you manage expected outcomes. Make conscious choices in facilitating these interventions in a way that is congruent with your true self. Celebrate your strengths, and face your own challenges. These interventions will ask your clients to do self-exploration work, be vulnerable, and value personal well-being. Be willing to do that for yourself as well.

Thank you for the valuable work you do.

Ami Kanimura, MT-BC
harmonyresource.com

PART I: WORKSHEETS

The following worksheets may serve as assessment tools, self-reflection tools, session openers, or topics for discussion.

These worksheets provide an opportunity for music therapy participation without actually playing music, but rather reflecting on music. This can be useful as a break from playing music, or when working with clients who may not be interested in playing music but may benefit from music based discussions and reflections.

With groups, it is recommended that individuals complete their own worksheet, and later share their responses with the group. The music therapist can then encourage a group discussion, which may encompass an entire session, or supplement music interventions.

With individual clients, these worksheets may be completed as homework assignments, or as an opportunity for self-reflection. Responses may be shared with the therapist, and used for more in-depth processing.

MUSIC | Preference, Participation, & Involvement

<u>Favorite Styles:</u>	<u>Favorite Artists:</u>	<u>Favorite Songs:</u>	<u>Participation/Involvement (circle):</u> Listen Perform Analyze Attend concerts Collect Record Write Play in a band Compose Play instruments: Rap Sing Freestyle Improvise
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1. When do you listen to music? _____
2. Why do you listen to music? _____
3. Other creative interests: _____
4. What do you think your music preference says about you? _____

5. Music that you do NOT like: _____
6. Music that triggers negative feelings, behaviors, or memories: _____

7. Share one positive music memory: _____

What are your 3 biggest challenges right now?	When are you most happy?

Songs of Life | Looking at my life through music

Please identify one song per category:

(Include title and artist if possible, the same song may be used more than once):

1. A song that could be my theme song: _____
2. A song that brings back a good memory: _____
3. A song that reminds me of my childhood: _____
4. A song that reminds me of a relative: _____
5. A song that makes me smile: _____
6. A song that makes me cry: _____
7. A song that makes me feel relaxed: _____
8. A song I enjoy singing: _____
9. A song that makes me feel alive: _____
10. A song I could listen to everyday: _____
11. A song I never want to hear again: _____
12. A song that represents me: _____

Three songs that relate to a significant moment in my life:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Creativity

1. What does it mean to be creative?
2. How are you creative?
3. What fuels creativity?
4. What blocks creativity?

Inspiration & Originality

5. What inspires you?
6. What makes you original?
7. What creative people do you admire?
8. How do you inspire others?

Art & Music

9. What is the purpose of art?
10. What is the purpose of music?
11. Is there a connection between art/music and spirituality?
12. What makes good music sound good?

PERSONAL PLAYLISTS

1. Rainy Day Playlist (Songs relating to how you feel on a bad day.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

2. Motivational Playlist (Songs that inspire, motivate, and energize you.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

3. Balanced Mood Playlist (Create a playlist with a variety of moods, and order the songs from least happy to most happy. You may use songs from the previous playlists.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

MUSIC INTERVIEW

One of the great things about music is that you can talk about it with almost anyone: a family member, a stranger, even someone totally different than you. Everyone knows what music is, yet we all have our unique preferences and relationship to it. In this exercise, you will be interviewing one person to learn about them and their musical interests.

Interviewing tips:

1. Read through the questions first on your own.
2. Try to ask questions authentically with curiosity.
3. Allow the interviewee time to answer and encourage them to talk. You do not have to write down every word they say on this form, just the general ideas. Focus on listening.
4. Do not judge their answers or react to their responses with your opinion. Remain neutral and focus on gathering information.

YOUR NAME: _____

INTERVIEWEE NAME: _____

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: (use the back of the page if you need more space to write)

1. What are a few of your favorite songs of all time? _____

2. What do you like about these songs? _____

3. How did you get introduced to the music you like? _____

4. What role does music play in your life? _____

5. If you could spend one hour with any musician who would it be and why? _____

6. If you could get any musician/band to write an album about your life who would it be, and what would they write about? _____

7. Do you think music affects your behavior? _____

8. How do your peers influence what you listen to? _____

Two (appropriate) music related questions of your own:

9. _____

10. _____

POST-INTERVIEW: Share 5 things you learned about your interviewee.

PART 2: INTERVENTIONS

Most of these interventions follow a similar format: the introduction of a theme using music, a worksheet to be completed by the individual, and a group discussion. This allows for both self-reflection and socialization to occur within a session.

The interventions are categorized by theme, and designed so each session can be based on a specific theme. The music used within these themes is meant to stimulate a deeper level of emotional connection with the theme, and then be processed within the group and with the therapist.

These interventions may be adapted to suit the functioning level of the clients and the time frame of the session. The instructions given are suggestions to go by. Some groups may benefit from just doing part of an intervention, while others may benefit from doing more than one per session. The worksheets also do not always have to be completed, but may serve as an organizational tool for a verbal discussion. While these interventions were designed for group experiences, they may also be adapted for individual therapy.

The instructions to these interventions do not include improvisational music experiences, but improvisation may be added to any of these interventions.

Be creative in your facilitation! *A green italicized script* is included in the interventions to help you verbally guide the process, however, try to find your own voice with practice.

THEME 1: IDENTITY

Goals:

1. Learn about the basic elements of music.
2. Encourage creative self-reflection.
3. Exploration of personality traits and identity.

Materials:

Copies of “Elements of Music” and “My Life as a Song” worksheets, writing utensils, music selections/samples, stopwatch/timer.

Instructions:

1. *Today, we'll be looking at our lives in terms of music, and reflecting how elements of music relate to our personalities, lives, and way of being in the world. Because music is made by people, there are many human qualities to be found in music. In this session we will use music as a way to look at ourselves through a different lens, and describe ourselves in terms of music.*
2. Hand out “Elements of Music” worksheet.
3. *This handout lists eight basic elements of music. We're going to go over them one at a time. If any of these seem difficult to understand, please ask questions at any time, but also know that it is okay if you don't totally get all of this today.*
4. Start with tempo. *Tempo is measured in beats per minute, which is the speed, and how fast or slow a piece of music is. The Italian terms listed are ways the tempo is described in classical music. I'm going to play a few samples of music, try to guess the tempo.*

Play short samples of various selections while having clients guess tempo and song/composer:

Suggested Music Samples For Tempo	Title	Tempo
	Largo from Sonata No. 3, Op. 58 (Chopin)	Largo
	Adagio from Serenade for 13 Winds (Mozart)	Adagio
	Symphony No. 7 in A Major, Op. 92: III Presto (Beethoven)	Presto
	Song Remains the Same (Led Zeppelin)	140 BPM
	All Apologies (Nirvana)	109 BPM
	Don't Know Why (Norah Jones)	88 BPM

5. *Our heart rate is also measured in beats per minute and we all have our own tempo that changes. Let's see what your tempo is right now. Find your pulse and I'm going to have you count your pulse for 15 seconds, I'll let you know when to start and stop.*
Have clients write down number of beats in 15 seconds and then multiply by 4 to get BPM.
6. Hand out “My Life As a Song” worksheet.
7. *This worksheet will help you take a look at how the elements relate to you. Looking at number one, please write down your current tempo, and answer the questions about tempo. At which speed would you say you live life? And what speed is most comfortable for you?*

8. Continue through worksheets, one element at a time, going over the terms on “Elements of Music,” playing music samples, and then writing responses on “My Life As a Song.”

Suggested Music Samples For Dynamics	Title	Dynamics
	Pachelbel's Canon in D	Piano
	Blitzkrieg Bop (The Ramones)	Fortissimo
	Bohemian Rhapsody (Queen)	Changes

Suggested Music Samples For Melody	Title	Melody
	Kawaiipunahele (Kealii Reichel)	Legato
	Give It Away (The Red Hot Chili Peppers)	Staccato

Suggested Music Samples For Harmony	Title	Harmony
	Symphony No. 5 in C Minor, Op. 67, “Fate” (Beethoven)	Minor
	Symphony No. 8 in F Major, Op. 93: I. Allegro (Beethoven)	Major
	Seasons of Love (RENT)	Consonance

Suggested Music Samples For Rhythm	Title	Rhythm
	Rolling in the Deep (Adele)	4/4
	Gravity (John Mayer)	3/4 or compound
	Gangsta Blues (A.R. Rahman)	Complex
	One Love (Bob Marley)	Syncopation

Suggested Music Samples For Theme	Title	Theme
	Concerning Hobbits (Howard Shore)	Light
	Time (Hans Zimmer)	Dark
	Lose Yourself (Eminem)	Autobiographical

9. Have clients share what they wrote down, any insights, and whether or not this brought to mind any changes they would like to make in their life.

Other suggestions and options:

- Music samples may also be provided with live instruments.
- *After completing “My Life As A Song,” write a paragraph on the back of the paper describing what your life sounds like as a song in complete sentences. Who would be singing this song? Are you okay with the way this song sounds? How does it feel to you?*
- *Circle the elements that you wish were different or need improvement. Just changing one element of a song can completely change the entire song. How does this relate to your goals?*
- *This can also help us reflect on our relationships. Sometimes knowing a person is like music. We may be attracted to someone’s melody, and as we get to know someone we learn their lyrics. Or, sometimes these elements change over time, which changes our relationships with people. Thinking of your relationships in terms of music, what comes to mind?*

ELEMENTS OF MUSIC

1. TEMPO: speed (BPM= beats per minute)

Largo = slow (40-50 BPM)	Moderato = moderate (81-90 BPM)
Adagio = moderately slow (51-60 BPM)	Allegro = fast (105-132 BPM)
Andante = walking pace (61- 80 BPM)	Presto = very fast (168-177 BPM)

Approximate heart rates: sleeping (45-60 BPM), resting (60-80 BPM), exercising (90-150+)
Check your pulse (# of beats in 15 seconds x 4) = _____ BPM

2. DYNAMICS: volume

Pianissimo = very soft	Mezzo-piano = medium soft	Forte = loud
Piano = soft	Mezzo-forte = medium loud	Fortissimo = very loud

Changes in volume:

Diminuendo = to gradually get softer Crescendo = to gradually get louder

3. MELODY: voice, series of notes

Legato = smooth	Staccato = choppy
Wide range of pitches	Narrow range of pitches
High pitch = upper register	Low pitch = lower register

4. HARMONY: two or more notes played at the same time

Consonant = notes are in harmony	Dissonant = notes are not in harmony
Major chords = bright sounding	Minor chords = sad sounding

5. RHYTHM: the beat, the way music moves in time

Simple patterns: 4/4 (standard) or 3/4 (waltz)

Compound or complex patterns

Syncopation: accent is on the weak beat

6. INSTRUMENTATION: the instruments used in a song

Percussion (drums, bells, shakers, xylophone)	Woodwinds (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon)
Strings (guitar, violin, viola, cello, bass, piano, harp)	Brass (horns, trumpet, trombones, tuba)
Other: voice, keyboard, electronic instruments	

7. THEME: the message; the overall feeling expressing in sound or lyrics

8. SILENCE: the absence of sound

MY LIFE AS A SONG

Describe yourself in musical terms. What would your life sound like as a song?

1. **TEMPO:** At what speed do you live life? What speed feels comfortable to you?
Current tempo: _____ BPM.

2. **DYNAMICS:** How loud is your presence? When does it change?

3. **MELODY:** What does your voice sound like? How do you choose to use your voice?

4. **HARMONY:** Are you in harmony with others? Are you in harmony with yourself?

5. **RHYTHM:** What kind of beat do you walk to? What is the rhythm of your life like?

6. **INSTRUMENTATION:** What instruments would be in a song about you?

7. **THEME:** What are the main themes in your life? What would the lyrics say about you?

8. **SILENCE:** How much silence is in your life? Too much or not enough? Are you ok with silence?

THEME 2: SONGWRITING

Goals:

1. Participate in a creative writing experience.
2. Reflect on a current relationship.
3. Increase emotional communication and expression.

Materials:

Copies of "Songwriting Brainstorm" and "Songwriting Guide" worksheets, and writing utensils.

Instructions:

1. *Today we will be doing a creative writing exercise and you will be writing a song about a significant person in your life right now. It's okay if you are not a songwriter or a musician, today we are just focusing on writing lyrics, or words, and I will guide you through the process.*
2. *Before we do any writing, sit quietly for a moment and close your eyes if you wish. Take a deep breath in and out. Bring to mind a person who is playing a significant and positive role in your life right now, someone you are grateful for, that you can silently honor right now. Take a moment to think of this person. Gently open your eyes.*
3. Hand out "Songwriting Brainstorm" worksheet.
4. *We're going to use this form to first think of content for our song lyrics. First, write the name of the person you are going to write about on each line with two stars. Then, take your time and complete the worksheet.*
5. Hand out "Songwriting Guide" worksheet.
6. *The ideas that you got down will serve as content for your song. You'll be organizing your ideas into two verses, a bridge, and a chorus. There's no right or wrong way to do this. Remember, songs don't always have to rhyme or make grammatical sense.*
7. Possible suggestions for the songwriting process:
 - The chorus may repeat.
 - Start each verse with a question from the brainstorm, and attempt to answer the question in the next line.
 - The bridge may be a good place to just write one long sentence about the person.
 - Decide whether the song will be about the person, or speaking to the person.
8. Have clients share song lyrics with the group.

Other suggestions and options:

- With additional time or sessions, instrumentation may be added and songs can be performed or recorded.
- Songwriting may also focus on difficult relationships that need to be processed.
- Grief may also be addressed by writing a song about a loved one who has passed away or a relationship that has ended.
- Clients may also be given the option to write a song about themselves.

SONGWRITING BRAINSTORM

Choose a person to write a song about: * _____ *

Words that describe * _____ * (ex. personality traits, adjectives):

4 questions you would ask * _____ *:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Write a message to * _____ *. If you could tell them anything right now, what would it be?

What does * _____ * stand for/represent/believe in? _____

What do you want the song to sound like?

Tempo (speed): _____

Instruments: _____

Other (describe the sound or feeling of the song): _____

SONGWRITING GUIDE

Title: _____

Written by: _____ Date: _____

(Verse 1)

(Chorus)

(Verse 2)

(Bridge)

(Chorus)

THEME 3: TIMES LIKE THESE

Goals:

1. Reflect on present challenges, lessons, and goals.
2. Increase self-awareness, motivation, and mood.
3. Increase verbal and written self-expression.

Materials:

Copies of “Times Like These” songwriting worksheet, copies of “Times Like These” lyrics by Foo Fighters, guitar, writing utensils.

Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/foofighters/timeslikethese.html>

Instructions:

1. Hand out song lyrics and play “Times Like These” by Foo Fighters. Encourage clients to sing along and pay attention to metaphors in the song.
2. Facilitate a group discussion and lyric analysis of the song.
 - *What do the metaphors in the song represent?*
 - *How do you relate?*
 - *What is the main theme of the song, and how does this relate to the present moment?*
 - *At any given moment it is time for something. Right now, what is it time for you to do, learn, or be?*
3. Hand out “Times Like These” songwriting form. *You will now be writing your own version of the song, using your own words to describe yourself in the verses, and describing your experience of the present moment in the chorus. You may use your own metaphors if you want to, or it can be totally literal. Write your song in a way that works for you by filling in the blanks. If any words on the form don't work for you, feel free to change whatever you want. Take your time. If you don't finish the entire song in this time period that is okay, just try to at least get one verse and one chorus down.*
4. Allow clients to share song lyrics. Options for sharing:
 - Read lyrics out loud, like a poem.
 - Sing the song while music therapist accompanies on guitar.
 - Read lyrics and then music therapist sings and plays it live.

Other suggestions and options:

- Have each client contribute two lines of their own song to create a group song.
- Work collaboratively to create a group chorus.
- Record songs if possible.

TIMES LIKE THESE

rewritten by: _____ on (date): _____

I, I'm a _____

I'm a _____ that _____ and _____

I, I'm a _____

I'm a _____

It's times like these _____

It's times like these _____

It's times like these _____

It's times like these time and time again

I, _____

I'm a _____

But I, I'm a little divided

Do I _____ or _____?

It's times like these _____

It's times like these _____

It's times like these _____

It's times like these time and time again

THEME 4: COPING WITH CHANGE

Goals:

1. Increase positive coping skills for change.
2. Increase self-awareness, motivation, and mood.
3. Practice identifying and setting goals.

Materials:

Copies of "A Change I Want to Make" worksheet, lyrics to "Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac, lyrics to "Across the Universe" by the Beatles or "They Can't Take That Away From Me" by Frank Sinatra, writing utensils, guitar

Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/fleetwoodmac/landslide.html>
<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/beatles/acrosstheuniverse.html>

Instructions:

1. Start with meditation on positive change (page 44).
2. *Often times a big source of worry or anxiety is change. We worry about changes we want to make, changes we don't have control over, or just the fact that change is an inevitable part of life. In today's session my goal is to give you some tools to help cope with change and go after the changes that you want to make. To bring in the theme of change, let's start with a song.*
3. Hand out song lyrics to "Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac. Play song and encourage singing.
4. Facilitate group discussion and lyric analysis of the song.
 - *There are four questions in the second verse of the song. Which one sticks out to you the most? What would your answer be to this question?*
 - *What is this songwriter's feeling towards change? Do you relate?*
 - *What do the metaphors in the song represent? What does "landslide" mean?*
5. Hand out "A Change I Want to Make" worksheet. *One way to cope with our anxious thoughts about change is to externalize our thoughts and write them down. This handout will help you organize your thoughts, and create a plan around a change you want to make. Take your time in filling it out, and try your best to be specific with the change you want to make.*
6. Allow an opportunity for clients to share. *Another way to cope with change is to talk about it, and share your experience with other people to both gain and give support. Also, when we set goals, we are more likely to follow through when we tell someone else about it.*
7. Brainstorm other ways to cope with change. Review coping skills used in the session: meditation, music, writing, making a plan, identifying supports, and sharing with peers.
8. *Although we know that change is going to happen no matter what, is there anything you can count on that will not change? Think about that question as we sing through our next song.*
9. Hand out lyrics to "Across the Universe" or "They Can't Take That Away From Me" and play song. Then discuss things that will not change or things that can't be taken away. (Examples: sense of spirituality, love, past accomplishments).

Other suggestions and options:

- Other songs that may be used with this theme, along with worksheet on page 23.
 - Changes by 2Pac
 - Be the Change by MC Yogi

A change I want to make (be specific):

Reasons why I want to make this change:

Steps I plan to take to make this happen:

People who can help, support, or inspire me:

And what they can do to help:

Obstacles that may interfere with my progress:

And ways to overcome these obstacles:

Consequences of not making this change:
(What will my life be like if I do not make this change?)

Rewards for making this change:
(What will my life be like if I DO make this change?)

CHANGES I WANT TO SEE IN THE WORLD

WAYS I CAN CHANGE MYSELF

THEME 5: LETTING GO

Goals:

1. Identify negative attachments, behaviors, and beliefs.
2. Practice the process of letting go.
3. Practice identifying and setting goals.

Materials:

Copies of "Letting Go" worksheet, lyrics to "Let It Be" by the Beatles, writing utensils, guitar/piano
Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/beatles/letitbe.html>

Instructions:

1. Start with color meditation (page 43).
2. Hand out song lyrics to "Let It Be." *To introduce today's theme of letting go, let's play a song together. You are welcome to sing along with me, and as we go through the song, pay attention to any feelings or thoughts that come up.*
3. Play "Let It Be," and then facilitate discussion and lyric analysis of the song.
 - What does it mean to "let it be?"
 - What are some significant lyrics in the song?
 - How is "let it be" different from "let go?"
 - How is "let it be" similar to "let go?"
 - What are some things you need to let be or let go of?
4. Hand out "Letting Go" worksheet. *Letting things be or letting things go is not easy, and is a process that is part of the human experience. Though letting go may seem passive, it often requires a lot of strength, and can be difficult. Letting things be or letting go often involves the things we worry about but don't have control over, attachments, our behaviors and beliefs, and our ability to forgive. Take your time with this worksheet, and try to identify at least a few things per box. In order to let go of something we first need to be aware of what we need to let go of, and this is to help you identify the different aspects of letting go. Also, know that one way to let go is to write it down and let it go out of your head and onto a piece of paper.*
5. Allow clients to share thoughts they wrote down. *Another way to let something go is to externalize it from yourself by saying it out loud and sharing it with someone. Also, when we talk about something we want to let go of, we are letting it go with words, and when we admit and identify our attachments, they may have less of a hold on us.*
6. Review tools in session used for letting go: meditation, music, singing, writing, sharing with peers, peer support.
7. End with playing "Let It Be" again, or Images of Hope meditation (page 42).

Other suggestions and options:

- Discuss how music can help in the letting go process.
- Discuss how music can refocus attention from negative attachments.

LETTING GO

Things I feel attached to:	I could improve my well-being by letting go of:
----------------------------	---

Behaviors I want to let go of, or actions I want to stop doing:	Situations I worry about but don't have control over:
---	---

Beliefs about myself I DO NOT want to believe anymore:	Beliefs I want to believe about myself:
--	---

I would like to forgive myself for:	I would like to acknowledge myself for:
-------------------------------------	---

THEME 6: HOPE

Goals:

1. Positive outlook of the future.
2. Self-reflection on worldview and goals.
3. Increase feelings of hopefulness and confidence.

Materials:

Copies of handouts, lyrics to “One Day” by Matisyahu, writing utensils

Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/matisyahu/oneday.html>

Instructions:

1. Start with Images of Hope meditation (page 42). Continue playing relaxing music and hand out “I Find Hope In...” worksheet for clients to complete after meditation. *Our theme for today is hope. Take your time with this worksheet, and try to think of at least a few things per category. Keep your responses simple, and specific to you.*
2. Allow clients to share their responses.
3. *Now that we’ve taken some time to look at our individual relationships to the theme of hope, we are going to also look at hope from a larger, more collective perspective. I’m going to play a song that reflects this, and we will talk about the meaning of this song after it is done.*
4. Hand out song lyrics and play “One Day” by Matisyahu.
5. Facilitate lyric analysis of the song.
 - *What is this songwriter hoping for? Do you agree?*
 - *What lyrics seem meaningful to you?*
 - *How does this song make you feel? What does it make you think of?*
6. Hand out “Reflections” worksheet. *There are seven questions on this worksheet to further reflect on the themes of the song. After this, we will have one more short creative writing exercise that goes along with this.*
7. Hand out “One Day” songwriting worksheet. *Using the ideas we talked about today, you will be writing your own version of the song. Use your ideas from the reflections worksheet for your songwriting material.*
8. Allow clients to share songs, and review the concept of hope.

Other suggestions and options:

- Further discuss the role hope plays in recovery, healing, or mental health.
- Discuss the way hope may fluctuate throughout life.
- Address the potential of hope being a difficult theme for some clients.
- With limited time, just one of the worksheets may be used.
- With additional time, a group song on hope may be written.

I FIND HOPE IN...

Things I see:

Places I've been:

People I've met:

Sounds I hear:

REFLECTIONS

1. Something I do that helps me relax: _____

2. One thing I am grateful for: _____

3. One thing I wish or hope for: _____

and why: _____

4. Things in the world that need to change: _____

5. How I wish people would treat each other: _____

6. What I hope the world will look like one day: _____

7. What I hope my life will be like one day: _____

ONE DAY

rewritten by: _____

Sometimes I _____
and I thank _____
Then I pray _____
cause _____

Sometimes _____,
But I never let it get me down, so when negativity surrounds,
I know _____

Because all my life I've been _____
I've been praying for, for _____ to say
That we don't want _____ no more
There will be no more _____ and _____

One day

It's not about _____ or _____
Because _____

One day this all will change, treat people _____
Stop with the _____, down with the _____
One day we'll all be _____, and _____
Singing songs of _____

One day

THEME 7: IMAGERY & IMAGINATION

Goals:

1. Increase mindfulness and focus.
2. Increase creative thinking, writing, and expression.
3. Explore the effect of music on imagination and thought process.

Materials:

Copies of handout, writing utensils, blank art paper, drawing supplies, recording of Iron Man 3 theme song, other music selections

Instructions:

1. Start with a discussion of the use of music in movies. Ask clients to brainstorm ideas of how and why music is an important element in film.
2. Play recording of Iron Man 3 theme song, and have clients guess what kind of movie it sounds like, and what movie it is from.
3. Hand out Music and Movies worksheet. *This is an example of a simple way to describe a movie with the basic elements: title, characters, setting, and plot summary. I'm going to play another piece of music, and I would like you to use your imagination and create an idea of a movie that this music could be in. So, as the music is playing, imagine you are sitting in a movie theater and watching a movie on a big screen. On the bottom portion of your worksheet you will create your own movie with a title and characters, and as the music plays, write down a plot summary of what is happening in this movie you are watching. Allow your imagination to flow with the music, and try to keep writing as the music is playing. I'll let you know what the title of the piece is after the song is over so I don't influence your process.*
 - Suggested music: "Milan" by Karsh Kale
4. Have clients share plot summaries and compare and contrast themes.
5. *We are going to do two more exercises using our imagination and music. In this second exercise, instead of writing, we will be drawing. I'm going to play another piece of music, and I would like you to create a visual representation of the music. You may draw a picture, or it may be abstract. Pay attention to colors, shapes, and images that come to mind, and try to get that down on your piece of paper as you listen to the music.*
6. Hand out blank paper and drawing materials.
 - Suggested music: "Your Hand in Mine" by Explosions in the Sky
"Symphony No. 6 in F Major, Op. 68: 1st Movement" by Beethoven
7. Have clients share drawings, compare and contrast themes.
8. *In our last exercise, we will be not be writing or drawing, but just sitting with our imaginations and paying attention to our thought process and images that come to mind. You may think of this as a meditation, where you are observing your thoughts as they come. First, make sure you are sitting comfortably, and adjust your body in your chair so your muscles are relaxed. Next, take a deep breath in through your nose, and as you exhale, gently close your eyes. Again, as the music plays just observe your thoughts, and pay attention to where the music takes you.*

- Suggested music: "Wonder" by Lifescapes
- "As Long As You Are Near Me" by Lifescapes
- 9. Allow clients to share imagery experiences.
- 10. Discuss sequence of exercises going from concrete to abstract- writing, drawing, and imaging. Discuss clients' thoughts on music's influence on experiences.

Other suggestions and options:

- Discuss each client's preferred exercise. Which was easiest? Most difficult?
- Discuss sequence of exercises from concrete to abstract.
- Discuss clients' reactions to music selections.
- Do not tell the clients the title of the music selections ahead of time as to not influence their process.
- Have clients title their drawings before sharing.
- Inform clients of the length of each piece of music so they can pace themselves.
- Use music selections suitable for population and use music you are familiar with.

MUSIC & MOVIES

Title: Iron Man 3

Characters:

Tony Stark
Pepper Potts
Colonel James Rhodes
Aldrich Killian
Happy Hogan
The Mandarin

Setting:

Modern day, in Malibu, California.

Plot summary: Tony Stark wrestles with inner demons while contending with monsters of his own creation. Unable to sleep, he throws himself into his work with such intensity that it begins to take a heavy toll on both his mental health and his relationship with Pepper Potts. Tony has only started to appreciate the gravity of his problems when an enigmatic terrorist named the Mandarin hijacks the airwaves and threatens to bring America to its knees with a painful series of "lessons" that even President Ellis won't be able to ignore. When Tony's former security guard Happy Hogan is badly injured in an explosion caused by one of the Mandarin's agents, Tony issues a public threat that results in his home being completely destroyed in a devastating attack, leaving him to face his enemy with only one badly damaged prototype suit. Fortunately, Tony isn't on his own, and with the help of Colonel James Rhodes and a young boy named Harley, he pieces together the mystery of the Mandarin.
(Excerpt from <http://www.nytimes.com/movies/movie/456524/Iron-Man-3/overview>)

Title:

Characters:

Setting:

Plot summary:

THEME 8: BALANCE

Goals:

1. Find positive meaning in difficult circumstances.
2. Decrease black and white thinking.
3. Increase awareness of healthy living skills.

Materials:

Copies of "Balance" worksheet, lyrics to "Life is Wonderful" by Jason Mraz, lyrics to "Thank U" by Alanis Morissette, writing utensils, guitar

Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/jasonmraz/lifeiswonderful.html>
<http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/alanismorissette/thanku.html>

Instructions:

1. *Our theme for today is balance, and how it is important to be aware that both challenges and blessings may exist in our lives at the same time. Having a balanced perspective can help us live a balanced life. We are going to listen to a couple of songs that convey this message, and then see how we can apply this theme to our lives.*
2. Hand out lyrics to "Life is Wonderful" by Jason Mraz. Play live or recording.
3. Facilitate lyric analysis of song.
 - *Do you agree that life is wonderful?*
 - *What lyrics seemed significant to you?*
 - *What is the message of this song?*
 - *How does the theme of balance relate to this song?*
4. Hand out "Thank U" lyrics by Alanis Morissette. Play live or recording.
5. Facilitate lyric analysis of song.
 - *What do you think this song is about?*
 - *Why does she thank "negative" things in the chorus?*
 - *Do you relate to this song in any way?*
 - *What lyrics stand out to you?*
 - *What does this song have to do with balance?*
6. Hand out "Balance" worksheet for clients to complete.
7. Facilitate group discussion on personal challenges and blessings.
8. Facilitate group discussion on a balanced perspective on life and a balanced lifestyle.

Other suggestions and options:

- Discuss presence of both blessings and challenges, and our tendency to focus on one or the other.
- Discuss how a blessing may arise from a challenge.

BALANCE

The blessings in my life now:

The challenges in my life now:

Please describe what a healthy and balanced life looks like to you:

THEME 9: GRATITUDE

Goals:

1. Increase feelings of gratitude and awareness of strengths and resources.
2. Increase mindfulness.
3. Encourage positive self-expression.

Materials:

Copies of "Gratitude Lists" worksheet, lyrics to "Thank You" by the Makepeace Brothers, writing utensils, guitar

Lyrics may be found here: <http://makepeacebrothers.bandcamp.com/track/thank-you>

Instructions:

1. *Our theme for today is gratitude. In difficult times, gratitude may be a challenge. However, it is the times when it is difficult to be grateful that we need gratitude the most. Music can often remind us to be grateful and remind us what we are grateful for. Today, we will be using music and creative exercises to expand our feelings of gratitude.*
2. Hand out "Gratitude" worksheet. *Let's start by brainstorming things we are grateful for right now. This worksheet is meant to help you think of ideas using short gratitude lists. Take your time and don't feel like you have to complete the entire thing right now. Skip around to different categories and first do what comes easiest to you. I'm going to play a song while you are working on it, and if you need ideas, listen to the lyrics of the song.*
3. Play recording of "Thank You" by the Makepeace Brothers while clients complete worksheet.
4. After the song is over, have clients take a break from the worksheet and share what they have so far.
5. Hand out song lyrics to "Thank You" by the Makepeace Brothers and facilitate a sing along.
6. *Now you will have more time to complete your gratitude worksheet. I'll be playing more songs about gratitude while we do this. If you finish your lists, try adding more things to it.*

Suggested songs about gratitude:

- "What A Wonderful World" by Louis Armstrong
 - "Thank You" by Dido
 - "Thank You" by Boyz II Men
 - "Gratitude" by Paul McCartney
 - "Thank You" by The Descendents
7. Facilitate discussion on gratitude and have clients share additional ideas.

Other suggestions and options:

- Have each client write their own verse to "Thank You" and create group song.
- Lyric analysis of the other suggested songs.
- Discuss gratitude as a coping skill, and use of music to increase gratitude.
- Begin or end session with a meditation focused on feeling gratitude.

GRATITUDE LISTS

What are 5 material things you are grateful for?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are 5 abilities you are grateful to have?

- 1.*
- 2.*
- 3.*
- 4.*
- 5.*

NAME 5 PEOPLE YOU ARE HAPPY TO KNOW, AND WHY.

- 1.**
- 2.**
- 3.**
- 4.**
- 5.**

What are 5 character traits you like about yourself?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What are 5 challenging experiences you are grateful for, and what did you learn?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

What opportunities are you fortunate to have?

- 1.**
- 2.**
- 3.**
- 4.**
- 5.**

Look around you. Be present. What are 5 things you can appreciate in this moment?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

THEME 10: BEAUTY & SELF-ESTEEM

Goals:

1. Increase self-esteem and encourage positive self-image.
2. Increase self-awareness, motivation, and mood.
3. Encourage positive self-expression.

Materials:

Copies of handouts, lyrics to “I Am Not My Hair” by India Arie, writing utensils, guitar
Lyrics may be found here: <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/indiaarie/iamnotmyhair.html>

Instructions:

1. *Today we will be listening to music that relates to self-esteem and the idea of beauty, and reflecting on these themes together. Let's start by listening to a song called “I Am Not My Hair” by India Arie.* (Note: There are two recorded version of the songs. There is a remix featuring Akon that may be more desirable for adolescents or males).
2. Hand out song lyrics and play or listen to song together.
3. Facilitate lyric analysis and discussion of themes.
4. Hand out “I Am Not My Hair Chorus Rewrite” worksheet and have clients write their own version of the chorus, and share with the group.
5. Present other songs with a similar theme. Suggestions:
 - “Beautiful” by Christina Aguilera
 - “Beautiful” by Eminem (clean version available on iTunes)
 - “Try” by Colbie Caillat
6. Discuss common themes of songs, and emotional reactions to songs.
7. Hand out “What Makes You Beautiful?” worksheet. *Take some time with this worksheet to reflect on different aspects of yourself that make you a beautiful person. Try to think of a few things per category.* Play songs again while clients are completing worksheet, or play relaxing instrumental music.
8. Allow clients to share responses. Encourage peer support.

Other suggestions and options:

- Be aware of possible shame reactions manifesting as resistance.
- Take the pressure off those who are having a difficult time by encouraging simple responses or asking peers for suggestions.
- Further discuss self-esteem and self-love. Reflect on the quote, “Love says: I've seen the ugly part of you and I'm staying.”

I AM NOT MY HAIR CHORUS REWRITE

I am not my _____ I am not my _____

I am not my _____, no no

I am not _____ I am not _____

I am a _____

I am not my _____ I am not my _____

I am not my _____, no no

I am not _____ I am not _____

I am a _____

What makes you beautiful?

PHYSICAL

(Please list the physical traits you like about yourself)

CHARACTER

(Please list your positive character or personality traits)

ACTION

(Please list the things you do that make you a good person)

STRENGTHS

(Please list your talents, strengths, and unique qualities)

PART 3: MEDITATIONS

These meditations may be used to open or close a session. Each meditation is short, but may be modified to be longer depending on the needs and goals of the clients.

Prior to the meditations, try to create a cool and comfortable environment with low lighting and ample space between clients.

During the meditation, observe clients' affect and provide grounding prompts when necessary (example: feel your feet on the ground, feel your body in your chair).

Modify the meditation scripts as necessary, and try to find your own voice while speaking slowly, clearly, and steadily.

Suggested albums for meditation music:

Koyasan Reiki Sound Healing by Deuter
For a Quiet Evening
For a Rainy Day
Music to Relax by the Arcangelos Chamber Ensemble
Musical Massage Inside by Sylvia Nakkach
Sacred Healing Waters by Sayama
Sunset Meditation by Tony Sandate
Quiet Night by Lifescapes

Script #1: Favorite Song Meditation

(No background music)

Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, relax into your chair and allow your body to be comfortable.

Take another deep breath in. As you exhale, gently close your eyes. If closing your eyes makes you uncomfortable, just relax your gaze and look down.

Take a few moments to focus on your breathing, allowing your body to breathe as it wants to.

With your body and mind relaxed, take a moment to recall one of your favorite songs. This may be a song that makes you happy, is associated with a good memory, or one of your all time favorite songs. It may be hard to choose just one, but try to just stick with one for now.

With this song in mind, allow it to play in your mind. You may be able to hear the recording of it, or you may silently sing it to yourself in your mind. You may be able to play the entire song for yourself, or just repeat part of it. Either way, keep your focus on it for the next few minutes, and allow yourself to be with this song.

(Allow 1-3 minutes of silence)

Now, slowly turn down the volume of the song and allow it to drift to the back of your mind. Know that you can recall it anytime you wish. We all have a library of music in our minds, and sometimes just thinking of music we like, and playing it to ourselves, can bring a similar experience of actually hearing the song.

Continue to keep your eyes closed and bring your attention back to your breath.

Take a deep breath in, and let your air out of your mouth.

Take another deep breath in, and as you exhale, gently open your eyes.

Post-meditation discussion:

Discuss songs that came to mind.

Have clients share songs and their experience.

Acknowledge any frustrations as being normal.

Introduce the concept of “concentration meditation,” which is a meditation technique where the mind focuses on one thing. This can be an easy coping skill for stress and anxiety.

Script #2: Images of Hope

(Play soft instrumental background music)

Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, relax into your chair and allow your body to be comfortable.

Take another deep breath in. As you exhale, gently close your eyes. If closing your eyes makes you uncomfortable, just relax your gaze and look down.

Take a few moments to focus on your breathing, allowing your body to breathe as it wants to.

With your body and mind relaxed, take a moment to bring to mind the idea of HOPE. Allow the idea of hope to present itself as an image in your mind. This image may occur as a visual image, a feeling in your body, or a thought. The image may be an object, a place, a person, or a memory. However it shows up, let hope be represented as an image for you.

(Pause)

When you have your image of hope, try your best to keep your mind focused on it. For the next few minutes I am going to stop talking. Try to stay with your image as best as you can, and observe your experience of it. If your mind wanders, simply bring it back to the thought of hope.

(Pause 2-3 minutes)

Stay with your image of hope for just another moment and then let it slowly drift to the back of your mind. Know that you can recall it anytime you wish.

Continue to keep your eyes closed and bring your attention back to your breath. Place your hand on your chest and feel your body breathe.

Take a deep breath in, and let your air out of your mouth.

Take another deep breath in, and as you exhale gently open your eyes.

Post-meditation discussion:

Discuss images that came to mind.

Have clients share their experience.

Acknowledge any frustrations as being normal.

Script #3: Color

(Play soft instrumental background music)

Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, relax into your chair and allow your body to be comfortable.

Take another deep breath in. As you exhale, gently close your eyes. If closing your eyes makes you uncomfortable, just relax your gaze and look down.

Take a few moments to focus on your breathing, allowing your body to breathe as it wants to.

With your body and mind relaxed, imagine that a soft light is shining on the top of your head. Take a moment to choose what color you would like this light to be, and choose one that feels good to you.

Let the light slowly drift down your shoulders, down your arms, feel it on your fingertips.

Let the light move down towards your legs, down to your feet, and feel both the light on your feet and your feet grounded on the earth.

Allow yourself to sit with this light for a few minutes. Let it be healing for you.

(Pause 1-3 minutes)

Keeping your eyes closed, slowly bring your awareness to the music that is playing and let the light slowly fade away.

Now bring your attention to your breath and let's take a deep breath in, and let it out.

Take another deep breath in and when you exhale you may slowly open your eyes.

Post-meditation discussion:

Allow clients to share the color of their light and what that color means to them.

Discuss any physical experiences that came with the meditation.

Discuss influences of the music on the meditation experience.

Acknowledge any frustrations as being normal.

Script #4: Positive Change

(Play soft instrumental background music)

Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, relax into your chair and allow your body to be comfortable.

Take another deep breath in. As you exhale, gently close your eyes. If closing your eyes makes you uncomfortable, just relax your gaze and look down.

Take a few moments to focus on your breathing, allowing your body to breathe as it wants to.

Sitting in this relaxed state, think of a positive change you would like to make in your life. This could be a goal, something you are working on now, or something you want to let go of. Think of a positive change that would be good for you.

Now, using your imagination, imagine that this change has already happened. It's not necessary right now to be concerned with how this happened or what you had to do. Just use your imagination and visualize yourself as if this change has already happened. What are you doing? What are you wearing? How does life feel now that this change has been made?

Sit with this idea for just a couple of minutes and allow yourself to further explore what your life looks like with this positive change. Pay attention to the details and the feelings.

(Pause 1-3 minutes)

Keeping your eyes closed, slowly bring your awareness to the music that is playing and let your images slowly drift to the back of your mind.

Now bring your attention to your breath and let's take a deep breath in, and let it out. Place your hand on your chest and feel your body take a few breaths.

Take another deep breath in and when you exhale you may slowly open your eyes.

Post-meditation discussion:

Allow clients to share the positive change they want to make.

Discuss images, feelings, and experiences that came with the meditation.

Discuss influences of the music on the meditation experience, if any.

Acknowledge any frustrations as being normal.

Script #5: Your Ideal Day

(Play soft instrumental background music)

Take a deep breath in. As you exhale, relax into your chair and allow your body to be comfortable.

Take another deep breath in. As you exhale, gently close your eyes. If closing your eyes makes you uncomfortable, just relax your gaze and look down.

Take a few moments to focus on your breathing, allowing your body to breathe as it wants to.

With your body and mind relaxed, imagine that you are waking up in the morning from a restful sleep in very comfortable bed. You slowly sit up and put your feet on the ground. On this day, you have been granted unlimited resources. You have access to all the money and transportation you wish and you may see anyone you want.

As you get up from your bed, every choice you make is yours. Allow yourself to live your ideal day during this meditation and go on a journey in your mind that will be chosen by you. I'm going to stop talking for a while and let you live this ideal day, starting now.

(Pause 2-5 minutes)

Keeping your eyes closed, slowly bring your awareness to the music that is playing and let your images slowly drift to the back of your mind.

Now bring your attention to your breath and let's take a deep breath in, and let it out. Place your hand on your chest and feel your body take a few breaths.

Please take another deep breath in and when you exhale you may slowly open your eyes.

Post-meditation discussion:

Allow clients to share their experience, the choices they made, and their journey.

Discuss images and feelings that came with the meditation.

Discuss influences of the music on the meditation experience, if any.

Acknowledge any frustrations as being normal.

SAMPLE 8-WEEK MUSIC THERAPY CURRICULUM

Month 1: Self-Awareness Through Music				
Week	Theme/Intervention	Music	Worksheet/Handout	Discussion
1	Balance	"Life is Wonderful" by Jason Mraz	Music Preference Songs of Life Balance	What does your music preference say about you? What are the challenges and blessings in your life right now?
2	Identity	Various samples	Elements of Music My Life As A Song	How do the elements of music relate to your personality?
3	Times Like These	"Times Like These" by Foo Fighters	Times Like These lyrics and Songwriting Worksheet	How would you describe yourself in song lyrics? What are you learning in life right now?
4	Imagery & Imagination	Various samples	Music and Movies	How does music affect our thoughts and perceptions?

Month 2: Music as a Coping Skill and Life Skill				
Week	Theme/Intervention	Music	Worksheet/Handout	Discussion
5	Letting Go	"Let It Be" by The Beatles	Letting Go	How can music play a part in the letting go process?
6	Hope	"One Day" by Matisyahu	I Find Hope In... Reflections One Day Songwriting	Where do you find hope? What do you hope your life will look like 5 years from now?
7	Coping with Change	"Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac	Change worksheet	How can music be a positive coping skill for change?
8	Gratitude	"Thank You" by The Makepeace Brothers	Gratitude	What are you grateful for? How can music remind us to be grateful?

This sample curriculum is designed to lead the client first through self-exploration practices, and then end with using music as coping skill and life skill. This allows a client to build self-awareness in order to identify personal ways to use music as a therapeutic tool for personal growth. This curriculum also begins and ends with identifying blessings and sources of gratitude in order to gauge changes in perception, and to encompass a feeling of hope in the overall process.

CREATE YOUR OWN MUSIC THERAPY CURRICULUM

Week	Theme/Intervention	Music	Worksheet/Handout	Discussion
1				
2				
3				
4				

Week	Theme/Intervention	Music	Worksheet/Handout	Discussion
5				
6				
7				
8				

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Ami Kunimura, MT-BC is a board certified music therapist and has been practicing music therapy with individuals and groups since 2006 in private, inpatient, and out-patient settings. Her clinical experience includes working in treatment and recovery for mental health disorders, trauma, eating disorders, addiction, stroke, cancer, and developmental disabilities.

Ami runs a private practice in Southern California called the Harmony Experience, providing music therapy services for mental health care to individuals, groups, and treatment centers. Ami is also the founder of the Harmony Resource, a website providing music therapy resources to mental health professionals.

Ami received a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Loyola Marymount University and completed her studies in Music Therapy at Chapman University. Ami has also received certifications in Neurologic Music Therapy at Colorado State University, Yoga Education from Yoga Vidya Gurukul in Nasik, India, and in first and second degree Reiki from the International Center for Reiki Training in Pasadena, California. Ami has been playing guitar for over 14 years with experience in songwriting, performance, and recording.

Ami (pronounced ah-me) was born and raised in Hawaii and currently resides in the South Bay of Los Angeles. She has travelled twice around the world, met some of her greatest heroes, and continues to view life as an adventure through love, learning, and connection. Music is her passion, peace is her mission.

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