The Sound of Recovery: CBT based Music Therapy

Chris Trimmer & Richard Tyo
Summary

● Story of mental health music group

● Development & highlights of CBT-based music group therapy

● Future directions
Group Activity #1
‘Let’s play together’
Our Story

● Mandate from our agency (FCMHAS)
  ○ ‘hard-to-reach populations’
  ○ ‘whitecoats’

● Prior experience with music as Crisis Workers
  ○ on the phone, in-person
  ○ to build rapport
  ○ as coping strategy
Our Story

● Who we are
  ○ Rich & Chris

● Principles
  ○ not professional musicians, not music therapists
  ○ geared to all skill levels
  ○ improvisation
  ○ universality of music
  ○ positive psychology
Locations

● In From the Cold (local shelter)

● Lyons St. (Dual Diagnosis residential program)

● Making Connections (FCMHAS open group)

● Peers of the Roundtable (M.H. drop-in centre)
Core Principles

● We can talk about music as a metaphor for mental health
  ○ strengthen identity
  ○ reduce stigma

● Psycho-education
Core Principles

● Skill building
  ○ communication
  ○ focus/attention
  ○ using music to influence mood

● Social cohesion

● Song writing
  ○ collaboration, writing lyrics
‘I’m Free’

I’m free // Headin’ to the East coast
Watch the breeze lift the fog

Blue sky // Sunshine fallin’
Just me and the dog

**Chorus:**
I’m free // Leaving my worries
I’m free // Bound for a good time
I’m free // Takin’ a journey
Trying to leave it all behind

Just me // Headin’ top the West coast
Redwoods reach for the sky

Snow peaks // Mountaintops calling
Looking for a new place to fly
‘Havin’ Fun in the Wintertime’

Snow on the trees, up to my knees
Skating with my friends in the big city
Steam on the water, can’t make it hotter
Build a snow castle with me and my daughter

Havin’ fun in the winter time
Cold weather is not on my mind

Walk down the street, snow at my feet
Spreading good cheer to people we greet
Icicles on trees, cold winter breeze
Wood fire smoke, hot chocolate please

Chorus

Bridge: These are the things we love about winter/ to top it all off we get Christmas dinner!
Integrating CBT

- A conversation with Dr. Naeem, Crisis Psychiatrist
  - “Writing songs with CBT concepts”
  - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
  - Literature review
CBT-based Music Group Therapy

- Clients with symptoms of depression and anxiety
  - Focusing on psycho-education, symptom management, skill building

- 9-week CBT-based music group (homework, handouts)
  - Mental Health, Breathing, Thinking, Emotions, Songwriting, Behaviour Activation, Problem Solving
Methodology

Design
● RCT design (30 clients in intervention and 30 in TAU)

Measures
● Psychopathology
  ○ Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation-Outcome Measure (CORE-OM), Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS)
● Functioning
  ○ Who Disability Assessment Schedule 2.0 (WHODAS 2.0)
● Outcomes will be measured at baseline and at the end of treatment
Structure

1. Intro
2. Depression/Anxiety
3. Breathing
4. Thinking
5. Emotions
6. Songwriting
7. Behavioural Activation
8. Problem Solving
9. Review/Field Trip

- Metaphor
- Playing music
- Listening
- Behavioural Experiment
- Song-writing
- Thought Record
- Homework
- Self-help CBT handout
Structure

1. Intro
2. Depression/Anxiety
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Group Activity #2
‘I’m not a musician’
(Behavioural Experiment)
Structure

1. Intro
2. Depression/Anxiety
3. Breathing
4. Thinking
5. Emotions
6. Songwriting
7. Behavioural Activation
8. Problem Solving
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- Metaphor
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Metaphor

Drums

Bass

Vocals

Guitar

Keyboard

Thoughts

Physiology

Environment

Emotions

Behaviours
Structure

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- Metaphor
- **Playing music**
- Listening
- Behavioural Experiment
- Song-writing
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Playing Music

- Using the harmonica to teach breathing skills
  - learning accessible music instrument
  - recognizing sounds of different types of breathing
  - intertwining with five-part model
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Thought Record

**Week 2 Homework - Music Activity Record**

At one point during the day, please take a couple minutes to document your overall mood & level of anxiety. If your mood is less than a 6, or your anxiety level is greater than 6, please ‘prescribe’ yourself a song that may help improve your mood or reduce your anxiety.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>What is my mood? (1-10; if less than 6 continue)</th>
<th>What is my anxiety level? (1-10; if greater than 6 continue)</th>
<th>Song that you prescribed yourself</th>
<th>Persistent thoughts contributing to low mood/high anxiety</th>
<th>What was the trigger (contributing to low mood/high anxiety)?</th>
<th>What else helped improve your mood/lessen your anxiety?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday (08/01) Time:</td>
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<td>Saturday (08/02) Time:</td>
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<td>Sunday (08/03) Time:</td>
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</table>
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1. Intro
2. Depression/Anxiety
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- **Song-writing**
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Song-writing

- The ‘Again’ song
  - groups of two
  - identify persistent negative thought & possible cause
  - partner identifies balanced thought
  - 12-bar blues followed by harmonica solo
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Music Listening

- Recognizing emotions in music
  - Examples of basic emotions
    - Fear - Stravinsky’s Rite of Spring
  - Incongruent lyrics/emotions
  - Parallel with verbal emotion recognition
  - Extending to producing musical emotions
    - Guitar
Structure

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● Metaphor
● Playing music
● Listening
● Behavioural Experiment
● Song-writing
● Thought Record
● Homework
● Self-help CBT handout
Week 7 - Song - ‘The Less You Do’ (to the tune of Bob Dylan’s ‘Like a Rolling Stone’)

The less you do, the worse you feel
The worse you feel, the less you’re bound to do
It’s a vicious cycle
Let’s get out
Start to do things that are relaxing to you

Increase activities that inspire you
And enhance your point of view

Start small, get up and go
Break it into attainable goals
Make a list of activities
And build into it day to day

*Chorus:*
It feels good
It feels good
To be journaling thoughts
And to go for a walk
Or sit down and talk

*Rewrite:*
It feels good
It feels good
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Homework

Are you in tune?

(E)xperience
(B)elonging
(G)uidance
(A)wareness
(E)xistence
(D)irection
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GUITAR STRING BLUES

Verse 1:

If a guitar string snaps or goes out of tune
What are you gonna do?
Better figure out what it is you’ll be tending to

Chorus:

No one does it on their own
use the strengths that you know
focus on the task at hand
come up with a concrete plan

Verse 2:

First things first, take a minute collect yourself
Is there family, a friend, a crisis line, or someone else?
Do something, don’t just put it on the shelf

Chorus

No one does it on their own
use the strengths that you know
focus on the task at hand
come up with a concrete plan
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- Framework for dealing w/ thoughts + emotions
- Ways to look at unhelpful thought patterns
- Breathing
- Songs
- Music helped (cohesion)
  - Takes direct focus away
- Music is a get-away
  - Not medical focus
  - Lets you walk away fulfilled
- Music brings 'soul' to the process
- More options to cope
- Natural music/creative skills
- Genuine
- Positive to go through recovery journey
- Less focus on mental illness
- Sense of spirituality connected to outlet
- Music is inside of us all
Moving Forward

● Continuing research to establish evidence-based practice

● Expanding populations of clients
  ○ Providence Care MHS, Hotel Dieu Hospital, Limestone School Board

● Building a foundation to grow
  ○ Ontario Arts Council
Thanks to...

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Questions?