

# **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

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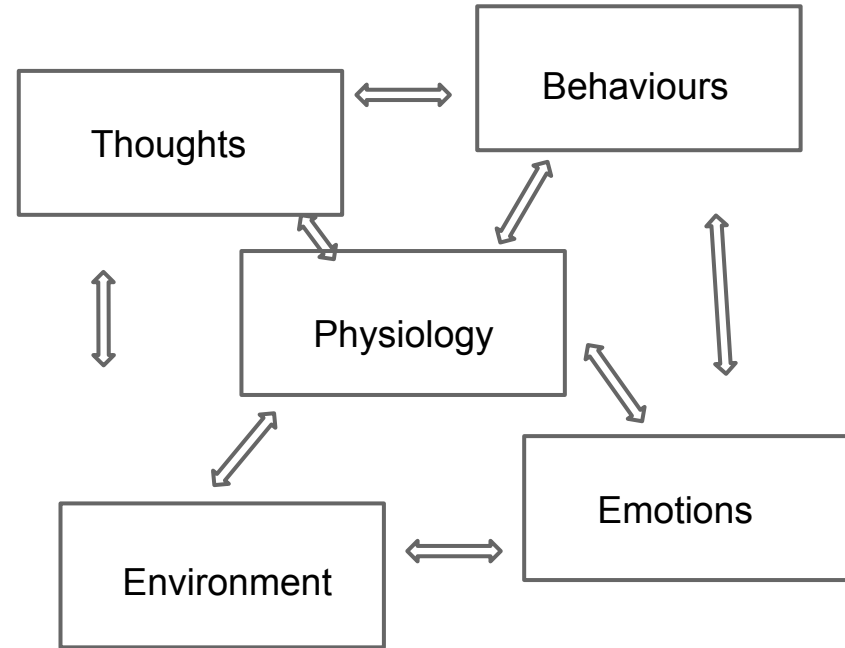
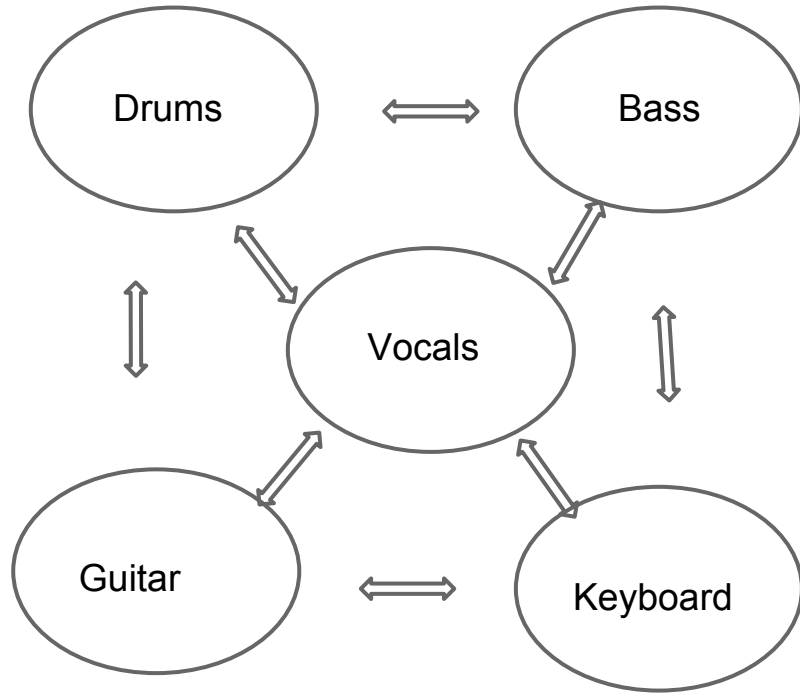
**Group Activity #2**  
**‘I’m not a musician’**  
**(Behavioural Experiment)**



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# Metaphor



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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.

| Date                      | What is my mood?<br>(1-10; if less than 6 continue) | What is my anxiety level?<br>(1-10; if greater than 6 continue) | Song that you prescribed yourself | Persistent thoughts contributing to low mood/high anxiety | What was the trigger<br>(contributing to low mood/high anxiety?) | What else helped improve your mood/lessen your anxiety? |
|---------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Friday (08/01)<br>Time:   |   |   |                                   |   |  |   |
| Saturday (08/02)<br>Time: |   |   |                                   |   |  |   |
| Sunday (08/03)<br>Time:   |   |   |                                   |   |  |   |

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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

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## 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



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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 @ 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...



- Stacey Dowling, Tania Laverty, Crisis & Transitional Case Management teams

**Questions?**