Ways to use music in therapy

- **Emotional expression**: Music can reflect and express a client's feelings/situation
  - Making music that expressed client's mood
  - Identification with someone else who experiences that feeling
  - Client can find a song that reflects their situation to help express it to counselor
    - Good for less verbal clients, male clients
    - Emotional release/catharsis – reflect and expands client's emotion
    - "Mood CDs" activity

- **Rapport building**: Discussing music taste to establish rapport
  - Music taste as an expression of identity and inquiring about their music interests can be a way to get to know your clients
  - Especially with students with extreme tastes
  - Ok for therapist to be a real person and have real tastes!

- **Sensory cues for memory**
  - Music flashbulb memories?
  - Past associations with songs or artists – transport them emotionally to a past state
    - Comforting memories with comforting people
    - Concert experiences
    - Background music during pivotal points in their life?
    - Soundtrack for a time in their life

- **Music as form of narrative therapy** – songs can represent the victim and journey to survivor narrative
  - Music as metaphor – symbols/handy carrying case for cognitively-complex ideas or complicated emotions
  - Instillation of hope through identification with people at a different stage of change
  - "I will Survive"
  - "Same old Song, but different" Activity
  - "Musical Chronology” activity

- **Music taste as identity**
  - Goth, emo, punk, country
  - T-shirts
  - Juggalo culture
  - DMB stickers on cars
  - Phish tours

- **Music can create emotional reactions**
  - Shapes mood
  - Changes energy
    - Motivates workouts, studying, writing, etc.
  - Music as behavioral activation
  - Accessing a different feeling through listening to music – Happy, sad, angry, energetic, etc.
  - Om and other Mantras
• **Music artists as role models** - the story of their life and stories behind their song can provide psycho-education and normalization
  o Pete Wentz, Fall out boy; Mary J Blige ([www.halfofus.com](http://www.halfofus.com))
  o Ad Rose, Brian Wilson, Syd Barrett, Kurt Cobain, Britney Spears

• **Coping strategies**
  o Relaxation
  o Spa music
  o Safe space visualization through music
  o Dwelling and marinating with prescribed writing assignment to make it productive
  o Sharing music to connect to other people

• **Music to promote identity development**
  o “Who am I?”
  o Finding a community- self in relation to others
  o Exploring multifaceted identities
  o Self awareness

• **Music for mastery**
  o Owning knowledge of one’s musical taste
  o Creating music
  o Writing lyrics
  o Receiving validation for musical expression

• **Sharing music to connect to other people**
  o Friend groups bonded my musical tastes
  o Concerts
  o Drum circles

• **Diagnostics**
  o Implications of music obsession
  o Complete dislike of music
  o Amusicality
  o Leader vs. follower
  • Strong preferences/individuality vs. listen to whatever friends listen to