

Coping Skills

Music

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PURPOSE OF GROUP: to increase coping skills
to decrease symptoms of anxiety

MATERIALS NEEDED: pens/pencils for each group member
piece of paper for each group member
*access to music is needed (can use music on phone)

1.

-Facilitator opens group by introducing **music** as a potential coping tool for anxiety, depression, anger, etc.

-Music can be a powerful relaxation tool, and it has the ability to energize you & change your mood.

-Writing music, listening to music, or playing an instrument can be cathartic & therapeutic.

-Music allows you to get in touch with your feelings & **express complicated emotions**

-Sometimes, we can relate to the lyrics of songs & find comfort in them

-Music can help you process & reflect on the things that have happened to you in the past

-Music can also serve as a helpful distraction from things that trigger your anxiety.

-For example, many people listen to music in the car to distract themselves from heavy traffic & road rage!

-When you are experiencing negative emotions, it is best to listen to “mood-incongruent” music.

-For example, if you’re feeling depressed, listen to a song that makes you happy. If you’re feeling stressed, listen to a song that relaxes you

1a. You can ask group members the following questions:

-Why do you think music is so important to so many people?

-What are some songs that reduce your stress level?

-What are some songs that cheer you up?

-What are some songs that you can relate to?

2. Group members will now participate in an **activity** that involves music. Give each group member pens/pencils & a piece of paper.

*For this activity, you will **play music for group members**. You can choose what type of music you think your group members will like.

a. In the past, I have used the Pandora app on my phone to play different genres of music for my group members (Pandora has jazz radio, classical radio, relaxation radio, etc.)

b. If you’d rather use songs, here are some examples that you can play that are good for any age:

1. Lean On Me
2. Don’t Worry, Be Happy
3. The Lion Sleeps Tonight
4. Stand By Me
5. Happy (by Pharrell Williams)
6. You’ve Got A Friend In Me
7. This Little Light of Mine

*As you play the music for group members, instruct them to just listen (no talking!) They can close their eyes if they want to. They can also choose to draw while listening to the music

*Play each song/genre of music for a few minutes. You don’t have to play the whole song

*Before you move on to the next song/genre, give group members a few minutes to **journal** their experience with each. They can answer the following questions:

a. What thoughts went through your head as you were listening to this music?

- b. What emotions did you experience?
- c. How did your body feel?

2a. Allow group members to share what they wrote after you are done with the activity.

3.

-Facilitator can conclude group by asking the following questions:

- Have you noticed any change in your level of stress from the beginning of group to the end of group?
- Do you think that music can be an effective coping tool for you? Why or why not?

-If there is time, you can go back to the songs that the group members mentioned at the beginning of group (i.e. the songs that cheer them up) & play them!

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