

Creative Interventions and Activities Clearinghouse

Creating to Mood Music

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Purpose:

The purpose of this creative intervention is to examine how our surroundings can play a role in shaping our moods, the ability of music to generate different mood states, and how self-exploration through creative measures can assist in tapping into personal expressions that may not easily be accessible just by talking.

Materials Needed:

A playlist of 5–8 songs that represent a wide range of music (i.e. jazz, classical, rock, etc.) and will elicit different moods; CD player, iPod player, or computer with speakers

Procedures:

The counselor explains the importance of identifying feelings and being in touch with personal emotions, and provides the client with appropriate drawing materials and paper. The client listens to each song and considers what feelings, thoughts, and memories each song is soliciting. The client draws their reactions onto the paper as the counselor emphasizes there is no right/wrong way to do this activity, normalizing the client's expressions of creativity. Other visual art mediums may also be used, at the client's discretion. It may be helpful to create a playlist where the song plays twice in a row, so that the client can become invested in the feeling of the music before creating to it. Once completed, the counselor asks if the client would like to go through the music again or if they feel comfortable with the time allotted. Finally, the counselor processes each picture with the client.

Process Questions and Follow-Up:

Go through each drawing and ask about what feelings, memories, or thoughts came up when listening to each particular piece of music.

What songs were relaxing? Irritating? Energy-inducing? Draining?

Which songs brought up the most vivid images or strongest emotions?

Was there any music that the client did not connect with, or that they enjoyed more than others?

Did any unexpected thoughts or feelings arise?

Practice Setting:

Mental Health Agency/Private Practice