



Music for Healing

Goal

Music has the power to affect our moods. We may find that we have “go-to” songs for when we are sad, happy, calm, or excited. Music can help us explore our feelings and can be a helpful coping activity when grieving. Use this activity to explore as a family the unique music that each person finds helpful, as well as other activities that help to make us feel supported.



Have you ever heard the song “Bridge Over Troubled Water” by Simon and Garfunkel? In this song, the singer talks about helping a friend who is having a hard time. He says he will be a ‘bridge’ to help his friend stay above ‘troubled waters,’ or the hard feelings his friend is struggling to manage.

In other words, the singer is saying that the people in our lives can be a huge source of support when we are struggling. In addition to people, activities can also be used as helpful tools to cope. **Listening to music is one such activity that has the power to help us cope through feelings of sadness, anger, and grief.** Even though we all have different music preferences, listening to music is something we can all relate to, whether we are three years old, or seventy years old. As a family, share music with each other, and talk about the other people and activities that are part of your ‘bridge’ of support. Consider starting by listening to “Bridge Over Troubled Water”.

Supplies Needed

Internet-Accessible
Device with Audio (cell phone, laptop, ipad, etc.)

Time Needed

Approximately 30-45 minutes

Possible Questions

- What do you think the song is about?
- What lyrics or lines in the song stick out to you the most?
- What is it about the song that helps you to cope, or feel better?
- What is a song you listen to when you are mad, sad, scared, happy?
- How much time do you spend listening to music?

Instructions

Have each family member come up with a list of songs that help them when they are experiencing a difficult feeling, or mood.

Take turns playing each other your songs, and talk about why those songs are important to individual family members as you are listening to them. Conversation can be adapted to meet the needs of each family member’s age and developmental level.

For families with younger children, consider picking songs together to help each other with the activity. For families with older children, consider using the possible questions provided to have a more in depth conversation about how you use music to cope.