



**MUSIC IMPROVISATION SKILLS: THERAPEUTIC TOOLS FOR RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT IN CLINICAL PRACTICE**

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ABSTRACT

Mental health and allied professionals are often conduits for fostering hope and change in clients that present multiple complex clinical concerns within multiple practice settings. In this experiential workshop, participants will be introduced to universal music and movement improvisational structures and techniques for building individual resiliency, interpersonal communication skills, as well as creative self-empowerment. Relevant theoretical literature will be reviewed. Several case examples will also be included highlighting clinical applications from a women's therapeutic support group within the context of an urban outpatient community mental health center. This workshop will offer a humanistic philosophical approach to music making which holds the belief that innate music making is an available tool for everyone to enhance health and wellbeing. Improvising is creating spontaneously an experience in the moment. To improvise takes courage and authenticity. When we improvise, we face the unknown. This process can help one face their fears, developing courage and trust. Self-expression can lead to self-actualization and a sense of building mastery over one's abilities that can generalize to other life experiences leading to self-growth and empowerment. The skills that encompass sound therapeutic practice are mirrored in similar skills that make up shared musical practice such as deep listening to self and others, supporting, trusting, mirroring, reflecting, releasing judgment, being in the present moment, authenticity, attunement and connection. Additional psychological benefits include a greater sense of community and belonging through this shared experience, development of social skills and interpersonal interaction. In conclusion, this workshop will provide an overview and introduction to music improvisation skills as a therapeutic tool within a safe, supportive, and creative environment. [The author can be reached at jllynnlcsw@gmail.com]