Referential Beats

"Referential beats" is a music therapy approach wherein loops are used to create tracks that reflect the client's strengths, needs, goals, and experiences. Each loop or track refers to one aspect of what is being explored with the tracks being combined to create a beat that elicits insight into the topic of exploration. The process involves repeated decision making and interpretation and expression of the topic of exploration. The completed product can be revisited later in the therapy process or by the client independently as a source of support or a reminder of their strengths and coping skills.

This approach was developed in 2019 and has been used with young children, adolescents, and adults, in groups and individually and in person and via teletherapy. It has been used in school settings, private practice, inpatient mental health, residential and inpatient substance use treatment, with Autistic children, and in professional development and clinical supervision.

Beat making originated in the 1970's with the birth of Rap in The Bronx, NY. Rap is a Black American art form. Suggested reading and watching: 1. Therapeutic Uses of Rap and Hip-Hop (Hadley & Yancy), 2. The History of Hip Hop (Reese) , 3. http://www.hiphopmusichistory.com/, 4. Hip-Hop Evolution (Netflix)

Topics
- Strengths (to be revisited when in need of strength or to be remade and compared)
- Who I am (individual or group)
- Family map
- Goals and objectives
- Triggers and related coping skills
- Stressors and related coping skills
- Peace and what it is comprised of
- Hope and what it is comprised of
- Negative self talk/reframed or responding self talk
- Stigmatized statements/realistic statements or responding statements
- Mood (feelings, thoughts, body)
- Inventory (thoughts and feelings in relation to a situation, place, anniversary, etc.
- Story: characters and moods change (think Peter and the Wolf)
- Supervision (goals, who you are as a therapist, blocks, strengths, relationships with clients, peers, superiors, etc.)
- Assessment