

# **Good Grief: Music Therapy in the Grief Support Group**

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## **Definition of Music Therapy as Applied to the Process of Mourning**

The application and controlled use of music as directed or supervised by a board-certified music therapist (MT-BC) in a non-threatening therapeutic environment for the following reasons:

1. To provide opportunities for the client or caregiver to express thoughts and feelings.
2. To enable the client or caregiver to develop a greater understanding of self.
3. To help facilitate the client's or caregiver's adjustment to loss.

## **Rationale**

1. Music is an innate human behavior. Individuals create music and react to it within their own cultures, life experiences, beliefs, thoughts and emotions. Therefore, each individual is the expert. Each individual helps guide and direct the musical experience. Music honors the individual and provides choices at a variety of participatory levels. The individual and the individual's choices are regarded as important and real.
2. Music provides a non-threatening atmosphere in which individuals may share thoughts and emotions.
3. Music can be provocative and, when, appropriate, may help individuals to reveal thoughts and repressed emotions so that they may be dealt with openly and honestly.
4. Music can trigger memories of events or feelings experienced by the individual or family. It can help stimulate reminiscence, which, in turn, may help facilitate and renew meaningful interactions among family members and the individual.
5. Music can help create special bonds and relationships between individuals (ie. the music therapist, family members, other staff, etc.) that span generations.
6. Music can serve as a focusing device or diversion, assisting individuals when coping with pain or anxiety.
7. Music may help with sleeping patterns, medication reduction and pain management.
8. Grieving is a difficult process, and music can enable individuals to experience "creative grief" in a healthy, socially acceptable manner. Music is a creative modality in which individuals do not even need to be physically active or verbal in order to understand or express themselves.
9. Overall, music can enhance and celebrate life while still allowing individuals to acknowledge, fully experience and then resolve loss.

# The Six “R” Processes of Mourning<sup>1</sup>

Music Therapy Interventions: Jennifer Hicks, MT-BC

During each session, clients will complete the Reflection page, as well as one or more of the Music Therapy Interventions listed below.

## 1. RECOGNIZE the loss

- ◆ **I have been able to acknowledge and understand the loss.**

- MT Interventions:

- Tear Soup by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen (create own pot of “Tear Soup”)
- Lyric Analysis: “Your Long Journey” by Robert Plant & Alison Krauss (create road with journey to group)
- Lyric Analysis: “Shattered” by Linda Ronstadt (write on puzzle pieces)

## 2. REACT to the separation

- ◆ **I have been able to experience the pain; feel, identify, accept and give some form of expression to all the psychological reactions to the loss; and identify and mourn secondary losses.**

- MT Interventions:

- Song Writing: Blues with prompts if needed (moving from negative to positive emotions)
- Lyric Analysis: “Lean On Me” by Bill Withers (list of friends/resources to “lean on”)

## 3. RECOLLECT and REEXPERIENCE the lost relationship

- ◆ **I have been able to review and remember realistically and revive and re-experience the old feelings.**

- MT Interventions:

- Lyric Analysis: “Remember Me” by Deanna Edwards (create rainbow or tear drop or ??? with memories)
- Song Writing: “Remember Me” by Deanna Edwards (fill-in-the-blanks)
- Lyric Analysis: “For Good” from the musical *Wicked* (create tree with how we’ve “grown”)

## 4. RELINQUISH

- ◆ **I have been able to relinquish the old attachments to the lost relationship and the old assumptive world.**

- MT Interventions:

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<sup>1</sup> Rando, T.A. (1993). Treatment of complicated mourning. Champaign, Illinois: Research Press.

- Lyric Analysis: “Let It All Go” by Chris & Johnny (plate exercise)
- Lyric Analysis: “Supposed to Be” by Jack Johnson (create star/shell/jar)
- Lyric Analysis: “Better Than I” by David Campbell (journal)

**5. READJUST to move adaptively into the new world without forgetting the old**

- ◆ **I have been able to revise the assumptive world, develop a new relationship with the lost one, adopt new ways of being in the world and form a new identity.**

➤ MT Interventions:

- Lyric Analysis: “Remember Your Chains” by Steven Curtis Chapman (create paper chains)
- Lyric Analysis: “Let Your Loss Be Your Lesson” by Robert Plant & Alison Krauss (journal – lessons)

**6. REINVEST**

- ◆ **I have been able to find new appropriate and rewarding investments in life.**

➤ MT Interventions:

- Lyric Analysis: “That’s Enough” by Deanna Edwards (journal – review list of friends/resources – is it enough?)
- Lyric Analysis: “How Can I Keep From Singing?” by enya (complete question)
- Lyric Analysis: “With My Own Two Hands” by Jack Johnson (create hand with what they contribute then join together)
- Lyric Analysis: “World” by Five for Fighting (create package full of Wishes for self and others)
- Lyric Analysis: “Grateful” by David Campbell (create gratitude journal)

## Reflection

Before

After

1. Recognize
2. React
3. Recollect & Re-experience
4. Relinquish
5. Readjust
6. Reinvest

Which of the R's are you dealing with today?

On which of the R's did this session help you focus?

Did this session help you focus on the issues you were struggling with most recently?  
How? Which ones?

Did the session provide any insights? If so, what?

Which R would you like to focus on in the future?

Any other reflections you would like to share?

# Tear Soup

by Pat Schwiebert & Chuck DeKlyen

# Your Long Journey

by Robert Plant & Alison Krauss  
("Raising Sand")

God's given us years of happiness here  
Now we must part  
And as the angels come and call for you  
The pains of grief tug at my heart  
Oh, my darling...my darling...  
My heart breaks as you take your long journey

Oh, the days will be empty  
The nights so long without you, my love  
And when God calls for you, I'm left alone  
But we will meet in heaven above  
Oh, my darling...my darling...  
My heart breaks as you take your long journey

Fond memories I'll keep of happy ways  
That on earth we trod  
And when I come we will walk hand in hand  
As one in heaven in the family of God  
Oh, my darling...my darling...  
My heart breaks as you take your long journey

# Shattered

by Linda Ronstadt  
("Cry Like a Rainstorm, Howl Like the Wind")

Shattered, like a windowpane

broken by the storm.

Each tiny piece of me lies alone.

And scattered, far beyond repair.

All my shiny dreams just lying there.

I'm broken but I'm laughin'.

It's the sound of falling glass.

I hope that you won't mind if I should cry in public

while I wait for this to pass.

'Cause sweet darlin', I'm shattered

into fragments cold and grey.

Sweep the pieces all away

Then no one will ever know how much it matters.

'Cause something deep inside of me is...shattered.

# The Blues

When faced with a loss, I \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

If these don't work, I \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Now that time's passed, I \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

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**Brainstorming Space**



# Lean On Me

by Bill Withers

Sometimes in our lives

We all have pain

We all have sorrow

But if we are wise

We know that there's always tomorrow

Lean on me, when you're not strong

And I'll be your friend

I'll help you carry on

For it won't be long

'Til I'm gonna need

Somebody to lean on

Please swallow your pride

If I have things you need to borrow

For no one can fill those of your needs

That you won't let show

You just call on me brother, when you need a hand

We all need somebody to lean on

I just might have a problem that you'll understand

We all need somebody to lean on

Lean on me, when you're not strong  
And I'll be your friend  
I'll help you carry on  
For it won't be long  
'Til I'm gonna need  
Somebody to lean on

You just call on me brother, when you need a hand  
We all need somebody to lean on  
I just might have a problem that you'll understand  
We all need somebody to lean on

If there is a load you have to bear  
That you can't carry  
I'm right up the road  
I'll share your load  
If you just call me  
Call me (if you need a friend)  
Call me (call me)  
Call me (if you need a friend)  
Call me (if you ever need a friend)  
Call me (call me)  
Call me  
Call me (if you need a friend)

# Remember Me

by Deanna Edwards  
("Music Brings My Heart Back Home")

Remember me whenever you see a sunrise,

Remember me whenever you see a star,

Remember me whenever you see a rainbow

Or woods in autumn colors from afar.

Remember me whenever you see the roses

Or seagulls sailing high in a sky of blue.

Remember me whenever you see waves shining in the sun,

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

Remember me whenever you see a teardrop

Or meadows still wet with the morning dew.

Remember me whenever you feel love growing in your heart.

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

Remember me whenever you feel love growing in your heart.

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

# Remember Me

by Deanna Edwards  
("Music Brings My Heart Back Home")

Remember me whenever you see a \_\_\_\_\_

Remember me whenever you see a \_\_\_\_\_

Remember me whenever you see a \_\_\_\_\_

Or \_\_\_\_\_.

Remember me whenever you see \_\_\_\_\_

Or \_\_\_\_\_.

Remember me whenever you see \_\_\_\_\_,

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

Remember me whenever you see a \_\_\_\_\_

Or \_\_\_\_\_.

Remember me whenever you feel \_\_\_\_\_.

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

Remember me whenever you feel \_\_\_\_\_.

And remember, I'll be remembering you!

# For Good

from the musical *Wicked*

I'm limited

Just look at me – I'm limited

And just look at you

You can do all I couldn't do, Glinda

So now it's up to you

For both of us - now it's up to you...

I've heard it said

That people come into our lives for a reason

Bringing something we must learn

And we are led

To those who help us most to grow

If we let them

And we help them in return

Well, I don't know if I believe that's true

But I know I'm who I am today

Because I knew you...

Like a comet pulled from orbit

As it passes a sun

Like a stream that meets a boulder

Halfway through the wood

Who can say if I've been changed for the better?

But because I knew you  
I have been changed for good

It well may be  
That we may never meet again

In this lifetime

So let me say before we part

So much of me

Is made of what I learned from you

You'll be with me

Like a handprint on my heart

And now whatever way our stories end

I know you have re-written mine

By being my friend...

Like a ship blown from its mooring

By a wind off the sea

Like a seed dropped by a skybird

In a distant wood

Who can say if I've been changed for the better?

But because I knew you

Because I knew you

I have been changed for good

And just to clear the air  
I ask forgiveness  
For the things I've done you blame me for  
But then, I guess we know  
There's blame to share  
And none of it seems to matter anymore

Like a comet pulled from orbit  
As it passes a sun  
Like a stream that meets a boulder  
Halfway through the wood

Like a ship blown from its mooring  
By a wind off the sea  
Like a seed dropped by a bird in the wood

Who can say if I've been  
Changed for the better?  
I do believe I have been  
Changed for the better  
And because I knew you...  
Because I knew you...  
Because I knew you...  
I have been changed for good...

# Let It All Go

by Chris & Johnny  
("Miles & Means")

These are the words, the ones to remember  
when we have a heavy load:  
Be as it may, an alternative way  
is to let it all, let it all go.

The natural habit is to love when you have it.  
You never want to be alone.  
But time is a tester and only the best can learn  
to let it all, let it all go.

Something has been tickin' me, pickin' and a-kickin' me.  
I'm bound to take a lickin' I know.  
Something in particular, what I got to say to her  
is let it all, let it all go.

We take from life whatever it gives us,  
but do we ever really know  
what to say when it's taken away?  
We let it all, let it all go.



An infinite wisdom is there if we can listen  
and out of it we can grow.

Because after the rain we'll be entire again  
if we can let it all, let it all go.

Something has been teachin' me, speakin' and a-preachin' to me.

I'm bound to learn a lesson I know.

Something in a last goodbye, sailing ships and lullabies.

Let it all, let it all go.

# Supposed to Be

by Jack Johnson

Maybe it's up with the stars

Maybe it's under the sea

Maybe it's not very far

Maybe this is how it's supposed to be

This is how it's supposed to be

Maybe it's trapped in a jar

Something we've already seen

Maybe it's nowhere at all

Maybe this is how it's supposed to be

This is how it's supposed to be

Looking forward as we rewind

Looking back is a trap sometimes

Being here is so easy to do

If you want to...

# Better Than I

by David Campbell

I thought I did what's right

I thought I had the answers

I thought I chose the surest road, but that road brought me here

So I put up a fight

And told you how to help me

Now just when I have given up, the truth is coming clear

You know better than I

You know the way

I've let go the need to know why

For you know better than I

If this has been a test

I cannot see the reason

But maybe knowing I don't know is part of getting through

I try to do what's best

And faith has made it easy

To see the best thing I can do is put my trust in you

You know better than I

You know the way

I've let go the need to know why

For you know better than I

I saw one cloud and thought it was a sky

I saw a bird and thought that I could follow

But it was you who taught that bird to fly

If I let you reach me will you teach me

For You know better than I

You know the way

I've let go the need to know why

I'll take what answers you supply

You know better than I

# Remember Your Chains

by Steven Curtis Chapman ("Heaven in the Real World")

I couldn't help but wonder what he was thinking  
As he stared out the window through the sky  
It seemed he was taking his last look at freedom  
From the hopeless, longing look in his eyes  
There were chains on his hands and chains on his feet  
And as I passed him by the thought came to me

Remember your chains  
Remember the prison that once held you  
Before the love of God broke through  
Remember the place you were without grace  
When you see where you are now  
Remember your chains  
And remember your chains are gone

There's no one more thankful to sit at the table  
Than the one who best remembers hunger's pain  
And no heart loves greater than the one that is able  
To recall the time when all it knew was shame  
The wings of forgiveness can take us to heights never seen  
But the wisest ones, they will never lose sight  
Of where they were set free...Love set them free

So remember your chains

Remember the prison that once held you

Before the love of God broke through

Remember the place you were without grace

When you see where you are now

Remember your chains...and remember your chains are gone

And in the light of all that we've been forgiven of

We will find our hearts fuller and freer to give and receive God's love

So remember your chains

Remember the prison that once held you

Before the love of God broke through

Remember the place you were without grace

When you see where you are now

Remember your chains

Oh, remember your chains

When you remember your chains...remember your chains are gone

Imagine what your life would be if Jesus had not set you free

Remember your chains are gone

Remember all that once held you before the love of God broke through

Remember your chains...and remember your chains are gone

You gotta remember your chains...and remember your chains are gone

# Let Your Loss Be Your Lesson

by Robert Plant & Alison Krauss  
("Raising Sand")

Once I had myself a good woman  
But I just didn't treat her right  
I was always leaving  
Living the party life

True love was waiting for me  
I was much too blind to see  
Till she told me she would leave me  
I said that's alright with me

Oh, but now she's gone  
I realize I lost the best thing there is  
And my pride keeps telling me  
Let your loss be your lesson

Heaven knows I miss her loving  
Heaven knows how much I cry  
Just to think that she had left me  
And I know the reason why

I could tell she had been crying  
That didn't seem to bother me  
'Cause I know there's no one blinder  
Than a fool who just couldn't see

Oh, but now she's gone  
I realize I lost the best thing there is  
And my pride keeps telling me  
Let your loss be your lesson



# That's Enough

by Deanna Edwards ("Listen with your Heart")

I can't remove your loneliness or heal your broken heart;  
Can't take away the shadows that make your night so dark,  
But I can stay beside you when life is getting tough.  
If we come close together, that's enough.

I don't have all the answers, and I don't know what to say.  
I can't bring you the sunshine or take the rain away,  
But I can always hold you when the storm is getting rough.  
If we come close together, that's enough.

I had to learn so many things and fail so many times  
Before the day I finally realized  
If we could take the sorrow from every loss that come along,  
We'd have to take the loving out of life.

I can't remove the dangers from a world so full of fears.  
I can't make living safer or take away your tears,  
But I can always love you, with a love that you can trust,  
And if we can come close together, that's enough.

# How Can I Keep From Singing?

by enya ("Shepherd Moons")

My life goes on in endless song above earth's lamentations,  
I hear the real, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.

Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear its music ringing,  
It sounds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?

When tyrants tremble in their fear and hear their death knell ringing,  
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?

In prison cell and dungeon vile, our thoughts to them are winging,  
When friends by shame are undefiled, how can I keep from singing?

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How can I keep from \_\_\_\_\_?

# With My Own Two Hands

by Jack Johnson

I can change the world  
With my own two hands  
Make it a better place  
With my own two hands  
Make it a kinder place  
With my own two hands  
With my own  
With my own two hands

I can make peace on earth  
With my own two hands  
I can clean up the earth  
With my own two hands  
I can reach out to you  
With my own two hands  
With my own  
With my own two hands

I'm going to make it a brighter place  
With my own two hands  
I'm going to make it a safer place

With my own two hands  
I'm going to help the human race

With my own two hands

With my own

With my own two hands

I can hold you

With my own two hands

I can comfort you

With my own two hands

But you've got to use

Use your own two hands

Use your own

Use your own two hands

With our own

With our own two hands

With my own

With my own two hands

# World

by Five for Fighting

Got a package full of Wishes  
A Time machine, a Magic Wand  
A Globe made out of Gold

No Instructions or Commandments  
Laws of Gravity or  
Indecisions to uphold

Printed on the box I see  
A.C.M.E.'s Build-a-World-to-be  
Take a chance - Grab a piece  
Help me to believe it

What kind of world do you want?  
Think Anything  
Let's start at the start...Build a masterpiece  
Be careful what you wish for...History starts now...

Should there be people or peoples  
Money, Funny pedestals for Fools who never pay  
Raise your Army - Choose your Steeple  
Don't be shy, the satellites can look the other way

Lose the Earthquakes - Keep the Faults

Fill the oceans without the salt

Let every Man own his own Hand

Can you dig it baby

What kind of world do you want

Think Anything

Let's start at the start...Build a masterpiece

Be careful what you wish for...History starts now...

Sunlight's on the Bridge

Sunlight's on the Way

Tomorrow's Calling ...There's more to this than Love

What Kind of world do you want

What Kind of world do you want

What Kind of world do you want

Think Anything

Let's start at the start

Build a masterpiece

History Starts Now

Be careful what you wish for...Start Now

# Grateful

by David Campbell

I've got a roof over my head,  
I've got a warm place to sleep.  
Some nights I lie awake counting gifts instead of counting sheep.  
I've got a heart that can hold love,  
I've got a mind that can think.  
There may be times when I lose the light and let my spirits sink.  
But I can't stay depressed...when I remember how I'm blessed.

Grateful, grateful, truly grateful I am.  
Grateful, grateful, truly blessed and duly grateful.

In a city of strangers, I've got a family of friends.  
No matter what rocks and brambles fill the way,  
I know that they will stay until the end.  
I feel a hand holding my hand.  
It's not a hand you can see.  
But on the road to the promised land, this hand will shepherd me.  
Through delight and despair, holding tight and always there.

Grateful, grateful, truly grateful I am.  
Grateful, grateful, truly blessed and duly grateful.

It's not that I don't want a lot, or hope for more, or dream of more.

But giving thanks for what I've got

Makes me so much happier than keepin' score.

In a world that can bring pain, I will still take each chance.

For I believe that whatever the terrain, our feet can learn to dance.

Whatever stone life may sling, we can moan or we can sing:

Grateful, grateful, truly grateful I am.

Grateful, grateful, truly blessed and duly grateful.

Truly blessed and duly grateful.