

## Power music

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### **Purpose**

Music is a very powerful tool. It can evoke very strong feelings – this is especially true for clients with an auditory preference (clients for whom hearing is the main process by which they interpret their version of the world). In particular, music is very effective for encouraging clients. It can significantly increase their motivation and remind them to remain positive and believe in their abilities.

### **Description**

This exercise draws upon the client's frame of reference when it comes to choosing music that has a meaning to the individual.

### **Process**

Ask the client questions to identify their 'power music' or 'power tune'. This will be a different process for each client. Some may be able to tell you instantly, some after you have asked further questions. It might be about situations involving music in which they felt great, concerts they loved, albums they listened to at a time in their life when everything was going really well or lyrics that really speak to them. Others may have to do a bit more investigating.

If a client falls into the last category, you can set them the task between sessions of listening to old albums,

listening to a different radio station, listening more closely to lyrics – anything that helps them make greater contact with music. Again, the ideas they come up with themselves are likely to be the most effective. Ask them to note any feelings or strong reactions to songs that they have or even just the songs they've really enjoyed.

Once the client has identified their significant music, there may be things they can discover about themselves merely from talking about the feelings associated with it. Self awareness is a hugely important part of coaching. You might ask questions such as:

- How do you feel when listening to the music?
- What is it about the music/lyrics that makes you feel that way?
- Which feelings would you like to recapture?
- How could you do that?

Alternatively, the music can go into your coach's toolkit as a resource to employ when greater motivation or self belief is required for a certain action or goal. It can have a euphoric effect and give a powerful reminder of the desires underlying the goal. If the client has not always found time for completing coaching actions, it may be useful to help them come up with fun and easy ways of incorporating the music into their daily schedule. Examples might include playing it when the alarm goes off in the morning, while they make their dinner, on their walk to work – but an idea that the client comes up with themselves would be much better.

## **Pitfalls**

As mentioned earlier, music is powerful and can evoke very strong feelings, both positive and negative. The context within which you are working should tend towards a positive response but should a certain piece of music bring up difficult feelings for your client, do be prepared to support them with these.

## **Bibliography**

- Blood, A. J. and Zatorre, R. J. (2001). 'Intensely pleasurable responses to music correlate with activity in brain regions implicated in reward and emotion,' *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*, 98: 11818–11823.
- Martin, C. (2001) *Life Coaching Handbook*, Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing.