

Understanding hip hop therapy



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The article " Hip Hop Therapy" by Edgar H. Tyson explains the results of a study in which researchers explore a form of therapy for troubled teens that uses rap music's lyrics. Although in the past these experiments including rap music and troubled youth have focused on the negative effects, this study utilizes a combination of previously effective therapeutic theories to affect them positively. It makes sense that these researchers are trying and tap into this rarely used genre, since it is such a great influence on the youth today. Music therapy was initially limited as only an auditory stimulus and a constructive expression for youth. Recently though, researchers have begun to explore the lyrical aspects of music as a form of therapy. Bibliotherapy on the other hand, uses literature and its underlying themes to try and connect with youth on some level in order to help them with their problems. When used on troubled youth in the past, it has proven to be effective, but it faces a problem as the majority of today's youths don't enjoy reading. Hip Hop Therapy uses rap and hip hop music, specifically its lyrical content which helps therapists relate to the youth and helps to identify, understand solve their problems. This form of therapy seems to blend the first two therapeutic styles to create a positive effect on the lives of distressed youth. An experiment was conducted at a Miami youth help centre in which youth who were currently staying there participated in Hip Hop Therapy sessions. The experimenters enjoyed great success as the results showed that it was a good way to connect with the youth as well as to help them find constructive ways, like writing rap songs, to illustrate their emotions and begin to work out their troubles.