



# TRANSFORMED BY SONG: THE IMPACT OF MUSIC ON ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS LIVING WITH ADVANCED CANCER

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# OBJECTIVES

- Describe music's role among a sample of adolescents and young adults (AYAs) living with advanced cancer

*I tell a story, and therefore I exist. I exist because there are stories, and if there are no stories, we don't exist. We create stories to define our existence. If we do not create the stories, we probably go mad.<sup>1</sup>*





# BACKGROUND

- AYAs living with advanced cancer may experience distress from
  - Illness related stress
  - Isolation
  - Prognostic uncertainty
  - Developmental transitions

# METHODS

- Descriptive qualitative research design
- Research question
  - How do AYAs who have advanced cancer conceptualize hope and its role in their lives?



# STUDY PROCEDURES

- Virtual recruitment and participation
- Informed by Husserlian Phenomenology
- Semi-structured interview participation
- Written narrative composition
- Thematic analyses



# ASSESSMENT OF FINDINGS

- Participant mean age:
  - 18.5 years
- Most of the sample
  - Were female
  - Received treatment for hematologic malignancies
  - Experienced at least one relapse
  - Received a bone marrow transplant

## *Participant Demographics (N=15)*

Characteristic	n (%)
Age (mean (range))	18.5 (12-21)
Sex	
Female	12 (80%)
Male	3 (20%)
Race/Ethnicity	
White	9 (60%)
Black	1 (7%)
Hispanic/ Latino	3 (20%)
More than one race	2 (13%)
Malignancy Type	
Hematologic	12 (80%)
Non-Hematologic	3 (20%)
Experienced a Relapse	10 (67%)
Received a BMT <sup>h</sup>	8 (53%)

# IDENTIFIED THEMES

## Main theme

- Simple supports of hope

## Subthemes

- Diversion
  - Calming effect
  - Creative outlet
  - Transformative value



*“I believe music is hope, and creating music in a place like a hospital defies what a hospital is. It’s daring to be musical, playful and silly in a very scary place. Music helped me spread hope to the nurses and doctors who were there. Music was something I could share with other people but was also a private way for me to deal with my emotions.”*

**(18-year-old female, Non-Hodgkin’s Lymphoma)**





# LIMITATIONS AND LESSONS

- Majority of sample
  - Female
  - White
  - Aged 18-21 years
- Selection bias
- Music's impact on hope was an incidental finding

# CONCLUSION

- Music provides a calming diversion
- Transportive and transformative value
- Further research needed to explore the relationship between hope and coping interventions (i.e. music therapy)



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# QUESTIONS?

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