

REFLECTING WITHOUT WRITING

Music and Sound

Listen for what resonates

A practical guide with no written answers required.

START HERE

A way to reflect that fits you

A song, familiar sound or moment of quiet can give shape to an experience that is hard to explain. You can notice your response without analysing the lyrics or deciding that a particular sound has a universal meaning.

What this approach can offer

Sound may help you connect with a mood, memory, energy level or need. It may also feel too intense. Choosing silence, turning sound down or stopping is part of the reflection, not a failure to take part.

Set it up gently

Choose a short piece of familiar music, a gentle sound or silence. Set the volume to a comfortable level. If headphones or particular sounds are uncomfortable, use a quieter speaker, ask someone to describe an option, or skip this activity.

When it may be useful

Music and sound can offer a nonverbal route into energy, memory, comfort and preference. You might use a familiar song to notice what resonates, or choose silence to check whether less input would help.

A few reminders

- There is no right answer or correct way to take part.
- You can use a word, gesture, choice, image, AAC, pause or silence.
- You can skip, change or stop the activity at any point.

You are the person who decides what your response means.

TRY IT

A short guided practice

Move through these steps at your own pace. You can do one step and stop, or ask someone you trust to read each step aloud.

1. Choose a small focus

Think of one moment, feeling, preference or decision from today. Keep the focus small enough to approach without explaining everything.

2. Try the method

- Step 1. Before listening, choose what you want to notice: energy, comfort, memory, movement, or what you want more or less of.
- Step 2. Listen for a short time, or simply notice the first response. You do not need to finish the track.
- Step 3. Notice what draws attention: a beat, pause, instrument, voice, silence or wish to stop. Use a word, gesture, colour choice or number if useful.
- Step 4. Ask whether the sound matches how you feel, differs from it, or brings up something you would rather leave alone.
- Step 5. Choose what you need next: another sound, quiet, movement, company, rest or a different way to reflect.

3. Let a question guide you

- Would I choose more sound, less sound or silence?
- What part of the sound stands out, if anything?
- Does this sound fit this moment, contrast with it or not feel useful?

A short example

You listen briefly to a familiar song. The steady beat feels supportive, but the lyrics bring up too much. You switch to an instrumental track. That choice shows what kind of sound feels manageable without analysing the memory.

4. Choose how to finish

Notice whether you want to continue, pause, ask for support, take one practical step or leave the reflection unfinished. No written record is needed.

MAKE IT YOURS

Adapt the activity to your needs

The method should fit the person, not the other way around. Keep what helps and change anything that adds pressure.

Ways to adapt

- Try a few seconds, a low volume, a familiar sound or a track without lyrics.
- Use vibration, rhythm tapped gently on a surface, or a visual rhythm if listening is not accessible.
- If music is linked with a difficult memory, stop and choose a neutral sound, quiet or another method.

Keep it workable

Choose sound for its pace, texture or familiarity, not its meaning. Try a few seconds, a short instrumental passage or a familiar everyday sound. If nothing feels right, stop and choose quiet.

When to pause

Sound can affect people differently and may bring up memories. You are in charge of volume, duration and whether to continue.

Take something with you

You do not have to find a message in the music. Noticing "this helps", "this does not help" or "I am unsure" is enough.

A gentle reminder

Reflection can be spoken, shown, felt, chosen, moved through or shared. You do not have to turn an experience into writing for it to matter.

For more support, you can speak with someone you trust or a qualified professional. Space to Breathe Therapy can be contacted to ask whether its support may be right for you.