

STEP 4 Listening to music pieces and sharing feedback

The final step aims to increase active listening and to enhance awareness of our inner sources of knowledge, through a process of insights with sounds and music providing a bridge to memory.

This particular step can be also be performed as a stand-alone activity.

Duration: 40 minutes

- Participants are invited to prepare themselves by following some simple steps concerning posture. They will sit and have the spine straight, better if they can also close their eyes. They are invited to breathe quietly and to try to relax their head and shoulders.
- The leader explains that they are going to listen to a piece of music and 'something' is going to happen. The exercise is to catch that 'something'. Nevertheless, the leader does not suggest to the participants that they should have any expectations.
- Participants will have also a pen and a notebook.
- They are explained that after the listening, they are going to write their impressions from the listening.
- Then, the listening experience starts.
- The music that the workshop leader has previously prepared is played. Participants listen.
- Just after the listening, participants, still in silence, write their impressions on the notebook.



Feedback is a very important part of the exercise and all participants are invited to make an effort to write down and then report to the group the experience they had during listening, even if in very few words.

Often some of the participants may want to keep to themselves the feelings and perceptions that they experienced during listening. A

variety of insights usually arise, since music stimulates each person in different ways. Sometimes, a completely abstract experience is reported in the form of emotions with neither mental representations of images, nor words, nor symbols and with no connection to place or situation. Or, a past memory emerges and with it the understanding of its meaning appears in a clear cognitive synthesis.

Sometimes, not a memory but a new aspect of a reality unfolds. Sometimes, with just a symbol, one can perceive a message from the unconscious. It's interesting to

notice that these experiences can be attained in a very few moments, on the music wings.

This is a process of 'giving birth' to one's own intuitions. The trainer does not tell anybody what to think or believe, but gives the participants a powerful tool to explore their own sense of discovering truths, by gradually unfolding new insights.

NB: For the correct performance of the exercises, the leader should not reveal the title and the composer of the chosen music before the listening exercise. S/he may give details of it during the conversations that follow, or if a handout containing the information has been prepared for the session, this will be distributed at the end. This is a very important detail because when listeners do not have any information that lead them to a classification of any kind, they can more easily overcome their music prejudices (if any) and be more open to experience. On the other hand, when a specific composer, work or musical genre has been mentioned, the listeners immediately categorise their listening, partially or completely partly preventing the freedom required to resonate.

Wonder is necessary element. "Wonder is the feeling of a philosopher and knowledge begins in wonder", Theaetetus, Plato.

As far as music styles are concerned, traditional and so called classical music contain, in principle, many treasures that can very much help us to achieve intuitions. But other music styles can be chosen.

The group dynamics, with a collective increasing ability to pay attention to other's feedback, and interaction among the participants and the leader, provide a unique learning environment where individual outcomes greatly depend on the quality of the group connotation and unity.

If participants focus on their listening and share knowledge with a genuine open mind, the results are astonishing. In any case, a process of growth through music and listening will be set in motion.

About duration: it is suggested that that the music listening would not last more than 10 minutes, especially if performing the exercise the first time.

Feedback duration depends very much on the number of participants and their participation.

The leader should also foresee at least 10 minutes for a Q/A (questions/answers) session.