

SAMPLE EMI EXERCISES

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Earliest Musical Memory Exercise

You can recover your earliest memory of music quite simply by taking a few moments to relax and practice the EMI Witnessing exercise. This involves focusing on breathing deeply and rhythmically, and allowing any intrusive thoughts to go by without giving them any attention. Once your thoughts are stilled and your body is calm, allow yourself to travel back in time - as far back as you can remember - and connect with your earliest memory of being with music. It should come quite easily, but if not, you might try looking at some childhood photographs. Do pick the first memory that emerges. Allow it to increase in vividness by focusing on the colors, sounds, smells, feelings, and bodily sensations you recall experiencing at the time. Write your impressions in your Music/Sound Awareness Journal. Explore how this early memory is related to your personality and temperament in the here-and-now.

Musical Relaxation Response

Reserve about thirty minutes to experiment with the following exercise: Choose a piece of music that you find soothing, dim the lights, find a comfortable place to sit or lie where you will not be disturbed, and begin to listen to your selection. Consciously use your breath to let go of any tension and allow yourself to relax more and more deeply as you listen. The areas for processing music in the brain are intimately connected to the visual, kinesthetic, olfactory, and emotional brain centers. If you are a visual person, the music may evoke dream-like images. Let your imagination be stimulated and allow healing images, feelings, and sensations to take you where you need to go. When the music is over, gently stretch your body and slowly return to normal consciousness, bringing with you any insights, images, or feelings that may add to your experience of harmony and well-being. Anchor this new learning through journaling, drawing, or musical improvisation.

Creating Your Own Lullaby

Which lullabies do you remember from your childhood? If you cannot recall a particular lullaby, don't fret. You can create one of your own to soothe and nurture the musical child within. You may want to have your Music/Sound

Awareness Journal and tape recorder nearby to record the creative insights that come to you during this exercise. Begin this lullaby writing session by accessing an image of yourself rocking a tiny infant in your arms. Let all of your senses engage with this image. Feel the soft, grainy texture of the cotton baby blanket next to your skin. Smell the clean, pure scent of your innocent little baby. Feel the waves of your heartbeat as you rock your baby in sync with the universal pulse, and feel the vibration of unconditional love as it wells up from the heart to your throat and then out through your loving voice and arms. When you are ready, listen to the words of your lullaby. They may come to you in a stream of consciousness or as a rhyme. You might want to work with rhythm first, creating a soothing beat with a rain stick, Tibetan singing bowl, ocean drum, or shaker. Take all the time you need to create your lullaby. You will know when you are finished, as the music will feel effortless and natural to perform. If you play an instrument, you may want to accompany yourself or play a soft solo section after you have sung the first verse or two. Use the lullaby during times of stress when you need to feel nurtured and comforted.