

Self-Soothing Sounds

Transcription



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Sometimes we might feel stressed or overwhelmed and we need to find a way to quiet our mind and relax our bodies to feel better.

No matter where you are, you can always turn to listening either inside your head or outside to help you relax.

When I'm feeling stressed, I like to listen to very slow music with long tones and soft bells or to the sounds of singing birds and night creatures. Other people like to sing to themselves while others prefer silence or listening to a soothing guitar or other nature sounds. I was very curious about what sounds make people feel relaxed so I asked a few of my friends: *What's a sound that makes you feel calm?* And here's what they said:

Rainforest

My cat purr

The coquí frog singing at night

Ocean waves

Bonfire

The voice of the person I love

The sound of water flowing in a river

The sound of bird songs

The beginning of a song El Reino Perdido by a 90's Mexican band called Santa Sabina

The sea breeze

Dawn

Thunder, rain

I want you to close your eyes, take a deep breath in and think about a sound that makes **YOU** feel calm.

Take another deep breath in and try to hear this sound inside your head. Now as you breathe out notice how you're feeling and if anything changed in how your body feels. Keep your eyes closed and take a few seconds to notice your mind and your body as you imagine you're hearing your sound.

Now give your head a little massage as if you were washing your hair and slowly, slowly open your eyes.

Today we're going to focus on **LAYERS** to create your very own self-soothing piece which you can come back to when you feel you need it. This will be a piece that you'll write just for yourself. No one else needs to listen to it. It's just for you so it can be whatever you feel will help you feel calm.

First, I want you to come back to your calming sound. If you could make this sound with any musical instrument or object in your home or your voice, what would you choose? One of my calming sounds was night creatures. The sound of the coquí frog that you can hear at night only in the island of Puerto Rico really calms me so I'm going to think about how I can translate that to any musical instrument or object in my home. I think I'm going to use the clarinet for this first sound playing a repeated pattern that reminds me of the coquí singing at night.

What is your idea for your sound? How will your first layer sound like? Write down some ideas and try them out.

Now think about something you can **TOUCH** that makes you feel calm. I really like the feeling of touching my dog's fur because it's really soft and smooth and it makes me feel very relaxed. What's something you can **TOUCH** that makes you feel relaxed? See if you can remember how it feels to touch this texture or even better touch it right now if you can. Now I want you to translate this **TEXTURE** to a musical idea. For example, since my dog's fur feels soft and smooth I thought of using long sustained tones in the violin in a soft volume.

And here's my first layer with the coquí frog in the clarinet along with my second layer of the soft long sustained tones in the violin.

What is your musical idea for your second layer inspired by something you can **TOUCH** that makes you feel calm? Write down your ideas and try them out.

Now I want you think about an **ACTIVITY** or something you do that makes you feel calm. To feel relaxed I like to float in the ocean, Other people like swimming, meditating, rock climbing, blowing bubbles or playing with their pets. What's an **ACTIVITY** that you like to do to feel calm? Close your eyes and move your body as you pretend to do that activity. Now open your eyes and notice how you were moving and how you felt as you were moving. Can you make a **THIRD** musical layer inspired by this activity? Since I like to float in the ocean, I thought I could make an undulating sound in a harp to show the way my body moves back and forth in the ocean while I'm floating.

This is how my Self-Soothing piece sounds like with my three layers together.

What is your musical idea for the activity that makes you feel calm? How will you combine that with your other two musical layers? Write down your ideas and try them out.

Using these three layers play with different ideas of organizing them, try creating repeating patterns, adding pauses and silence, stretching some of the sounds, even adding some new layers or any other ideas you have. You can record the three different layers in your computer or phone, write them down on paper or notation software or even have your family help you play the different layers if you want.

Now that you have composed and recorded your own Self-Soothing piece remember you can always come back to it anytime you need it, anytime you want to relax or even to help you go to sleep.

While you listen to your piece, practice letting go. Calm your mind, ease away stress, breath deeply, relax and enjoy your self-soothing sounds!