

## Music Activity: Playlist of Life – A Musical Journey

**Purpose:** This activity facilitates access to feelings, emotional expression, and memory of significant times associated with music. This is an exploration of the meaning of music in life, from which an individualized playlist can be created for shifting mood states, evoking memories, and stimulating cognition.

<b>Time Needed:</b> 3-25 min.	<b>Ages:</b> No limit.	<b>Materials:</b> None needed. <i>Optional:</i> Paper and pen for jotting down ideas; smart phone, notebook, or other listening device.
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### Introduction (time: 5-10 min.)

Ask one or more of the following questions:

- “What kind of music do you like?”
- “What are your favorite songs or pieces of music? What’s special to you about them? When or where did you first hear them? When do you listen to them now?”
- “What music do you listen to when you want to relax? Get energized? Get inspired?”

and music associated with them? What music may have been significant to you at those times?”

- **Personal Events:** “Reflecting on significant personal moments in your life, what particular music might remind you of those times?”

*NOTE:* Memories associated with music are strongest from adolescent years. Some participants may wish to spend more time reminiscing, while others may be more interested in or open to talking about the meaning behind their memories.

### Activity Description (time: 5+ min)

Explore the meaning of music in the journey of life with one or more of the following questions: *Optional:* Listen together to the music.

- **Childhood:** “What are some songs that you remember from childhood? How were they important to you?”
- **Adolescence:** “What kind of music did you like to listen to as a teenager? What songs were really popular then? What did you think about them? When did you listen to them – at dances, in the car, when studying, etc.?”
- **Adulthood:** “What, if any, songs have been important to you as an adult – perhaps in your role as parent or caregiver?”
- **Positive Memories:** “Try to think of a time in your life or an event that made you really happy. What special music may have been associated with that time or event?”
- **Connectedness:** “Some songs make us feel connected to other people or something bigger than ourselves. They may make us feel grateful or fill us with a sense of awe. They may even bring tears to our eyes. What, if any, songs do that for you?”
- **Culture:** “What songs do you sing or listen to that are related to family, religious, cultural or holiday traditions?”
- **World Events:** “What about important historical events

### Reflection (time: 5 min.)

- “What songs might you want to include in a playlist?”
- “In what ways could listening to music be helpful during the day? How might you use it?”
- “Imagining music can have similar effects on the brain as actually listening to it. If you try to imagine hearing the music in your mind, how does it make you feel?”
- Thank them for participating.

If actual music was listened to together:

- “How was that experience for you? What did you notice?”
- “What did you discover as you were listening? Did anything surprise you?”
- “How did your body feel while you were listening to the music?”
- “What thoughts or images came to mind while you were listening to the music?”
- “How do you feel now compared to how you felt before you started listening to the music?”
- “What other pieces of music might help you feel this same way?”