

# ADULT USER MANUAL

SAFE & SOUND PROTOCOL  
DELIVERY MANUAL



As our brain-body connection becomes more organized, we better process the world around us and become more confident, happy and engaged.

# CONTENTS

USING THE SAFE AND SOUND PROTOCOL	1
What is it?	
What effects does it have?	
How does it work?	
Does it work?	
INTRODUCTION TO THE APP	4
Volume	
Headphone recommendations	
Length of listening sessions	
Tech support	
SUGGESTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE SSP	5
An ideal environment	
HOW DO I GET STARTED?	6
INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE SSP	7
Encouraged activities	
Activities not recommended	
An ideal time of day	
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS	9
LOOKING FOR AND SUPPORTING CHANGES IN YOURSELF AFTER THE SSP	11
WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO SEE RESULTS? HOW SOON CAN I REPEAT THE PROGRAM?	13
CONTACT INFORMATION	14

# USING THE SAFE AND SOUND PROTOCOL (SSP)

## What is it?

The Safe and Sound Protocol™ (SSP) is a 5-hour program designed to reduce stress and auditory sensitivity while enhancing social engagement and resilience. The SSP uses prosodic vocal music that has been modulated to train the neural network associated with listening to focus on the frequency envelope of human speech.

Once human speech is properly perceived, the portal to social engagement is opened.

You'll find you are better able to interpret not only the meaning, but also the intent, in conversations. And the sense of safety that is achieved by better understanding the fluctuations in human voice calms your physiological state. Once the nervous system is better balanced, further social connection is enhanced, further therapy is accelerated, and behavioral regulation is improved.





# USING THE SAFE AND SOUND PROTOCOL (SSP)

## What effects does it have?

The SSP is not a cure for any underlying disorder or diagnosis. Rather, it can affect some of the associated symptoms to improve one's life experience, including....

- Prosody (tone and inflection) of voice
- Facial expressivity
- Emotional control
- Anxiety
- Mood
- And more

## How does it work?

The nervous system uses tone of voice as one way to determine safety. The SSP involves listening to specially processed vocal music over the course of several days.

Different frequencies of sound communicate different information. Low frequencies are associated with sounds of threat and danger while high frequencies communicate alert. As described in the Polyvagal Theory, social behavior and emotional regulation are only possible when the nervous system deems the environment safe. While we can hear sounds from 20-20,000 Hz, the frequencies associated with human speech (from about 1,000-5,000 Hz) are what convey that you are safe with your friends and family. This begins with our first breath; the melody and intonation of a parent's voice calms an infant and we continue to subconsciously crave these signals as adults.

For various reasons (the effects of trauma, low muscle tone, or even a history of ear infections), one's ability to process the sounds of human voice can be impaired. This can result in a learned disuse of the neural network associated with speech perception. By emphasizing the frequencies of human voice and modulating the frequency bands within the music, the neural network associated with listening is exercised and perception of the full range of human voice is improved.

# USING THE SAFE AND SOUND PROTOCOL (SSP)

The five hours of listening to the SSP can restart this neural network to improve perception of the sounds of human connection. Positive social communication will maintain it. When the tone and prosody of human voice can be better processed, it can provide signals of safety and calm to the nervous system. Suddenly, cues of safety exist in the voices of friends and family. Once a sense of safety is achieved, emotional resilience and nervous system regulation are possible. This will activate the parasympathetic nervous system and enable not only better communication, but better regulation overall.

## Does it work?

- Research: <https://integratedlistening.com/research/#SSP>
- Case study: Adult with trauma history experiences increased self-regulation and connects with others <https://integratedlistening.com/blog/2019/05/15/case-study-adult-with-trauma-history-regulates-self-destructive-habits-no-longer-feels-fear-of-others/>
- Case study: Mother and daughter co-regulate using the protocol <https://integratedlistening.com/blog/2019/06/28/case-study-a-frightened-adult-feels-calmer-and-gains-courage/>
- Holistic therapist tries the SSP and experiences a personal transformation <https://integratedlistening.com/blog/2020/08/06/lisa-gale-safe-sound-protocol>  
*Note: This case study discusses doing the SSP in five consecutive days. Please be aware that, while this is an option, we find that the SSP can be slowed down considerably to suit your tolerance while still being quite effective.*
- SSP-specific Case Studies and Research: <https://integratedlistening.com/case-studies/>

# INTRODUCTION TO THE APP

Download the Unyte-iLs app from the Google Play Store or Apple App Store.

1. Enter the email address and password used to create your account.
2. Select your program.

## Volume

Before each listening session, use the Volume Test to set the volume level to the lowest comfortable level that you can hear the music. LOUDER is NOT better. The volume should not be adjusted again that day, even during points when the music will seem very soft. *Adjust the listening time by dragging either end of the status bar to the recommended length of time.*

## Headphone Recommendations

Inexpensive headphones that surround the ear can effectively deliver the music of the SSP. Noise cancelling headphones are NOT recommended.

Bluetooth headphones can be used when kept close to the playing device, to avoid disruption. *The SSP does not use bone conduction. Please be sure if you have bone conduction headphones that the bone conduction is turned off.*

## Length of Listening Sessions

The maximum recommended listening per day is 60 minutes. Your SSP provider will work with you to decide the pacing of your listening. It is critical that you follow their recommendations on how long and how frequent your listening sessions will be. Please keep in touch with your provider after each listening session and let them know if you experience any emotional or physical discomfort during your program. While listening to music may seem innocuous, the SSP can be very potent. A guiding principle of the SSP is “Less is More”. Please do not power through the listening. Your results will be better if you are feeling safe and relaxed as you listen.

## Tech Support

Find most commonly asked questions in the Support tab of the iLs website:  
[integratedlistening.com](https://integratedlistening.com)  
[service@integratedlistening.com](mailto:service@integratedlistening.com)  
Open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)

# SUGGESTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE SSP

The Safe and Sound Protocol is designed to work with a person's nervous system. When you feel safe, calm and relaxed, your nervous system will be receptive to new acoustic stimuli within the frequency band of human communication; this maximizes the effectiveness of the therapy. It is important to create a calm and quiet environment to encourage relaxation during the SSP.

## An Ideal Environment

By finding a quiet location, you will be able to:

1. feel safe and relaxed without worrying about distracting noises; and,
2. focus on listening to the music.

Keep in mind that those with sound sensitivity may be bothered by everyday noises that may go unnoticed by others. All sounds should be minimized, including human voice, both inside and outside the room where you are listening to the SSP. As the sound level of the music fluctuates throughout the program, at times it will seem very quiet, and a quiet environment will help you pay attention to all parts of the music.

# HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Do not begin your program without first speaking to your provider. We recommend that you complete the SSP Intake Form and have a frank and open conversation with them to allow them to best plan and guide your experience.

Unyte-iLs also recommends that adult listeners doing the remote SSP program have a support person available locally to provide support and regulation during listening. This support person can be a close friend, a significant other, or a current therapist or counselor. It is best if that person can be with you during the listening, and you feel safe with them being present.





# INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE SSP

## Encouraged Activities

Feel free to have a non-alcoholic drink or soft foods during the SSP (no crunchy foods). Be aware that alcohol, sugary snacks and caffeinated beverages may cause an altered physical state during the program, which can interfere with the ability of the body to listen and receive the music. Some suggested activities while listening to the SSP are looking through photo albums, any types of crafts including weaving, painting, drawing, doodling, coloring, working with clay, jigsaw puzzles, quiet board or card games, etc. Your Provider may have additional suggestions.

## Activities Not Recommended

Use of cell phones, videos, apps, and video games, or any type of time spent on a screen while listening to the program is discouraged. Due to the cognitive dissonance that can occur with any of these items (i.e., focusing on the video so much that the individual “tunes out” everything else – including the music!), we discourage the use of ANY screens during the program, even if the sound is muted. Increased movement activities can raise the heart rate and move the nervous system out of feeling “safe”, thus potentially reducing the effectiveness of the SSP. Walking around the room is acceptable, but Unyte-iLs discourages excessive movement during listening, including walking outside, exercising or doing chores.



# INSTRUCTIONS FOR DELIVERING THE SSP

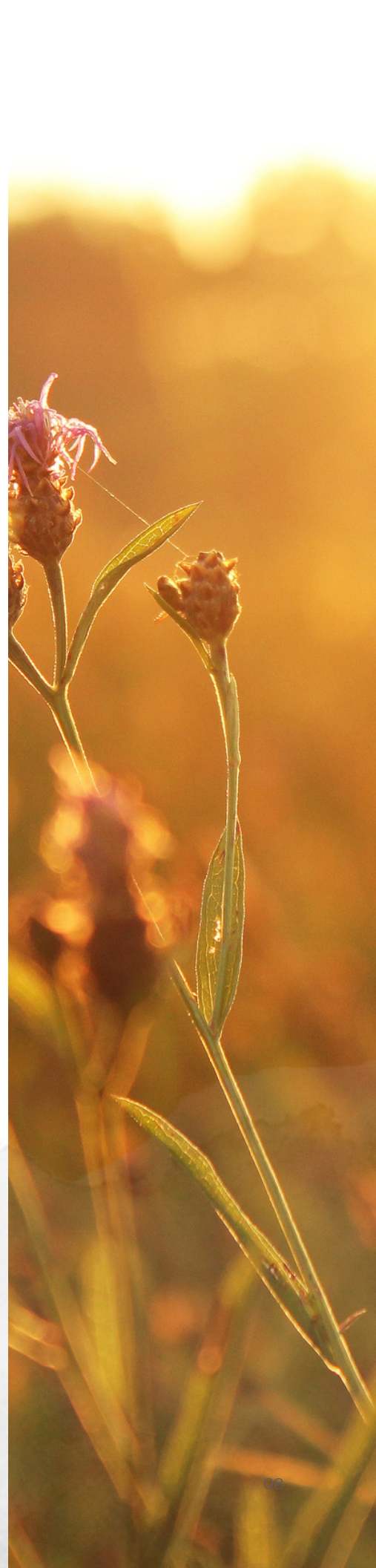
## An Ideal Time of Day

For the majority of people, listening earlier in the day is better than later in the day, because there is a potential for the program to be alerting. It could interrupt your sleep patterns. It is also good to consider doing it earlier, because for many people, the brain starts to slow down in the evening, as it is getting ready for rest.

Try to find a time in the day where your energy is at an appropriate level (neither over- nor under-aroused).

If you need to take a break from the music, pause the music and resume when you are able to do so. Slowing down the protocol, either upon the advice of your practitioner, or when you feel overwhelmed, may help with processing and integration of the therapy, which can potentially provide better outcomes and reduce negative side effects. Please consult with your SSP Provider if you are unsure when to pause or end a listening session.

The atmosphere should be comfortable, relaxing, pleasant, friendly and encouraging to you.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Does the program need to be delivered in five consecutive days?**

No. One of the guiding principles of the SSP is “Less is More”. The SSP is designed to exercise the neural network associated with listening and this may fatigue the middle ear muscles and cause a temporary feeling of exhaustion. This may be a cue to reduce the length or the frequency of your listening sessions.

In addition, be attentive to changes in your behavioral state. Feeling agitated, overly emotional, exhausted, or pain of any kind are definitely things to share with your provider. She or he will likely adjust the pace of your listening schedule for the best results. It would be wise to keep a journal of your SSP experience and how you have felt during or after a listening session to inform your conversations with your provider.

**Does the protocol need to be scheduled for the same time each day?**

No. You can schedule the protocol at different times on each day. The goal is to select a time of day when you are alert, with a schedule that works best for you to do the protocol.

**Can I use ear-buds instead of headphones?**

No. Headphones that surround the ear block out environmental noise to help you attend better to the music.

**I am feeling reluctant to complete the protocol. What can I do?**

If you become overwhelmed or feel anxious, pause the music and give yourself a 5-10 minute break. If in rare cases, you feel severe discomfort or pain, promptly stop the session, and contact your provider. Once you are pain free, perhaps in a day or two, you may restart the SSP using shorter sessions (i.e., 10-15 minutes) depending on the advice of your provider. If you are having a "bad day" or a busy/overly scheduled day, consider skipping that day and resuming the next day. Less is more. There is no reason to "power through" the protocol.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**I am feeling overly tired during protocol week. Is this normal?**

Many users have reported fatigue during the protocol, especially around Hour 3. The SSP is working the nervous system - the middle ear muscles, the brain, and the autonomic nervous system - so feeling tired is common. If you are overly concerned about fatigue, please contact your therapist. On the other hand do not worry if you do NOT feel overly tired, either. In general, we have received reports of improved sleep patterns after completing the SSP.

# LOOKING FOR AND SUPPORTING CHANGES IN YOURSELF AFTER THE SSP

The SSP is a portal to the Social Engagement System, and it can have powerful impacts on how you interact with the world. Resulting new behaviors reflect an increased sense of safety in the world, yet they are fragile and can be disrupted if not recognized and responded to in a positive manner. What comes after the SSP can solidify and extend these gains. The repeated and consistent responses from people around you will enhance your new sense of safety and reinforce new, positive behaviors and change.

The following guide can help you, and the other people in your life know what to look for over the 2-8 weeks following the completion of the program and how they can best support you.

## look

You may now be making more eye contact with your family, friends and/or coworkers. Eye contact is a sign that you are feeling safer and are receptive to social behavior.

## listen

You may now understand others' speech on an improved level. You may not have to ask others to repeat themselves when others ask you something. You may also notice that loud noises may not bother you as much. Once you complete the SSP, your ear muscles will be learning how to "ignore" loud noises, and this allows you to focus on speech and communication.

## regulate

You may now have better control over your emotional expression. Meltdowns and outbursts are typically a sign of dysregulation, or uncontrollable feelings. Meltdowns can occur for a lot of reasons, some of which may be addressed by the SSP.



# LOOKING FOR AND SUPPORTING CHANGES IN YOURSELF AFTER THE SSP

## social

You may now feel that you have improved social interactions. Being social involves reciprocal interactions, and communication between people is amplified by eye contact and active listening.

## love

You may now be able to show and be more expressive of love and affection for other people, including being more comfortable giving smiles and hugs.

## support

The SSP is only one way to improve your emotional regulation. Other ways you can continue to help yourself include:

- play woodwind instruments (exercises breathing control and ear muscles)
- sing alone or with others (exercises breathing control and ear muscles)
- yoga (exercises breathing, posture and self-control)
- meditate (exercises breathing, posture and self-control)

## additional support

Maintain a safe and pleasant environment for yourself. Some ideas include calming vocal music, gentle lighting, soft surroundings and fabrics, pleasant fragrances (or a fragrance free space, if preferred), and avoiding loud or abrupt noises overall.

Continued work with your therapist: The SSP is designed to work with treatment, not to replace it. By providing a means for you to feel calmer and be more socially engaging, it will allow the therapist/clinician to help you engage in the protocol, and this should help you to respond positively.

# WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO SEE RESULTS

Because every brain and nervous system is unique, it is difficult to predict when you will see the benefits of your program. Typically, the majority of SSP listeners will see benefits from 2-8 weeks after completing the therapy, and some may even see benefits as the program unfolds. One thing to note is that you may experience negative side effects during your program, as well as the week or two following completion of the program. This is very normal, but it is important to remember that these side effects are temporary as your nervous system adjusts and reorganizes. Take care of yourself by making your world as small as possible (ie. keeping your schedule routine, and low key) throughout the program, as well as for the week or two after to give yourself time to adjust to the new changes you will potentially experience.

# HOW SOON CAN I REPEAT THE PROGRAM

Please consult with your practitioner about this, as it is recommended that there be at least 2-3 months in between administrations of the SSP. It is not recommended to repeat the SSP immediately after finishing the program, even if you feel like you have seen some nice changes, as your nervous system can become overactivated as a result. SSP Balance can be used immediately post-SSP to maintain and integrate the impact of the Core program

# WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU

We would love to hear your experience, and/or testimonial, so keep in touch with your provider to share the changes you notice after completing the program and/or send us an email to [mystory@integratedlistening.com](mailto:mystory@integratedlistening.com) to share your story.

Happy listening, and we look forward to hearing from you!

## NOTES

[illegible]