



SABRINA CARPENTER TAKES US INSIDE HER MOST CONFESSIONAL SONG YET



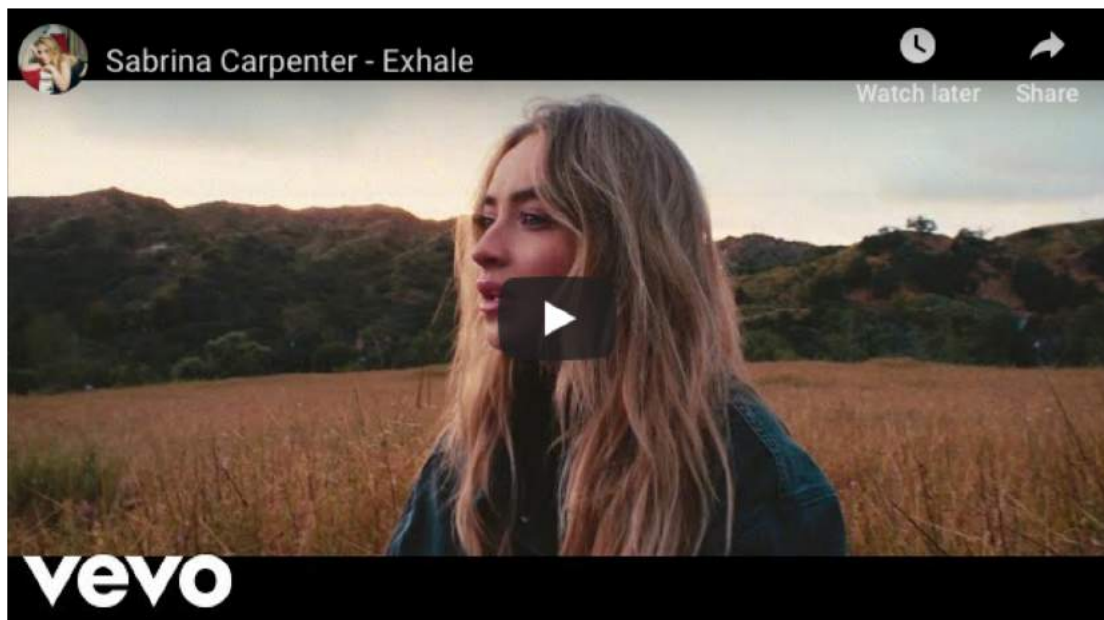
'I'M CONSTANTLY REMINDED THAT YOU DON'T KNOW
WHAT OTHER PEOPLE ARE GOING THROUGH, REGARDLESS
OF WHAT THEIR LIFE LOOKS LIKE'

By Lauren Rearick

It took only one performance of “Exhale” for a fan to show [Sabrina Carpenter](#) a tattoo inspired by the song, which speaks openly of the singer’s experience with anxiety. She hadn’t even released the track’s recording; for the time being, it was just a song she sang live, as a comedown at the end of her set.

And as she tells MTV News, the tattoo served as a reminder of the impact music can make in all respects — and especially when it comes to decreasing continued stigma surrounding mental health conditions.

On [May 17](#), in the midst of Mental Health Month, Sabrina released “Exhale,” ahead of her forthcoming album, *Singular: Act II*. Although the release of the song touches on her emotions surrounding anxiety, its arrival wasn’t specifically tied to the month of mental health awareness. Fortunately, Sabrina says the timing was perfect, and a song that she had been nervous about sharing made its way into the world at the exact right time.



The *Girl Meets World* actor explained to MTV News that the track was her attempt of describing what anxiety feels like for her. “Anxiety is a very hard topic to put in a bubble,” she said. “I don’t think you know what it is because it is a thousand questions that you can’t answer. Sometimes it feels like you can’t breathe; you don’t know where to start, you don’t know where to begin to start feeling better and to start healing yourself.”

So at a recent recording session, she began to put down thoughts, that turned into lyrics like, “Who put the baby in charge? / It's already hard to buy all the parts and learn to use them. / Who put the world on my back and not in my hands?” For the accompanying video, Sabrina is seated in a field, and she sings of wanting just a minute to collect herself, asking, “Can I exhale for a minute? / Can I get this out in the open? / Can I sit down for a second? / Can I breathe?”

As on the of the [40 million American adults](#) diagnosed with anxiety, Sabrina is still doing her best to understand what method of self-care and treatment work for her. “It’s hard because sometimes you want to talk, other times you don’t want to talk to anybody,” she said. “It’s about doing things that keep yourself close to yourself, because at certain points I feel very far away from myself.” She credited baths and taking a moment to sit and breathe, as she does in the video, as two forms of self-care that have helped her. Prior to the release of this song, Sabrina had [called](#) anxiety her “biggest struggle,” but she shied away from singing about it. “I never wanted anybody to feel like I was complaining... I have so many things to be grateful for,” she told MTV News. But she credits a switch in thinking with helping her open up when she needs to. “It’s taking that second to remind yourself that just because you have so much to be grateful for doesn’t mean that there aren’t things you’re internally struggling with.”