Week 3 — Solutions, Prioritization & Wireframes

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1. Brainstorm Solutions

1.1 Context & Problem Recall

Based on the validated **P0 problem** from Week 2: “Users are struggling to find songs that match their current mood or vibe because Spotify’s search and discovery systems rely on literal keywords and static playlists rather than emotional or contextual understanding.”

The goal is to **reimagine Spotify’s discovery experience** as *emotionally intelligent, expressive, and user-driven*, allowing users to communicate how they feel rather than what they want to hear.

1.2 Comprehensive Solution List

#	Feature Name	Problem Solved	Feature Description	Potential Impact
1	**Semantic / NLP Vibe Search** *(Flagship Feature)*	Spotify’s search is keyword-based and fails to capture mood or intent.	Enables users to type or say phrases like “music to recharge after work” or “songs to feel motivated.” Spotify interprets emotional and contextual cues using NLP and surfaces *individual song* recommendations that fit the described vibe.	Directly solves the root problem; enhances emotional connection, satisfaction, and engagement.
2	**Emotional Gradient Bar** *(Mood Selector)*	Users can’t easily express how they’re feeling in the moment.	Adds a gradient slider ranging from *pumped-up → calm → sad → nostalgic* on the homepage, letting users visually adjust recommendations based on mood.	Simple, visual, and intuitive; reduces friction in expressing emotions and increases session relevance.

3	**Freshness Slider *(Dynamic Discovery Control)***	Playlists and recommendations often feel repetitive and predictable.	Adds a slider on the *Now Playing* or playlist view that lets users control how much novelty vs familiarity appears in upcoming recommendations.	Keeps discovery fluid and user-driven; boosts engagement by offering control and freshness.
4	**AI DJ / Conversational Curator**	Discovery feels mechanical and lacks emotional depth or interaction.	Introduces a short conversational flow (text or voice) where the AI DJ asks questions like “Feeling energetic or mellow?” and curates accordingly.	Adds human-like personalization and emotional depth.
5	**Discovery Bridge** *(‘Find It on Spotify’)*	Users find songs on TikTok / YouTube but struggle to locate them on Spotify.	Lets users paste lyrics or short descriptions (e.g., “that trending TikTok song…”) and Spotify finds the right track.	Keeps external discovery moments within Spotify’s ecosystem.
6	**Freshness / Uniqueness Indicators**	Users don’t understand why songs are recommended.	Adds badges showing how “fresh,” “unique,” or “familiar” each track is to the user’s profile.	Builds transparency and trust in the recommendation engine.
7	**Emotion Tags & Listening Insights**	Users lack awareness of emotional listening habits.	Tags songs with emotional labels (“Chill,” “Hyped,” “Nostalgic”) and visualizes monthly mood trends.	Strengthens user identity, shareability, and connection.
8	**Voice Emotion Detection** *(Experimental)*	Users may prefer passive mood recognition.	Uses voice tone to infer emotion and suggest suitable playlists.	Futuristic differentiator but high risk and privacy-sensitive.
9	**Vibe Loop** *(Adaptive Mood Session)*	The queue and autoplay don’t adjust to mood shifts mid-session.	Evolves playback into a *session-aware* experience that changes with skips or likes.	Seamless, adaptive listening that evolves with user mood.

1.3 Categorization by Implementation Stage

Priority Stage	Features	Rationale
MVP Core (Must-Have)	1. Semantic / NLP Vibe Search 2. Emotional Gradient Bar 3. Freshness Slider	Directly address the core user pain of expressing intent and finding emotionally relevant music; highest impact on engagement and satisfaction.
Phase 2 (Should-Have)	4. AI DJ / Conversational Curator 5. Discovery Bridge 6. Freshness Indicators 7. Emotion Tags & Insights	Deepen personalization, trust, and emotional attachment after MVP validation.
Experimental / Future (Could-Have)	8. Voice Emotion Detection 9. Vibe Loop	Long-term differentiation; useful for R&D and innovation cycles.

1.4 Summary Insight

By shifting discovery from *“what do you want to hear?”* to *“how do you want to feel?”*, Spotify can reclaim its edge in emotional discovery — transforming passive listening into an active, expressive, and adaptive experience.
These ideas redefine Spotify’s value proposition from **algorithmic personalization** to **empathic personalization** — an experience that not only understands users’ music taste but also their emotional context.

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2. Feature Details

Feature 1 – Vibe Search (Semantic / NLP-Based Song Recommendations)

One-Line Summary
Lets users describe how they feel in natural language — like *“upbeat music to unwind after*

work" — and instantly get **personalized song suggestions** that match their emotional intent rather than static playlists.

User Story

Aisha, who's on her way home after a long Friday at work, opens Spotify to find some happy, upbeat songs as she feels excited about the weekend ahead. She searches for "feeling good and energized" so that Spotify can recommend songs that lift her mood, help her unwind, and get her into a weekend mindset.

High-Level User Flow

1. Aisha opens the **Search** tab.
2. A prompt reads *"Describe your vibe… e.g., music to recharge after work."*
3. She types *"upbeat music to unwind after work."*
4. Spotify's NLP interprets emotional tone and context (*energy = high, mood = positive, context = post-work evening*).
5. A **list of 20–25 songs** appears, each showing:
    - *Vibe Match %* (closeness to her taste + mood).
    - "+" button to queue or save.
6. Aisha likes/skips tracks; Spotify learns and refines future vibe searches.
7. She can optionally save songs as a *Vibe Mix* or tag them for future feedback.

Why It Matters

- Makes discovery **emotion-first** and **song-centric**, not playlist-driven.
- Ideal for quick, situation-relevant discovery moments (commutes, pre-party, post-work).
- Strengthens Spotify's emotional intelligence by letting users *talk in moods, not metadata.*

Feature 2 – Emotional Gradient Bar (Mood Selector)

One-Line Summary
A color-coded emotional gradient on the homepage that helps users slide through moods, recognize what they're feeling, and instantly receive song suggestions that match their emotional state.

User Story

Rahul, who likes to take post-dinner walks, wants to listen to some soft, mellow, and relaxing songs. He isn't always sure what exactly he's feeling and often finds it hard to pinpoint his emotions. He'd like Spotify to help him identify his mood so he can pick songs accordingly.

High-Level User Flow

1. Rahul opens **Home**, seeing a horizontal **Mood Slider** bar (color gradients: blue = calm, yellow = happy, red = energetic, gray = reflective).
2. Sliding across colors reveals **emotion labels** (“Calm,” “Peaceful,” “Joyful,” “Energetic”).
3. Rahul selects *Mellow / Calm.*
4. The homepage **refreshes instantly** with songs aligned to that mood; “Top Pick for Your Mood” starts playing.
5. He can fine-tune the slider anytime to adjust recommendations.
6. Spotify learns from his selections and listening duration to refine future suggestions.

Why It Matters

- Bridges **emotion and action**, guiding users who struggle to verbalize moods.
- Visually intuitive and fast — no typing required.
- Promotes emotional awareness while giving Spotify richer mood data.

Design Inspiration:
Based on the **Plutchik Emotion Wheel**, the gradient uses color to make emotional navigation sensory and engaging.

Feature 3 – Freshness Slider (Dynamic Discovery Control)

One-Line Summary
Lets users control how similar or novel their next song recommendations are — from familiar favorites to completely new discoveries — with an intuitive freshness slider.

User Story

Ruchi, who listens to music during her gym sessions, wants to control how fresh or familiar her next song recommendations are. She enjoys discovering new tracks that match her energy but doesn’t want to stray too far from her favorite genre, so she can keep her workouts both motivating and musically exciting.

High-Level User Flow

1. Ruchi opens **Now Playing** or her **Gym Playlist**.
2. Below “Next Up,” a **Freshness Slider** appears: *“How fresh do you want your next songs to be?”*
3. Adjustment options:
    - 0–20 % → Same vibe
    - 20–40 % → Slight variation
    - 40–60 % → Balanced mix
    - 60–80 % → New but related
    - 80–100 % → Completely fresh
4. Adjusting updates the upcoming queue in real time.
5. Spotify learns from likes/skips to fine-tune her exploration comfort zone.

6. Each playlist remembers its preferred freshness level (e.g., high for gym, low for chill).

Why It Matters

- Tackles **recommendation fatigue** — Spotify's biggest pain point.
- Empowers users with transparency and choice.
- Balances novelty with familiarity, keeping discovery fresh yet grounded.

Design Note:
A subtle color gradient (green → yellow → orange → red) visually communicates the degree of novelty.

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3. Feature Prioritization

3.1 Detailed RICE Analysis per Feature

Vibe Search (Semantic / NLP-Based Song Recommendations)

Reach: High — Based on primary research, nearly 75% of participants expressed difficulty finding songs that matched their mood or intent. Adjusting for sample bias and aligning with secondary research trends, it's reasonable to assume that around 60% of Spotify users face this challenge. Since this feature enhances the core search experience — one of Spotify's most-used functions — its reach spans a broad segment of both free and premium users.

Impact: Very High — Music is deeply emotional, and users consistently emphasized the importance of listening to songs that reflect or influence how they feel. By enabling mood- and intent-based song discovery, this feature directly enhances Spotify's emotional connection with users. It transforms search from a transactional tool into an expressive experience — driving longer sessions, higher satisfaction, and stronger engagement.

Confidence: High — The problem has been validated through both primary interviews and secondary research. Users are already attempting to express emotions through search ("songs for rainy days," "music to feel better"), which shows a clear unmet need. The alignment between user intent and current product limitations makes this a high-confidence opportunity.

Effort: Low–Medium — Given Spotify's existing NLP and recommendation infrastructure, implementing natural language-based search queries is technically feasible. The main work involves expanding emotional taxonomy and refining semantic understanding — not overhauling existing systems.

Emotional Gradient Bar (Mood Selector)

Reach: Medium–High — Since the feature lives directly on the homepage, it's instantly visible and easy to use. It can reach both casual and active listeners because it doesn't require typing or deep interaction — just a simple swipe.

Impact: High — User interviews showed that when people can't find songs that match their mood on the first try, they tend to retry with different keywords or switch apps. By allowing users to visually explore and select from a range of moods, the Emotional Gradient Bar simplifies the decision process and makes discovery intuitive. This can directly reduce frustration and improve engagement time.

Confidence: Medium — While users expressed a clear desire for mood-based discovery, it's uncertain how comfortable they'd be with color-coded emotional input initially. However, the concept aligns strongly with user psychology and Spotify's existing playlist data, making it a promising bet.

Effort: Low–Medium — Implementation would rely on existing mood-based song categorization and personalization models. The key effort lies in front-end design (gradient UI and mood mapping), while backend logic can repurpose Spotify's current "mood playlist" infrastructure.

Freshness Slider (Dynamic Discovery Control)

Reach: High — Spotify's recommendation fatigue is one of the most commonly discussed issues among regular users. Nearly every active listener experiences repetition in their recommendations or playlists. Since this feature would appear on the Now Playing screen — a high-traffic area used daily by millions — it would reach a large portion of Spotify's active audience.

Impact: Very High — Repetitive recommendations are among Spotify's top user frustrations. The Freshness Slider directly addresses this by giving users control over how similar or different their next songs will be. This balances novelty with familiarity — keeping discovery exciting without alienating users. By solving one of Spotify's biggest perception gaps ("same songs again and again"), this feature could significantly improve engagement and long-term satisfaction.

Confidence: Medium — While user frustration with repetitive recommendations is well documented, the success of a self-adjustable freshness control depends on user adoption and UI clarity. However, the concept aligns closely with Spotify's personalization philosophy, making it a promising mid-confidence bet.

Effort: Low–Medium — The backend logic for updating queues and fetching similar tracks already exists. The main work lies in adding a UI control (the slider) and linking it to Spotify's

recommendation model. It’s a lightweight feature with high payoff potential, leveraging existing systems with minimal complexity.

3.2 RICE Scoring Overview

Feature	Reach	Impact	Confidence	Effort	RICE Score	Priority
Vibe Search (Semantic / NLP-Based Song Recommendations)	5	5	4	2	**50**	**Highest**
Emotional Gradient Bar (Mood Selector)	4	4	3	2	**24**	**High**
Freshness Slider (Dynamic Discovery Control)	5	5	3	3	**25**	**High**

3.3 Interpretation & Rationale

- **Vibe Search** ranks highest overall, as it directly addresses Spotify’s validated discovery gap. It combines broad reach, strong emotional impact, and high feasibility — making it the MVP cornerstone.
- **Emotional Gradient Bar** follows as an intuitive, visually engaging feature that complements Vibe Search by simplifying mood expression for less active users.
- **Freshness Slider** ranks close behind — highly impactful but slightly more effortful to implement and test for adoption, positioning it as a logical Phase 2 extension.

4. Wireframe -
https://www.figma.com/proto/ZIAaxYW9PtvdCtK7hyVBT8/HelloPM-Assignment?node-id=0-1&t=KwZ4DR9fjH48TJqg-1