



PLAYING WELL WITH OTHERS

Sound advice for playing together in a group or ensemble. (Thoughts from Chick Corea, Bill Frisell, and others)

Presented by Ben Hassenger

1) Listen! Listening is the number one thing!

- * When you're playing with a band, you need to have your attention away from yourself.
- * Focus as much as you can be on the people around you; look at, and listen to, the other people in the band.
- * Find your place in the mix and make your sound blend. Listen to your sound (volume, tone, and what notes/chords you are playing) and adjust it to the rest of the group and the room. It's called a band for a reason and unless you are the star at a particular moment, it's always better to let the ensemble shine as a whole.
- * Play to make the other musicians sound good. Listen to the group and play things that will make the overall music sound good.
- * Listening is such a huge thing. It sounds simple, but it's a lifelong struggle to really, really listen.

2) Mix it up to add complimentary textures to the combined arrangement.

- * Alternate chord inversions
- * Varied strums
- * Dynamics
- * Use contrast and balance the elements: high/low, fast/slow, loud/soft, tense/relaxed, dense/sparse.
- * Create phrases that contrast with and develop the phrases of the other players.

3) Space is the Place

- * Leave space, create space, intentionally create places where you don't play. Create space, then place something in it.
- * Play only what you hear; if you don't hear anything, don't play anything.
- * Play with intention; don't improvise on endlessly.
- * Create each sound, phrase, and piece with choice; deliberately, not mechanically.
- * Less is more!

Ask yourself: "How can I best serve the song and the group?" "Am I taking up too much space, or perhaps not enough?" "How can I best compliment and enhance what others are doing?" Above all, focus on having fun and being part of a creative and learning process.

Adapted from essays by Bill Frisell and Chick Corea with additional input from Mark Anderson, David Nefesh, and Mike Skory.

<https://www.guitarplayer.com/lessons/jazz-guru-bill-frisells-top-ten-tips-for-guitarists>

<https://jtspartz.medium.com/chick-coreas-cheap-but-good-advice-for-playing-music-in-a-group-b9b52b49a96e>

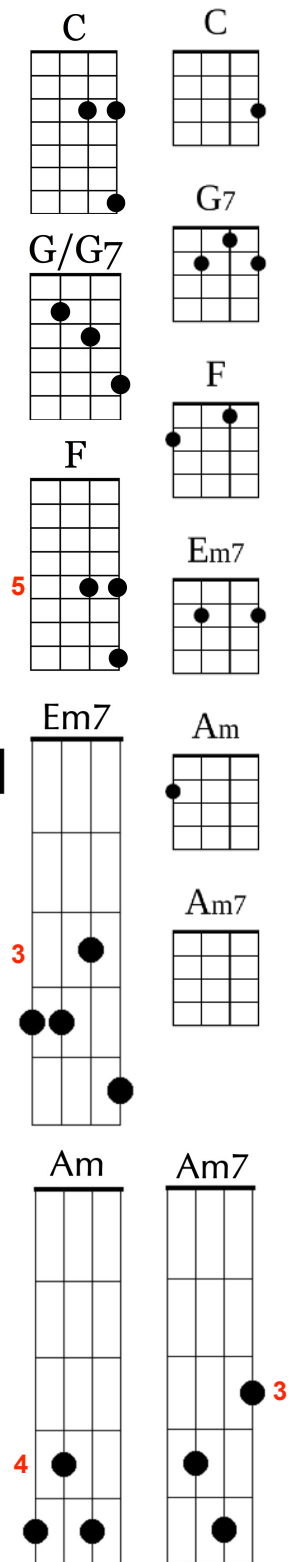
The Rose artist: Bette Midler writer: Amanda McBroom

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxSTzSEiZ2c>

Some say [C] love it is a [G7] river
That [F] drowns the [G7] tender [C] reed
Some say [C] love it is a [G7] razor
That [F] leads your [G7] soul to [C] bleed
Some say [Em7] love it is a [Am] hunger [Am7]
An [F] endless aching [G7] need
I say [C] love it is a [G7] flower
And [F] you [G7] its only [C] seed

It's the [C] heart afraid of [G7] breaking
That [F] never [G7] learns to [C] dance
It's the [C] dream afraid of [G7] waking
That [F] never [G7] takes a [C] chance
It's the [Em7] one who won't be [Am] taken [Am7]
Who [F] cannot seem to [G7] give
And the [C] soul afraid of [G7] dying
That [F] never [G7] learns to [C] live

When the [C] night has been too [G7] lonely
And the [F] road has [G7] been too [C] long
And you [C] find that love is [G7] only
For the [F] lucky [G7] and the [C] strong
Just re-[Em7]member in the [Am] winter [Am7]
For be-[F]neath the bitter [G7] snow
Lies the [C] seed that with the [G7] sun's love
In the [F] spring be[G7]comes the [C] rose



Here's a great site for chord inversions in standard and baritone tuning:
https://www.ezfolk.com/uke/chords/C_Major/c_major.html