Therapeutic Ukulele – Healthy Vibrations
Los Angeles International Ukulele Festival - September 19, 2026
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Opening and Welcome Song – Rondo Form for Group Connectedness and Individual Expression

"We're Gonna Uke, Uke, Uke" - Based on "Egg Shaking Blues" by Gary Johnson, adapted Robert Krout

A section **We're gonna [G] uke uke [G] uke, uh huh huh, we're gonna [G] uke uke [G uke, uh huh D7] huh**
We're gonna [G] uke uke [G] uke, uh huh huh, [G all D7] day [G] long

B section **We're gonna [Gx2] _____, we're gonna [G] _____[D7]_____,**
We're gonna [Gx2] _____, [G all D7] day [G] long

Some Terms and Concepts

Music Therapy - music within a therapeutic relationship to address physical, emotional, cognitive, and social needs & provided by Board Certified Music Therapists who hold a degree from an AMTA university.

Therapeutic Music - music played/sung in a healthcare setting to enhance healing atmosphere (MHT)

Therapeutic Ukulele - the learning, playing, listening to, and sharing of music on ukulele to enhance the quality of life of the player, listener, and community through a spirit of shared aloha (Krout).

The Ukulele – perfect therapeutic instrument due to accessibility, portability, ease of playing, & inviting sound
- A great example of the ukulele in music therapy is the Ukulele Kids Club
- Another is is the VA's Heroes Ukulele Group based in L.A.

The Ukulele as a Tool for Building Emotional Intelligence (EI) – encompasses self-awareness and self or co-regulation, empathy, and social skills**.** A person with high EI can handle stress and respond to challenges with resilience. Learning ukulele can boost EI and provide an avenue for self-expression

How the Brain/Body Processes Music, Mind-Body Connection, Afferent/Efferent Paths
- **Whole brain/nervous system -** cognitive engagement, brain criticality, CNS, PNS (ANS – SNS, PNS, ENS)

Song/Improvisation for Creativity, Listening, Awareness, Improvisation, Self-Expression

Based on "Coconut" – excerpted words and music by Harry Nilsson

C7
Brother bought a coconut, he bought it for a dime, his sister had another one, she paid it for a lime
She put the lime in the coconut, she drank 'em both up, she put the lime in the coconut, she drank 'em both up
She put the lime in the coconut, she drank 'em both up, she put the lime in the coconut, she called the doctor
Woke him up and said, "Doctor, ain't there nothin' I can take", I say, "Doctor, to relieve this bellyache?"
I say, "Doctor, ain't there nothin' I can take", I say, "Doctor, to relieve this bellyache?"

Vocal Improv Over C7

C7
Put the lime in the coconut, drink 'em both together, put the lime in the coconut, then you feel better
Put the lime in the coconut, drink 'em both up, put the lime in the coconut, and call me in the morning

Some More Terms and Concepts

- **Psychoneuroimmunology** - interactions between psychological/nervous/endocrine/immune systems
- **Music affects neurotransmitters**/activates brain regions involved in emotion, reward/stress regulation, the limbic system, hypothalamus, & dopamine-related reward pathways, as well as hormones
    - **Dopamine:** Drives your brain's reward, motivation, and pleasure systems
    - **Serotonin:** Acts as a natural mood stabilizer that also helps control sleep and appetite
    - **Oxytocin:** Known as the bonding or love hormone that builds trust and social connection
    - **GABA:** A main calming inhibitor that slows down brain activity to reduce stress/anxiety
    - **ACh (Acetylcholine):** Triggers muscle contractions and helps with learning and memory
    - **Endorphins:** Work as the body's natural pain relievers to ease discomfort and boost mood
    - **ACTH (Adrenocorticotropic hormone):** Tells the adrenal glands to produce and release cortisol
    - **Cortisol:** The main stress hormone that manages energy, inflammation, and physical threats
    - **Epinephrine (Adrenaline):** Triggers the "fight-or-flight" response to boost heart rate and energy
- **Limbic system,** role of hippocampus in memory and tagging emotional memories for retrieval
- **Neuroplasticity** - music can effect functional changes in the brain connections over time and after injury
- **Neurogenesis**– differentiation/growth of neural stem cells into new neurons, inc. via hippocampus
- **Enteric nervous system -** in the gut - communicates with the CNS and heavily influencing emotions/stress
- **Attunement/Engagement** - harmonious resonance between individual and music
- **Ukulele/Music for Self and Co-Regulation –** up and down regulation of activity/emotional states
- **Entrainment/Iso-Principle** – match current activity state, then stimulate or sedate
- **Emotional Normalization**/Identification/Validation/Expression- Emotional/Physical Health

Singing together can be therapeutic – it connects us and asks for openness and vulnerability

Metaphors can bypass defenses to engage emotions/allow for safely processing complex feelings via images

Music in Insight Therapy uses structured musical experiences to help process and improve self-awareness

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Song to Help Identify, Validate, Normalize, and Express Emotions (V.I.N.E. Concept)

"It's 'Cause I'm Really Mad (Let's Strum)" (identifying/expressing anger (words/music Robert Krout)

|: G7 I woke up this morning, feeling pretty mad, I looked in the mirror, what I saw looked pretty bad
C7 My face looked like a ballon getting ready to pop, G7 Problem was I didn't know how I could make it stop
Bb Then I thought of this song that I'm C7 singing to you now, and
G7 Maybe there's a way to get that D7 anger out somehow, let's
G7 Strum, let's strum, let's C7 strum, let's G7 strum
Bb Why you ask, how come? It's C 'cause I'm really mad, let's G7 strum D7 :| G7 rumble

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Closing/Goodbye Song for Group Cohesiveness and Closure

"You and Me Together in Harmony" (words/music Robert Krout)

|: C You and me, Em7 together in Am harmony Am7, waiting for Dm7 one more voice G7sus4 to G7 join us
FM7 Healing hearts with G7 music made by :| C you and me C tickle

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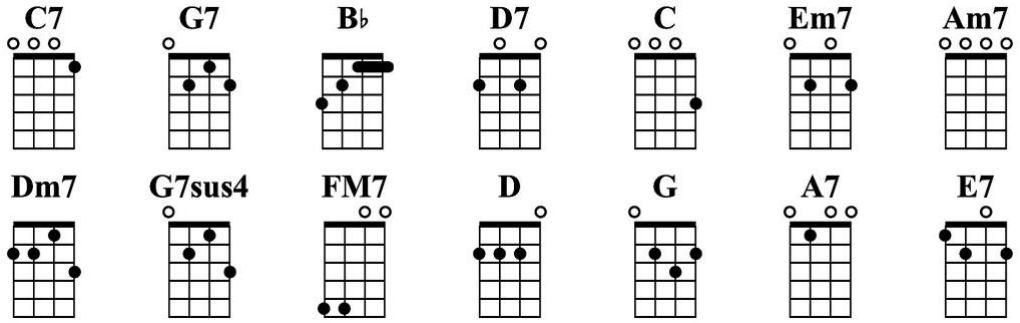
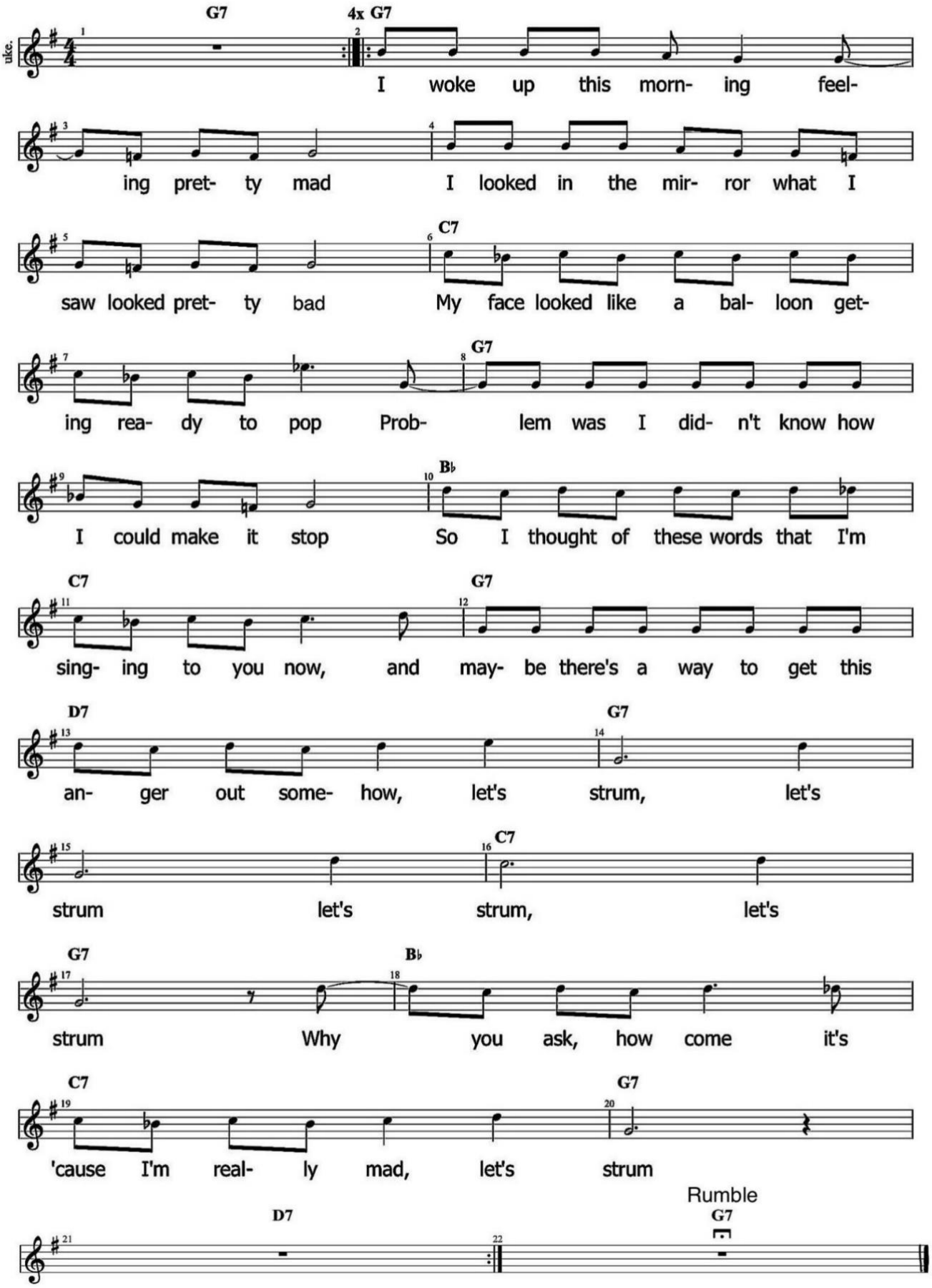


"It's 'Cause I'm Really Mad (Let's Strum)" (words/music 1999/2026 Robert Krout, ASCAP)



You and Me (Together in Harmony)

Words and music by Robert Ellis Krout (ASCAP)

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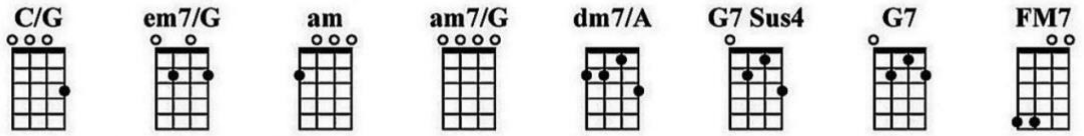
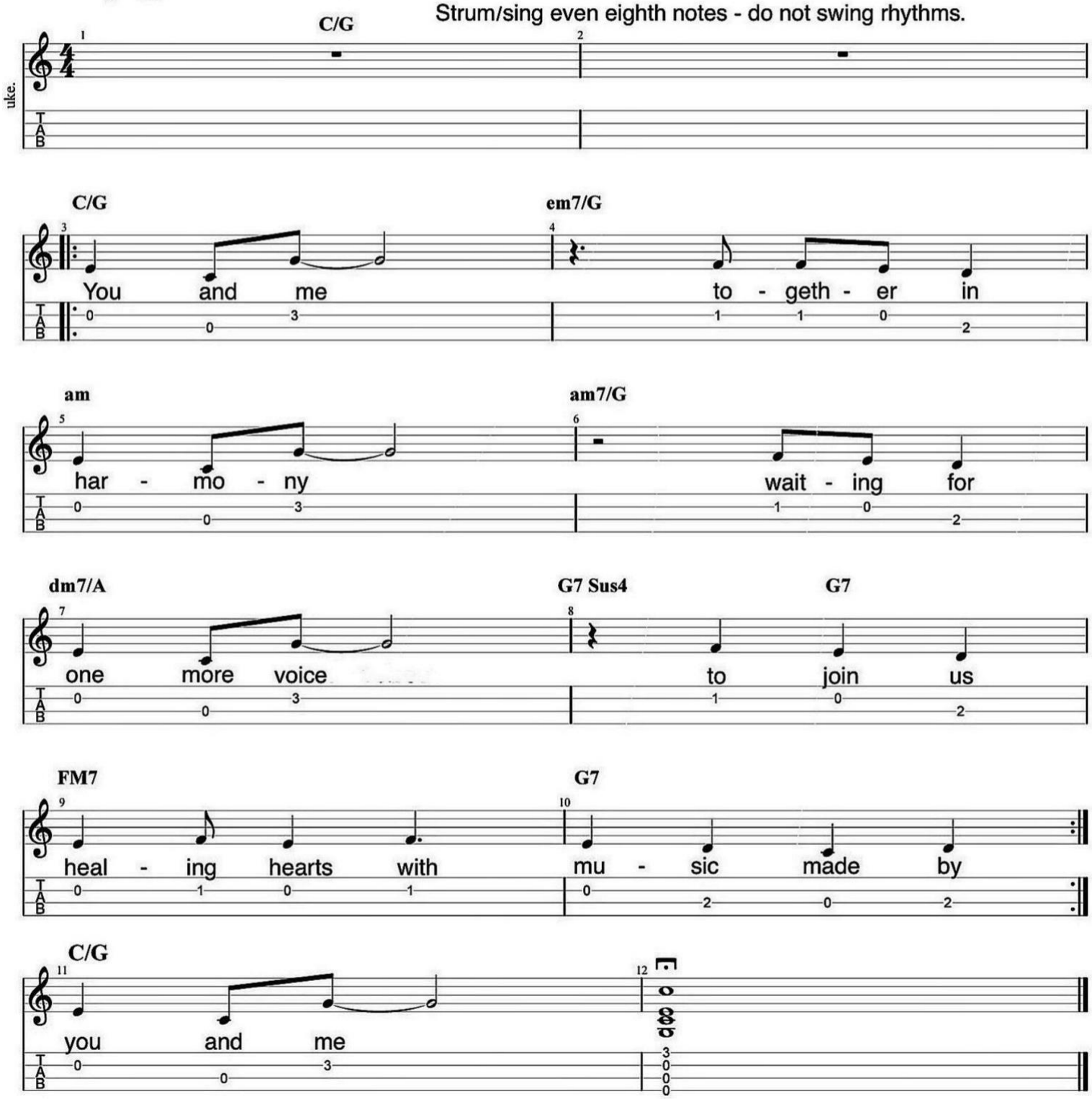


Low G
①=A ③=C
②=E ④=G

♩ = 80

To acknowledge the conclusion of a session and bring members together in closing.
Begin with one voice - others join at each repeat until all sing through second ending.
Gentle island (syncopated) strum suggested. May be fingerpicked as well.
Strum/sing even eighth notes - do not swing rhythms.



Selected Readings, Links, and Resources

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Ukulele Kids Club - https://theukc.org/

Ukulele Support System for physical challenges - https://www.facebook.com/UkuleleProsthetics/

Ukuleles Heal the World - https://www.facebook.com/ukuleleshealtheworld