

# How to Love

for guitar and string quartet

**Composer:** Avner Dorman  
**Year:** 2016  
**Duration:** 14 min  
**Orchestration:** gtr, 2vn, va, vc  
**Publisher:** G Schirmer Inc

## Program Note

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### Movements

- I. I am here for you
- II. I know you are there, and I am happy
- III. This is a happy moment
- IV. You are partly right

### Composer note

The title of this work is taken from the book of the same name, written by Thich Nhat Hanh, a Buddhist monk and peace activist from Vietnam. Each movement is titled after one of the six mantras that he outlines at the end of the book. The movements are repetitive in a variety of forms — chaconne, theme and variations, passacaglia — reflecting the repeating nature of a traditional mantra. The first movement, "I am here for you," begins with a open, flowing gesture in the guitar that calls to mind a sense of presence that continues, as the gesture transforms throughout the movement. The second movement, "I know you are there, and I am happy," celebrates that happiness of being with the one you love. The third movement, "This is a happy moment," is an aria, a love song celebrating the joys present in everyday life. The final movement, "You are partly right," is the most conflict-driven of the piece, and therefore the most dramatic. As the author of the text explains, we can say "You are partly right," both in response to praise and admiration as well as in criticism or disagreement. The movement progresses through conflict to the recognition and reconciliation that we must embrace

imperfection in order to love each other fully.

— Avner Dorman

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Avner Dorman

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