



# Play It by Ear: Improvise Your Way to Lasting Friendships

*Ron Carducci*

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## Reviews

“*Play It by Ear* is a lively read, full of wisdom, humor, and anecdotes that both enlighten and entertain. Ron Carducci tempers his advice with humility—each time he reveals his own struggles, we recognize a fellow imperfect human whose stories can offer us real hope and direction.” — Judith Schlesinger, Ph.D., psychologist and jazz critic, AllAboutJazz.com

“Jazz musician-turned-psychologist Ron Carducci shows how to improve our friendships by applying some of the practices that define being a jazz musician. *Play It by Ear* belongs in everyone’s personal or professional library. I highly recommend it!” — Jan Yager, Ph.D., friendship coach, sociologist, and author of *When Friendship Hurts*, *Friendshifts*, and *Who's That Sitting at My Desk?*

“If you want friends, Ron Carducci says, be a friend. Easier said than done? Using the interaction of jazz players as a metaphor and illustrating with anecdotes, he tells us how to go about it. Refreshingly free of psychological jargon, this enjoyable book delivers a wealth of helpful advice.” — Doug Ramsey, distinguished jazz critic and award-winning author of *Take Five: The Public and Private Lives of Paul Desmond*

## Book Description

Mental health experts agree that to lead a happy, healthy, and fulfilled life, we must be able to build and nurture friendships. Yet many of us don’t know how. We struggle with making friends or alienate the ones we already have, leaving us feeling lonely and confused.

*Play It by Ear* offers a fresh, jazz-inspired approach to help us connect with others in a positive, meaningful way. Drawing on experience from his two careers — first as a professional musician and second as a therapist — Ron Carducci introduces the improvisational jam session as a model for mastering the art of relating. By adopting the flexible, accepting behaviors of jazz players, we can foster the trust and spontaneity that lie at the heart of enduring friendships.

Readers will learn how to cast aside their expectations, bend with others to preserve and deepen their relationships, transform conversations into creative, rewarding “jazz dialogues,” and keep their cool in difficult situations.

Filled with illustrative stories from Dr. Carducci’s practice and from the many years he performed in jazz clubs and Las Vegas show bands, *Play It by Ear* invites us to loosen up and engage in the present moment — and experience the joy that comes from sharing a genuine connection.

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#### **Ida Resler:**

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#### **Kent Brown:**

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#### **Mary Ransom:**

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