

“WHY”
by Tracy Chapman

Hi Everyone, hope you're all safe and well.

Today I'd like to invite you all to take a look at one of my favorite songs of all times:
WHY by Tracy Chapman.

This song is not only packed with a high energy groove and rhythm, it also has a very important message for us all.

I've always believed that songs that deliver a message are crucial. Music and songwriting is not only about entertaining...but they can also serve for a higher purpose. This song is literally a list of questions, and Tracy Chapman does not give us any answers. I guess that, when she wrote the song, she wanted us to find our own answers to those questions. I really like that too.

Leaving things open to interpretation and freedom to choose.

So, after this brief intro, lets get right down to it !

This song is composed by just TWO sections:

1) SECTION ONE:

This section is a 4 bar loop. Which means we play these 4 bars over and over. you will be playing this 4 bar loop for both VERSES and CHORUS.

The chord progression is:

B minor for two bars.

G major for one bar.

A major for one bar.

// Bm / Bm / G / A //

2) SECTION TWO:

This section has a very special feature :) You guys ready for it... ?
Here goes: instead of the very used and common format of even number of bars that compose a section, section two of this song is 5 BARS LONG.
Basically there is an extra bar.

The chord progression for this section is:

D major for one bar.
A major for one bar.
B minor for one bar.
G major for two bars.

// D / A / Bm / G / G //

Try and practice playing this section as follow: play each chord on the 1 of each bar.
Count out loud the beats of each bar. Like this:

C 2 3 4 (count the numbers, which are the beats of the bar)
A 2 3 4 (count the numbers, which are the beats of the bar)
Bm 2 3 4 (count the numbers, which are the beats of the bar)
G 2 3 4 (count the numbers, which are the beats of the bar)
G 2 3 4 (count the numbers, which are the beats of the bar)

So, we're almost there.

Now for the structure of the song. REMEMBER: this song is only these two sections alternating. When you are playing one section, no matter which one it is, and you feel a change is coming.....all you need to do is moving to the other section.

If you're playing SECTION 1 you will then move to SECTION 2.

If you're playing SECTION 2 you will then move to SECTION 1.

SONG STRUCTURE:

INTRO - play SECTION ONE **2X** (No singing in this part)

VERSE 1 - play SECTION ONE **2X**

CHORUS - play SECTION TWO **ONCE**

VERSE 2 - play SECTION ONE **3X**

CHORUS - play SECTION TWO **ONCE**

VERSE 3 - play SECTION ONE **3X**

CHORUS - play SECTON TWO **ONCE**

END ON Bm

IMPORTANT TIP: listening to the lyrics is always a good way to always know where we are within the song. If you do so with this song, you don't really need to count how many times you play "SECTION 1" before it's time to move to "SECTION 2". THIS IS BECAUSE IN "SECTION 1" TRACY CHAPMAN ALWAYS SINGS THE SAME LAST LINE RIGHT BEFORE MOVING TO "SECTION 2". THE LAST LINE SHE SINGS BEFORE MOVING TO "SECTION 2" IS: "WHY IS A WOMAN STILL NOT SAFE WHEN SHE'S IN HER HOME". WHEN YOU HEAR HER SINGING THAT LINE, GET READY TO MOVE TO "SECTION 2" !

Ok guys, I do hope this handout will be useful and you can start having fun playing this song.

Also I'm open to suggestions, if you have a song in mind that you really like and would like to learn, let me know and I can break it down for you so that we can learn it together.

Stay safe,
Mike