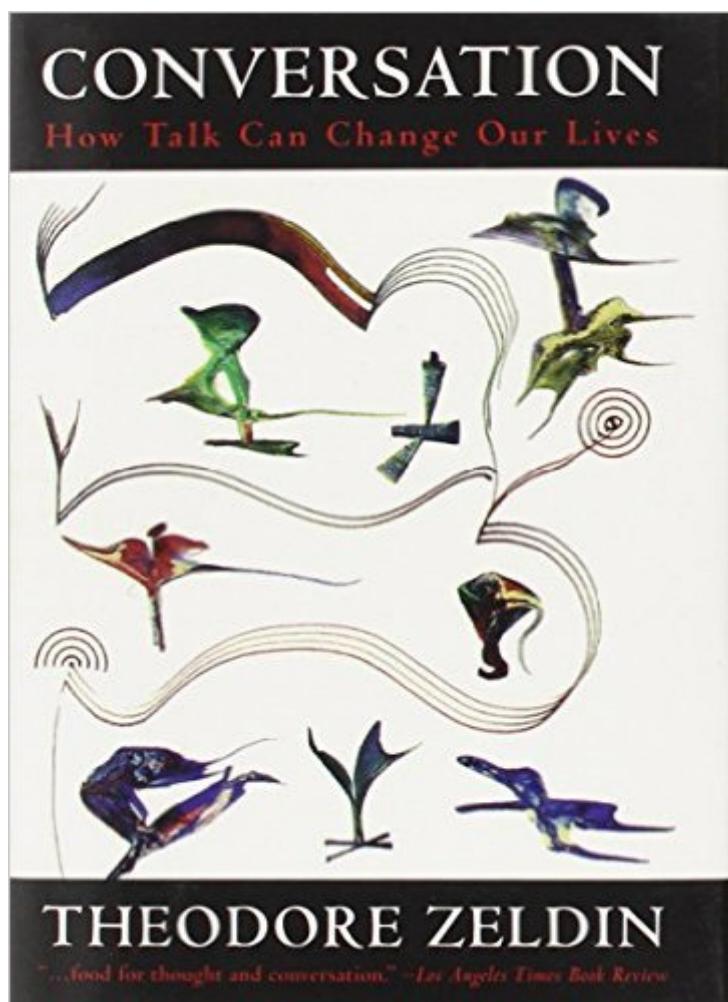


The book was found

Conversation: How Talk Can Change Our Lives



Synopsis

Do you want better conversations with your lover, your colleagues at work, your family, friends or strangers, or yourself? Conversation explains what kind of talk charmed and excited people in the past, and why we talk differently today. It explores the art and the history of conversation and how it can be the key to a happier, more interesting future. It shows how women have changed the ways lovers speak, how families avoid silence or boredom, how your work can damage or improve the way you converse, and what role there is for the tongue-tied and shy. This book will enable you to see more clearly what you want to talk about, and what conversation can do to your life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Zeldin explains his intentions of writing this book to stimulate conversation. It certainly has done this in my life. I have discussed this book with people who have not read it. Passionate conversation has resulted. I have learned quite a bit about myself from this book. For example, I learned I am an elocutionist. Zeldin points out in a historic account that elocutionists focus more on the form (proper grammar/style) rather than depth in conversation. I may now overcome some prejudices I have when people fall out of form. Perhaps one of the most fascinating ideas he presents is that conversation with like minded people can become boring. Upon learning this I went straight to someone with conflicting views and had an argument with them. The emotions that came from that conversation were overwhelming and appreciated by both of us. I have the book to thank for this. 36 prints of artwork that are similar to what you see on the cover are contained within the pages. I also have enjoyed discussing this art with people. The book fulfills its promise to stimulate conversation. I

highly recommend this quick read to anyone interested in the dynamics of conversation, even if you are shy or quiet.

This is a beautifully produced small hardcover on glossy paper to include the author's provocative marbleized drawings. The author was described by the *Independent on Sunday* (London) as "one of the forty world figures whose ideas are likely to have a lasting relevance to the new millennium," and is a member of the BBC Brains Trust, the British Academy, and the European Academy. So what's the problem? Maybe I'm just not smart enough to get it, but this book seemed insubstantial to me. "We need a new conversation," Zeldin repeats, new ways of talking with each other within and about work, love, technology, family, but the proposals and examples never come. He's studied conversation, and had innumerable conversations with people all over the world, but how would one characterize these as "new" or "old"? Unfortunately, the book does not live up to the promise of its subtitle. The final chapter, "How Conversation Encourages the Meeting of Minds," on providing hospitality to strangers to enrich the family dialogue, and the 36 conversational topics at the end, were the most practical of the book. But a book I had looked forward to giving as a gift fell short of my hopes for stimulating thought and community through conversation.

I heard about this book on an old radio interview with the author, Mr. Zeldin. I was impressed enough to buy the book. I think the ideas in the book are way ahead of our times, which is why I'd like to recommend it to everyone. It's a fast read, you can get through it in an afternoon easily. But the ideas are as profound as those in *A Gift from the Sea* by Anne Morrow Lindbergh. I'm sure I'll read this book over and over at odd times.

With this book, Theodore Zeldin reminds us that the thoughts we translate from electrical charges spurting about our craniums into lines of airborne vibrations named WORDS are so powerful. Each composition of sentence can serve as a tool to 'change the world'. This potentiality gives 'gift' to our listener as it gives 'gift' to us. Such potentiality allow transcending the moment of NOW into the sphere of CHANGE. Zeldin's brief historical study of conversation reminds us of the opportunity to affect another person: at mind/soul level. Our thoughts truly are 'tools' to teach others. The randomness of prattle is urged to be replaced by the potent and influential weight of words that may register on the inner recording devices of another human. In that considered act (forming sentences of worth) one learns/relearns the value of Jesus implied when he said "whenever two or more of you are gathered together, there I am with you also." Do slip this book into your hands and those of your

language intimates! It will yield the deepened relationships for which we ALL yearn (marriages included).

This book is an edited transcript of six lectures Zeldin gave on BBC. He covers a diverse set of topics and supplemented the book with 36 thought provoking conversation starters, each with an original painting to encourage the dialog. I think the people who have rated the book low were expecting a clearly articulated thesis or well worked out methodology for "New Conversation." This is an explorer's notebook of possibilities glimpsed from Zeldin's rich set of experiences. He offers some very insightful points of departure on the value of conversation as a co-creation exercise and for on the job training. Read it to encourage your own experiments and explorations, as a point of departure, as a sketch of possible approaches to innovation, creativity, and knowledge work.

First, I love Zeldin's manner of thinking. His intellect connects amazingly well with reality! What a joy and an exception. This book is surprisingly powerful in its combination of insight and simplicity. You will find yourself saying over and over, "I knew that!" but in a way that indicates you didn't know it in the way Zeldin just said it. A MAJOR added benefit of this work is the collection of color plates, paintings by Zeldin that he uses so well to illustrate his verbal points of connection. The colors are amazing and the connections are right on. Superb!

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