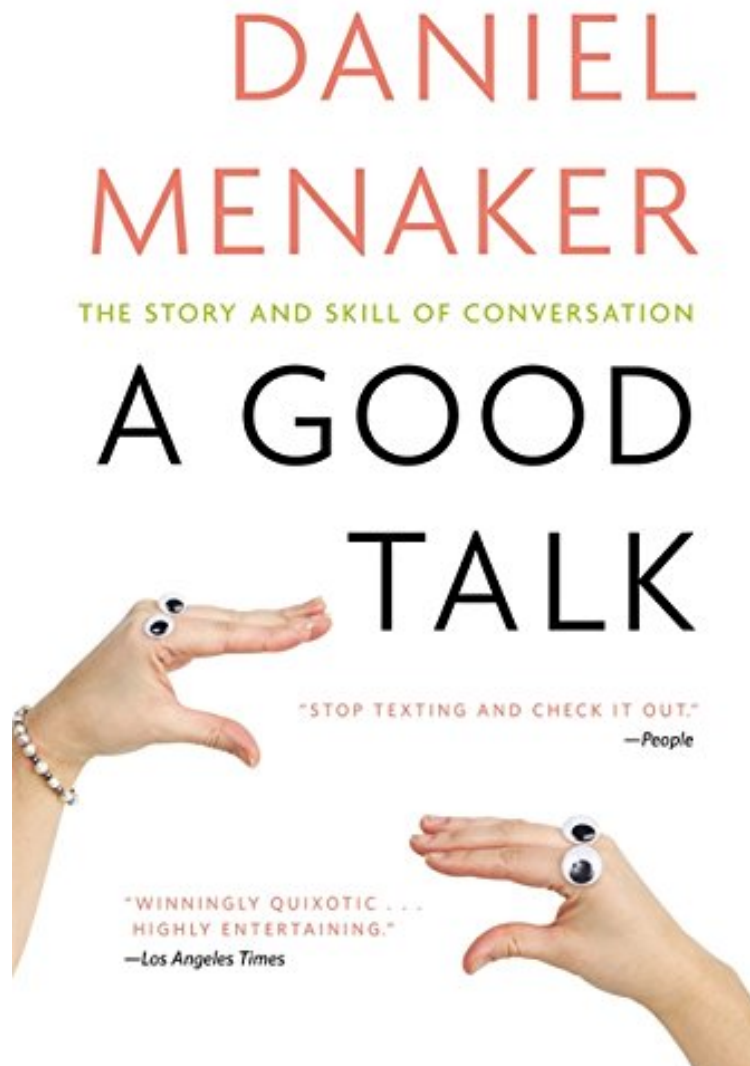


(Pdf free) A Good Talk: The Story and Skill of Conversation

A Good Talk: The Story and Skill of Conversation

Daniel Menaker

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Daniel Menaker : A Good Talk: The Story and Skill of Conversation before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Good Talk: The Story and Skill of Conversation:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A good talk for the in crowdBy susanCharmingly written and enjoyable this book is a nice read though it does not provide much that is new for the conversationally impaired. There are several points in the book where the author goes against his own advice and assumes political attitudes in his reader that match his own and by implication creates a small world of like-minded correct thinkers. This is unfortunate since it undercuts his message that good conversation requires an openness that defies the judgmentalism of dogma or

correctness. SETMO of 0 people found the following review helpful. Essential elements in conversation .By anticipationMakes a good case for conversation being more than just neurones and brain chemistry .9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. a Good TalkBy Nancy Talbot DotyThis was a big disappointment. I ordered this book after listening to an interview with the author on NPR. it was delightful exchange, light-hearted and informative; and I assumed the book would be the same, especially after reading at least one very positive review on 's web site. It was neither (informative, nor entertaining). It consisted primarily of interminable analysis of one so-called conversation between the author and one young female acquaintance. The author had defined criteria of "conversation" as, in part, having no particular purpose. It was apparent that the exchange on which the book concentrated was about the young woman receiving advice on her own writing career. It was not humorous and did not exhibit any evidence of rapport between the two participants. I did not receive either entertainment or insight into good communication skills as a result of having read it. Menaker seems to be a pleasant person; but I would not care to have a conversation with him. Dull!

A GOOD TALK is an analysis of and guide to that most exclusively human of all activities-- conversation. Drawing on over forty years of experience in American letters, Menaker pinpoints the factors that drive and enliven every good conversation: the vagaries (and joys) of subtext; the deeper structure and meaning of conversational flow; the subliminal signals that guide our disclosures and confessions; and the countless other hurdles we must clear along the way. Moving beyond self-help musings and "how to" advice, he has created a stylish, funny, and surprising book: a celebration of "the most excusively human of all activities."In a time when conversation remains deeply important-- for building relationships, for relaxing, even for figuring out who we are-- and also increasingly imperiled (with Blackberries and texting increasingly in vogue), A GOOD TALK is a refreshing celebration of the subtle adventures of a good conversation.

From Publishers WeeklyA fiction writer and former editor at the New Yorker and Random House, Menaker (The Treatment) regards conversation as a human art of great importance produced by all people everywhere. His witty approach is evident almost immediately, as he speculates on the creation of human language, moving on to the general rules of conversation, London coffeehouses as a forum for ideas, greetings, and name-droppers: They wrap the pig of name-dropping in a blanket of casualness, or even criticalness, and seem to actually believe you won't taste the inner wiener. At the book's core is a conversation between Menaker and an anonymous female writer. Taped in a Brooklyn restaurant, this lengthy transcript is analyzed in detail to show how the participants take risks, seek a common ground, interject humor, and discover perceptive insights about each other. Interview tactics and prepared remarks are covered, along with e-mail embarrassments, dating stratagems, sarcastic barbs, compliments, and interruptions. However, what makes a lasting impression is the parade of anecdotes about life in the corridors of the New Yorker and Random House, leaving the reader yearning for a full-scale Menaker memoir. (Jan.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistA New Yorker editor for 26 years, Menaker views conversation as artifact, tracing its prehistoric beginnings with glottological theories on physical changes in the hominid larynx and mutation of the FoxP2 gene, which helped develop brain areas conducive to language, all before hominids left Africa. He posits that conversation developed as a hands-free substitute for socially interactive grooming, as with chimps, and, moving forward, considers conversation as aimless: not without aim, but without purpose, something that Americans, more than other modern societies, have been traditionally critical of. Within the context of the persistent legacy of Puritan sobriety and pioneer pragmatism favoring those who talk little and accomplish much, he seamlessly entwines his own wryly humorous observations, dialogue from Jonathon Swift and Fred and Ginger, discussion of the chi energy of conversation, and FAQ: Frequently Arising Quandries. These last include Insults (subdivided into Inadvertent Affronts and Deliberate, Frontal Attack), Prepared Remarks, and Dating, which includes observations by Samuel Johnson plus notes on seduction and courtship. A charming, useful, and entertaining approach to a fascinating topic. --Whitney Scott "I might have guessed that Daniel Menaker could talk about talk with the same facility and charm that he can bring to any conversation. Still, A GOOD TALK, his lively analysis of the workings of social speech, comes as a delightful revelation."--Billy Collins, former Poet Laureate of the United States and author of Ballistics"The art of conversation is in decline, and Daniel Menaker has hastened that decline by writing prose that is so funny, surprising, and habit-forming that the reader is inclined to cancel all social engagements and stay in at night with this book. I don't know about you, but I find it hard to resist an author who compares Socrates toColumbo."Mary Roach, author of Stiff"How can a single book be so learned, so wise, so helpful, and so short? A Good Talk is a great delight."Ann Packer, author of The Dive from Clausen's Pier"Just when it seems our society has forgotten how vital it is to our health and well being to have both intimate and public productive conversation, Daniel Menaker brings us "A Good Talk." This intelligent and thoughtful exploration of human communication happens to be very entertaining, but more importantly it provides a roadmap for enhancing your own relationships with good talk." Gail Saltz, M.D. Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst, and Today Show Contributor