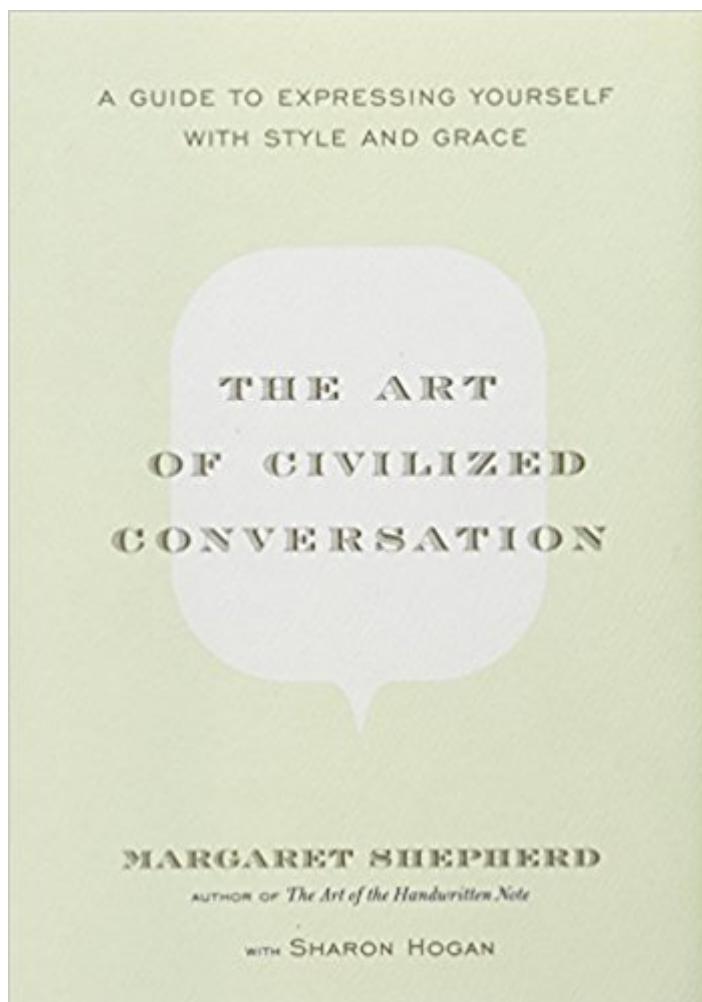


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# The Art Of Civilized Conversation: A Guide To Expressing Yourself With Style And Grace



## Synopsis

In our fast-paced, electronic society, the most basic social interaction—talking face-to-face—can be a challenge for even the most educated and self-assured individuals. And yet making conversation is a highly practical skill: those who do it well shine at networking parties, interviews, and business lunches. Good conversation also opens doors to a happier love life, warmer friendships, and more rewarding time with family. For those intimidated by the complexity of personal interaction, or those simply looking to polish their speaking skills, *The Art of Civilized Conversation* is a powerful guide to communicating in an endearing way. In its pages, author Margaret Shepherd offers opening lines, graceful apologies, thoughtful questions, and, ultimately, the confidence to take conversations beyond hello. From the basics—first impressions, appropriate subject matter, and graceful exits—to finding the right words for difficult situations and an insightful discussion of body language, Shepherd uses her skilled eye and humorous anecdotes to teach readers how to turn a plain conversation into an engaging encounter. Filled with common sense and fresh insight, *The Art of Civilized Conversation* is the perfect inspiration not only for what to say but for how to say it with style.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

There is so much information in this manual that the easily intimidated may decide that silence is sometimes better than bearing in mind all the rules of conversation. Shepherd, a calligrapher and writer (*The Art of the Handwritten Note*), covers almost every type of social or intimate situation,

including how to make introductions, requests, apologies, and a variety of tips for speaking with children, elderly people and in-laws. Shepherd also addresses those difficult moments when we all have trouble knowing what to say: she advocates first checking when a bedridden friend will welcome visitors and allowing a seriously ill person the freedom to express anger at his or her condition. Not all will agree with her argument that it's appropriate to speak in a louder voice to someone whose first language is not English. Some of the author's 10 rules of conversation are obvious, while others seem based on her own likes and dislikes. And some standard rules that she reiterates—such as not speaking about religion or politics—have loosened up a bit in recent years. (Dec. 27) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

“Just as a civilized conversation can get the morning off to a great start, it can enhance your work life all through the day and invigorate an evening of social life. If you enjoy the art of conversation with your family and friends, you will also shine at breakfast with a client, lunch with coworkers, and dinner with your boss. It’s the Swiss Army knife of social skills that anyone can learn to use. Take it with you wherever you go, and you’ll be equipped to turn a seatmate into a confidant, an interviewer into an employer, and an acquaintance into a friend. As an accomplished conversationalist, you’ll be welcomed everywhere; everyone loves good conversation because it is fun.”<sup>1</sup> from the Introduction

This is a great book for any person who wants to operate smoothly in our modern "networking" society, but is not sure of the best thing to say in all situations. This book gives you ways to get into, through, and out of all kinds of social conversations. I just wish I had read this book when I was much younger. This book will be my new high school graduation gift, as the ability to converse using this book's recommended methods will help any person greatly in life, both personally and professionally. This book is outstanding for anyone looking for ways of smoothing their social graces, and should prove invaluable for any person who might have become a bit too reliant on a gadget for communication and feels a bit lost when trapped with people face-to-face.

So far (4 chapters in) I like what Shepherd has to say and find it very helpful and educational. My only discomfort is that she doesn't provide any other way or opinion than her own. There is always another perspective, especially with the nuances of people. I do like that she has chapters about talking to men, young, and older.

I am surprised that this concise and eloquent book is not better known, and I'm baffled by some of the lukewarm reviews. This really is a beautiful collection of scenarios and responses and a mindset for approaching conversations and relationships. I cannot think of a single person I know who would not benefit from reading this. In fact, I think I will buy a few extra copies to hand out as gifts. I have only ever done that for one other book.

I purchased this book for a review of good manners, and it fills the bill.

For a non-native, this book offers the opportunity to learn language and behavioural norms en passent

This book can give you advice as to how to maneuver in conversations where you might be at a loss for words. I think it should be given out to every 10th grader to help with social skills for a lifetime.

A most useful book

I wouldn't exactly say that it's not a good book, however, it is very basic. Unless you are a teenager or a young adult, or have problems connecting in social situations because of shyness or otherwise, you will find that this book doesn't offer anything new. I don't need to buy a book that tells me that I need to ask questions, listen more than talk, and advise me on how to accept compliments. But of course for anyone who does, this might be helpful.

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