

A Stylish, Funny and Surprising Guide to the Art of Conversation

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DANIEL MENAHER A GOOD TALK



THE
STORY
AND SKILL OF
CONVERSATION

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A GOOD TALK : THE STORY AND SKILL OF CONVERSATION

Daniel Menaker

"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*

This is a time when conversation is more important than ever before—for making and keeping friends, for relaxing, for understanding ourselves. But it is also imperiled, by overwork, cell phones, and email. So *A GOOD TALK* is a welcome and timely celebration of the rewards—both subtle and dramatic—of conversation.

Drawing on over forty years of experience in American letters, Menaker pinpoints the factors that drive and enliven every good conversation. 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.

DANIEL MENAKER has been a part of America's life of letters for almost forty years. As a writer, he has met and talked to thousands of people about their work and their lives. He is widely read and well versed in psychological literature and practices and, as an editor at Random House, has had countless meetings and other exchanges with writers, agents, public figures, and ordinary people. His own writing has appeared in the *New Yorker*, the *New York Times*, and *Slate*; he lives in New York with his wife and their two children.