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About the Author

Megan Worsley wrote this [book](#) to help people improve their ability to connect with people on a personal level.

She said, “Even though the number of people in every town is growing, we are becoming more isolated from each other.”

The high [pressure](#) of our working lives and the impact of ever more packaged entertainment has reduced the amount of social contact which many of us have.”

“Many of us don’t know our neighbors even if they’ve lived next door for years. And, some are starting to prefer it that way!”

“Many people suffer events which cut them off from their friends or family and they may have great problems when they try to reconnect.”

“I think that a lot of our [health](#) problems could be related to having less human contact.”

So, Megan did her research about what the experts say and balanced that with chats among her friends about their experiences and [ideas](#) for improving the situation with minimum [stress](#) and time.

Megan said, “I think some of the ideas from my friends were better than the experts. But, I’ve included as much of both as I can.”

“This book could help people of almost any [age](#) that wants to connect with more people, improve some of their current [relationships](#) and maybe try to repair some that have been broken for whatever reason.”

“Not everything will apply to the needs of all readers but the variety of people who’ve contributed means that some definitely will be worth anyone checking out and giving them a good try.”

Just remember, it’s a matter of “Meet, relate, connect and repeat!”

Introduction

Connecting with people in social and [business](#) situations is something we have been doing all through our lives.

Despite all the [practice](#), most people would probably acknowledge that we would like to become better at it.

It’s important for our [success](#) in social and business areas of our [life](#) to make new connections when we can.

It’s inevitable that some people move or we lose contact with them for a variety of reasons.

And, every human contact has a degree of importance for us.



Making new connections is critical as we lose contact with some of the people we share parts of our life with from time to time.

If we don’t maintain enough healthy connections, we can become less comfortable when we do connect with people.

That may, over time, begin to affect the other [connections](#) which we value.

But, current lifestyles mean we have to make an effort to connect with others and then maintain those which become important in various areas of our lives.

This book will show you the tips and tactics which have helped many people make a better first impression and avoid making a bad one.

It won’t take long to scan the [book](#) to get an overview.

Then, pick the areas which are most relevant to you right now.

You’ll be able to adapt some techniques of professionals in [sales](#) and entertainment.

You will be able to better understand the reactions of the people you mix with and ensure that you’re on their wavelength.

This will not teach you to be a better public speaker, but the principles here will help.

It’s focused on improving your personal interactions in social and [business](#) situations.

If approaching people or getting their interest when you talk with them in person or in other ways has been difficult, this could be the first day of a much brighter future for you.

Body Language

Body [language](#) is important because it will be seen by people before they get close enough to actually talk to us.



They will form their first impression of you, in large part, on the impression they got before they hear what you have to say.

This section will give you some tips based on my experience and what I've learned from masters of body language.

Some of it may vary from what you find recommended elsewhere but it has worked for me and hundreds of others in all sorts of situations.

Let's define "body language".

It's a way of interpreting actions and attitudes of people you meet to better

understand what they are thinking about you and the interaction between you.

Some people use their [knowledge](#) of body language to adjust their own attitudes and actions in ways that they believe can make a better [impression](#) on the other people.

Some systems such as "Neurolinguistic Programming" have [content](#) based on body language techniques.

Learning how the experts interpret other people's body language can help you. At least, it will mean you are paying more attention to the other person.

But, those signals are easy to misinterpret.

To make good use of the system, you need to practice a lot in a wide variety of different situations.

Also, be aware that many people who rely on persuading people like us for

their [income](#), from con-artists to politicians, are very experienced in using body language signals to back up the message they are telling us.

Starting a Conversation

This is a very important [skill](#) to develop.

When you arrive at a function and see people are in small groups and couples, you look around hoping to see a person you know. If not, you need to circulate and get into one of the groups.

Often, you will find that someone will welcome you in. But, sometimes, it can be a little harder.



Some people will waste time circulating without making any effort to join.

What do you say to get a conversation started or to join a conversation in a group which you want to join?

That depends on the setting and circumstances.

The suggestions which follow will need to be [thought](#) about before applying to your particular situation. I know you will get it right.

What To DO:

Check Your Body Language: Many people know a little about body language and even those who don't believe it's fully credible use it as a guide in social and some [business](#) situations.

If you have a sour or defeated [expression](#) - If your arms are folded, people will assume you are feeling defensive although you may just be cold!

Avoid these signs, push your smile up to your [eyes](#) and make your approach to a likely group or another person who is currently alone.

What To SAY:

Take your cue from the other person or group members whether to keep talking or move on. Usually, you'll get some help from the others.

After all, they’ve probably gone through similar experiences themselves.

Use "open statements" or "open questions", which give the other person more than one option for the type of answer they give.

If you ask someone, "Did you enjoy the play so far?" their answers will mostly be either "Yes" or "No." You might be able to get further discussion with them about it, but they may think that topic is exhausted.

If you had asked, "What do you think of the play so far?", you give them an opportunity to give more detail about what they like or dislike and why.

From their answer, you will be able to know whether they are prepared to talk more about the topic with you and, if so, what aspects of the play most interest them.

You should try to get some [idea](#) if you talk fast compared to most other people around you. Pace your talking at the rate they are mostly using.

If you’re not sure, slow down slightly from your usual speed and, if no-one falls asleep while you’re talking, you can speed up later to your normal rate.

Pay close attention to the others when they are speaking, and make a comment on anything which you feel important.

Be a Conversation Champ!

In recent years, the pace of [life](#) has sped up.

It’s got harder to get people’s attention and connect strongly.

These tips will help you make your points and be someone that most people will look forward to speaking to again.

If someone starts a conversation with standard [lines](#) like, “Nice weather we’re having”, they give the impression they either haven’t got much to say or they aren’t very interested in the people they’re going to talk to.

If they were, they’d try to start your conversation with something more interesting to the people they’re talking to.

They also risk someone answering with a closed answer, like yes, which could end the talking right there!

Think about the impression you want these people to have of you. They will have already formed one when they met you. The first few minutes are the best time to show yourself in a good [light](#).

That doesn’t just involve what you say. It’s very important to treat the other people as potential friends or colleagues, depending on the situation.

The phrase I suggest that you keep in mind is, “People don’t care what you know until they know that you care.”

When someone mentions a topic outside of what you have been discussing, you know they have an interest in it. You might want to ask them for some information.

But, I recommend that you don’t try to bring a conversation to a favorite topic of yours unless there is a direct [relationship](#) to what has been discussed.

Give your attention to the people you are with.

When you start speaking they will return the favor.

I always use part of what the previous person said as part of my first comment. It shows that I’ve really taken in what they said and is a way of thanking them for their contribution to the discussion.

You should know that a good [listener](#) is always appreciated. It isn’t something which we’re taught at [school](#). But, it’s well worth developing that sort of reputation.

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Start with You

When we try to [work](#) out how we can connect with more people, we usually focus on external factors such as looking for more opportunities to meet new people.



But, some of the most important factors affecting our ability to connect with more people are personal; our [health](#), self-talk and outlook.

We have most control over these factors and can expect quick results if we put some genuine effort into the adjustments we may need to make.

Of course, we know the benefits we could get from regular [exercise](#), [eating](#) healthier food and other tactics. But, finding the time and [energy](#) is hard for many of us.

The only way to improve is to make them a priority instead of a casual option.

If we don't start making the effort, we will continue to feel tired and sabotage any measures we take to improve our lives.

The New Year is a traditional time to improve your daily routine.

But, there's no reason to wait until then.

Tips on Motivation

To have the best chance of keeping to your new [routine](#) long enough to see the benefits, you need to find your “Why”, a reason which will inspire you.

Research has shown that people who succeed with a new [exercise](#) program or other positive change to their routine have some particular motivation – a target which they are trying to reach.



Celebrate small victories. We may tend to set large targets which take great effort and time to reach. The [journey](#) can be more enjoyable if we give ourselves and those who help us some recognition for achieving smaller milestones on the way to the big target.

Always state your [goals](#) in a positive way. Research with students and adults found that we respond better when we are working toward a positive outcome rather than trying to stop doing something. So, “I will quit [smoking](#)” might be less effective than, “I will be a non-smoker in six weeks!”

One of the most subtle barriers to changing our attitude is our own self-talk.

We all talk to ourselves, some just do it more openly.

If we can consciously start feeding our subconscious positive statements about ourselves, we will get a positive effect. The subconscious accepts whatever we say; it does not grade the information.

Then, it feeds that information back to us constantly.

Failure is Your Friend

The new tactics you get from this [book](#) are mostly very simple.



Some people say, “I know that and I do it.”

Often, the truth is that they did it and it didn’t work, so they avoid doing it again.

Friends accept your failures because they’ve had their own.

No-one succeeds every time. But, failure is not a road-block, just a detour which we can learn from.

Joe Sugarman, mail-order [millionaire](#), said that people should accept failure as part of [life](#). He always believed and acted like there was a great opportunity waiting to be found in the failures each of us encounter.

Sports champions don’t win every race. They don’t quit when they lose. They review those events with their coaches to find any weaknesses in their techniques and are better prepared for next time.

As all horse riders know, they’re going to fall off sometimes.

They can’t win unless they get back on and do that as soon as they get the [opportunity](#)!

In the area of personal [relationships](#), you will improve with more attempts and you will also make a great impression when people see you handle the failures in a calm, mature way.

You only really Fail when you finally stop trying to improve!

Practice Needed

You probably realize that the information here won't help you much until you start using it and adjusting it to fit your own particular circumstances and aims.

That means you need to seek more opportunities to practice these suggestions and smooth out any rough edges.

This is also very important with systems like body [language](#).

Few people are smooth enough when they start to adjust their stance and attitudes or respond to other people's actions and attitudes.

Don't wait for formal [events](#) to try your new conversational style. Start making light [chat](#) with the neighbor you haven't said more than, "hello" to in the years you've lived next to each other.

Ask them about the roses in their front [garden](#) or their [dog](#) – something which will encourage them to make conversation if they want to.

If they aren't communicative, don't take it personally. It's just an opportunity to practice starting a light, brief conversation. That's the hardest part of [connecting](#) with more people for a lot of us.

Just try with someone later in your day.

It won't take much time out of your day and some of these casual encounters will develop into casual but enjoyable friendships.

Join a Group

If you want to meet more people, consider joining a local organization which has people interested in something you enjoy doing.

If you don't have a [hobby](#), start one and join a club which focuses on it.

Don't worry about your low skill level. All groups have people at all levels of knowledge and ability. If you make a genuine effort to learn, you will find plenty of people willing to help. That's another way to practice your ability to connect with more people!



And, if you have a skill, you could help other less-experienced members.

You can do this with forums on the [Internet](#), but this [book](#) is about connecting personally with more people.

Of course, those online

groups will often have contact details for groups in your area.

You might want to join a [group](#) that does charitable work in your area or supports a cause you believe in.

While you may join a group with the main aim of meeting new people, you will need to be active in the group and helpful to other members. Otherwise, you will be seen as a user rather than a contributor.

Pointing a Conversation

Many of our conversations are casual chatter which we mainly have to [enjoy](#) the company of the other people.

But, we often have a need to get something specific from a conversation.

That might be some information, make an impression or get some help from someone in the group.

At other times, the whole group will be focused on a particular [goal](#).

At these times, try to keep to the point. Introducing any external subjects or other irrelevant material will waste everyone’s time and affect their desire to include you in future serious talks.

Keep your questions short.

Ask for clarification of anything which is not clear to you so that you can fully contribute to the discussion. The other part of that point is to be sure you review the material to be discussed so you are on top of it when the discussion starts.

When you have a personal goal which does not involve the whole group, respect the others and don’t try to keep the talk on the point you need information about.

Contribute to the wider discussion and you will get more cooperation and help from everyone present.

Don't Waste a Meal

Whenever you can, have company for your meals.

Many people eat the lunch at their desks and either continue to work or just [check](#) their personal emails or read a [book](#).

Continuing to work while you eat may interfere with your [digestion](#) and won't do anything for the quality of your work during that time.

The book might give you some information or amuse and distract you for a while. Your emails won't make your lunch any more digestible than continuing to work.

Your best option is to get a break from your work (and office where it is possible). That way, you will be a little fresher and better able to handle the afternoon workload.

You also need a little [exercise](#). Walking to the canteen, a nearby café or even a park will help your system better digest your food.

But, whatever you eat will taste better and be better for you if you do it in agreeable company.

It's a standard maxim of [computer](#) users, you should not drink near any equipment. That applies to eating as well. The atmosphere doesn't help your digestion and the crumbs and liquids are very bad for the equipment.

Whoever you arrange to eat with, ensure that you have enough time to eat your food properly and do justice to the conversation.

Two hour lunches are probably overdoing it. But, ramming your [food](#) into your mouth and rushing off as soon as you pay your check is disrespectful to the other people and not a pretty sight!

When you ask someone to meet you for lunch, give them some [idea](#) of what you want to discuss and, if they agree, ask for their suggestions of a venue.

Maintaining Your Connections

When we have a comfortable number of friends and acquaintances, we may tend to take some of those [connections](#) for granted.

It’s important too keep contact with and show appreciation of those people who are good enough to share part of their business or personal lives with us.

Inevitably, we will lose contact with some people.

Some will change their [employment](#) or location and we will not follow up quickly enough.

I suggest that you give some time to thinking about people that you had a more than casual connection with every few months and you might find some names which you really want to find out how they are now.

Maintaining connections with family can be harder than we expect.

It can be a good idea to make occasional contact by phone (or even Internet [phone](#)) rather than just a Christmas or birthday card. It would be a terrible feeling to have someone contact you, thank you for your card and then tell you the relative had died months before the birthday or holiday, wouldn’t it?

You can just imagine the effect on their family when the [card](#) arrived.

In the [business](#) area, contacts are worth preserving, even if you are not likely to actually do business in the near future.

Gene Autry, a film star and (later) entrepreneur, said that he always maintained good [relationships](#) within places he had previously worked. He might need to try for a [job](#) there later but the main reason was really that those people were character witnesses that would tell other people about him.

And, their endorsement has power because they have no benefit from giving it.

Be Natural

Some people avoid systems like body [language](#) because they are not “natural” and think it makes them look false to people they are trying to connect with.

The fact is that the techniques are only a guide to how we can read natural actions we can observe every day.



The systems are intended to be used as a guide to improving our understanding of those unconscious signals and how we can support our words and actions with gestures that people will understand.

The systems can be misused but the effect will not work unless the person trying to mislead someone has committed many hours to practicing the deceptive actions until they appear natural rather than forced.

The best way to use these systems is to read the material, watch some of the expert demonstrators and think about how you might use them.

Then, [focus](#) on the other person and making the conversation enjoyable and useful for them.

I have seen a few people, especially [sales](#) people, use the usual body language techniques so badly, they have lost sales and potential customers.

But, used as reinforcement for genuine intent, they can be useful.

Know the News

Many people have difficulty keeping up with their particular area of work and the [emails](#) which they get, both personal and business-related.

They don't know much about current events or even what is happening in the street where they live!

They limit their ability to connect with their [community](#) but they also limit their ability to chat with people in all areas of their lives.

I don't suggest that you read you local newspaper (if there still is one) from cover to cover. Nor, do you need to read everything in the major news sites frequently.

But, it will pay you to check the local newspaper's site each day for major local events and [concerns](#) and, at least, check the "Breaking News" listing of a major state or national news organization for events which may impact your family, community or business.

This won't make you an expert or even be able to [sound](#) like one. But, it will inoculate you with a broad general knowledge of current events so that you will be able to understand what people are talking about round the [water](#) cooler or at the party that night.

If you only have knowledge of those areas which have a direct impact on yourself and your [business](#), you limit your opportunities to connect with others who have wider interests and knowledge.

It’s Not About You!

Your favorite topic is yourself; that’s only natural.



But, everyone else is most interested in what affects them, of course.

So, the way to connect with each other is to find out what you have in common and how you can improve their lives.

That does not mean “what can you sell them?!”

Whenever you are talking to someone, try to show genuine interest in them.

Relate the topic of your discussion to them. Ask how they feel about it or what effect it has on their [business](#) or family (unless that would be too personal).

If the [conversation](#) stops, the easiest way is to ask them about something they do, want or are interested in.

While you are talking to people, watch for what sparks signals of interest or other emotions in particular people. Then, you probably can ask a question which relates to their particular interests.

And, always be aware when something you are talking about is not resonating with the people in the group. When you are boring, stop drilling as soon as possible. Ask someone else a question so they can continue the discussion. Don’t try to hold the attention of the group by switching to another topic. Let someone else have the [floor](#) and try again a bit later.

Be Understanding.

When I started selling at a [store](#) in my teens, my boss noticed I got upset when people didn’t buy.

She told me that was natural but it wasn't helpful to me or the customer. I also realized that it also gave them a bad impression of the [business](#), but my boss was trying to help me improve rather than reprimanding me.

That was an important lesson: If someone said no to my offer, it was not a personal attack.

That's something to keep in [mind](#) in our personal interactions as well as business.

People may reject what we say without intending to make any reflection on us, our methods or our offer. Well, most of the time, anyway.

But, many people who feel rejected, respond in a negative way.

Often, the main effect of that is to give the other person a bad impression of you and also, most importantly, prevent any significant further interaction between the people involved in the future.

When we are trying to connect on a personal level, try to respect the view and feelings of the other person and you may sometimes have a chance of further encounters later on.

It's almost impossible to never offend anyone but it's a losing situation for all concerned.

How to Listen

This is the most important skill you need if you are to connect with people and interest them in your [ideas](#), business, and you as a person.

You will not learn much when you are talking about yourself except from the reaction of other people to what you’re saying.

When you are listening, you can discover much more than just what they actually say.

They will mention topics which they are interested in that you might want to ask them about at another time.

They will show their views, biases and hot-buttons so you can [work](#) out what things you might want to be involved with that they value and any which you would not be.

They will form a better impression of you and most people will try to give you as good a [hearing](#) when you speak as you did for them. The exceptions are of course, people that will only be trying to think of something else to say when it is their turn again!

Many people do that or they start to move their [eyes](#) around the room, looking for someone or a group that they are more interested in.

It’s not polite, gives people that notice a bad impression of them and reduces their ability to contribute much to the current discussion.

Next, I’ll touch on humor, which can be a very touchy subject.

Making a Connection

One way to connect with people you are talking to is to comment on what they have been just saying when you speak.

You might say that you agree with and use a few words relevant to the last point they made.

If you didn't understand or happen to disagree with their comment, ask them for more information.

Don't be worried about disagreeing with someone unless they are likely to be aggressive or vengeful.

Just make your reply a statement for them to respond to.

But, try to find some of what they said which you do agree with so you have a common ground as well as areas that you differ on.

Always comment on other people's words in a positive way which you would like them to use when responding to you.

It won't always work but remember the truism, “***The first to shout has lost the argument!***”

The Power of Touch

Another way to connect with people is to actually touch them.

Can you make a bond by touching the person you speak to?

There is research which shows light contact is enough to make at least a temporary bond between the two people, unless other factors interfere.

But, this can be misinterpreted, so [exercise](#) care and consideration.

The views on whether touching is acceptable depend on the culture of the particular community as well as the experience and views of the person touched.

In the U.S.A. and many other Western [countries](#), there is little acceptance of someone who is not a close friend of someone touching them.

That does vary with certain groups.

I suggest you become aware of what is common practice among the groups you are part of and be cautious rather than adventurous.

It's the perception as much as the action which governs the reaction. Except when there is a clear intention to support someone who is seeking the touch, be careful.

Let's discuss humor next. That's another touchy subject!

How to Handle Humor

Everybody likes a funny story but almost everyone has a different idea about what is funny!

If you can tell a joke well and always get a great reaction, you should try comedy.

But, even professionals know that everyone “bombs” sometime.

Unless you’re sure you have no sense of humor and have never laughed at any joke, you should try to gather and rehearse at least a couple of jokes to show you know what a joke is even if you don’t tell them very well.

The reason is that people like people that want to add humor, and the effect when a joke works for you is worth putting some effort into achieving.

These tips are based on discussions with a few comedians and other entertainers I know. Realize that they take the subject seriously and don’t go round telling jokes all the time. They always practice each joke and try variations before they ever think of using it.

We should also practice a joke and only use material which will not offend anyone in the group.

You want to make everyone there happier and not ruin even one person’s evening.

Otherwise, they may find a way to ruin yours or just tell others how you upset them without cause!

Pick your time carefully to tell your joke. Unless the discussion is just everyone telling their favorite stories, don’t follow someone else’s joke with one of yours, even if it’s completely unrelated.

And, never, tell a variation of someone else’s joke because you think it’s better. That’s part of being respectful of everyone who has the courage to tell a joke in public.

But, I draw the line at giving any sort of good reaction to a joke which is offensive or otherwise in poor taste. If you do that, the offender will be

encouraged to tell worse stories more often and offend other innocent people.

But, always be a good audience for other people when they tell jokes.

It’s one of the hardest things to do well.

When you’ve told a joke, don’t let the positive reaction encourage you to tell more.

Be considerate of the others in the group and let the [conversation](#) continue so everyone enjoys it to the maximum extent

When you have found and used a joke successfully, you will know a type of joke which your friends or colleagues like and that you can tell effectively.

Start to look for more jokes but vary the subjects and length so they will fit in other situations.

Practice with a [recorder](#) so you know what your [voice](#) sounds like to other people and you can pick up any bad habits like “Um,” “Erh,” mumbling your words or laughing at your own jokes.

Don’t use jokes you just saw or heard on a TV program or [film](#) because most of the people in your area will have seen it or been told of it before you try it on them. And they heard it first from a professional!

Keep practicing because making people laugh not only entertains everybody, it makes them feel better about themselves and the world around them.

Meet Them with a Smile!



However much you practise, you probably won't back that natural, unforced smile you had as a [baby](#) like this one.

But, you will improve if you just keep giving smiles away each day!

The catch-cry of many entertainers is to leave everyone smiling.

That's also a great way to meet new people as well.

You care about people and want to meet more so you will do your best to create a great first impression.

What about your smile?

Most people believe they have a great smile; they've been doing alright for years.

The fact is that many people have let the quality of their smile drop through [overconfidence](#) and being comfortable about the results they get.

A good smile often takes just a little tweaking to become a great smile!.



I am not suggesting you adopt the over-the-top shark-like grin of some TV [presenters](#).

You know you need to look after your [teeth](#) but that's still not enough.

Many people's smiles have slipped. They don't give a good impression.

Some people smile at everything. That tells people you aren't listening or you don't care.

Some people have a 2 Watt smile –

low-power and fading fast.

They used to have an attractive smile but it doesn't light up more than their [teeth](#) and maybe their upper lip.

Power up your [smile](#) by checking it in your bathroom mirror and imagining it lights all your face from the lower lip to your eyebrows.

The difference in what people see and feel is electric. Just try it!

Welcome to Your New Reality



I hope that you have already started to use some of the tips and strategies which I have shared with you in the previous chapters.

Just reading them may have given you some inspiration and cleared some doubts and [fears](#) from your [thoughts](#) and maybe your self-talk as well.

But, the real gains will only appear when you start to use the material.

Some may not work as well as you expect “out of the box”. But, you will learn and improve your results with each attempt.

And, you now know that failure is often just means you need to adjust a little so you can get greater [success](#).

Megan Worsley

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