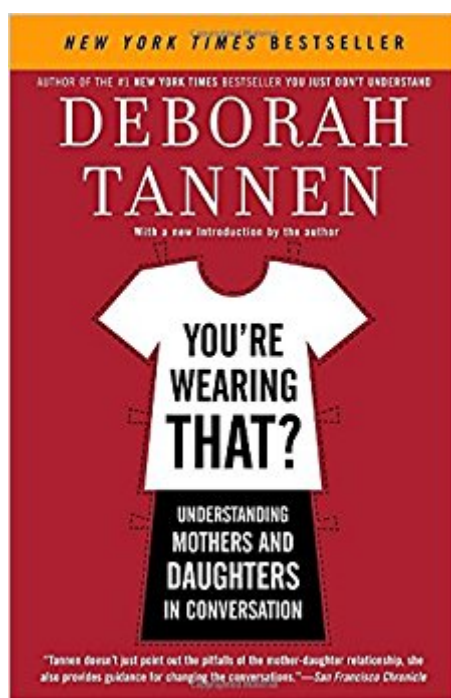


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You're Wearing That?: Understanding Mothers And Daughters In Conversation



Synopsis

Deborah Tannen's #1 New York Times bestseller *You Just Don't Understand* revolutionized communication between women and men. Now, in her most provocative and engaging book to date, she takes on what is potentially the most fraught and passionate connection of women's lives: the mother-daughter relationship. It was Tannen who first showed us that men and women speak different languages. Mothers and daughters speak the same language but still often misunderstand each other, as they struggle to find the right balance between closeness and independence. Both mothers and daughters want to be seen for who they are, but tend to see the other as falling short of who she should be. Each overestimates the other's power and underestimates her own. Why do daughters complain that their mothers always criticize, while mothers feel hurt that their daughters shut them out? Why do mothers and daughters critique each other on the Big Three—hair, clothes, and weight—while longing for approval and understanding? And why do they scrutinize each other for reflections of themselves? Deborah Tannen answers these and many other questions as she explains why a remark that would be harmless coming from anyone else can cause an explosion when it comes from your mother or your daughter. She examines every aspect of this complex dynamic, from the dark side that can shadow a woman throughout her life, to the new technologies like e-mail and instant messaging that are transforming mother-daughter communication. Most important, she helps mothers and daughters understand each other, the key to improving their relationship. With groundbreaking insights, pitch-perfect dialogues, and deeply moving memories of her own mother, Tannen untangles the knots daughters and mothers can get tied up in. Readers will appreciate Tannen's humor as they see themselves on every page and come away with real hope for breaking down barriers and opening new lines of communication. Eye-opening and heartfelt, *You're Wearing That?* illuminates and enriches one of the most important relationships in our lives. "Tannen analyzes and decodes scores of conversations between moms and daughters. These exchanges are so real they can make you squirm as you relive the last fraught conversation you had with your own mother or daughter. But Tannen doesn't just point out the pitfalls of the mother-daughter relationship, she also provides guidance for changing the conversations (or the way that we feel about the conversations) before they degenerate into what Tannen calls a mutually aggravating spiral, a "self-perpetuating cycle of escalating responses that become provocations." —The San Francisco Chronicle

From the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Ballantine Books; Reprint edition (December 26, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 081297266X

ISBN-13: 978-0812972665

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 128 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #140,715 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #42 in [Books > Reference > Etiquette > Conversation](#) #144 in [Books > Parenting & Relationships > Parenting > Parenting Girls](#) #310 in [Books > Parenting & Relationships > Parenting > Teenagers](#)

Customer Reviews

Tannen (You Just Don't Understand; That's Not What I Meant; etc.) continues to study human interaction through conversation, this time attempting to peel back the layers of meaning that make up conversations between mothers and their teenage and older daughters. While Tannen intends to clarify the ways in which mothers and daughters relate to each other verbally (through direct conversation; indirect messages, or "metamessages

Talk is essential to women's relationships, best-selling (You Just Don't Understand, 1990) linguistics professor Tannen maintains. This book responding to readers' feedback about the mother-daughter chapter in her I Only Say This Because I Love You (2001) argues that satisfying conversations between mothers and grown daughters can be the ultimate healing agents, a kind of Holy Grail for women. Or not. "Words are like touch. They can caress or they can scratch." The illuminating extracts from mother-daughter colloquies that she cites bring to life both the soothing ointment and the ripped-open scars possible in interchanges on issues indicated by the chapter titles "Involvement or Invasion," "Great Expectations," "Incompatible Style Differences," and "Difference Equals Distance," as well as age-old sources of conflict for this extraordinarily intense kind of relationship. Whitney Scott Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I'm kind of grateful that Deborah Tannen makes it clear up front that her research group was mostly middle-class Americans as I found this book to be a somewhat disappointing and stereotypical

series of descriptions of families that seem to have codependence and boundary issues. There are many descriptions of mother-daughter interactions where they seem to be jockeying for position and dominance and control; behaviours that in other works she describes as tendencies of men. Perhaps these are cultural differences, I'm British & she is American & so there are bound to be differences and bafflements. For example, Tannen writes that "report-talk" is not a conversational style for women & yet I hear women using this conversational style most days, & I use it myself. & I hear men responding to this gambit in the way she reports women as responding to it. That said, I am an admirer of Tannen's writings & recognise that she is writing from her research & experience while I am considering her words as a woman from a different culture who has had different experiences & interactions. This book, while disappointing in some ways, is still a great way to gain insight into how others struggle to communicate clearly & how difficult it can be to arrive at reasonable interpretations of what was actually intended versus what was heard. There is almost always an emotional aspect to communication & we all have filters that can be a barrier to speaking or listening well. I'll be giving my mother & my daughter copies of this book, it will be fascinating to hear their views on it. Some related books that might be of interest are: A lot of what is written here seems to reflect Tannen's thoughts in her book *The Argument Culture: Stopping America's War of Words* & for a different perspective on the subject of gender, Cordelia Fine's book *Delusions of Gender: How Our Minds, Society, and Neurosexism Create Difference* & to improve negotiation skills perhaps *What We Say Matters: Practicing Nonviolent Communication* or *Getting More: How You Can Negotiate to Succeed in Work and Life*

I'll admit I haven't quite finished the book but I think it's wonderful. My friend recommended it to me, as she said it was the most helpful book she and her mother read during family therapy and as a counselor-in-training I was intrigued. However, I tend to be very critical of anything that essentializes gendered behavior so I wasn't sure I'd like this book (as it does do that a fair amount). Still, I think it is a wonderful book and it has made me think about my relationship with my mother in new ways. I feel like we have a wonderful relationship already but there is always room for improvement and better understanding of each other. It also made me realize how lucky I am to have the relationship I do with my parents. If I hadn't ordered it on kindle I would give it to my mother to read next so we could talk about it! As it is, maybe I'll tell her about it and read what I think is relevant to her so we can discuss it more. It also (for the most part) made me feel comforted reading it, as I live far from my family, I got to think about my parents and makes me happy.

A good read!!! Very relatable stories. This book has a story for any mother or daughter who wants to understand the dynamics of the very complex relationship that develops and exists between mother/daughter.

I read this book in a couple of days really quickly, as hooked as if it was a novel. I thought it was spot-on and really helped understand the dynamics between mother and daughter, distance and influence. Let me add I checked out a few books on the subject and while I only read the Kindle free samples of others, or reviews by other customers, I am very happy I bought this one and feel it is what I was looking for. I realised that some things to deflect bad reactions or bad timing, my mother and I already do (email sometimes instead of phone, for instance). And it gave me perspective about arguments and points of views. I really think it will help me further understand my mother and cultivate a positive relationship. What I especially liked : there is no norm or judgement about how often contact is "good" or "too much". It's for each person to define. One point that bugged me a little, despite the 5 stars : there is a chapter about how new technologies and new ways of communicating (can) impact the relationship. Maybe it's because I belong to the generation who grew up with it, but there was a lot of explaining how email is instantaneous, what an emoticon is, etc. which sounded a bit basic at some point and like it was addressed to someone who was new to all of this (which maybe it is.) Anyway. I read a great short, self-published Kindle book that could be a companion to this one; it's called "The Twelve Sacred Traditions of Magnificent Mothers-IN-Law" (or "MILs") and it's a humoristic but oh-so-true set of rules for mothers of all kinds (or step, in-law or other yet) to respect their grown-up children freedom and cultivate a respectful, caring relationship with them. There are little drawings too which are really funny.

After our usual screams and tears at my visit to my daughter's home for Thanksgiving weekend, someone recommended this book to me. I purchased the Kindle version for both my daughter and me and I sent her a message stating "we both need to read this." OMG - it is so on point! It explains how well-meaning statements and gestures are completely misinterpreted. Both mother and daughter are made to see the other's point of view. After reading it, you come away with the feeling that - hey, I am not a terrible mother and I don't have a rotten daughter. You realize that you are not alone in how you inadvertently hurt each other's feelings. A must reading for all mothers and their adult daughters.

Great stuff.

Thanks for a great product.

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