

# Deborah Tannen

## Quotes

*Men, Communication, People, Ideas, Independence, Mean, Cogs,  
Understanding, Mind, Different, Connections, Mother, Girl, Conversation, Want,  
Criticism, Doors, Thinking, Doe, Fighting*

For most women, the language of conversation is primarily a language of rapport: a way of establishing connections and negotiating relationships.

~Deborah Tannen

The biggest mistake is believing there is one right way to listen, to talk, to have a conversation - or a relationship.

~Deborah Tannen

Part of the reason images of women in positions of authority are marked by their gender is that the very notion of authority is associated with maleness.

~Deborah Tannen

Male-female conversation is cross-cultural communication

~Deborah Tannen

Many men honestly do not know what women want, and women honestly do not know why men find what they want so hard to comprehend and deliver.

~Deborah Tannen

We tend to look through language and not realize how much power language has

~Deborah Tannen

Cooperation isn't the absence of conflict but a means of managing conflict.

~Deborah Tannen

The desire for freedom and independence becomes more of an issue for many men in relationships, whereas interdependence and connection become more of an issue for many women.

~Deborah Tannen

More men feel comfortable doing "public speaking," while more women feel comfortable doing "private" speaking.

~Deborah Tannen

We all know we are unique individuals, but we tend to see others as representatives of groups.

~Deborah Tannen

Words can be like weapons of destruction: It takes so much effort, and the cooperation of so many people, to build something - and so little effort of so few to tear it down.

~Deborah Tannen

If women are often frustrated because men do not respond to their troubles by offering matching troubles, men are often frustrated because women do.

~Deborah Tannen

Some days you just want to get dressed and go about your business. But if you're a woman, you can't, because there is no unmarked woman.

~Deborah Tannen

The chivalrous man who holds a door open or signals a woman to go ahead of him when he's driving is negotiating both status and connection.

~Deborah Tannen

To say that a person feels listened to means a lot more than just their ideas get heard. It's a sign of respect. It makes people feel valued.

~Deborah Tannen

It can be the best of relationships and the worst of relationships - often at the same time. The bond between a mother and daughter is one of

the strongest, but it's also among the most complicated.

~Deborah Tannen

Relationships are made of talk - and talk is for girls and women.

~Deborah Tannen

Communication is a continual balancing act, juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy and independence

~Deborah Tannen

Each underestimates her own power and overestimates the other's

~Deborah Tannen

Each person's life is lived as a series of conversations.

~Deborah Tannen

Many women feel it is natural to consult with their partners at every turn, while many men automatically make more decisions without consulting their partners.

~Deborah Tannen

All conversation, in addition to whatever else it does, displays, and asks for recognition of, our competence.

~Deborah Tannen

Treating people the same is not equal treatment if they are not the same.

~Deborah Tannen

The key to conversation at work is flexibility and understanding how what you say might be perceived by others.

~Deborah Tannen

In dialogue, there is opposition, yes, but no head-on collision.

Smashing heads does not open minds.

~Deborah Tannen

any criticism heard secondhand sounds worse than it would face to face. Words spoken out of our presence strike us as more powerful, just as people we know only by reputation seem larger than life.

~Deborah Tannen

Public discourse requires making an argument for a point of view, not having an argument - as in having a fight.

~Deborah Tannen

In an ongoing relationship, each current criticism packs the punches of all the others that have gone before.

~Deborah Tannen

But if you parry individuals points - a negative and defensive enterprise - you never step back and actively imagine a world in which a different system of ideas could be true - a positive act.

~Deborah Tannen

Though all humans need both intimacy and independence, women tend to focus on the first and men on the second. It is as if their lifeblood ran in different directions.

~Deborah Tannen

Critiquing relieves you of the responsibility of doing integrative thinking.

~Deborah Tannen

False dichotomies are often at the heart of discord.

~Deborah Tannen

Saying that men talk about baseball in order to avoid talking about their feelings is the same as saying that women talk about their feelings in

order to avoid talking about baseball.

~Deborah Tannen

Girls are not accustomed to jockeying for status in an obvious way; they are more concerned that they be liked.

~Deborah Tannen

Life is a matter of dealing with other people, in little matters and cataclysmic ones, and that means a series of conversations.

~Deborah Tannen

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