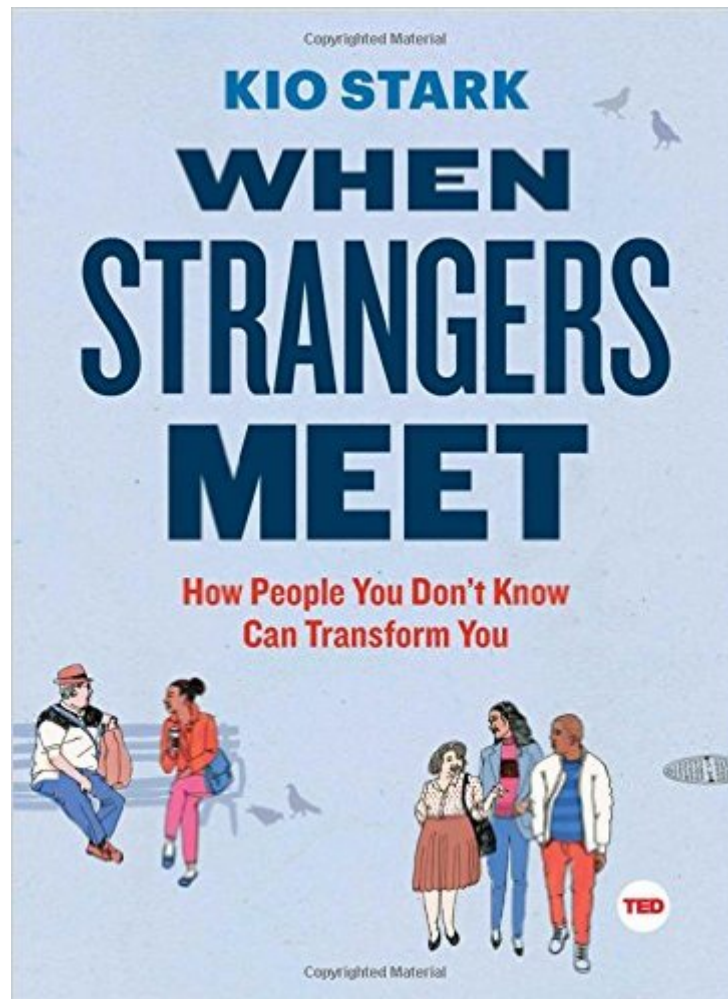


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When Strangers Meet: How People You Don't Know Can Transform You (TED Books)



Synopsis

Discover the unexpected pleasures and exciting possibilities of talking to people you don't know how these beautiful interruptions can change you, and the world we share. When Strangers Meet argues for the pleasures and transformative possibilities of talking to people you don't know. Our lives are increasingly insular. We are in a hurry, our heads are down, minds elsewhere, we hear only the voices we already recognize and rarely take the effort to experience something or someone new. Talking to strangers pulls you into experiences of shared humanity and creates genuine emotional connections. It opens your world. Passing interactions cement your relationship to the places you live and work and play, they're beautiful interruptions in the steady routines of our lives. In luminous prose, Stark shows how talking to strangers wakes you up. Threaded throughout are powerful vignettes from Stark's own lifelong practice of talking to strangers and documenting brief encounters, along with a deep exploration of the dynamics of where, how, and why strangers come together. Ultimately, When Strangers Meet explores the rich emotional and political meanings that are conjured up in even the briefest conversations and unexpected connections with strangers. Stark renders visible the hidden processes by which we decide who to greet and trust in passing, and the unwritten rules by which these encounters operate. When Strangers Meet teaches readers how to start talking to strangers and includes adventurous challenges for those who dare.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I was surprised by WHEN STRANGERS MEET. I have never read a book like this before. In a nutshell, the author encourages the reader to take small risks, and step out a little from your secure, safe world. Actually make contact with someone totally new. Why? Because it opens your life up to new encounters, new ideas--and who knows what else. Interrupt your routine, learn new things, be exposed to new ideas. Change perspective: "When you talk with strangers, you make beautiful and surprising interruptions in the expected narrative of your daily life. You shift perspective." Of course, it's true, we can keep moving in the same, safe track--never risking anything, never being confronted with anything new or wacky. Yes, we can play it safe. We can stay "in a one-dimensional world, deprived of honest human connections and interruptions that awaken us." Kio Stark pleads with the reader to step out, try something new. Look for adventure! "There are adventures to be had here, adventures you can set out for every day of your life." Talking to new people is good for you. It's a happy interruption--nay an "exquisite interruption" that happily takes one on a slightly different path. Practically speaking, one should pick the occasions carefully. If a stranger is in a hurry, then of course, that's a terrible time to start a conversation. The author provides suggestions for opening a conversation. One great way is to use a compliment. Almost everyone appreciates a compliment: "To give a compliment means that your eyes are open, you are present. You are seeing someone as an individual." Another way to bridge the gap to another person is to ask for (or offer) help to someone in a predicament.

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