
Our Friends Talk about *Community Conversations*

"I work from the firm belief that 'Whatever the problem, community is the answer.' Community Conversations teaches us how to make that statement true. The stories, examples and processes gathered together in one lovely book hopefully will inspire you to become active in creating the conversations that will weave our communities into health and new capacity."

~ Margaret J. Wheatley

Author of *Leadership and the New Science* and *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future* and *Turning to One Another*

"Paul Born's *Community Conversations* draws from decades of experience to illuminate the strong and effective ideas that emerge when diverse participants meet together over well-mediated conversations. The book is replete with inspirational stories and how-to tips, delivered with clear writing, gentle humour, and reflective commentary that provide powerful insights into community-based dialogue."

~ Mark L. Winston

Academic Director and Fellow, Centre for Dialogue
Simon Fraser University

"Evidently, transformation is not so much about organizations as it is about citizens coming together to share their vision, to learn, and to create. Not new to any of us. Like building coalitions, it is part of the community development air we breathe.

I appreciate Born's efforts to break collaboration down into its constituents, and to elevate its skills and knowledge to an art form deserving of our close attention. We need to walk the talk more often, in more meetings, and in more projects in order to instill the skills of listening, creativity, non-judgment, visioning, and collaborative leadership (and "follower-ship") at every level of community life.



Born offers the most practical tools and suggestions for what it is we need to do or ask in order to realize these prerequisites (for transformation) in the communities where we work. Born offers many examples from his experience in Vibrant Communities that illustrate his contention that our dialogue or conversation design and facilitation skills are really central to planting all of these prerequisites in groups and communities."

~ Michelle Colussi, Canadian Centre for Community Renewal and member of the Canadian CED Network (CCEDNet), written for [makingwaves](#) - Canada's authoritative magazine on Community Economic Development

Selected quotes from Seven Prerequisites of Transformation, volume 20, number 1

"Paul Born has done a masterful job of demonstrating the power of community conversations. The combination of first hand stories, concepts that make sense and practical advice will make this a favourite book for community leaders, facilitators and activists."

~ Brenda Zimmerman

PhD, Director, Health Industry Management Program - Associate Professor of Strategy/Policy, Schulich School of Business. Co-author of *Getting to Maybe, How the World is Changed*

"I love *Community Conversations* because I think it will be helpful to our ever emerging Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation, amongst other communities. It is an easy read, packed with such simple yet strong lessons which we all have acquired in our practices yet tend to forget or let slide to the sides of our frames of action let alone reference."

~ Sandra Zagon

Past-Chair, Canadian Community for Dialogue and Deliberation

"*Community Conversations* dispels the notion that 'talk is cheap.' Talking or good conversations are essential to rethinking our analysis, our partners and our actions as we tackle our tough social and ecological challenges. You can imagine yourself as an impresario of good conversation after reading this book."

~ Al Etmanski

Founder of the Plan Institute

"This slim volume explores a new kind of social dialogue emerging in communities across North America. Paul Born is a social entrepreneur and co-founder of Vibrant Communities, whose work is at the forefront of social change movements in Canada. An engaging storyteller and speaker, Born's writing is inspirational and humble. Here, he offers us stories and practices – including Future Search and Conversation Cafes – that can bring communities together into the conversations and collaborations to shift the ways we approach our intractable and increasingly complex social issues."

~ ascent Magazine, issue 40, winter 2008

"Paul Born is a change maker. If you want to understand how to make change happen, explore the techniques he uses to enable communities to take charge of their own future."

~ Judith Maxwell, Senior Fellow

Canadian Policy Research Networks

"If you want to help your community move from good to better, this book is a must read. Paul Born draws the reader into some marvelous conversations about the theory and techniques that lie behind community improvements."

~ Monica Chaperlin
Coordinator, Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative Inc.

"My students responded so well to your book and you. It is a valuable contribution and deserves to be well promoted. Many have gone on to explore the Tamarack contributions, so it is a win-win."

~ David Nostbakken
Professor, School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Carleton University

"Facilitated conversations among people from diverse walks of life are a building block for social advancement. In *Community Conversations*, Born offers informative and inspiring examples of multi-stakeholder collaboration that have led to reducing poverty and crime and to re-energizing citizens and social programs."

~ What's Budding at Maytree, August 2008 Newsletter

"Paul Born's book is a summary of many experiences and experiments in community conversations. His distillation of what has worked for him, tricks and formats to use, and principles to follow will be valuable for anyone who works in this fascinating, challenging, diverse and emergent space."

~ Trevor Gray
Executive Director, The Tindall Foundation, New Zealand

"I read your book *Community Conversations* and I found a profound 'identite de vue' (same passion) with your perspective. Very well said. In particular, 'we listened and gained a corner on the obvious' which translated is, 'nous ecoutons and tentons de capter ce qui est evident.' This describes very well our work in the community."

~ Lyse Brunet
Directrice generale, Québec Enfants, Fondation Lucie et André Chagnon

"Through simplification of complex concepts and illustrative and relevant examples, Paul Born has succeeded in wetting the reader's appetite to do more for his/her community. Many of the tips outlined in the book are easily reproduced and can help to guarantee the successful development of multi-stakeholder working groups. The well-defined chapters allow the reader to come back to specific areas of discussion to highlight solutions to challenges they may experience along the way."

~ Susan Scotti
Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, HRSDC

"*Community Conversations* is appropriately conversational in its style, enjoyable and easily readable. Typically, we think of conversations occurring in very typical or traditional ways. Paul Born reminds us that there are a multitude of ways in which communities can converse and that by being creative in our approach to these interactions, a greater opportunity exists for our communities to be inspired and involved."

~ Salima Stanley-Bhanji
Director, Vibrant Communities Calgary

"Paul Born's success in facilitating community conversations that really make a difference to community well being and people's lives come shining through. His visionary and strategic approach, combined with real-life experience, handy hints and practical tools, makes for fascinating reading. This is a book to go back to time and again."

~ Mary-Jane Rivers
Inspiring Communities, New Zealand

"If you work within communities, this book can give you more knowledge, encouragement and hope that you can do better. There are new ideas and clear outlines of the steps you can take to try new approaches in community engagement. I found it to be truly inspiring and will return to it over and over in those times when I need to reflect and find new ways of connecting to people."

~ Janice Melnychuk
Executive Director, Vibrant Communities Edmonton

Learn more about Paul Born and *Community Conversations* at:
<http://www.paulborn.ca>