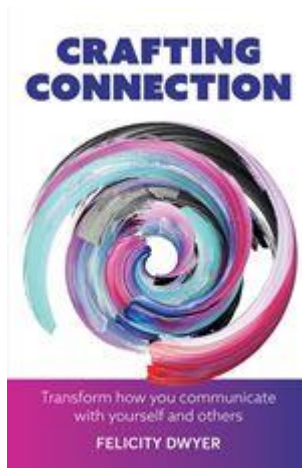

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW



Book Title: ***Crafting Connection – Transform how you communicate with yourself and others¹***

Author: **Felicity Dwyer**

Publisher: Practical Inspiration Publishing

List Price: US \$21.99

Format: ebook = Review Proof only – not for circulation

Publication Date: October 2022 ISBN: 9781788604031

Reviewer: **Marva Gordon, CAPM**

Review Date: June 2024

Introduction

In this great read of a book, the authoress Felicity Dwyer quite successfully pulls from her own experience and from other wide-ranging sources to guide readers to connect with themselves in their wholeness. Then she demonstrates that that is the foundation for communicating with other individuals as well as groups – because of the thorough connections which can be achieved.

She wants us all to feel ‘heard and understood’.

Overview of Book’s Structure

The writer uses three ‘dimensions’ (‘3D’) within which to frame and deliver her treatise: Connecting Within as the first section of the book – contains 5 chapters; Connecting With as the second section contains 6 chapters; and Connecting Beyond is the third section comprised of 3 chapters.

Each section also has several paragraphs, before the new chapter begins, outlining her intention and guiding expectations.

Although not so outlined, I consider the last chapter to be the fourth section of the book. In it she specifically provides the conclusion she hopes you reach too -assuming

¹ How to cite this work: Gordon, M. (2024). *Crafting Connection – Transform how you communicate with yourself and others*, book review, *PM World Journal*, Vol. XIII, Issue VII, July.

you had been applying the principles and ought to have arrived at a new place in your 3D connections.

Dwyer employed 79 understandings and quotations from others – set out in the Endnotes covering 8 pages. Coupled with the 24-item bibliography, these show that she relied not only on her own experience as facilitator, trainer, coach, and speaker but drew from the learning she gleaned from those sources, and most likely applied in her own journey.

Highlights

Ms Dwyer gets right to the point. There is no lag while she explains why you need to hear her message. Just the message and practical ways to enjoy it and put into practice what she informs about.

Dimension 1 is about how to understand and read yourself in all your aspects – spiritual, physical, mental and emotional. The aim is for you to identify how acknowledging different vantage points can generate appreciation of ones whole self.

Dimension 2 underlines what (in my estimation most persons have most challenge with) are the ways in which each person can create, rely on and enjoy genuine supportive and effective one-on-one communication with another person. The aim she points out is the sharpening of your will and capacity and determination to learn how to listen deeply to another person in much the same way that you learnt to listen to the total you. Then, she posits, you can respond in a way that leads to true connectedness

Dimension 3 considers our place in the ‘wider tapestry of life’ including the linkages we experience with other people but also with the world ecology in all its facets. She argues convincingly that each of us can experience a sense of meaning, of purpose through the vast interconnections which surround and envelope us. The aim then would be to appreciate those interfaces and engage with them, secure in the holistic understanding that those very dynamic interactions will bring collaborations, and renewal of communities within which we might experience added life value.

Did I miss the part where she fittingly addresses how to handle the niceties of group politics, or to navigate the office grapevine?

Highlights: What I liked!

I could almost feel the sense of challenge the authoress felt, getting to the point where she learnt all this and became able to share it with others. Her self-reflection, so authentically laid out throughout the text, can definitely support one’s own self-exploration. She gave her own testimony throughout – about her feelings, experiences and outcomes so you connect with her, can relate to her, and want to do as she has done.

Some of the principles shared are reflective of injunctions given in the Bible (which is my all-time favorite book). For example: when she points out "...evidence demonstrating the benefits of meditation...include reducing anxiety...and improving levels of concentration and work performance", it brought to mind where James 5:16 says "...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much"

I have sections highlighted almost on every page throughout the e-book version I read. That means I found much I'd like to review again and or apply to my own situation so that I can gain the most from her work.

Somehow her words "And a particular thank you to those who gave me feedback on early drafts and helped me feel both that the book was worth writing, and how it could be improved." found near the end of Acknowledgements impressed me as it shows that the tension between those two ideas is healthy and manageable. Not the main point of her book but certainly related to recognizing the value of those crucial interpersonal connections.

Dwyer starts her warm Acknowledgements with the following:

"Firstly, thank you to Sophia, my beautiful daughter. You are my greatest teacher, and you show me everything I have yet to learn about crafting connection."

While I learnt from everything else, these words resonated sweetly with me: I have been letting my own two offspring know that I recognize the wonderful ways in which they have challenged me and helped me grow.

Who might benefit from the Book

It seems to me that anyone seeking authenticity in their communication, work and overall life would find this book beneficial.

Furthermore, as she gives us insight about how to connect with ourselves as the path to connecting with others, it is clear that those who are in a position of trust, of guiding or leading or influencing others, or who desire to be a role model for others, would gain immense competence when they embrace and practise the principles she espouses. I am reminded of the semester on transformational leadership which we read during our journey towards a Master's in Business Administration for Executives. Change yourself and you can change the world.

Project managers who are guided by the Project Management Institute's Project Management Book of Knowledge, can certainly benefit from reading this book. I believe that their people-management and communication will undoubtedly improve. Those two are cast as the two most valuable features of being a trusted leader. So, they will support and inspire the team's contributions.

Conclusion

In the last chapter, Dwyer offers a summary – designed for the first letters to spell pared as in “PARED-down”. That’s pretty cute as it shows just how skilled she is at using the written words to get her points across. Presence, Awareness, Respect, Exchange, Dynamic are the words which summarize the lessons she shares – and I could do no better than repeating them.

It is a very very easy read and gently organized to lead you to its conclusions. This book tends to influence without too much mind-bending. All throughout Dwyer asks questions of you the reader, so you are *inclined* to think about what she has said. Associated are also practical tips for leading a personal call-to-action. She invites each reader to connect with her, to provide feedback to her and to use the Connection Craft Kit which she put together for us. Isn’t that practising what she preaches?

In these ways she throws down the gauntlet to all who read her book. Similarly, I challenge you my reader to take up *Crafting Connection*, it’s a refreshing read albeit a paradoxically intense one – it can change you. *Try it – you’ll see.*

For more about this book, go to: <https://practicalinspiration.com/book/crafting-connection>

Editor’s note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the [PMI Silver Spring Chapter](#). Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Silver Spring Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Silver Spring Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP re-certification when their reviews are published.

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About the Reviewer



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Marva Gordon employs project management principles in all that she does – volunteerism, profession and even church elder-ship. She is in career transition towards aviation safety management systems in the US. She will draw upon her superpowers of critical thinking, research and consultation to dissect issues in context and collaborating around effectively addressing them. As an Attorney-at-Law, she has analyzed situations then compiled and presented advice in aviation, governance, compliance and law; she has integrally supported development of statutes, regulations and directives, guidance material such as procedures and manuals, training curricula and delivery; has engaged in international negotiations and briefed officials of government and international bodies to adopt relevant policies.

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