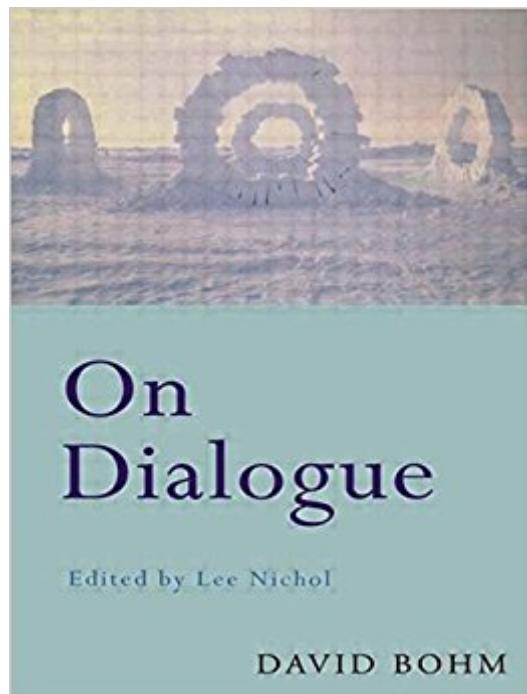


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# On Dialogue



## **Synopsis**

Never before has there been a greater need for deeper listening and more open communication to cope with the complex problems facing our organizations, businesses and societies. Renowned scientist David Bohm believed there was a better way for humanity to discover meaning and to achieve harmony. He identified creative dialogue, a sharing of assumptions and understanding, as a means by which the individual, and society as a whole, can learn more about themselves and others, and achieve a renewed sense of purpose.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

David Bohm (1917-92). Renowned physicist and theorist who was one of the most original thinkers of the second half of the twentieth century.

Preface by Peter Senge is worth a read in and of itself! "...a growing recognition that the complex problem our organizations and societies face demand a deeper listening and a more open communication than has been the norm" (p. viii). So begins this book. Lee Nichols in the forward adds, "[Dialogue] is more of the nature of relaxed, nonjudgmental curiosity, its primary activity being to see things as freshly and clearly as possible" (p. xviii). As described, Bohm's purpose for dialogue is not to agree or reach consensus per se but for people to "create something new together. . . . each has to be interested primarily in truth and coherence, so that he is ready to drop his old ideas and intentions, and be ready to go on to something different" (p. 3). This is a book about our

thoughts, biases, and assumptions. Dialogue is a way to suspend our assumptions, to honor the varying assumptions in the room, and to collectively create a new way forward. It is about reflection, learning, and respecting others sufficiently because we value community as a representation of the various people.

For many, *On Dialogue* is their first introduction to David Bohm. In this book Dr. Bohm brings to action the idea of many of his investigations of thought and his experience as a physicist, by presenting a space for groups learning to think together. Rather than a group simply sharing ideas back and forth, Dr. Bohm felt that we had the ability, through dialogue, to create something totally new in thought. If you have not read it, read David Bohm's book, *Thought as a System*, the book will open your thinking of what thought is and question what we consider are our own thoughts. I found *On Dialogue* to be a very exciting idea. In practice Dialogue, as presented by Dr. Bohm is not for the faint at heart, but rewarding.

The preface from Peter Senge is itself well worth the read on its own, I am a fan of Peter too. Bohm has impacted so many great thinkers, including the Dalai Lama. His books are not easy to read, I normally can get in one or two pages and have to put it down to reflect. This book, and others he wrote like it, create an awareness of one's mental processes, and that of others. That awareness can literally enhance your ability to think and communicate clearly. For me, as I read the "best practices" for communicating, it tells me there is no near-term hope for the deteriorating communications we have in our society today, especially in politics. This book has the blueprint our country needs to start working together and not only understanding each other, but to use interactions with others to think more clearly. If you do not like books that explain in detail how our minds work, suggest not getting, it is not an easy read.

As I read I wished I could mail a copy to every politician/leader/human on Earth. When I first started reading it I felt like it was intense, but the ideas have stuck with me more than six months later.

Interesting read as part of an OD doctoral program, but I'm not sure I'd sit down with it otherwise. It is simple and quick, however, and reiterates the dire need to listen and be aware of our internal assumptions and beliefs.

Very clear information about blending science and spirituality by a master teacher.

We talk to each other all the time. We think all the time. But we never stop to understand what this implies and means. If you are interested and have time to think about how we can unleash the power of dialogue from a philosophical point of view, this work will be useful to you. Bohm's language is easy to understand and consistent.

This book is for you if you can appreciate Bohm's observation in it: "Thought should be able to perceive its own movement, be aware of its own movement. In the processes of thought, there should be the awareness of that movement, of the intention to think, and of the result which that thinking produces." A seminal manifesto on communication breakthroughs, "On Dialogue" provides just the theoretical grounding that a Dialogue neophyte would need to venture into this provocative terrain of how we mean.

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