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BK BUSINESS

235 Montgomery Street, Suite 650  
San Francisco, CA 94104-2916  
Fax 415.362.2512  
www.bkconnection.com

Tiffany Lee, Publicity Manager  
Phone: 415.743.6477 Email: tlee@bkpub.com  
Peter Cavagnaro, Publicity Manager  
Phone: 415.743.6469 Email:  
pcavagnaro@bkpub.com

For Immediate Release

# Community

## The Structure of Belonging

### By Peter Block

Communities are plagued by fragmentation. The various sectors of our communities all too often work at odds with each other. They exist in their own worlds, as do so many individual citizens, who long for connection but end up marginalized, their gifts overlooked, their potential contributions lost. This disconnection and detachment makes it hard if not impossible to envision a common future and work toward it together. In his new book, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, bestselling Peter Block combines penetrating and often contrarian insights into the nature of community with specific, pragmatic advice on how to restore and nurture it.

We know what healthy communities look like—there are many success stories out there. The challenge is how to create one in our own place. What Peter Block provides in this inspiring book is an exploration of the exact way community can emerge from fragmentation. How is community built? How does the transformation occur? What fundamental shifts are involved? What can individuals and formal leaders do to create a place they want to inhabit?

Block helps us see how we can change the existing context of community from one of deficiencies, interests, and entitlement to one of possibility, generosity, and gifts. Questions are more important than answers in this effort, so the job of leaders is to get the right people together in the right way—convening is a more critical skill than commanding. As he explores the nature of community and the dynamics of transformation, Block outlines six kinds of conversation that will create communal accountability and commitment and describes how we can design physical spaces and structures that will themselves foster a sense of belonging. He also includes many moving examples of how individuals, on a small scale, are doing innovative work to rebuild community.

*More...*

*“Peter Block clearly identifies the essential ingredients, qualities, questions, atmosphere and actions needed to create and build vital communities filled with possibility, generosity, accountability, and deep engagement. Outstanding in its relevance, practicality, and clarity.”*

– Angeles Arrien, Ph.D., cultural anthropologist and author of *The Second Half of Life: Opening to the Eight Gates of Wisdom*

*“Building community and bringing people of diverse cultures and abilities together to the benefit of all is work that can seem like breaking trail in a pathless forest at night without a flashlight. Peter Block provides the flashlight.”*

– Judith Snow, Social Inclusion Advocate, ABCD Faculty

*“Community is a gift; in this remarkable work, the arrhythmic heartbeat of today’s fragmented communities beats again with new hope and possibility. It is an irresistible call to true citizenship and a desperately needed revival of community.”*

– Sadanand Ward Mailliard, Founding Member of The Mount Madonna Center Community and Head of Community Studies Development, Mount Madonna Institute

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**Peter Block** is a partner in Designed Learning, a training company that offers workshops designed by Block to build the skills outlined in his books. He is the author of *Flawless Consulting*, *Stewardship*, *The Empowered Manager*, and *The Answer to How Is Yes*. He is the recipient of the American Society for Training and Development Award for Distinguished Contribution to Workplace Learning and Performance and the Association for Quality and Participation President’s Award. He is also a member of *Training* magazine’s HRD Hall of Fame.

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**By Peter Block**

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