



Start with Hello:
(And Other Simple Ways to Live as Neighbors)
by Shannan Martin
Paperback ISBN: 9780800740894
\$18.99; 224 pp
E-Book ISBN: 9781493438945
Release date: Oct 2022

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A Field Guide on How to Live as Neighbors

"I forever want Shannan Martin to boss me on the art of neighboring and the true purpose of home. One of the best books of the year."

Myquillyn Smith, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Welcome Home*

For the past couple of years most people were told to isolate, protect themselves from contact with neighbors, and stay indoors. After practicing this for so long how do we become neighbors again? And, should we care?

In this practical, compelling book, ***Start with Hello (And Other Simple Ways to Live as Neighbors)*** author Shannan Martin shares simple practices for living as a more open-hearted, empathetic neighbor who sees past what divides us, looks for common ground, and is rewarded with vibrant and enduring connection.

There are so many ways, both intentionally and unintentionally, we wall ourselves off from one another, yet we are truly better, healthier, and happier together. The good news is authentic connection can be found. Martin shares how to:

- Believe in the possibility of healthier, sturdier, more unified communities and be committed to the collective health of those at the sidelines.
- Trade feelings of loneliness, isolation, and disconnection for the security and camaraderie of living in connection with the people near them.
- Engage simple, accessible practices for living as a more open-hearted, empathetic neighbor.
- See past the headlines of division and become more curious about our shared humanity.
- Be equipped for the small, slow work of repair within a culture that often seems to have given up and experience the brighter life that comes through the persistent practice of solidarity.

"Shannan Martin is a sidewalk poet and an everyday prophet. In *Start with Hello* she issues a stunning and accessible invitation for us to live as neighbors in the world, casting a hopeful vision of what it looks like to be human together." **Emily P. Freeman**, *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author of *The Next Right Thing*



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Instagram @Shannanwrites



About the Author

Shannan Martin, author of *The Ministry of Ordinary Places* and *Falling Free*, is a speaker and writer who found her voice in the country and her story in the city. Shannan works as a cook at The Window, a local nonprofit dedicated to feeding its community. She, her jail-chaplain husband, and their kids live as grateful neighbors in Goshen, Indiana. Follow her on Instagram @shannanwrites.

PRAISE for Start with Hello

Shannan. I pick her friendship. I pick her example. I pick Start with Hello. This book. It is lovely, warm, honest. It brims with possibility. It is--and Shannan would hate this word--inspiring. I want to run home and leave the mess where it is and send a text to my five closest neighbors to come over for chili and \$10 wine. What a gift she is. What a gift this book is." **Jen Hatmaker**, speaker, podcast host, and bestselling author of *Fierce*, *Free*, and *Full of Fire*

"This book is so inspiring, but in a chill, regular sort of way. It doesn't wreck you or kick you in the pants or make you rethink your entire existence. Instead, it will change you in a way you've been craving to change by helping you see the beauty of where you currently exist and the people who exist near you. It makes being a neighbor, not to mention a person, just so beautifully . . . doable. Y'all, this is the book we've been waiting for." **Kendra Adachi**, New York Times bestselling author of *The Lazy Genius Way*

"Fellow wallflowers, Shannan Martin has written our guide to come to the dance floor in a way that feels possible, alluring, and bursting with potential. In terms that are both poetic and practical, Shannan makes a compelling case that we all can find our people and our places in community. Start with Hello invites us to see the people around us as whole and generous and just waiting to be known and loved. You'll want to mark up your copy and pass it to a neighbor." **Beth Silvers**, cohost of the *Pantsuit Politics* podcast and coauthor of *Now What?*



Sample Interview Questions for Shannan Martin

Start with Hello:

(And Other Simple Ways to Live as Neighbors)

- Please share where your inspiration for this book came from?
 - In the book, you talk about obstacles that prevent us from connecting with our neighbors. Can you share a couple of common obstacles most people have and how to overcome them?
 - What was your first step in trading in your loneliness for connectedness?
 - Explain what a “waking up” practice is and how it works?
 - How can people find their “blind spots?”
 - In the book you write that “we need to be nudged into awkward places and prodded to have conversations where we learn.” Can you explain a situation where this might happen?
 - You have one fool-proof tip for connecting with people. Share how you have used this in your journey toward interdependence.
 - In your book, you write about racism you’ve witnessed in the lives around you (including for you kids) and ways that we can all learn and grow in this important area. Can you give us a couple of ideas on how to move forward when we feel stuck or discouraged by what we are seeing?
 - Why do you think we need to reframe hospitality?
 - We frequently hear people use the word “awkward” to describe themselves today. Tell us why you think that word needs a new PR campaign?
 - You write in the book, “It’s time to reclaim ‘too sensitive’ as our honor badge for everyday citizenship,” while some may say we *are* too sensitive. What are your thoughts on these conflicting views?
 - There are so many causes that we can align ourselves with in the world. Tell us where to start if we are overwhelmed.
 - After reading this book, what one thing would you want readers to walk away with?
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