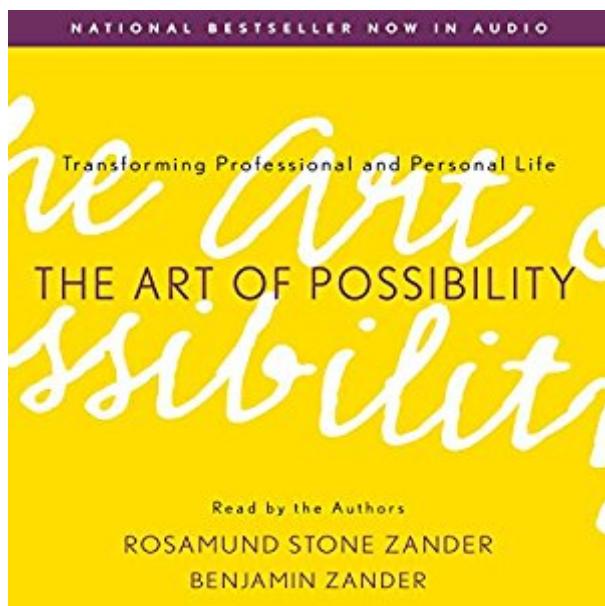


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# The Art Of Possibility: Transforming Professional And Personal Life



## **Synopsis**

Presenting 12 breakthrough practices for bringing creativity into all human endeavors, *The Art of Possibility* is the dynamic product of an extraordinary partnership. The Art of Possibility combines Benjamin Zander's experience as conductor of the Boston Philharmonic and his talent as a teacher and communicator with psychotherapist Rosamund Stone Zander's genius for designing innovative paradigms for personal and professional fulfillment. The authors' harmoniously interwoven perspectives provide a deep sense of the powerful role that the notion of possibility can play in every aspect of life. Through uplifting stories, parables, and personal anecdotes, the Zanders invite us to become passionate communicators, leaders, and performers whose lives radiate possibility into the world.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Draw a different frame around the same set of circumstances and new pathways come into view," say authors Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander in their book *The Art of Possibility*: Transforming Professional and Personal Life. This brought to mind one of my favorite quotes by the late Wayne Dyer, ""If you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change." I like this philosophy, and I wanted to read more. *The Art of Possibility* is full of examples to emphasize that life works better when you have a positive mental outlook. The authors tell a story of two shoe factory salesmen exploring new markets in Africa. After assessing the situation, both send telegrams: SITUATION HOPELESS. STOP. NO ONE WEARS SHOES. GLORIOUS BUSINESS

OPPORTUNITY. STOP. THEY HAVE NO SHOES."The one who sees no shoes, all the evidence points to hopelessness. To his colleague, the same conditions point to abundance and possibility," say the Zanders. Through easy to understand examples like this the authors drive home their point. I also liked the stories the Zanders share from their professions. Benjamin Zander is the conductor of the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra. Rosamund Stone Zander (nickname of "Roz" in the book) has a private practice in family therapy. The Art of Possibility is more than just pie in the sky optimism. The Zanders recommend a realistic approach to negative thoughts and feelings. Their approach "doesn't mean you should drown out your negative feelings or pretend you like what you really can't stand. It doesn't mean you should work to achieve some 'higher plane of existence' so you can 'transcend negativity,'" they feel. "It simply means, being present without resistance: being present to what is happening and present to your reactions, no matter how intense. The capacity to be present to everything that is happening, without resistance, creates possibility." Reading the book led me to challenge some of my limiting beliefs. "We can replace the narratives that hold us back by inventing wiser stories, free from childish fears, and in doing so, disperse long-held psychological stumbling blocks," say the Zanders. Perhaps our interpretations of the events in our lives do not match reality. "We see a map of the world, not the world itself," the authors feel.

This is a pretty good book, though possibly not as meaningful as some others I've read in the same genre have been for me (self help; self improvement; better life tactics). But, as a musician the analogies were fabulous! Written by a conductor, there were countless stories that were applicable to me, a part-time musician. I'm getting some great ideas and this book reinforces lessons taught in other books. I think the more you read, and as things are said in a different way by different authors, the better the chance you will actually make the changes! It is well worth the read.

This is one of my top 5 all time favorite and most helpful books. Not only does it impact the working world it also positively affects personal relationships through seeing the potential that exists everywhere. It is not a bunch of vapid platitudes, but every suggestion is explained with real world examples that are truly helpful and that would also work for most readers. My favorites are re-framing mistakes to "How Fascinating" and also to seeing beyond downward spiral thinking as well as understanding the 2 selves many of us possess, and tapping into the central self. I love the content of this book so much that I've gifted it to about a dozen people in the last few months.

The "practices" in this book are great and can be applied to so many aspects of your life. I read this book as part of a course on Leadership and really enjoyed the discussions we had as a class on the different ways we interpreted and have applied the practices to our own lives. However, actually reading the book was difficult. I think it was just a personal preference, but I had a very hard time relating to either author. The husband is a music conductor (I'm not musical, and everything he wrote about related to that) and the wife seemed to have lived a very privileged life. If you are a musical person (especially classical) you will love the examples and stories that the husband has to tell.

There are some good nuggets (be a contribution being my favorite), but you have to wade through so much excruciating detail about his orchestra (often irrelevant to the point being made, but seemed to satisfy his ego), it was barely worth the nugget. I fell asleep more than once with this book in my hands. He obviously has a profound respect for his profession and thinks it may be the most important thing on earth, so I don't begrudge him his tendency to throw in irrelevant details, but I do blame the editor. This could have been edited down to half the size and would have probably been more profound and impactful.

I've liked reading this book, but it didn't live up to my expectations. What is the problem with it? Maybe an exaggerated generalization of the ideas expressed. I exemplify with "giving an A", one powerful recipe, but to be used with the required precaution. Entirely agree with the authors (one of them) when they say: "You can't play great music unless your heart's is broken". I doubt that living a full life is so simple as the book seems to defend.

I was required to read this book for work and it was mainly fluffy and may not have made a significant impact on my life. Consider reading an essay on a similar topic or participating in some kind of training with clear action plan instead.

I can't recommend this book enough. It helped me jump-start a creative project I'm working on, and even helped me tackle a personal issue I'd been putting off. Lots of great content, and written beautifully.

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