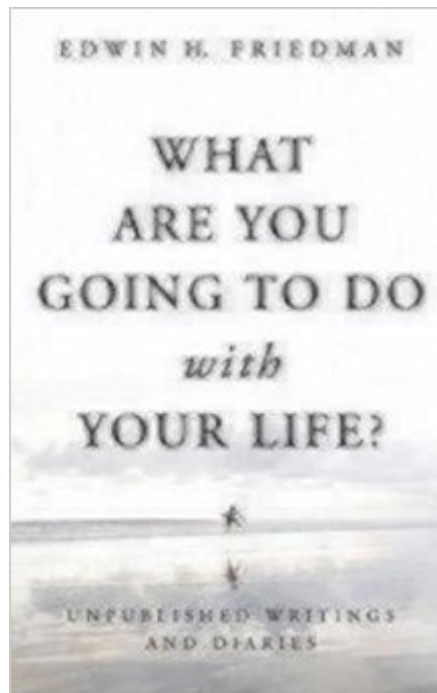


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# What Are You Going To Do With Your Life?: Unpublished Writings And Diaries



## Synopsis

Whether he is interviewing God ( I must be the first since Moses to be allowed into your presence ), preaching on marriage as music, or reflecting on a visit to his parents grave, Friedman always has the power to surprise us and invite us to change. This new collection of Edwin Friedman s writings, most of them unpublished, reveal a different side of this rabbi, teacher, and leadership coach who caused a revolution in viewing human relationships with Generation to Generation. Organized into life stages, specifically the journey from young adulthood to maturity and death, *What Are You Going to Do with Your Life?* captures Friedman s signature wit and playfulness as he cuts straight to the heart of human growth and relationships. Throughout his life, Friedman eloquently applied the insights of family therapy to churches and synagogues, organizations and businesses and, of course, to families themselves. He energized and delighted a wide public in his lifetime and continues to engage us with *What Are You Going to Do with Your Life?*, an essential reader for those seeking lifechanging insights.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A Good LifeAfter Ed Friedman died his son, Ari, and daughter Shira kept looking at the eight foot file cabinet filled with diaries, sermons, and (mostly) unpublished manuscripts at the family home in Bethesda. Ari said, "Why don't we publish them?"Two other people who have been instrumental in the posthumous publication of writings of Friedman spent several days going through drawers, boxes, and files. The result is "What Are You Going To Do With Your Life?"This book is by far more

biographical and personal than anything else published under the Rabbi's name. And generally more accessible. Thinking about family process can be a bit like the rabbinical wisdom that God is not accessible by a direct approach but rather by metaphors. Likewise, understanding and managing triangles and the transmission of anxiety (or calmness) throughout a family system (including larger systems) can be daunting. Friedman is a master of doing this and explaining what he is doing. In these articles he traces his own encounters with the systems to which he is connected through his illnesses and the crises faced by others which required his own self-management. In the final article he visits two cemeteries where family are buried and shares his reflections on the experience. For the purposes of better understanding family process a chronology would have been helpful. As it is, I was able to piece together the main events which are noted in the text. For anyone undecided about purchase of the book the tool call "Look Inside" is a very useful way of sampling a book. And don't miss 'Surprise Me!' which gives access to dozens of other pages. A terrific convenience. An added bonus to the entire experience of working with this book is the cover - an expanse of beach on an overcast day with a man leaping exuberantly into the air in the middle of it.

It's a good book to be sure, but I wouldn't recommend it to people who hadn't read anything else by Friedman. I think these writings are far more interesting in the context of his other published works; without that context, I fear that this book will seem directionless and little more than a random assortment of essays and journal entries. That said, there are some gems that the uninitiated may find worth the price. Friedman's commencement speeches and marriage sermons hold great insights into the human condition at those transitional points in life. "The Day God Prayed" is a profound continuation of the biblical story of Noah, especially when read with the context of the U.S./Soviet arms race in the background, or even of today's so-called "war on terror." "Interview with God," is a thought-provoking look at the biblical story of creation through the lens of Friedman's understanding of the concepts of family therapy. Overall, the book serves as a great complement to Friedman's other writings, and I recommend it to those who have found Friedman's ideas useful. I recommend it cautiously to those who have never read anything else by Friedman...

Those of us who got to know Ed Friedman before *Generation to Generation* were privileged to experience a person who thought deeply about the human experience. His encounter with Dr. Murray Bowen, MD, only enriched his desire to understand the processes of human relationships. These unpublished articles and diary reveal an intimate view of Ed's early thinking moving from

Bucknell Un. to the seminary. His early thinking about the human family and how it has emerged are helpful to those of us who have appreciated his contributions that assist us in our daily work (ministry) to people. Thank you Shira and Ari (Ed's daughter and son) for sharing these notes of your father.

For Friedman followers, this is like finding buried treasure...wonderful stories which add depth to his theories for practical application and heightened understanding. The personal essays gave me a feeling of sitting across from him as a privileged listener as he taught from his self awareness around life's nodal events.

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