

From Beginning to End



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FROM BEGINNING TO END Why "rituals"? My thinking was set in motion by those who, knowing I was a parish minister for many years, have asked me for advice about ceremonies and celebrations. They wanted words to use at graduations, funerals, and the welcoming of children. They inquired about grace at family meals, the reaffirmation of wedding vows, and ways to heal wounds suffered in personal conflict. People requested help with the rituals of solitude, such as meditation, prayer, and contemplation. . . . Rituals do not always involve words, occasions, officials, or an audience. Rituals are often silent, solitary, and self-contained. The most powerful rites of passage are reflective--when you look back on your life again and again, paying attention to the rivers you have crossed and the gates you have opened and walked on through, the thresholds you have passed over. I see ritual when people sit together silently by an open fire. Remembering. As human beings have remembered for thousands and thousands of years. FULGHUM

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目录:

[From Beginning to End 下载链接1](#)

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