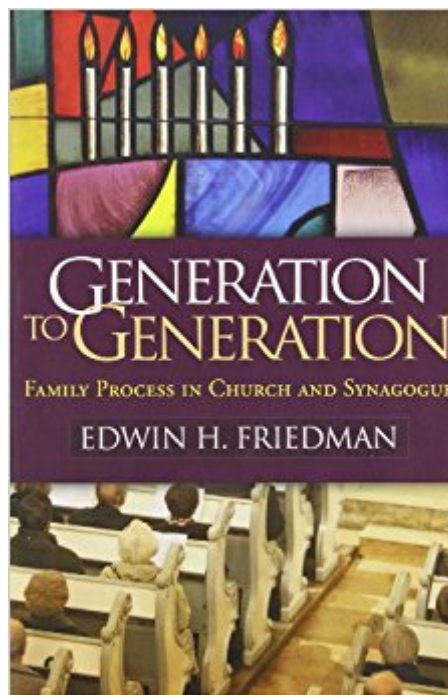


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Generation To Generation: Family Process In Church And Synagogue (Guilford Family Therapy (Paperback))



Synopsis

This acclaimed, influential work applies the concepts of systemic family therapy to the emotional life of congregations. Edwin H. Friedman shows how the same understanding of family process that can aid clergy in their pastoral role also has important ramifications for negotiating congregational dynamics and functioning as an effective leader. Clergy from diverse denominations, as well as family therapists and counselors, have found that this book directly addresses the dilemmas and crises they encounter daily. It is widely used as a text in courses on family systems and pastoral care.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book to be absorbed slowly. I don't think I can summarize this book any better than Friedman himself does on page 1: "It is the thesis of this book that all clergymen and clergywomen, irrespective of faith, are simultaneously involved in three distinct families whose emotional forces interlock: the families within the congregation, our congregations, and our own. Because the emotional process in all of these systems is identical, unresolved issues in any one of them can produce symptoms in the others, and increased understanding of any one creates more effective functioning in all three." This book will invite you to take a good, hard look at your own functioning. "There is an intrinsic relationship between our capacity to put families together [or, Friedman would also say, to put congregations together] and our ability to put ourselves together" (page 3).

Friedman looks at family issues and congregational issues from a systems perspective, arguing that when a member of a family (or a congregation) is demonstrating "symptoms," it is necessary to look at the whole network of relationships that that individual is involved in -- because the root cause of the problem may lie in a completely different part of the system. Friedman illustrates in detail how clergy can positively effect change in a family system or a congregational system. He also (somewhat indirectly) stresses the critical importance for clergy to resolve their own lingering family-of-origin issues. The book is heavy reading -- full of terms that may be unfamiliar (and that, unfortunately, he doesn't directly explain, which can be confusing at first), such as "identified patient" and "self-differentiation" and "detriangulating.

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