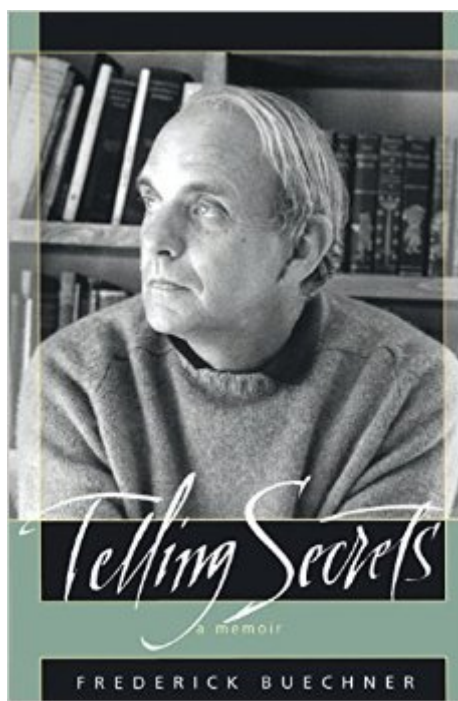


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Telling Secrets



Synopsis

With eloquence, candor, and simplicity, a celebrated author tells the story of his father's alcohol abuse and suicide and traces the influence of this secret on his life as a son, father, husband, minister, and writer.

Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: HarperOne; Reprint edition (September 5, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060609362

ISBN-13: 978-0060609368

Product Dimensions: 5 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 7 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (44 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

In this book, Buechner places great stress on the influential nature of the secrets we tend to keep. He also places great importance on the power of memory to recall and grapple with the events in our past that impact our lives. I found much of what Buechner had to say to be searching, honest and incisive, if not altogether theologically tight. Buechner describes 3 sore spots in his past that have greatly shaped his present outlook - his father's suicide, his mother's narcissism, and his daughter's battle with anorexia. He suggests that his over-controlling and over-fretting response to his daughter's illness was shaped by the loss of his father and even the potential loss of the memory of his father. This, he believes, fed a great fear of losing things close to him. He further intimates that his mother's tendency to wall off certain topics and events from discussion left a relational hole that he tried to fill by over-pursuing and over-analyzing his daughter both before and during her illness. He suggests that this suffocation actually contributed to his daughter's crisis. The best portion of the book is the final chapter in which Buechner delves into spiritual realities. Here, Buechner tells a poignant story of his time at Wheaton, where he discovers that evangelicals are not the close-minded apocalypticists that the culture describes. Instead, Buechner found a principled

tolerance that is anchored in a faith that sets a principled direction for all other endeavors. He contrasts this with his time at Harvard, where he observed how brute pluralism often degenerates into all-out factionalism. Buechner is very insightful here.

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