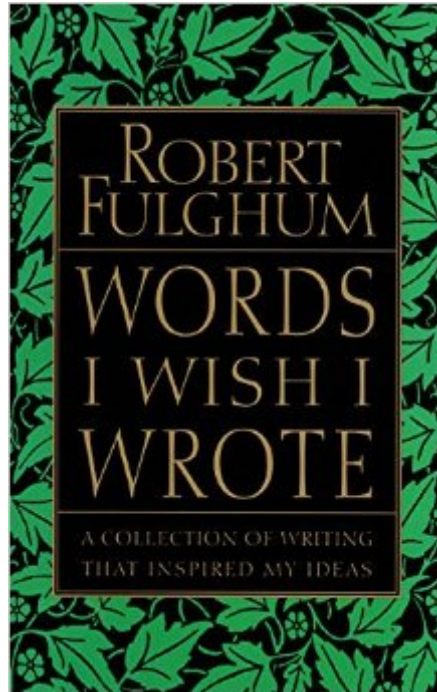


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Words I Wish I Wrote: A Collection Of Writing That Inspired My Ideas



Synopsis

In *Words I Wish I Wrote*, Robert Fulghum reveals the works of writers who have inspired him. During the past four decades he's reviewed and revised the basic principles of his philosophy many times, sometimes as an exercise in personal growth, but more often in response to individual crisis. Then at fifty, seeking a simplicity to counter the complex thinking of his college years, Fulghum wrote a summary essay professing that all he really needed to know he learned in kindergarten. As he approached his sixtieth year, Fulghum became curious about what in his outlook had changed and what had endured. On review, Fulghum explains, everything he has ever said and thought and written is transparent to him now. As hard as he has tried to speak in his own voice, much of what he's said is neither original nor unique. The best ideas are often old and are continually being revived, recycled, renewed. Wherever his search took him, Fulghum found that someone else has been there before. And more often than not, that person has chosen words Fulghum wishes he had written, using language he can't improve upon. To Fulghum, however, this isn't a discouraging realization. It's a recognition of companionship, which is an affirming consolation. The confirming statements, quotes, and credos that Fulghum recorded in his journals for years are collected here, representing the most important ideas underlying his living and thinking. They are organized thematically into such chapters as Companions, God, Bene-Dictions, Contra-Dictions, Simplify, and Believe. Each begins with Fulghum's own insightful, introductory words, followed by inspiring passages drawn from a diverse group of sources, from Jerry Garcia to Albert Camus, Dylan Thomas to Franz Kafka. At the end of each chapter, Fulghum offers readers his own personal commentary on the sources--where he was introduced to their words, why he returns to them again and again, and how they may change you.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I must say that when I started this book today, my day, in fact my week was going very badly. By the time I finished it a couple of hours later my whole perspective had changed, and I feel revived and refreshed. Robert Fulghum has given me back a renewed feeling of faith and hope again. How can I ever show my gratitude? Only by telling others how much it has meant to me. Thank you Robert Fulghum, for sharing the wisdom that you have garnered from these great writers. Although you didn't write their words, yours are so inspiring to me. I would like to share some of my favorites that I think are relevant to the theme of his book: "The way a book is read -- which is to say, the qualities a reader brings to a book -- can have as much to do with its worth as anything the author puts into it." (Norman Cousins) He ate and drank the precious words, His spirit grew robust; He knew no more that he was poor, Nor that his frame was dust. He danced along the dingy days, And this bequest of wings Was but a book. What liberty A loosened spirit brings! (Emily Dickinson) 'Tis the good reader that makes the good book; in every book he finds passages which seem to be confidences or asides hidden from all else and unmistakably meant for his ear; the profit of books is according to the sensibility of the reader; the profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until it is discovered by an equal mind and heart. (Ralph Waldo Emerson) To sit alone in the lamplight with a book spread out before you, and hold intimate converse with men of unseen generations--such is a pleasure beyond compare.

You shouldn't put aside this book because of your prejudices. To me, this is the best lesson it leaves on us. Robert Fulghum was a minister, a unitarian universalist minister (Wikipedia), and to know that could fire eventually certain alarms in some people. It did on me, but I bought the book because I had read All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten. In fact, I use that book in my lectures of mathematical modeling and simulation and (trust me) it really worked. And as the people say, one thing led to another. Words I wish I wrote is one of those book you never finish. Is a companion book. A brick that's always there, waiting to be picked up in order to open it and read whatever you find, don't matter what. Now well, the author collected these quotes through different ways. Taking them from a book, from a picture, from a conversation, many, many ways. So the selection has the fresh air of something that it came to be, something that wasn't intended. Anyway,

Fulghum explains, at the beginning of every chapter, why he choose those quotes and why they were important to him. And here is the magic, because what was important to him it seems to be important for us, the readers. There's a coincidence indeed, but a very happy one. The chapters have titles like, well, Begin, Choose, Possible, Journey, and so on. They are thematic, so if you need it, you only have to look for knowing, beforehand, that you'll find exactly that: Begin, Choose, Possible, Journey...

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