

## Ritual – key phrases

"In the true sense, ritual means right action, and any action done rightly, with wisdom and compassion, is a ritual."

David Frawley

"If Mary Douglas is correct, and the industrialised world is moving away from ritual and 'there is a lack of commitment to common symbols', then the individual's management of misfortune, disease, death and the stages of the human life cycle might all become more difficult."

Cecil Helman

"pick up the pilgrim staff and take the road... to the place of unknowing... A place where you are strange, and a stranger, and lonely, and because of that, perhaps afraid"

Morris West

Clark draws parallels with the "journeys" we make in our lives – moving to new towns, starting new jobs or training programmes, new relationships, or after suffering some loss or other.

In these situations, we are "cast into limbo, and must dwell there for a while, until we again move to a place where we create new boundaries of who we are and where we might be, but with wider perspectives about what is possible."

"a border territory between the known and the not yet known"

(Jean Clark)

"The state of the liminar becomes ambiguous, neither here nor there, betwixt and between all fixed points of classification; he passes through a symbolic domain that has few or none of the attributes of his past or the coming state."

Victor Turner

"... a symbol is the smallest unit of ritual which still retains the specific properties of ritual behavior; it is a "storage unit" filled with a vast amount of information. Symbols can be objects, activities, words, relationships, events, gestures, or spatial units."

Deflem

"Ritual is "a stereotyped sequence of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place, and designed to influence preternatural entities or forces on behalf of the actors' goals and interests"

Victor Turner