



FORWARD BY BOB BUFORD

HALFTIME FOR COUPLES

BUILDING A SECOND HALF OF IMPACT
AND ADVENTURE TOGETHER

BY LLOYD AND LINDA REEB

A COMPANION GUIDE
TO THE BEST-SELLING BOOK, *HALFTIME*

HALTIME INSTITUTE RELATIONSHIP TRILOGY

HALFTIME FOR COUPLES

BY LLOYD AND LINDA REEB



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20 Years of Equipping Leaders

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FORWARD

BY BOB BUFORD

Transitions in life are often difficult and confusing, but they are valuable, if not essential, to living a rewarding and relevant life. The Halftime transition sneaks up on us at midlife, drawing our focus beyond simply success and accomplishment to seeking something deeper and more lasting.

This journey from success to significance is in many ways a recent human experience. Longevity, education, opportunities, and flexibility have converged to offer you a second half that is like a blank canvas. Because this is a new phenomenon, a guide can be helpful. This book is an interactive guide built around all that we have been learning over the 15 years that Lloyd and I have been serving Halftimers together.

Lloyd has spent more than 10,000 hours helping people wrestle with powerful questions, dream beyond their limits, and craft roadmaps to live out those dreams. I have watched him and his wife Linda live this out in their own lives. Working with many couples in Halftime has provided a platform for speaking into the unique challenges of this season of life.

If you are married, planning your second half together can bring great joy. If you are at or approaching your Halftime, let me share with you that in my mid-seventies I am very grateful that my wife Linda and I took the time to stop, dream, and plan together. Today my top goal is her and her happiness as she lives out her calling. I encourage you to resist the temptation to charge off into your second half without including your spouse. If you do, you risk missing out on the richest component of a second half of significance - doing it with those you love.

Bob Buford
February 2013

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THIS WAY

We meet them in our neighborhood, listen to their stories on airplanes, and hear them at parties, and it's easy to see how they got here. They are looked up to, sophisticated, and seasoned. They are successful by every normal measure, but something's missing in their inner world.

Surrounded by noise and buried in crazy schedules, their most cherished relationships are not as rich as they wish. They want their lives to count for more, but they feel trapped by their corporate or professional identities. Their lifestyles, while affluent, seem demanding. Their dreams are buried under blankets of responsibility.

Their spouses, meanwhile, often are resigned to the distance and loneliness that comes from their crazy schedules. A lack of intimacy can begin to feel routine, normal, and acceptable.

It doesn't have to be this way. But they don't really know how to have a deeper conversation about what they are experiencing at midlife.

These people are looking for a "Halftime" pause in their lives – a re-ordering of priorities that allows them to answer their highest callings in full partnership with their spouses.

I have had the privilege of speaking all over the world to this unique group of people – different continents, different cities, different faces...the same story. But I've also experienced it. And so has my wife, Linda. Now, she often helps as we work with couples who are in this phase of life, because she can lend her unique perspective – the perspective of the spouse.

Jim headed to the mountains for a weekend to read, reflect, pray, and write. A busy, senior executive in his 40s, his Halftime coach had helped him articulate his inner confusion and recommended this extended time away. On Jim's return, he was excited to share with his wife almost ten pages of notes from his journal – desires, frustrations, words from God, fears, dreams. Feeling a little awkward,

he mustered his courage and dove in. After sharing the first few pages, she said, "Jim, I'm not sure I get what this is all about. Why not just go back to the office, do your regular work, and focus on being a good dad to these teenagers?"

When Jim's coach asked about his wife's response, Jim said, "I really didn't get to tell her the most meaningful parts. I guess I took enough of an emotional hit after sharing the first few pages. There's no way I was going to share the rest."

Jim's wife didn't understand what he was experiencing, and he had little idea what fears lay behind her reaction. They had inadvertently drifted apart in their second half, an all-too-common and all-too-easy path for couples like them.

THE ROAD FORWARD

This *Halftime for Couples* ebook is a roadmap for creating an intimate adventure together. It's a time for blending your dreams for travel, hobbies, grandchildren, your calling, leaving a legacy, and intimacy with God and with each other, into a trip of a lifetime. With some guided reflection, this season of life can be packed with fun, growth, and fulfillment.

Halftime is the season to look back and take stock, to look forward and dream, and then to chart a new course together. It's about moving beyond a focus on success to pursuing significance.

It's about "laying hold of the life that is really life." (I Timothy 6:19, NIV)

You're in Halftime if you have been successful in your career by some measure, you have a longing for more meaning in life, and you have some options about how to spend your time (or you could create that flexibility). You may not be financially independent, you may not be planning to leave your career or sell your company, but your heart is telling you that there's more to life than just driving the next quarter's earnings or growing your net worth.

Perhaps the least important statistic in American football is the score at the end of the first half, because most games are won or lost in the second half. You have a perspective at Halftime that you could not have earlier in life. The power of Halftime is that it provides the time to stop, reflect, and build a game plan for your second half.

Richard Rohr, in his book *Falling Upwards*, points out that, "Most people have no clear crossover to the second half of their lives. No one shows us the stunted and limited character of the worldview of the first half of life, so we just

continue with more of the same...most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely about getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of our physical life. What looks like falling can be experienced as falling upward and onward into a broader and deeper world, where the soul has found its fullness."

Peter Drucker, perhaps the greatest observer of American culture in the 20th century, summed this up by saying, "People now have two lives, life one and life two. And they are over-prepared for the first half and under- prepared for the second half. There is no university for the second half of life."

Both men and women experience Halftime. If one spouse has been hard-charging and success-oriented, the other has often been more focused on home and family. Although some couples include two successful, career-focused spouses, this book is written from the more common perspective that one spouse is in Halftime and the other has played a more supportive role. If you are both in Halftime, then focus on those portions of this book that are written for the person in Halftime.

Take a minute to click and watch a halftime story to make this come alive:

 [CLICK HERE TO VIEW CLARK MILLSPAUGH'S STORY.](#)

Clark went home to heaven in 2012, but he lived out his calling with joy and abandonment.



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THE JOURNEY DEFINED - LLOYD'S JOURNEY

I have always loved real estate. It's thrilling to build something beautiful from nothing and then see people enjoying it. The early success in our company's development projects, however, had less to do with our talent and hard work, and more to do with a mysterious hand at work – a hand some might call fate but that I believed was God.

Many people would love to have a business like ours. Our retirement buildings are beautiful places for seniors to live and fun to own, but when I reached Halftime I wondered if I was called to just build more buildings for the next twenty-five years. Was I created to do something else with my second half? Should I settle into this business or use it as a platform, freeing me to discover and live out something more? I sensed God nudging me to explore this.

I felt a growing desire to make a difference in the world, but sometimes wondered if I was going crazy. What if I tried something new and it completely failed? How could I even talk about this with my wife, Linda, when we had three kids and a big house, college educations to pay for, along with a schedule overflowing with family, friends, vacations, church, civic responsibilities – so many plates spinning?

So I began by looking for ways to help a few hours a week with the needs that were right around me. Then, I sent resumes to major non-profit organizations looking for larger scale projects.

Along the way – through leadership roles in non-profit organizations and a pastor role in a large church – I have had the privilege of helping prisoners find hope, poor children receive food and education, farm families in Albania learn how to survive as communism changed their entire way of life, marriages find healing, and seekers discover a relationship with God. Through these diverse experiences, I was testing my way to clarity about my unique calling.

My worldview expanded and my heart was captivated by how my skills really could

make a difference. It became obvious, through both formal assessments as well as observation, that my core strength is thought leadership – helping people gain clarity. My passion is not the homeless or child poverty or farmers, but my peers. I am passionate about helping successful business and professional people get clear on their callings so they can pursue their callings with everything they have. In a sentence, my mission is *“to be a thought leader mobilizing high capacity marketplace leaders to make an eternal impact.”* **So I narrowed the scope of what I do, eliminating good things to pursue the best and finding more leverage and impact as I got more focused.**

By clarifying my mission, I have been able to help thousands of successful people clarify their callings, get free by decluttering their lives, and get going on the path toward discovering and living out their callings. And through their efforts, I can see real, measurable life change. That's 100x return on investment. Truly priceless.

I've spent more than 15,000 hours coaching Halftimers and speaking to groups of successful people. Was it worth it? Was I crazy to trade buildings and money for meaning and impact? It's been everything I dreamed of and more. But, as you can imagine, I've made lots of mistakes along the way. I want to use those mistakes and these years of experience to help you and your spouse on your journey.

Looking back, Linda and I had two different perspectives of Halftime. I was feeling a deep desire for my life to really count – unable to shake the feeling that I didn't want to invest my life in developing buildings that would be torn down in a hundred years. Linda worried that if I stopped developing real estate, my transition might take us on an extreme path, with an uncertain income and less security. At the same time, she liked that I'd be working fewer hours, giving us and the family more time together. We'd also avoid some of the ongoing financial risks that come with building large real estate projects, which she liked as well.

Our challenge as a couple was to understand and work through those differences, and I found myself woefully unprepared to lead us through those waters.

My career and training had prepared me to be a good strategist and to drive projects, but it had not helped me develop the softer side of life. I had cultivated skills that were highly compensated in the marketplace, but, frankly, they didn't equip me well for this intimate adventure with Linda. I wasn't good at communicating what I was feeling, and she was not familiar with my corporate language or using strategic planning tools to help her manage her life.

I focused on the adventure and dreams for my second half, acting as if it was just a career transition. I wasn't overly engaged in understanding the fears and disruptions

these changes would create, or how Linda's calling would fit into our new lifestyle. If I could start this conversation over again with Linda, I would not launch into all the wonderful dreams I had for making a difference in the world. Instead, I would ask about her fears and dreams and how I could help her live them out.

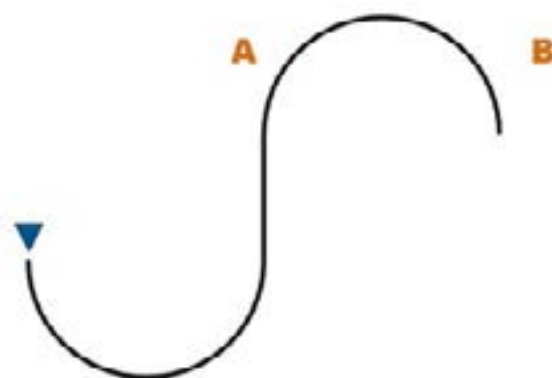
Perhaps my greatest surprise in fifteen years of watching couples go through this transition successfully (and not so successfully) is that the most fulfilling and joyful thing for a successful man in his second half is to help his wife discover her calling and flourish in living it out.

Now that we are empty-nesters, Linda has been able to travel with me to specific Halftime events and facilitate separate discussions with spouses. These conversations, often filled with confusion and frustration, always remind us of some of the places we've been in our own halftime story.

THE JOURNEY DEFINED

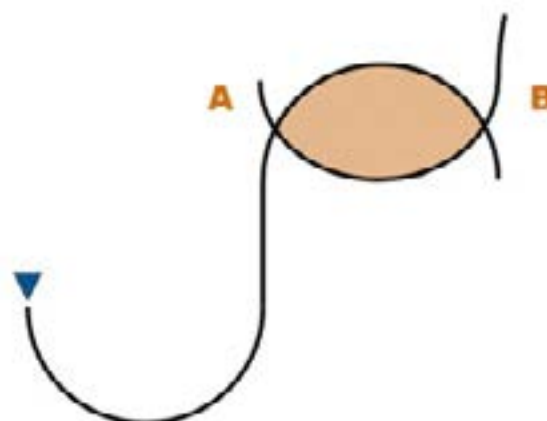
If you look at my story, Halftime can seem like a mild form of a midlife crisis. In fact, it's almost the opposite. A midlife crisis is characterized by fear, loss, and turning inward. Halftime is about hope, dreams, expanding interests, using our talents to meet the needs of others, and putting those we love ahead of ourselves.

This classic sigmoid curve captures the essence of the Halftime journey. Many of us come out of school to make our way in the world, and getting started takes a bit of time and effort. Then, we get our rhythm and life starts to take off for us.



If we follow our first half dream too long and too hard, it always seems to turn over on itself. This may happen when landing the “next big deal” is no longer a thrill, or when the stress and long hours finally catch up with our bodies. Perhaps a close friend or age dies suddenly, and we're faced with how little time we have left. Or the last child goes off to college, and we begin to wonder what's next.

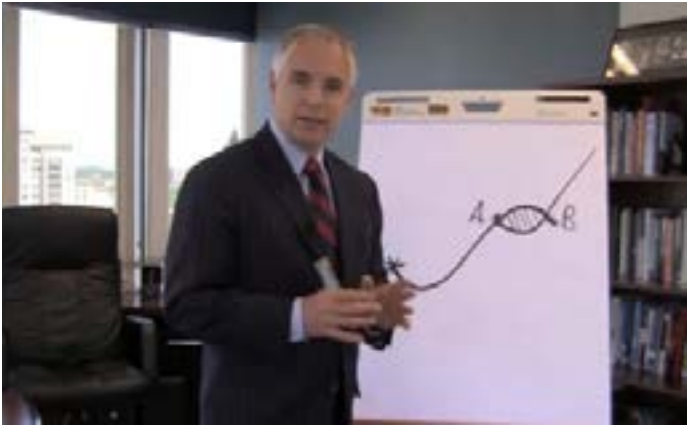
Point A is a healthy inflection point to look up and begin a new, parallel path to sort things out. Point B represents the start of a downward path toward a classic midlife



crisis. The colored in area between A and B represents the Halftime process of sorting things out and allowing God to re-invent us. In the Bible, Moses' first forty years were focused on getting a great education, learning to lead, and moving up the corporate ladder in Egypt. After a wilderness experience in midlife, God revealed a plan to use all of the learning and experiences from his first half. Most of the impact and legacy of Moses' life is from his second half, and the same could be true of your life and ours.



**WATCH LLOYD SHARE MORE ABOUT THE
SIGMOID CURVE ([HTTP://YOUTU.BE/RC1-DLXWRJG](http://youtu.be/RC1-DLXWRJG))**



THE GREAT ADVENTURE - LINDA'S JOURNEY

Over and over we hear people in Halftime say how much they wish their spouses would take an active interest in what they are experiencing, even if they don't understand it all. Ask gentle but exploratory questions and affirm what they are feeling without jumping to conclusions. I wish we had known this twenty years ago! We didn't realize at the time that we were making decisions that would eventually lead us down one of two very different roads: one paved with skepticism or disinterest leaving us to process this transition in isolation from each other, and the other taking us through the center of our fears to the life we really wanted.

Halftime is not just about your dreams for the future – it's about taking stock of the first half, as well. It provides an outstanding opportunity to formally celebrate God's goodness in your lives, as well as to acknowledge areas of pain or disappointment. It can bring closure to things that are unresolved.

One of the most difficult things to do at midlife is to find the freedom to dream. Often our childhood or youthful dreams have been buried under blankets of busyness, obligation, and responsibility. One woman in Halftime told us that twenty-five years ago she "turned her dreamer off." She went on to say, "you can't turn your dreamer back on in fifteen minutes." Linda could relate to those sentiments.

LINDA'S JOURNEY

We lived on a beautiful lake down a long, winding country lane in our dream home – a replica Massachusetts farmhouse with large fireplaces and wide plank floors. Lloyd and his partner, Andrew Mitton, were building buildings, the kids were learning and growing, and I was having fun doing all the things that keep a family running.



Then Lloyd took a trip with a friend to three countries in Asia, returning with a heart changed by the stories of children in poverty. Next he was taking time off to help a non-profit find a better home office: then mentoring prisoners every Thursday afternoon.

As Lloyd began his Halftime journey, I had more questions than answers - what was going on? He sent letters to forty mission agencies asking how he could serve them by using his marketplace skills. He began talking about cutting back on his real estate career. I realized pretty quickly that this was going to have a major impact on my life and the lives of our kids, as well. I didn't really understand what he was feeling, and while I wanted to be supportive, I was definitely pre-occupied with my role of being a mother to our three young children.

Today my perspective is different. Lloyd's halftime disruption, I now realize, was an opportunity for me in lots of ways that I didn't see clearly at the time.

*Because of Lloyd's internal confusion and his need to discuss it, Lloyd gave me his full attention! Halftime issues include issues of the heart, which led us to more soulful conversations and a deeper understanding of each other. I saw the fun Lloyd was having as he discovered and lived out his passions and calling, and I decided to take a risk and start investigating that for myself. **Now that we both have clarity about our individual callings, we've been able to create a common narrative going forward - more "our" story than just his or mine.***

Because we opened our lives up to risk and sacrifice, we were forced outside of our comfort zone. Having to actively trust God has had a ripple effect on those we love. We saw our children's faith impacted. They began to understand that they are part of God's story - the ongoing saga of what God is doing in this world. As I've more intentionally lived out my calling, I've been surprised to see how some of my friends have been inspired to do the same.

Looking forward, I can feel enthusiasm bubbling up from a sense of shared adventure. While Lloyd's halftime journey was a huge disruption in my life at the time, it allowed us to start being creative as we planned our second half together. The last thing I want is to live under the same roof with a stranger. Instead of increasing loneliness and living "separate lives," we are discovering the fun of being co-adventurers in living out our story.

Her journey toward understanding her calling and being willing to dream has been a gradual process; others have had a more abrupt introduction to a midlife transition. That was the case for our friends Mark and Norma, a couple experiencing Halftime.

Mark was a senior executive with a large bank when his job was suddenly

terminated. That night he gathered the family together and shared the bad news, expecting them to be afraid and sad. Instead, Norma blurted out what was deep in her heart: "Thank God. Now you will live."

As she explained, he realized she had lived for years with the fear that his stress, lack of exercise, and poor diet were killing him. She was longing to be a priority to him, and she was confident he could provide for their family even if it meant adopting a simpler lifestyle.

For Mark and Norma, something that arrived with little warning and at first seemed devastating instead became an opportunity to really hear each other, to process their first half – disappointments, pain, successes – and build on them in a healthy way.

MERGING YOUR STORIES

Remember the earlier conversation between Jim and his wife after his time away to think and journal? Their conversation may seem like a small disagreement, but her reaction had real power to enable or disable his ability to dream and feel the freedom to discover his calling. Her response also affected how much he was willing to share about his deeper, inner world.

Look closely at these pictures. The drawing on the left looks a lot like our first half. We were on the same journey and under the same roof, with kids, faith, and fun adding lots of color. But we had separate stories. You too? Now, with options about how we spend our time and resources, we could continue living separate stories or begin writing one story ("our story"), a common narrative.



The winding road looks more fun and interesting. It's what we're now experiencing more and more. I coach people through Halftime, and Linda mentors moms with young children. We're often involved in separate activities, and we make a point of sharing about those activities, praying for each other, and being mentally involved. When Linda travels with me to Halftime Institute events and facilitates discussion sessions, she is on the winding road under my picture. When I help with planning for Moms Mentoring or make dinner for the moms who have been invited to our home,

the road curves in Linda's direction. Opening ourselves to involvement in each other's lives and callings has enriched us, and it has been great to have support with what God has called each of us to do. Mentally and spiritually, we are each other's biggest cheerleaders and supporters, so the road we are travelling together has begun to feel like "our story."

We've come to believe that writing a common narrative is a little like dancing. It takes time together with the same music in our ears, a basic knowledge of the steps involved, and the courage to dance from the heart. We can't worry about what others may be thinking; instead, we choose to focus on being "in the moment."

This can seem out of reach if you are neck deep in managing your first half life. The process, goals, and action plans in this book will provide you with proven tracks to run on as you plan your second half, **but the pathway to an intimate adventure with your soul mate starts with time together, listening to the music in each other's heart and life.**

COMMON MISTAKES AT HALFTIME

There are some common, but avoidable mistakes that tend to happen at Halftime:

1. Not taking the time to look back and unpack your first half; missing the understanding and closure that you need to build a healthy second half.
2. Defaulting to your culture's values, rather than doing the hard work of getting clear on the underlying values that you want to drive your life.
3. Failing to get clarity about your individual calling.
4. Hoping to find fulfillment by reallocating your talent to making a difference in the world, without letting God really transform your heart and guide the process.
5. Not looking around at the impact on others, and missing the opportunity for this to be a win for them as well.

To avoid these pitfalls, this *Halftime for Couples* ebook will guide you to look at your first half and learn from it. Looking inside will give you clarity about your strengths, interests, and desires. Looking up will allow you to hear from God. We'll examine the reality of challenges and fears, then look ahead to get clear on where you want to go.

We encourage you to print off and complete the exercises throughout the book,

even if they seem overly simplified. It's amazing to see how couples progress when they have clear answers to these specific questions and understand what each other is feeling about their second halves. The likelihood of building an effective plan together will dramatically increase once you've done this prep work!

If you choose to not be involved in your spouse's Halftime journey, or the development of your own, please don't assume that the status quo is safer than facing this season of change head-on, or that it is likely to get you where you want to go. We want to see you make it one of the richest seasons of your life – **our desire is to help you thrive, not just survive.**



LOOKING BACK

The most helpful insights for charting a course for your second half often come from reflection on your first half.

Mickey Peters and his wife confronted his sexual addictions with a courage and openness that has allowed them to not only heal, but thrive in their relationship. As they explored what their second half calling was, they realized that this pain from their past was the impetus for serving others who find themselves trapped in some form of sexual addiction. Speaking, writing, and mentoring on several ministry platforms have created a portfolio of serving opportunities. They are testing what is optimum for them and their family.

As Tom and Debbie Warren launch into their second half, both are heavily influenced by their early life experiences. Debbie went to a Young Life camp as a teenager and in that setting, away from normal life routines, she heard God speaking to her. Today she is transitioning from her role as a doctor to serving kids in unique camp settings. Tom was ridiculed in undergraduate and medical school by fellow students and professors because of his belief that science and the Bible are compatible. The challenging experience in college caused him to study science and faith much deeper. Tom's calling today is to use the credibility of his role as an otolaryngologists (an ear, nose and throat doctor) and his expertise and fascination with science and reason to "help people discover that their faith in Jesus is reasonable."

UNPACKING YOUR STORY

Couples can bring powerful insights by listening to each other's story and writing down what they are hearing.

Ask each other the following questions and write down what you hear as you listen to your spouse. Share those notes to allow them to see their story through your lens.

1.

What experience from your childhood or student years do you most often revisit in your mind and how did it shape you? What ideas come to mind to use this experience in your second half?

2. Tell me a story of when you felt you were at your best – when you were most passionate, engaged and effective. What was happening?
3. What was your most painful life experience and what have you learned from it? How has it shaped who you are today? How could this be used to help others in your second half?

Read over your spouse's notes about your answers to these questions and then write down the two biggest insights that come to mind, about how your past might inform your future.

Insight #1

Insight #2

Share these insights with each other.

COMING TO GRIPS WITH YOUR FIRST HALF IDENTITY

When you introduce yourself to someone, what do you instinctively draw on to define who you are? Do you define yourself by your work or role? It is often hard to admit, but perhaps your identity has been defined by status symbols (awards, cars, homes, titles, your success, children's accomplishments, how attractive you are) that are indicators to you (and to those around you) of your worth.

A midlife crisis is often triggered when some of those status symbols or markers are taken away from us, involuntarily, and we're thrust into the messy process of redefining our identity. This can happen when you sell your company, retire early, lose a job or begin to look or feel decidedly older.

Being a great parent or having a successful career are simply roles, important roles, but they fall short of an identity. When our youngest child, Jennie Leigh, left for college, we realized that whether we liked it or not, our job description was changing. One of the most difficult transitions at midlife is the sense of loss when our identity changes. Halftime provides us with the opportunity to rethink our identity in a thoughtful, intentional way and reshape it around something lasting.

What truths about you define your identity? Don't over-think. Just write.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

What truths about you do you want to define your identity? Write three things do you most want to define your identity.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Discuss this with your spouse and a friend. Ask God to help you live into this new identity.

LOOKING INSIDE

There are some deep internal reactions as you approach Halftime. Those reactions are an emotional starting place, and they're likely different from your spouse's. It's helpful to know that.

COMMON STARTING SPOTS FOR HALFTIMERS

The list below is not exhaustive, but it's a great place to begin as you identify your emotional starting places (yours and your spouse's).

- **I am bored.** - "The thrill of growing my practice or closing the next deal is waning. I find myself thinking about something that would bring more excitement and adventure into my life. More money or accomplishment is not likely to satisfy me."

Note – If you try to muscle through and don't address the boredom you are experiencing, it can create some unseen risks in your life.

- **I feel trapped.** - "I'm stuck in a career that pays really well but is unfulfilling. I spend most of my time on things that don't really matter."

Question – Are there some simple ways you can create freedom in your life so that you don't overreact to feeling trapped in your career?

- **I am in midlife panic.** - "I've spent my whole life getting good at this one thing, but I wonder if there's something else I was created to do, and I might miss it. Time is slipping by."

Note: Beneath this sense of panic there is often a belief that is worth analyzing.

- **I've lost my platform.** - "When I sold my company or left corporate life, I had no ideas how much I would miss the structure, platform, and identity it provided. I feel a strong need to go find another similar business platform, but I wonder if there is something better."

Comment: Even as you build a new plan, use this time to detox from relying on

your platform for your identity.

- **I feel disconnected from God's purpose for me in the world.** - "I have been focused on being a good provider, responsible business person, husband or wife, parent, neighbor, and friend. I have not taken the time to really get close to God personally, much less understand what He has in mind for me in this life."

Comment: Before you march on, take time to celebrate the privilege to have these important roles and responsibilities in your first half.

- **I sense a new calling for my second half.** - "I have felt like my career has been God's calling up until now. I have had a growing sense that there is a new calling in this next season, and I need to take time to listen, and then develop a plan to live it out."

A Promise: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you." Psalm 32:8

- **I am continuing our journey that we have been on together.** - "We have had a multi-year conversation about what's next and I feel like we are on the same page, but now we need to turn our dreams into action plans so the coming years don't slip by us."

Personal Reflection

Which of these starting spots most closely resembles your feelings as you consider this Halftime journey? And why? Discuss them together.

1. _____

2. _____

COMMON STARTING SPOTS FOR HALFTIME SPOUSES

- **I'm ticked off.** - "Frankly I'm disappointed with our first half and not so hopeful about what's next."

Note: It's easy for some spouses to feel like they came second to corporate travel and client meetings, while they kept the plates spinning at home. This book isn't designed to help you rebuild a shaky marriage – if you sense that you need that kind of assistance, we encourage you to find a professional Christian marriage counselor.

- **What are you talking about?** – "This whole idea seems completely new and so 'out in left field.' I have no frame of reference. And it looks uncomfortably similar to the midlife crisis some of my friends' spouses have gone through."
- **I'm comfortable.** - "From my perspective life is good the way it is, so don't mess with it. We're at midlife and we have our homes, friends and hobbies refined into a comfortable routine. When my spouse begins talking about moving from success to significance it sounds like it could disrupt the comfortable life we have finally arranged."

Question: How might comfort stand in your way of something richer and more lasting?

- **We're in different stages of life.** - "Honey, we still have kids at home and I have lots on my plate, but you seem like you're ready to move on to what's next."

Question: What are the implications of ignoring this imbalance?"

- **Isn't this a career transition?** - "Why do I need to be so involved; this just seems like a career move. We've worked through similar transitions over the years, and I have confidence in my spouse's decisions - why do I need to be involved in this extra dreaming and planning now?"
- **What's the rush?** - "Can't we get around to this when we're less busy? Life is hectic, balancing kids, parents, and career. It seems more sane to wait until things slow down to plan for the next season."
- **I just want to support you.** - "Why can't I just come alongside what you're doing, and be supportive?"

Note: This is a gracious offer, but it begs two honest questions: What if God has a unique calling for your life? What if your spouse dies?

- **At last! I've been waiting for this.** - "I have been looking forward to this season of life and have lots of thoughts about what our second half could be like together. I want to live with more purpose, and not get stuck in the comfort zone. Sometimes I even feel like I'm running out of time."

Personal Reflection

Which of these starting spots most closely matches your feelings as you consider your second half journey? Why? Discuss them together.

1. _____

2. _____

GET CLEAR ON YOUR CORE

The cornerstone of your calling is to understand your core strengths, spiritual gifts, passions, and mission.

Define your strengths and gifts. Many of you have already done formal assessments of your strengths. If so, pull those out and begin to refine what you know are your top two or three strengths. If you have not done formal personality and strengths assessments, we encourage you to do the Myers-Briggs personality profile, a spiritual gifts inventory and the Clifton Strengthsfinder. Then look for the common themes that emerge.

Based on these assessments and your life experiences, how would you summarize your greatest strengths? To help you synthesize your strengths, scan the list on the next page. What two or three words describe your top strengths?

Analyzing, Writing, Coaching, Creating, Designing, Hospitality, Influencing others, Implementation, Leading teams, Managing people and/or projects, Managing numbers/money, Manual skills, Marketing, Organizing, Persuading/Sales/Fund Raising, Performing (art, music, theater, etc), Recruiting, Researching, Speaking, Teaching, Strategy, Technical skills, Other strengths not listed _____,

_____, _____, _____, _____

Personal Reflection

Write down your top two or three strengths. We'll use these strengths as the first building block in your mission statement:

GET CLEAR ON YOUR PASSIONS

What causes or issues can you not stop thinking about? What do you see around you that breaks God's heart? When you read a global newspaper, what kind of topics make you mad or sad? Is there something you are drawn to but have not, until now, had time to squeeze into your schedule?

Passion often is not something we find, but rather something that evolves. Linda experienced this a few years ago when four couples we love all experienced a divorce. We felt the pain of that up close and personally. We saw how hard it is to heal a marriage that has been damaged in layers, over many years. Linda became increasingly determined to be part of the solution. She couldn't live with the thought of having a thriving marriage and a Biblical heritage without paying it forward. She knew God had something specific for her to do, and she started thinking about what that could be. Why not focus this passion on young moms so that their marriages build on a healthy foundation, and even thrive during busy parenting years? And that's what she does now almost every day.

What are your passions? On the next page is a partial list of issues in our world. Use it as a way of identifying areas of special interest.

What two or three areas have you felt drawn to in the past?

Poverty, Human Trafficking, Bullying, Homelessness, Medical care, Hunger,
Domestic violence, Clean water, Government, Marriage, Parenting, Men's ministry,
Women's ministry, Disaster response, Micro-enterprise for the poor, Education,
Financial management, Cultural ethics issues, Inner city, Environmental issues, Crime,
Entertainment, Addictions (drugs/alcohol), Business as mission, Combating
prostitution, Micro-finance, Other _____,
_____, _____, _____.

Maybe you are interested in serving a particular group of people?

Infants, Children, Handicapped/Disabled, Orphans, Junior/Senior high school
students, Military personnel, College students, Adult women/men, Young
professionals, Executives, Singles, Educators, Young married couples, Widows,
Government leaders, Athletes, Seniors, Internationals, Other _____,
_____, _____, _____.

Is there is a spiritual need you have been most keen on meeting?

Mentoring, Community/Fellowship, Evangelism, Encouragement/Shepherding,
Discipleship, Mobilizing, Teaching, Leading others to worship, Other _____,
_____, _____, _____.

Personal Reflection

Write down your top two or three areas of passion. Don't worry if you are not sure
these are your greatest passions; this will give you a starting place. Maybe some of
these interests/passions can be combined? For example: "Children in the inner city
who need mentoring."

THE POWER OF A PERSONAL MISSION STATEMENT

A personal mission is not an effort to tell God what you want to do, but rather listening to who he has made you to be, what he has put in your heart, and writing down what you are hearing from Him. It's active listening to God, writing down what you are hearing, and seeking confirmation.

We were at Scott River Lodge, in a breath-taking setting, nestled between two mountains along a rushing river, with large log beams, a crackling fire, and sun streaming in the windows. A long weekend away from schedules and out of cell phone reach, it was just us and ten couples who were wrestling with their own Halftime journeys. In a place where dreaming should come naturally, some of the spouses felt that writing a concrete mission statement was too confining, too corporate. One person talked about all the different things she was involved in – good things – then finally concluded with tears in her eyes that she was very tired from running in so many different directions. She began to see how a mission statement would align her efforts with God's best for her.

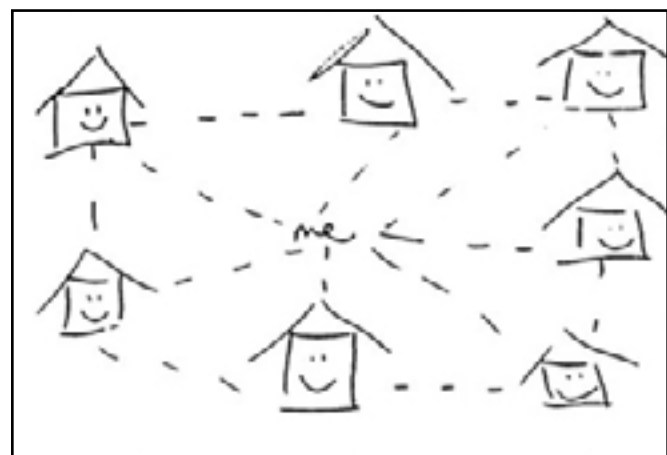
Rather than being confining, a mission statement defines what you believe is your calling, freeing you to say no to what may be good, but not best. Jesus was able to clearly articulate his purpose for being on this planet, and yet He began each day in prayer looking for guidance from His Father and He often responded spontaneously to the needs around him. So too, your mission statement doesn't limit God's daily leading in your life.

Linda's Reluctant Mission Statement

When Linda first thought about writing a mission statement someone gave her a paper with this template as a suggested guide:

I am trusting God to use my gifts of _____ and _____ (your top strengths and spiritual gifts) to impact and serve _____ (the cause or group of people you are most passionate about) in order to _____ (your desired results).

This tool might help you make a first attempt at writing your mission statement. Give it a try. For Linda, it felt too linear and somewhat frustrating. She found it much easier to visualize and draw it first. Here's what she drew:



In her heart, Linda began to realize that these homes represented the homes of moms with young kids. The smiles come from a home where God's Word is being incorporated into marriages and parenting, making a tangible difference in the family. From this drawing, Linda has been able to distill a clear written mission statement: "To mentor young moms to learn the Bible's wisdom and apply it to their marriages and parenting." She realized from this drawing that she has a role to play in seeing God transform the lives of families in our community.

Once she got clear on her mission statement, she could start making secondary decisions such as:

- Will I work in the community, or through my church?
- How will I help them?
- How often will we meet?
- Will I work by myself, or as part of a team?
- How will I structure our times together?

From those questions came some pretty clear "next steps" that Linda could pursue.

Linda's Journey

Every month, I have the privilege of hanging out with some amazing ladies. Arriving with armloads of kids and diaper bags, spilling over with enthusiasm, stories, and laughter, the mood is contagious as we enjoy a morning of learning and sharing.



My friends, part of my team, spread out to facilitate discussions at the tables, and I grin on the inside as I overhear snippets of their conversations, the push and pull of applying the Bible's wisdom to their marriages and parenting challenges. The encouragement I offer them comes back to me tenfold. I leave tired but happy.

My mind drifts back to earlier times, at my favorite restaurant, watching Lloyd writing on his napkin. As I talked about momsmentoring.com and all the things that were exciting but scary to me, he doodled drawings, asked questions, offered concrete ideas. His gentle, steady encouragement to follow God's call bolstered my confidence and helped birth specific next steps.

Draw what you have in mind

Take ten minutes to draw what you have in mind as your mission or calling for your second half. What would you love to do to meet the deepest needs of others and bring glory to God through your efforts? Give it your best shot but don't be upset if it isn't clear or perfect. This picture should be based on your knowledge of your strengths, working on things you are most passionate about to make the kind of difference you most desire.

Action Steps

Share your strengths, passions, mission statement, and drawing with your spouse and a few friends, asking them for their observations and insights. You might not feel like sharing this with others because it might seem half-baked or too personal. We encourage you to muster the courage and share it anyways, because as you do you gain clarity and helpful feedback!



LOOKING AT REALITY

Eight couples mingle by our fireplace with soft music playing in the background. I am leading the husbands on a year-long Halftime Roundtable experience, and this night is about getting together with their spouses. After I set up the topic, Linda shares her experience of how this “disruptive” season can become a rich blessing — for her and for the entire family, as well. We unpack a little from our Halftime journey and stories of others in an effort to open their hearts. A few questions over dinner get the conversation flowing. Out of her experiences, Linda is able to deeply relate to the spouses’ challenges and fears and affirm their questions and desires. We discuss the blessing that this journey affords and the risks of just drifting along with the culture.

As we look around, we see tears in almost every wife’s eyes. This topic touches a deep longing, and yet many questions and fears remain unspoken. What does this really mean for me and for our family?

We linger over dinner around candle-lit tables, talking and laughing about dreams, plans and obstacles. The conversation continues in a larger room after dinner. As they listen to their peers, they begin to gain confidence that their second half together could be even more rich and rewarding than the first. Then we provide them with some common language and a few tools to help them continue this conversation back home.

One woman has been quiet all night, but in just a few sentences she puts many of our thoughts into powerful words. “I have worked really hard and I was thinking this season would be my time to kind of take it easy,” she says. “I feel like my teaching job is a calling and I am worried his changes might disrupt what I am doing. On top of that, I don’t want to move to Africa or some strange place like that.”

If you are like most of us, after you begin to seriously dream about your second half, reality sets in. Fears emerge, practical obstacles surface, and responsibilities, comfort and laziness can stand in the way. You face a choice to either identify and address them, or allow them to remain hidden, the unspoken enemies of your second half. **Take some time to look realistically at the challenges and fears you face as you start this journey.**

What are some common fears and obstacles that you think other couples face at this season of life? Write down some that come to mind.

As you can imagine, we have compiled a list as we've lead groups of couples in this conversation. Which ones can you relate to?

COMMON FEARS

- Sacrifice – I am afraid of how this will affect our lifestyle. How will this affect our family? Where will this end up? Will I miss the adrenalin or perks of my previous life?
- Failure – What if I fail? What if the learning curve is too steep? What if God doesn't really come through for me?
- Loss of Identity – How will my identity change? What will our friends say or think? How can I avoid losing my credibility or platform?
- Discomfort – How much change/potential discomfort will be involved? I don't really want to have to fit my travel and hobbies around ministry commitments.
- Wasting My Time – Will I be able to I find a place to produce real results that measure up to the kind of results I get now in the marketplace? What if God doesn't put me to good use?
- Being Second Again – What if my spouse's second half has him (or her) running as fast as ever? I'll continue to feel like a distant second. But this time it will be for a good cause, which might make it even harder to compete with.
- Others? _____

COMMON OBSTACLES

- Financial Capacity – How can we make this work financially?
 - Lack of Clarity – I haven't found something I'm most passionate about. Or, I have too many competing interests, and it is very hard to choose between them.
 - Time – My schedule is always full, and it seems impossible to carve out the time. My work and family issues dominate my life, and I am not sure how to create the margin to tackle something new.
 - Health – We have some health issues. How will that impact my ability to serve? I'm on the verge of burnout and feel like I need to take time off and rest before launching into what's next.
 - Lack of Opportunities or Exposure – I don't know what kind of organization or role within those organizations would best fit my mission.
 - Others? _____
- _____

ACTION STEP

Jot down your top two fears and obstacles from this list and share them with your spouse.

Fears

1. _____

2. _____

Obstacles

1. _____

2. _____

What does the Bible say about your fears/obstacles?

One way to explore this is to use the topical index at www.biblegateway.com or www.gospel.com to see what the Bible has to say about these issues. Reflect on God's wisdom, perspective, and promises. Write down what you learn regarding your top two fears and challenges.

Based on what the Bible teaches, what can you do to address these fears and obstacles head on? Incorporate these action steps as part of your plan at the end of Chapter 8.

Prayer from Sir Francis Drake, 1577:

Disturb us, Lord, when we are too pleased with ourselves, when our dreams have come true because we dreamed too little, when we arrived safely because we sailed too close to the shore.

Disturb us, Lord, when with the abundance of things we possess we have lost our thirst for the waters of life; Having fallen in love with life, we have ceased to dream of eternity and in our efforts to build a new earth, we have allowed our vision of the new Heaven to dim.

Disturb us, Lord, to dare more boldly, to venture on wilder seas where storms will show Your mastery; where losing sight of land, we shall find the stars. We ask you to push back the horizons of our hopes; and to push back the future in strength, courage, hope, and love.

This we ask in the name of our Captain, who is Jesus Christ.

Sir Francis Drake, Adventurer

BUILDING ON THE CHALLENGES SUCCESSFUL COUPLES FACE

Being married to a successful spouse can be a huge blessing, but we'd be lying if we said there weren't also some challenges that go along with that! Recognizing them up front allows you to build on them in constructive ways. Here are some of the common challenges. What will you do to build on the ones that resonate with you?

- **Balance your second half** - Successful people often are driven by a desire for adventure and impact. If, in contrast, you have a high need for security and tranquility, how will you design a second half that balances these with a faith adventure?
- **Heal from first-half resentment and skepticism** - Resentment, wounds, or skepticism sometimes follow us from our first half, and, frankly, they can be very valid. Sometimes your lifestyle, while comfortable, required a lot of sacrifice. You may be tired from keeping all the plates spinning for so many years. The overriding emotion at midlife can be a sense of disappointment. Distance or conflict in your marriage highlights the need for soul work and restoration. Would professional counseling be helpful?
- **Dismantle the scale gap** - Maybe your spouse is interested in large-scale opportunities, and God's call on your life involves working one-on-one or with small groups of people. The temptation is to feel like they do big things and you do small things. You may need to "truth check" your yardstick as to how you are measuring! Getting clear on your own mission statement will help you to relax into who God has created you to be, while still celebrating God's unique call for your spouse's life. No calling is small if it comes from God.
- **Broaden your communication style** - People in Halftime often use corporate, analytical language and may have difficulty relating to their spouses if they have a more emotionally based, relational style of communicating. Halftimers who develop the ability to really listen to their spouses, and validate the emotions that surface, are often surprised at the changes that occur. Feeling affirmed, their spouses are much more likely to be open to the action plans and concrete ideas. It seems that stories are the best tool to bridge this communications gap. We encourage you to download and read some of the stories in the book *The Second Half*. Stories combine both the head and heart of this journey - real, tangible examples that address matters of the heart with warmth and emotion, yet wrapped around plans and strategies.

Which of these stories touch your heart or ignite your interest, and why?

Here are two stories to start with:

Patrick McConathy

Patrick is a successful oil and gas businessman with a big heart for healing men's hearts — and through them, healing their families.

Patrick and Trisha purchased a ranch in Colorado and redeveloped it into the perfect setting to launch Horizon Quest Ministries.

Each week their ranch is a place where men come to address the deepest needs of their hearts.



 [CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

Mike Fox

Mike's first half is really quite hard to listen to. Even as a little boy, he had one gut punch after another. But in some very real way, those hardships have prepared him for his calling to serve orphans.

Mike and Beth have done a great job of creating a replicable model for building orphanages, and the needed complementary education and medical services.



 [CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)

DOWNLOAD AND READ *THE SECOND HALF*

This coffee table book (hard copy or eBook) compiles 25 diverse stories of what others are doing in their second half, to spur your dreams.

Click here for e-book.

Click here to purchase a hard copy of the coffee table book.

- **Be patient with the detox process** - There is baggage that almost always comes with years of pursuing success, so you will likely need to allow time for your spouse's "heart journey." They may have an addiction to adrenaline and action, their identity may need to be rebuilt, they may be slowly learning the value of intimacy ...the pace of change can seem irritatingly slow. It's tempting to be demanding, but prayer, steady support and on-going encouragement will be what God uses in this detox process.

- **Break the money barrier** - Who of us have not felt the addictive pull of lifestyle creep, or been frustrated by the realization that our spending is limiting our freedom to respond to God's call? We discovered that no one came to tell us when enough was enough – it was up to us to draw that intentional line in the sand.

“Compensation spending” can become a default mode to make up for an often-absent spouse. We have friends who are struggling in this area. Over the years, Alan has been pre-occupied with his business, and has done very well financially. Sue's a wonderful, spiritual woman who would never label herself materialistic, but they find themselves caught in a web of spending that continues to accelerate. Despite having significant net worth, they feel powerless to change. Alan feels obliged to work very hard, and his absence fuels the cycle of plate-spinning, along with the “compensation spending.”

Health issues for Alan, from years of being addicted to adrenaline, are starting to surface. They are approaching the empty nest years, and, without having built a solid platform of together-time, the cost of their escalating lifestyle may turn out to be far higher than either of them could imagine.

When I decided to stop developing real estate, we launched a two year experiment: If we lived “simply,” could we live on the proceeds from our investments, which would free me to pursue God's call on my life? Needless to say, Linda was wondering, “How simple is ‘simple’?”

Looking back, we remember all the good times we had those two years. I was around a lot for the kids and Linda, and we discovered fun things that we could do together as a family that didn't involve spending tons of money. We opted for a mindset of “trading up” not “giving up.”

What spending could you let go of that would allow you to have something of lasting value? We discovered the truth in Michael Card's lyrics, “It's hard to imagine the freedom we find from things we leave behind.”

LISTEN TO MICHAEL CARD - “THINGS WE LEAVE BEHIND”

We've been living this out now for almost two decades and are discovering that the words of this song have proven to be true.



Halftime is not always about downsizing homes, cars, or vacations, but it’s worth asking if your lifestyle is robbing you of freedom. If you think it is, take an evening to go over your family budget line by line and ask yourselves: What would it be like to live without this? What time would we free up by not having to “manage” it? What kind of financial margin would this generate if we opted to remove this from our lives? How would it affect our children/grandchildren to see us re-allocate our money in a different direction?

We have been intentional about managing our spending plan for the past two decades, even as our net worth has risen, and we have found it to be a good exercise, ensuring that our lifestyle doesn’t rob us of the life we really desire. Think in terms of trading up, not giving up.

Take a few minutes to explore the question – How Much is Enough?

 **CLICK HERE TO EXPLORE THE QUESTION,
“HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?”**



ACTION STEP

If you struggle with managing your spending so that you are free to live out your calling, we encourage you to use Crown Ministries’ helpful tools – just one click away.

 **CLICK TO VIEW CROWN SPENDING PLAN**



LOOKING UP: MY RESPONSIBILITY AT HALFTIME

Jesus gave a speech to thousands of people that's recorded for us in Luke 12. In the middle of his speech, someone interrupted him and said, "Hey Jesus, tell my brother to share half of the inheritance with me." In other words, he was saying, "I want more than what I have."

We have often said to God that we want more out of life. Jesus' reply was to warn the crowd to watch out for greed because it will eat you alive. Then He went on to say that if you want more out of life and also want to be rewarded when the master returns, you should be like a house servant who knows his assignment and is focused on living it out. Lastly, He said, "and to those who have been given much, much is required."

 [CLICK HERE TO READ JESUS' SPEECH:](#)

In thinking about this passage, Linda and I realized that we are in the "been given much" group that Jesus is speaking to. We've been ambushed by God's goodness. So it begs the question, what specifically is required from our lives? It dawned on us that we have a responsibility to know what our unique assignments are and to stay focused on them.

 [CLICK HERE TO DIG INTO JESUS' SPEECH:](#)

Good thinking alone won't enable you to discover and live out God's call. Ultimately, it's about looking up and making eye contact with God. He promises, "I will guide you with My eye." We need to orient our inner worlds, ready to respond obediently to what He shows us. We are God's workmanship - created in Christ Jesus to do good works - prepared in advance for us to do. Custom-made, on purpose.



BIBLE READING AND PRAYER

Spend time each day reading the Bible and listening for what God is saying to you. Linda and I use technology to help us. For instance, www.gotandem.com provides small Bible portions that come as texts, voicemail, or email. If you don't have a daily routine, take a step and set that up right now.

Prayer is your most powerful tool. We encourage you to personalize the "Halftime prayer" below and make it a regular prayer.

"Dear Lord, we are on a journey to find and live out what you placed us on this earth to do. We need your clear direction. We need to see your hand at work and sense your pleasure in what we do. Even more importantly, we want you to transform our hearts, as we partner with you in what you are accomplishing in this universe. Please soften our heart and bring clarity to our thinking so that you can create in us a new identity, a new measurement of our performance, so we become strong through interdependence, enjoy greater intimacy, and live as your servants. Amen."

A SILENT SOLO RETREAT

Find a beautiful, restful setting and schedule a full day alone with God, your Bible, and a journal. This is one of the most powerful steps you can possibly take toward hearing clear direction from God and having the Holy Spirit show you where your heart needs to grow.

REFLECTION TOGETHER

Here are some powerful guidelines for you as you try to get clear on your calling and begin living it out: "Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life." Galatians 6:4-5 (The Message)

ACTION STEP

Take 15 minutes and listen to what God may be saying about these verses using the questions on the next page.

How does God want you to continue exploring the work he has given you?

What does He mean by “sink yourself into it”?

Who are you comparing yourself with and why?

Is anything holding you back from being your creative best?

MAKING EYE CONTACT WITH GOD

Mark Malone started his career in IT, moved to marketing, and rose to become VP of Marketing for a Fortune 200 company with responsibility for a budget of several hundred million dollars. During his rise in the corporate arena, Mark started integrating a few spiritual disciplines into his life in an effort to grow closer to God and to be able to hear Him more clearly.

“As I began to tithe, spend time every day quietly listening to God, and reading my Bible, I realized that I was giving my best to my career and giving God my left-overs. The more I came to know God, the more I saw His heart for the poor. During a weekend of quiet reflection, a switch got flipped in my heart. I felt God calling me to partner with him to help eliminate extreme poverty and serve children who are dying of preventable causes or living without hope.”



CLICK HERE TO WATCH MARK MALONE'S STORY



.....

LOOKING AHEAD

The sun streams into a room overlooking downtown Dallas, and quiet music plays as couples work away on large, rolling white boards, drawing out what they have in mind for their second half. We watch and listen.

Her hand starts writing, then she rubs it out. Starts again, then stops. Looking around, then out the window, she's day-dreaming. Putting the markers down she walks over to get a coffee.

She has been a senior executive for years, and I'm pretty sure what's going through her mind. So I ask.

"I am not really sure what to write," she says. "I have never really given this much thought. What if I put something down that isn't really right or just looks crazy? I really don't know where to start, and I feel like at this stage in life I should have this figured out."

She verbalized what most of us feel when we begin to look ahead at midlife. I remember having the same feeling. I was unclear about what I really wanted and had no idea how or if God could use a real estate developer.

Over the next hour, however, we watched her take bold steps, putting down in writing what came to her heart, without worrying if it was right, then explaining it to the rest of us. **She gained clarity faster than she ever imagined, and by working through her confusion, she helped the people around her begin to do the same.**

Now it's your turn. With each of these four exercises, you are doing the hard work and heart work that will help you develop clarity. Be bold and share what you write. Clarity develops as you go.

Get clear on how you will protect what you already have.

If a valuable company asset were unprotected, what would you do? Now imagine if something personal and truly priceless was unprotected. The first step in looking

ahead and planning for your second half is to get clear on the priceless things that you already have. It's usually a very short list.

List what you have that is priceless. Write what you are doing to protect that.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Share your answers with your spouse.

GET CLEAR ON WHAT YOU WANT

If it were two years from now and you were living the perfect second half of your life, how would you know?

Take some time to answer this question, but notice it is not asking what you would be “doing” or where you would be living, etc. This is a metrics question, and your answer will reflect how you would know for sure that you are living the perfect second half.

Share this with your spouse.

BUILD A ROADMAP TO YOUR EMERGING DREAM

We’ve found that it’s most effective to dream individually, then plan together with your spouse, then live it out with others around you.

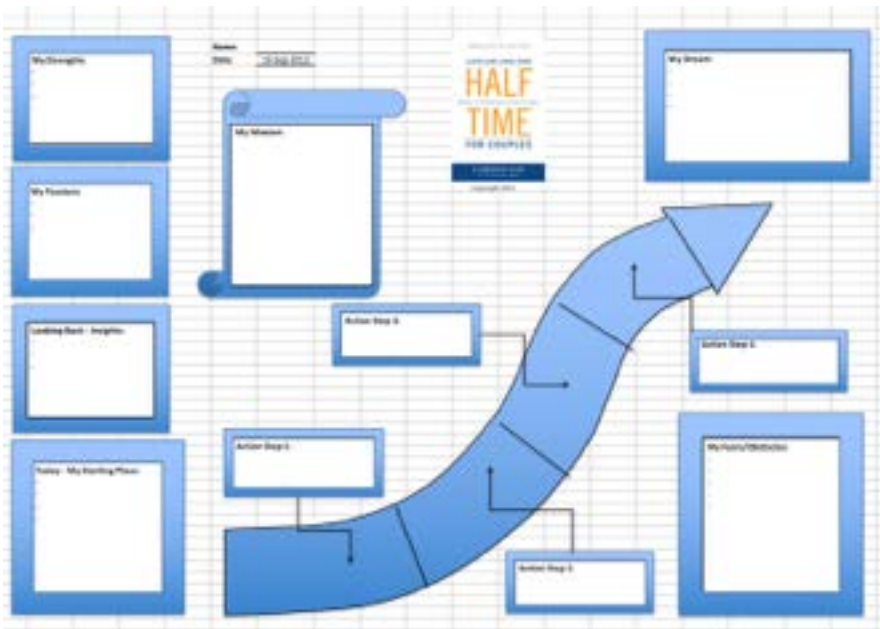
When your individual dreams are out in the open, writing your common narrative can begin. This exercise is about creating your own personal roadmap, then sharing it with each other.

Using the roadmap below, take 30 minutes or an hour and distill what you have learned onto the drawing. Limit your writing to only the most important and clear words, even though you will feel like so much of your story is being left out. It is this ruthless editing process that enables your real story to emerge - just like careful pruning leads to a beautiful tree or shrub.

Insert your strengths, passions and mission, your definition of the perfect life in the upper right, what your life is like today in the lower left, and the fears and obstacles which your plan should address. Then along the arrow, taking you from the lower left to the upper right, itemize the four or five steps you plan to take to move from the life you are living now to the life you desire as you live out your emerging mission.

“The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty.” Proverbs 21:5 (NASB)

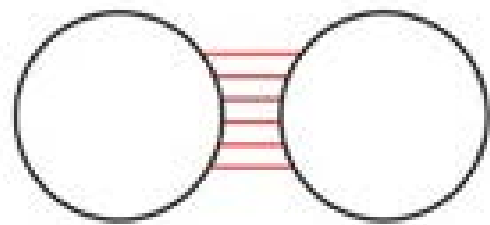
 **CLICK TO VISIT THE HALFTIME SITE AND DOWNLOAD HALFTIME FOR COUPLES ROADMAP**



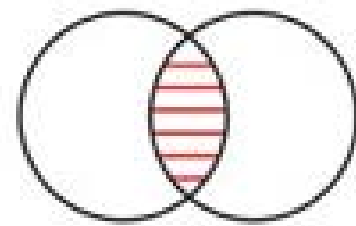
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INCLUDING OTHERS IN YOUR JOURNEY

The circles on the right represent the three equally valid ways couples typically interact as they develop the serving part of their second-half plan. No one model is better than the others, and one may be a best fit for you.



The top two circles illustrate a couple who have very different interests and callings. Most of their discretionary working/ministry time is spent separate. The red lines represent the time and communication needed to stay connected.



The middle, overlapping circles is a couple with individual interests but some work/serving together. If this is best for you, how will you serve together and how much time will you allocate to working together?



The last set of circles is a couple involved in the same initiative with perhaps different roles. The small red circles suggest the need to have some individual interests so they don't suffocate each other.

Which of these do you think would be best for you? Why?

INCLUDING YOUR KIDS IN YOUR JOURNEY

Your plans will likely involve changes in your kids' and parents' lives. How might this transition be disruptive for them? How will you share your dreams and plans with your kids, grandkids, and parents? How will you prepare them for the transition, while also enabling them to bring their best ideas and encouragement, as well as their feedback about your blind spots?

Carter, Caroline, and Jennie Leigh, our adult children, have become a lively part of our team, praying for us, and offering support (often in the area of technology). They critique our blogs, watch videos we create, help us with our websites, and, in their own individual ways, hold us accountable to what we say we want the second half of our lives to look like.

Our friend Gregg sent me this email: “Lloyd, I shared my Halftime plans with my wife and daughter...After talking this through with them, my daughter went to bed. She came back out a few minutes later, and said to me, **‘I want you to know, Dad, that I feel closer to you now than I ever have in my life, and it’s such a blessing to me.’** It brought tears to my eyes. One of my highest priority goals for my second half is to deepen my relationships with family and friends. It’s great to hear my daughter confirm the progress toward this goal.”

Another friend recently shared his halftime roadmap with his daughter over lunch, asking for her input. He wrote, “Lloyd, I just returned from having a two-hour lunch with my oldest daughter where we talked about ‘what it’s like having me as your dad.’ I also asked her to offer suggestions on my second half plans for this coming year...to help me see some of my blind spots. It was one of the best conversations we’ve ever had.”

INCLUDING OTHERS IN THE JOURNEY

“Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise in your latter days.”
Proverbs 19:20 (NKJV).

A few years ago, I met with my mentor, Bob Buford, at his home in Dallas. I had asked three close friends who are like my “personal board” to send him an email spelling out their observations of my life and what they felt were my greatest risks and opportunities. I felt a little vulnerable, but I needed to know what they saw.

Bob listened to me as I thought aloud about areas of confusion, things I need his perspective on. Looking past my eyes as if he could see inside, he said, “Lloyd, you have lived with freedom and found your calling, and you have focused on it for a long time. But in this next season you will need to learn to live within your limits.”

Those words and ideas had never crossed my mind before that moment. He went on, “I want you to read the book *How the Mighty Fall* by Jim Collins. It’s about how great companies fail, but it applies to us, too. Hubris and overreaching take them down. Those could take you down, too.”

And so began this next season of learning for my life. Bob and I were on this journey together a long time, and since his passing I cherish his past wisdom all the

more. Often he would ask fruitful questions. Imagine the power of this kind of insight into your plans as they emerge. Most healthy Halftime learning happens like that... over time, with others.

Your journey may take a year or longer, and you will benefit from peer insights, coaching, and accountability. How can you include others?

If you don't have close friends you can open your life up to in this fashion, here is an effective way:

THE HALFTIME INSTITUTE

The Halftime Institute is the leading authority on creating a second half filled with joy, impact, and balance. It is designed for people who share two defining characteristics: they have been successful in the first half of their lives and now share a deep desire to pursue eternal significance in their second half. The highly interactive format features the personal insights of our Halftime team and peer input. By the end of the process, participants create their own powerful second half life plan alongside their coach who walks along the journey with them. The Halftime Fellows Program also includes a cohort of peers, because as Bob Buford said, "change happens over time with others".

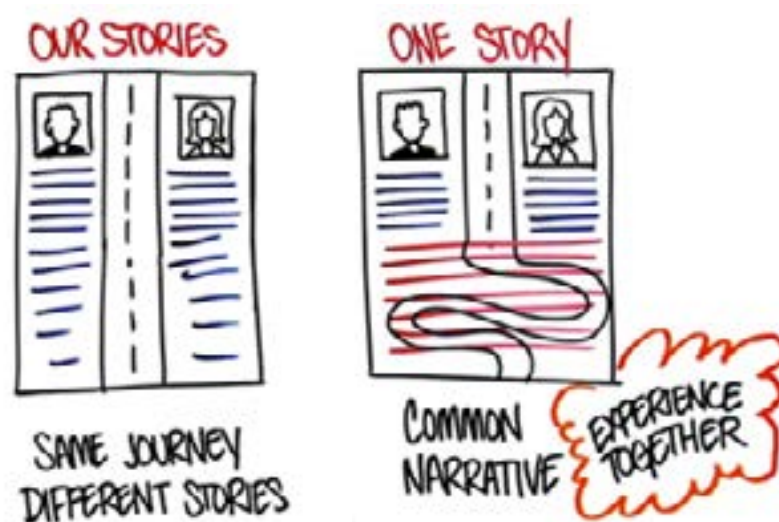
We encourage you to read more about this option and then begin the journey. **There is a much higher probability of actually implementing your dreams if you take this step.** At the very least, look for another couple in your circle of friends who are open to discovering God's call for their second half, and meet regularly to explore these ideas and share encouragement, accountability, and support. It makes a huge difference.



WRITING A COMMON NARRATIVE IS LIKE DANCING

Writing a common narrative in your second half seems a lot like dancing. They share some key elements:

- » **Time together**
- » **The same music in your ears**
- » **Having clear steps in mind**
- » **A commitment to enjoying the moment**
- » **Courage to dance from the heart together, regardless of what others are thinking**



TIME TOGETHER

Carve out time to continue to discuss and refine your ideas. I set aside one workday each week that I call a “Linda day.” For almost a decade now, I have made this a part of my life, and it has proven to be the most fun day of my week. Yes, it absorbs 20 percent of my normal work week, but if we truly want to be living out a common narrative, it takes time together and lots of listening to each other. “Linda days” are on my calendar for the next 6-8 months, so they don’t get squeezed out by other activities. It’s hard for me to switch gears from problem-solving to just hanging out, so I need a day like this. You may not need a whole day together, but grab your calendars and schedule some specific, re-occurring times together.

When I first proposed “Linda days,” she was a little surprised and not sure it would be a good idea - it sounded like maybe too much time together! Although it felt awkward at first, it’s turned out to be a good thing. By the time our last child left for college, we

knew each other well, had developed things we enjoyed doing together, and were clear about each other's callings and how we could best support them.

THE SAME MUSIC IN YOUR EARS

Stories are often the music of our second half. Stories of when the kids were little. Stories of a long romance, of what we've accomplished together. Perhaps of loss. But fresh stories, too, of the adventures of the day. While we can't always mention names, we often share stories at dinner of the people we are serving. We're neck-deep into their lives, and we experience joy and gratitude when they share about the blessings and growth emerging in their lives.

We keep the notes of encouragement that we receive from people we have served. Sharing these, along with the day-to-day stories of where we see God showing up, has created a tribute to God's faithfulness – to how He is helping us live out our callings. It's the music of our dance.

HAVING CLEAR STEPS IN MIND

Having your spouse's plan top of mind is like dancing with the same steps, instead of stepping on each other's toes. It allows you to move gently, to anticipate, to sync your lives in ways that help each other flourish. Practically, this means that you pull out your plans from time to time – maybe monthly, or, at the very least, quarterly – and spend time going over them together. Ask each other three simple questions: what's working, what's not working, and how could I be of help? Tell stories about each other when the opportunity arises. These reinforce in your own mind that you are living out a common narrative.

ENJOYING THE MOMENT

We don't know how long our partner will be healthy, or how our investments will fare, or what our ministry efforts will achieve. Life doesn't come with a set of guarantees. What you do have is today, that you can enjoy together. Success requires that we train our mind and heart to focus on productivity and outcomes at the expense of enjoying the moment. If we're not careful, it's easy to repack our second half schedules with meaningful activities, forgetting to breathe, to enjoy the present and the people, that God gives us the privilege of loving and serving today.

Chances are, if you have been driven for your first half, you are married to someone who is better than you at periodically slowing the pace of life, enjoying the moment. What if you gave them permission to help you grow in this area?

COURAGE TO DANCE FROM THE HEART

Living a life of significance always involves risk and sacrifice, and it's not for the faint-of-heart. When you address real fears and obstacles in living out your calling, you are drawn closer together as you look back on those steps of faith, and see where God has worked, allowing you together, to partner with Him.

We want to live like we're dancing with abandonment, without worrying about what others are thinking, despite inevitable uncertainties, and challenges. Celebrating together.

Dancing alone can feel free and exhilarating.

Dancing together takes practice and attention, and is a whole other experience.

Practicing these steps, giving our attention to God's call, and each other, will increase the likelihood that, against all odds, in our self-absorbed culture, we live out the second half life we are called to.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Linda and Lloyd have been married over 30 years, enjoy living near Charlotte NC and have three grown children. Linda was a stay-at-home mom and a part-time dental assistant until the children started leaving for college. After exploring her calling and realizing her passion to encourage moms of young children, she transitioned into a mentoring role. She has always loved working with dental patients but loves her role at www.momsmentoring.com even more, and today that is her primary occupation.

Lloyd is a successful real estate developer and owner of retirement homes who made a Halftime transition about 20 years ago...looking for greater meaning, joy and impact in his second half. Lloyd still owns his company, but he has the privilege of spending most of his time teaching and coaching for the Halftime Institute, a global team that helps men and women discern and live out their second half callings.

For the past decade, he has taken the Halftime message around the world: speaking, leading Halftime Institute cohorts, and coaching individuals through the journey. As a result, Lloyd understands the issues that surround the season of halftime in a deep and practical way.

Lloyd is the author of ***From Success to Significance: When the Pursuit of Success Isn't Enough***, which is a road map for this mid-life transition and ***The Second Half***, a coffee table book of more than 25 captivating stories of what other couples are doing to give their second half more meaning, joy and impact.

You can reach Lloyd and Linda at: Lloyd.Reeb@halftime.org.