

The Second Half of Life:

Making Your Later Half Your Greater Half



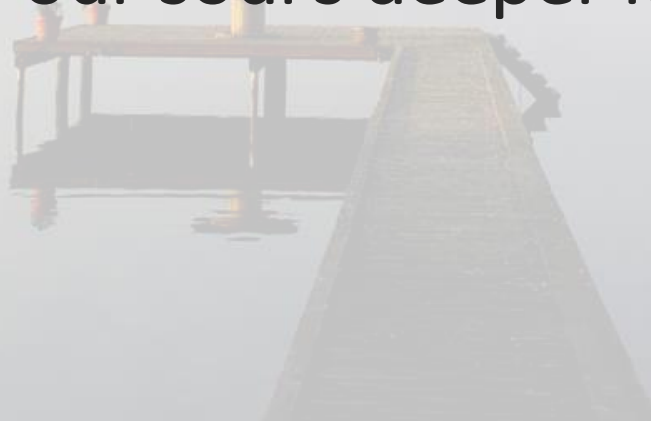
Nobody grows old merely by number of years. We grow old by deserting ideals. Years may wrinkle the skin, but to give up enthusiasm wrinkles the soul. Worry, doubt, distrust, fear, despair: These bow the heart and turn the spirit back to dust.

--Unknown

A wooden pier extends from the foreground into a calm body of water. The pier has a railing and a small structure at its end. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall scene is peaceful and serene.

The Good News

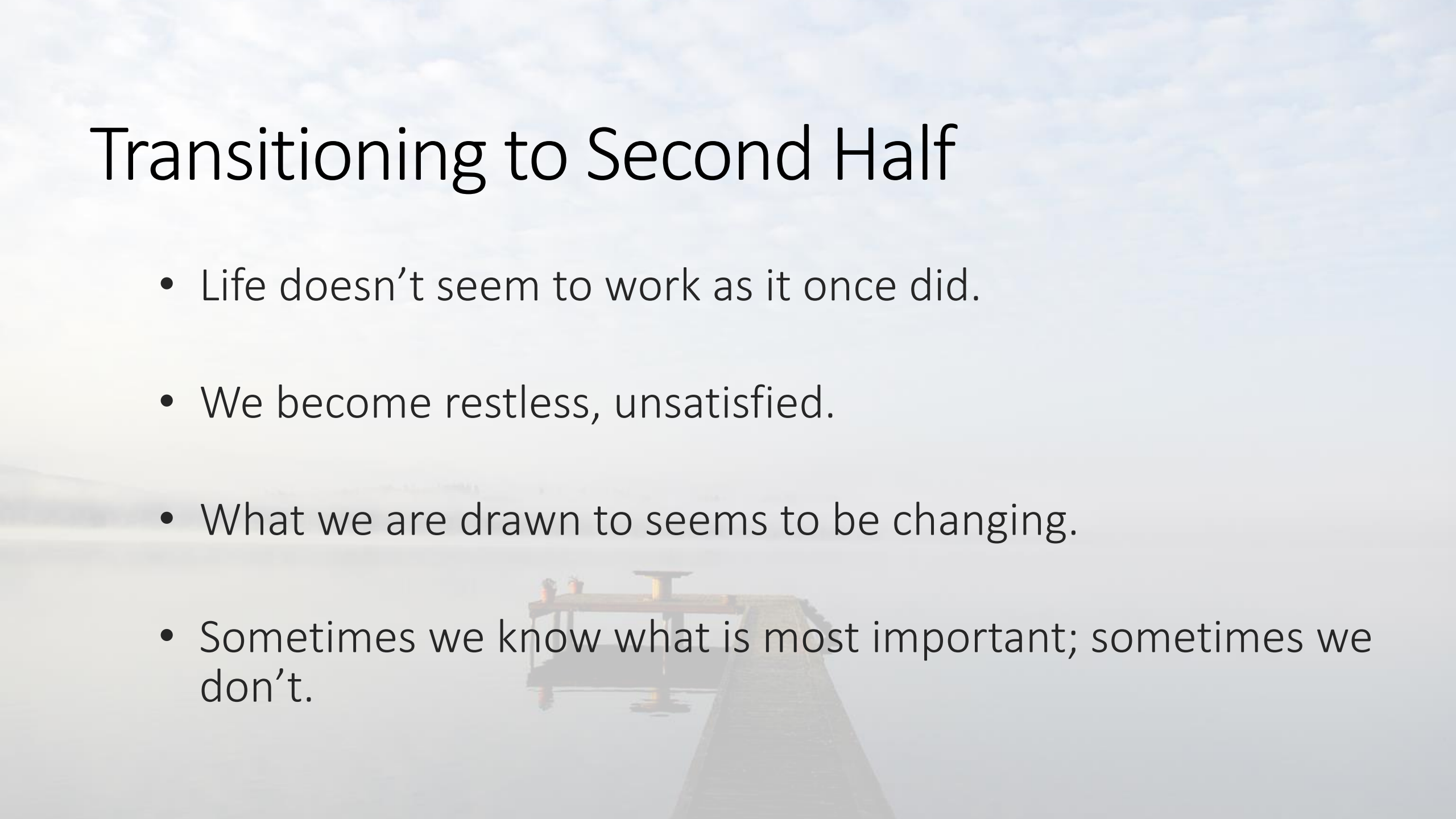
- Fertile time for transformation.
- For remaking meaning and purpose.
- For responding to our soul's deeper longing.





What
brought
you
here?

Transitioning to Second Half

- Life doesn't seem to work as it once did.
 - We become restless, unsatisfied.
 - What we are drawn to seems to be changing.
 - Sometimes we know what is most important; sometimes we don't.
- 
- A wooden pier extends from the foreground into a calm body of water. The pier has a railing and a small structure at the end. The water is still, reflecting the sky and the pier. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds, and the overall atmosphere is serene and contemplative.

The First Half of Life

- First half is about acquisition.
- Requires competition.
- Requires action.
- Purpose and meaning very related to first half mode.
- Culture values the first half mode.

The Road Becomes Bumpy

- We begin to experience the “slippage” of transitioning to the second half.
- We only know the first half mode, so
- We try applying first half principles to resolve the crisis, and
- **THEY DON'T WORK!**




The Issue

“One cannot live the afternoon of life according to the program of life’s morning; for what was great in the morning will be little in the evening; and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie.”

- - Carl Jung

“What is a normal goal to a young person becomes a neurotic hindrance in old age.”

A wooden pier extends from the foreground into a misty lake. The pier is made of dark wood and has a small platform at the end. The water is calm and reflects the sky. The background is a soft, hazy landscape with hills or mountains under a cloudy sky.

Shifts Required in the Second Half

- From doing to being.
- From competition to cooperation.
- From material to spiritual.
- From acquisition to letting go.



“No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.”

-- Albert Einstein

Challenges of the Second Half of Life

- Dealing with the unfamiliarity of second half principles.
- Losses
- Remaking meaning and purpose.
- Living a vital life despite the diminishments.



Opportunities of the Second Half of Life

- Healing the past.
- Time for self.
- Acquiring more of me/living my own life.
- Living more vitally than our culture predicts.
- Giving back and determining our legacy.

Opportunity Details/Examples

- Healing the compulsive worker.
- Time and fear of selfishness.
- Claiming one's own authority.
- The being that drives the doing.
- Connectedness and vitality.

Opportunity Details/Examples--continued

- Finding a fulfilling and mature spirituality.
- The ascendance of relationships.
- The duty driven drudge.
- Presence.
- Acceptance of mortality.



The Cure for Exhaustion

“The cure for exhaustion is not rest; it is wholeheartedness.”

-- David Steindl-Rast



Moving into the Unknown

- Risk
- Anxiety
- What might happen:

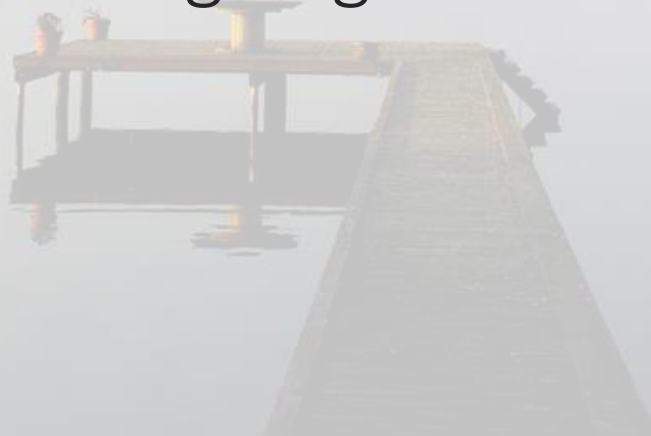




Who am I? Whose life have I been living? Who do I want to be?

Importance of Conscious Passage

- Time when our deeper longing tries to get our attention to call us to a larger, less restricted life.
- We have be tuned in.
- Great need for quiet and going inward.



What is Calling You?

“From a deeper perspective, illness is caused by unfulfilled longing. It is a message that somehow, somewhere, you have forgotten who you are and what your purpose is. You have forgotten and disconnected from the purpose of your creative energy from your core. Your illness is the symptom. The disease represents your unfulfilled longing. So, above all else, use your illness to set yourself free to do what you have always wanted to do, to be what you have always wanted to be, to manifest and express who you already are from your deepest, broadest and highest reality.

If indeed you have discovered yourself to be ill, prepare yourself for change; expect your deepest longing to surface and be brought to fruition. Prepare yourself to finally stop running and turn and face the tiger within you, whatever that means to you in a very personal way. I suggest the best place to start to find the meaning of your illness is to ask yourself:

What is it that I have longed for and not yet succeeded in creating in my life?”

--Barbara Brennan, Founder of the Barbra Brennan School of Healing

From Ageing to Sageing

“Our images of aging are more the problem than aging itself.”

-- Zalman Schachter-Shalomi

- Our culture views aging as a process of gradually worsening personal diminishment and disengagement from life.
- Schachter-Shalomi says, “We need to view old age as the culminating stage of spiritual development.”

“Senior Citizen” or Sage?

Ageing points to becoming a “senior citizen” = a static, lifeless condition where all further organic growth has ceased.

Sageing = a process that enables older people to become “spiritually radiant, physically vital and socially responsible elders of the tribe.



Eldering

“Eldering implies that we take active responsibility for our destiny in old age. We not only take responsibility for our destiny, but we do the work necessary to give back to society and the world from our accumulated experience and wisdom.”

-- Zalman Schachter-Shalomi

The Movement in Elders

- Is away from personal ego and ambition towards contributing to the common good.
- Is inward and deeper. (Elders don't have the last word; they have the "deep word.")
- Elders become:
 - *Teachers and mentors.*
 - *Mediators.*
 - *Monitors.*
 - *Mobilizers away from self-interest and towards the common or public good.*

Predictions For The Future Are Dire!

- Climate tipping point could be reached by 2050.
- All fish could be gone from the sea by 2048.
- 80% of the world's original forests have been eliminated.
- One-half of all species could be extinct within the next fifty years.
- 1% of Americans own 40% of its wealth.
- Upheaval, riots and war as countries and people fight for dwindling resources.

It's 3:23 in the Morning, and I'm Awake.

It's 3:23 in the morning, and I'm awake
Because my great, great grandchildren won't let me sleep.
My great, great grandchildren ask me in dreams,
"What did you do while the planet was plundered?
What did you do when the earth was unraveling?
Surely you did something when the seasons started failing,
As the mammals, reptiles, birds were all dying?
Did you fill the streets with protest when democracy was stolen?
What did you do, once you knew?"

-- Charles Eisenstein

I want to help, but what can I do?

The problems are so big.

I am just one person.

What difference would it make?

I'll, at least, send a check.



The Good News

- Join with like minded people.
- A peaceful grace roots movement of committed individuals is gathering momentum around the world to save the planet and improve life for everyone.
- Numerous groups are already working individually and collaboratively to bring about needed changes to save our planet and improve life on it.

We Need Elders.

- There are a lot of us.
- Elders can bring the second half of life characteristics to the table.
- Elders have time.
- Elders don't have time.



WHAT DO YOU WANT YOUR LEGACY TO BE?

- What sort of world do you want for your children and grandchildren?
- Where will you leave your heart?

Play “music” with the
“strings” you have left!



Support, Support, Support

Support is what overcomes resistance. We have to learn improved self-support and to enlist or participate in the support of others.

“Human conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change—personal change, community and organizational change, planetary change. If we can sit together and talk about what is important to us, we come alive. We share what we see, what we feel; and we listen to what others see and feel.”

--Margaret Wheatley

In Summary

The Second Half of Life is a fertile season for transformation, for remaking meaning and purpose in our lives.

We have to know the principles and the path and to move along the path consciously in order to capitalize on the opportunities.

We have the opportunity to step consciously into our elderhood and to give for the common good from our accumulated experience and wisdom.

How we think about aging/elderhood will be critical to how we age.

And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance,

**I HOPE YOU DANCE!
I HOPE YOU DANCE!**

--Lee Ann Womack



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QUESTIONS?



Summary of Key Points About the Second Half of Life

