

Building a Thriving Family in your Second Half

By Lloyd and Linda Reeb

Halftime is a personal journey, from success to significance. It's a deep learning at midlife that 'it's not about me.' As well, it can be about more than just Mom and Dad's second half. It can be a turning point in a family's legacy.

One of the most rewarding aspects of the Halftime Journey is taking our family with us on this exploration and adventure. Linda and I want our kids and grandkids to not only be successful in what they pursue but to living deep, rich, rewarding, self-sacrificing lives. Ironically this is the one thing we can't buy for them. We can buy them a great education and diverse experiences, but this we have to model for them.

This exercise is designed to help you think through some important elements of leading your family in your second half and talk it over with your spouse and your Halftime coach.

I. The idea of building a thriving family in our second half suggests at least three things:

- That I have a proactive leadership role to play in the family even if our kids have moved away
- There's a difference between leading my family in the first half compared to the second
- There is a difference between a healthy family and a *thriving* family.

1. In one or two words describe the role you envision in leading your family in the second half?

2. What will need to change in how you lead your family in the second half compared to the first half?

3. What do you feel are the differences between a healthy and a thriving family?

II. A Common Question: As we begin this conversation with people in Halftime, many immediately respond by asking “What if you feel that your family didn’t thrive in your first half? I wish my contribution to the family had been different. What do I do about that?”

1. First take time to define what components of your first half family life you wish had been different? In what ways can you change or redirect those areas now?
2. One Halftime couple who have brought great energy, faith and innovative thinking to leading their multi-generation family summed up their experience by saying, “God doesn’t make your family history go away, he transforms it.” What are your reactions to this quote?

Perhaps begin by asking your children what it was like growing up with you as their father or mother – then listen carefully and ask for forgiveness where needed. What will you change in how you interact with them in the future?

Ask your individual family members “What is the most meaningful thing I could do that would make your life better?”

III. What Will Dominate Our Thinking?

It’s normal as we approach our second half to talk about houses, hobbies, vacations and leaving a legacy for our kids. These are good things. But there are other important topics that might not initially grab our attention which can bring real joy and blessing into our family. It seems that a lot depends on the questions we ask.

Linda and I want to be careful how much of our time and energy we spend on those “typical” topics so we can bring creative, productive energy that will enable us to put ourselves in the best position to model a harmonious home, a loving marriage, healthy habits, meaningful vocations and how to live a legacy of generosity with our kids.

1. Take a few minutes to reflect on the two columns of questions below. What one or two words best describe the column of questions on the left and what words characterize the questions on the right?

<p>Houses – Where will we spend our summers and winters?</p> <p>Hobbies – What would be fun and fulfilling to spend our time on once we retire?</p> <p>Vacations – There are so many places we have always wanted to visit and perhaps now we can take our kids/grandkids.</p> <p>Leaving Legacy – How much should we spend on ourselves vs. leave as a legacy to our kids/grandkids?</p>	<p>Homes – How will we help build God-honoring, harmonious homes in our family?</p> <p>Habits –How can we model the most important habits for our family and inspire them to incorporate those into their daily routines?</p> <p>Vocations – What are our individual callings and how can we help each other thrive in living those out?</p> <p>Living Legacies - How will we include our family in our giving so they learn generosity?</p>
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2. Where would you like to put more emphasis in this next season of your life?

3. What do you feel is missing in this list of questions that is important to you?

I. Six Components of a Thriving Family Plan

1. **Leadership:** Earlier we asked you to define your family leadership role going forward in one or two words. With that role in mind, describe in a sentence or two what is your vision for your family over the next 20 or 30 years?

What do you need to do, or learn, to bring your best to that role?

2. **Values:** What are the core values that will guide your family to the legacy you desire? We encourage you to craft them together, write them down, and put them up somewhere in the house as a reminder of what your family is all about. How can you help instill those values? What stories will make these values come alive.

Take five minutes and write down the 3 or 4 core values you would like to build into your family.

3. Family of Unique Individuals: How well do you know your family members – their aspirations, fears, strengths, love languages, personality profile?

What next level of understanding about each individual would most help you in your leadership role? (We have asked each person to take the Strengthfinders assessment, Myers Briggs, the Five Love Languages assessment. Then we share stories of when we have seen these strengths and attributes in their lives. Makes for a rich and affirming family time.)

At a very practical level, what do you feel is the greatest risk and opportunity for each person in your immediate family this year? How will you help them get what they need?

Name	Risk	Opportunity
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

What do they need next in their spiritual development: training, mentoring, encouragement, exposure to what God is doing around the world? How will you help them get what they need?

Name	Spiritual Growth Opportunity	How I can help them
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

- 4. Serving:** Serving together from time to time brings a family closer together and can help entrench family values. In what ways could you serve together as a family and what is your role leading in that?
- 5. Legacy:** There is a big difference between leaving a legacy of money or property and living a legacy with our family. What legacy do you want to live?

How will you lead your family on a journey of generosity?

What next steps will you take to develop or refine your plan?

- 6. Celebrating:** How will you celebrate all of God's blessings in your family and what He's doing through you to bless others? (Some families have created special gatherings filled with fun, great food and music and share stories, photos/ archives of God's faithfulness in the past, provide a platform for Grandparents to share their faith journey, and talk about individual dreams for the future. Kids and grandkids leave with a new sense of thankfulness and responsibility as stewards of so much blessing.)

Read the verses from Joshua 4 below – What can you learn from this about capturing and celebrating God's goodness in your family?

When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, "Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan from right where the priests stood and to carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight."

So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and said to them, "Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean?' tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever." Joshua 4

A Simple Plan

We encourage you to work through these six questions with your spouse capturing your answers in a document as you go. As you talk with family members come back to the document and change and improve your thoughts and action plans.

There is power in writing down your plans – not as bold statements of what you will accomplish – but as a humble listening prayer to God of what you are counting on him to do by His power in and through your family.