

Perspectives on the Second Half of Life..

“It is not easy to be sure that being yourself is worth the trouble, but we do know it is our sacred duty.” – Florida Scott-Maxwell, *The Measure of My Days*

“...maturity beckons..., asking us to be larger, more fluid, more elemental, less cornered, less unilateral...” – David Whyte, *Consolations: The Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning*

“The second half of life is also the age of the amateur. Amateurs are lovers, drawn to their work and their commitments by love, not duty, sustained by the gift of joy and wonder...our perspective changes, and we are amazed to realize that some things just don't matter any more.” – Margaret Guenther, *Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life*

“Yes, the second half of life is a certain kind of weight to carry, but no other way of being makes sense or gives you the deep satisfaction your soul now demands and even enjoys... Your concern is not so much to have what you love anymore, but to love what you have - right now. ...” – Richard Rohr, *Falling Upward*

“Aging has propelled the development of the human being from the beginning....Things will decay, but they cannot age. Aging is an active process that requires the force of life.” – William H. Thomas, M.D., *What Are Old People For?: How Elders will Save the World*

School for the Second Half of Life

This stage of life invites us to a greater sense of wholeness and a new sense of freedom to make choices that are true to ourselves and to a meaning of life that unfolds through the wisdom of years. Our youth-driven culture tends to view aging only as something to be dreaded and denied. The reality is that these years, lived mindfully, offer an opportunity to enter more deeply into and to appreciate what matters most in life. *We are invited to a Second Coming of Age.*

Mercy by the Sea Retreat and Conference Center is located in Madison, CT, along the Long Island Sound. A sponsored work of the Sisters of Mercy of the Northeast, the Center's programming is grounded in the community's tradition of discerning and serving critical unmet needs of its particular time and place. Day and weekend programs include creative expressions of the Spirit, contemplative practices, sustainable co-creation, finding the sacred in the everydayness of life, and human development.

For more information or to enroll in the School, visit our website, www.mercybythesea.org or call Guest Services 203.245.0401



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Artist: Ansgar Holmberg

Mercy by the Sea Invites You to the School for the Second Half of Life

Toward a new way of being

Toward a way of being

“Wholly unprepared, [we] embark upon the second half of life. Or are there perhaps colleges for forty-year-olds which prepare them for their coming life and its demands as the ordinary colleges introduce our young people to a knowledge of the world and of life? No, there are none... But we cannot live the afternoon of life according to the programme of life’s morning – for what was great in the morning will be little at evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie.” – C.G. Jung

The second half of life is not defined by a specific age, but as that time in life when you might begin to wonder, “Is there more to life?”

You’ve enjoyed successes and survived failures, endured loss and had cause for celebration.

Yet, little by little, or through a sudden life event, we find we cannot or don’t want to live life in the way we always have. It’s time to look at life with fresh, soft eyes.

Paradoxically, this crossroad calls for a willingness to “not know,” to set aside perfectionism, to slow down and listen to the still small voice we’ve been ignoring. And, in time, to ripen and become like Mary Oliver’s rose “in its huge willingness to give something from its small self to the entirety of the world.”

Welcome to the School for the Second Half of Life

Join with other seekers on a journey toward a new vision of the Second Half of Life.

The second half of life is a distinct and creative developmental stage that can lead to a greater sense of wholeness and freedom.

Through mythology, story, scripture, poetry, literature, film, art and music, we will explore how aging has been viewed across time, cultures and traditions and the wisdom practices that support and sustain our growth into the fullness of life.

We will use current research in happiness, medicine, and the brain to inform our revisioning of the Second Half of Life.

And, we will engage our experience, imagination and creativity to explore the big questions.

Sessions will include suggested readings, input, small and large group discussion, individual time for reflection and a monthly reflection paper.

Optional additional programs and activities (priced separately) will be offered throughout the year.

School for the Second Half of Life

- ◆ The School will meet one Saturday per month for three “semesters.” Participants commit to the 3 semesters when they register.
- ◆ Overnight lodging (for an additional cost) is available for those who travel a distance, or for those who wish additional time for personal reflection & renewal
- ◆ The next cohort will enter January 12, 2019. Dates for the Spring 2019 semester include the following Saturdays from 9:30 am – 3:30 pm, with an optional social gathering from 3:30-4:00 pm: 1/12, 2/9, 3/9, 4/6, 5/4, Dates for the Fall 2019 semester are: 9/21, 10/19, 11/16 and 12/14. Dates for the Spring 2020 semester are: 1/11, 2/8, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2.
- ◆ Tuition for each of the three semesters is \$750 for a total of \$2,250. A special “buddy discount” of \$725/semester is available to both parties who sign up together.
- ◆ A payment plan and limited scholarship monies are available.

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