

Walking Together in the Second Half of Life

By **JAMEY LEWIS**

Jamey Lewis is a facilitator with the Second Half Collaborative or 2HC (2hc.life), an initiative of Frontier Ventures. 2HC is a 10-month cohort led by seasoned facilitators, spiritual directors, and coaches to provide encouragement and help for mission workers in the second half of life. Their goals are vibrant communion with God, authentic community, and sustainable mission.

What motivations initially led you to engage in mission? How have those motivations changed or been clarified?¹ These are questions, among others, that we ask on our application for the Second Half Collaborative (2HC).

Those who have joined 2HC indicate a desire in this season of their lives for these things:

- a deepening and/or simplifying of relationship with God
- discernment in times of family or ministry transition
- friendships with others in similar life circumstances
- help in facing seasons of disorientation

Our 2HC retreats, stations of learning, and interactions provide space for 2HC members to express these longings honestly and listen for what God, their own hearts, and other cohort members are saying.

Beyond the dedicated space that 2HC provides, how can we offer a perspective that brings second half of life flourishing into many more places and spaces of mission? How do we help families, teams, and mission organizations be places that encourage and support global workers who uncover the typical second half of life longings listed above?

We asked these questions of one cohort at our final retreat. Numerous ideas for both postures and practices surfaced. We group some of these responses here in four main categories.

Let what we share provide prompts for your own reflection and action: How might I apply or adapt these ideas in my own family, team, friendship groups, and organizations? What other ideas come to mind?

Give space for unhurry.

- Organize family activities in an unhurried way.
- Celebrate unhurriedness and resist the organizational debt [or burden] that busyness creates.
- Pay attention to patient, loving “unhurry” as we transition from doing one thing to another.

In organizations, make room for spiritual practices, offer spiritual direction, and develop trainings.

- Give people work time for contemplative practices and space to reflect together and alone. In 2HC, these include reflective ways to engage Scripture, retreats of silence, and contemplative prayer.
- Hold silence for a time in meetings after someone has shared.
- Encourage people not to schedule back-to-back meetings.
- Normalize spiritual direction (or spiritual companionship) and coaching. Pay for spiritual direction for staff.
- Ask, “What is this organization’s corporate discernment framework?” and then offer group discernment before planning.
- Use what we learn from a particular 2HC station for speaking or leading a workshop. 2HC offers 10 different stations of learning on themes of

¹ A version of this article originally appeared online: 2hc.life/blog/2nd-half-of-life-friendly-mission-organizations. Reused here with permission.

identity and the inner life, supportive and authentic friendship and community, and sustainable mission. Retreats focus on discernment, gratitude, and blessing.


- Give space for people to pursue these types of programs/intensives, such as 2HC or other programs.

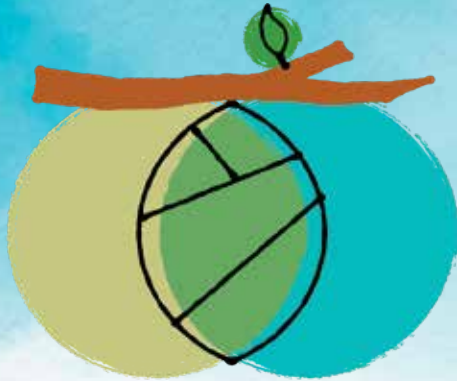
Make space for sharing our own second half of life experiences (e.g., storytelling, story listening).

- Share with adult kids and friends the new ways of seeing, what I'm learning, and what I'm experiencing as I encounter Christ in the "back half of life." Be honest with the ups and downs of the journey along the way.
- Interview people and invite them to share their experiences.
- Invite others in my organization into a short-term explorative community to discuss the "second half."
- Pursue a group of friends to talk about these kinds of second half of life concepts.

Focus on "being" and not just "doing."

- What gets evaluated gets done. Have different metrics that reflect 2HC values such as "being" rather than merely "doing."
- The foundation seems to be making sure "2HC DNA" is alive, well, and cultivated in me. If it's "who I am," I will necessarily carry it with me everywhere I go and in every interaction. It will be something that simply and naturally "bubbles out of me."
- Talk about who we are called to be (i.e., where we find our deepest significance) in our groups.

What happens in mission organizations that do not provide spaces and support for those facing the challenges and opportunities of the second half of life? Conversely, when we steward the precious resource, the maturing person in mission, what results will follow? At the very least, fruitfulness and longevity in mission will naturally flow from that person. Additionally, that individual will become a safe, trustworthy, and compassionate role model for younger generations of those drawn to the excitement and calling of God in mission. 



second half
COLLABORATIVE

an initiative of  **FRONTIER**
VENTURES

Spiritual formation, friendship,
and mission-life integration for
the second half of life.

You Belong Here.
www.2hc.life/about

"2HC isn't an invitation to learn new content nearly as much as it is an invitation to unpack your soul and muster the courage to disclose its contents to some trustworthy friends on the road."

—2022–23 Participant