

BOOK

Halftime: Moving from Success to Significance

AUTHOR

Bob Bufford

PUBLISHER

Zondervan

PUBLICATION DATE

1994

SYNOPSIS [From the publisher]

“What do you want to do with the rest of your life?”

In *Halftime*, Buford provides encouragement and insight to propel your life on a new course to true significance--and the best years of your life. Buford focuses on this important time of transition to the second half of your life, giving you the tools you need to:

- Take stock of your successes and accomplishments thus far
 - Redefine significance and what it means to you
 - Identify your personal goals
 - Develop a mission for serving God in the second half of your life
-

“Fifteen years ago I began recording my thoughts about something that happened in my life. Instead of facing a crisis as I approached middle age, I discovered that a new and better life lay before me. I called the process of discovery ‘halftime,’ and the eventual outcome of this process led to my “second half.” The metaphor fit because, after a successful first half, I needed a break to make some changes in how I played the second.”

“My message is the same today as it was in 1994: If you are approaching middle age – which can be anywhere from your late thirties well into your fifties – the very best years of your life lie ahead of you. Whatever success you are having will never completely fulfill you. A life of significance – of really mattering – is yours for the taking, and the process I describe in this book will work for you.”

“My own circumstances provided a moist and fertile soil in which I could grow. It was a fortunate environment, and that has been a critical factor in my story. My own tale is not that of the self-made man, nor is it a rags-to-riches account or a Horatio Alger fantasy. I was given far more opportunity for growth, personal development, and financial rewards than most Americans.”

“What about your epitaph? What have you been given, and what will you do with it the rest of your life?”

“Recently, I have begun looking at my own life through the metaphor of a football game (actually, any sport that divides its action into two halves will do). Up until my thirty-fifth year, I was in the first half. Then circumstances intervened that sent me into halftime. Now I am playing the second half, and it’s turning into a great game. Along the way, I have come to the conclusion that the second half of our lives should be the best half – that it can be, in fact, a personal renaissance.”

“If the first half was a quest for success, the second half is a journey to significance. The game is won or lost in the second half, not the first.”

“Much of what I write will seem far-off to you, but do not put this book where you won’t be able to find it later, for the first half races by faster than you think.”

“Making a lot of money has its benefits, but what was I leaving behind that would make a difference in the world? Something was telling me that there was more to life than money.”

“In the first half of life, there is barely enough time to go beyond second base. We are hunter-gatherers, doing our best to provide for our families, to advance our careers, and to pass our beliefs and values on to our children. In addition, for most men, and certainly a growing number of women, the first half finds us in our warrior mode. We need to prove to ourselves and others that we can accomplish something big, and the best way to do that is to become increasingly focused and intense.”

“In *The Odyssey*, the epic telling of the life of Odysseus, two great forces are pulling at Odysseus: work and home. He yearns to get home, yet he enjoys the battles along the way. Do you feel a kinship to him? During the first half, we too are pulled between the desire to be with our families and the adventure of trying to make it in our careers. Is it any wonder we do not hear that still, small voice calling us to something better?”

“The first half of life has to do with achieving and gaining, learning and earning. The majority do this in the most ordinary of ways: getting an education, entering the workforce, starting a family, buying a house, earning enough money to provide for needs as well as a few wants, setting goals, and climbing toward them.”

“Likewise, for the second half of life to be better than the first, you must make the choice to step outside of the safety of living on autopilot. You must wrestle with who you are, why you believe what you profess to believe about your life, and what you do to provide meaning and structure to your daily activities and relationships.”

“There is a risk in this decision: in tossing aside the security blanket that keeps you safe and warm in your cautiously controlled zone of comfort, you may have to set aside familiar markers and reference points. You may feel, at least at first, that you are losing control of your life. To that I say, “Good for you.”

“Here’s a question that will help you with the same goal: If your life were absolutely perfect, how would it look to you?”

“It is not unnatural nor should it overly concern you that you feel the need for a change. The mistake most people make when they begin to feel this way is to ignore the voice that is telling them to stop and listen. And there are many ways to ignore it. Some simply bear down, reasoning that they need more discipline, more focus. Some turn to diversions, both healthy and reckless. Most, I am convinced, enter a sort of sleepwalking stage during which they force themselves to hold on until retirement.”

“As you take stock, ask yourself these similar questions: What is my passion? How am I wired? Where do I belong? What do I believe? What will I do about what I believe? Or, as Peter Drucker advised people who were looking for their life’s task: What are my values, my aspirations, my directions, and what do I have to do, to learn, to change, in order to make myself capable of living up to my demands on myself and my expectations of life?”