

**The School for the Second Half of Life**

**Guiding Principles**

* The School for the Second Half of Life is an invitation to greater freedom, wholeness and a life grounded in what matters most (the undivided life)
* This is a unique adult developmental stage. When lived mindfully & intentionally, this stage can be characterized by creativity, growth and integration
* The passage through this time of life is not linear. It requires cultivation & navigation
* Contemplation, understood as “a long, loving look at the Real,” is foundational to this program and to this stage of life.
* Self knowledge opens us to understanding the interconnectedness of all things and leads to compassion, both for self and a movement outward
* Fully entering into the realities of our lives carries us through suffering and can engender appreciation and gratitude
* Practices (different from “mastery”) throughout time, cultures and traditions support growth and resiliency in the Second Half of Life
* The “hand-crafted” life is one that resonates with the True Self, cultivates simplicity and humility. Living the “hand-crafted” life, while counter-cultural, contributes something of great value to our various communities.
* Many of the experiences of aging that the culture calls “diminishment” parallel the spiritual invitations of all traditions.
* Aware Elders have a critically important role to play in advancing and enriching human evolution and the care of creation
* An intentional community of Elders is needed to discern, lament, mourn, appreciate, celebrate and act.