

Outward, Inward, Upward

The Wilderness Coach brings you on a journey of personal fulfillment and success

At some point in our lives, we all find ourselves stuck. Either stuck emotionally, or stuck not knowing how to achieve the goals we've set for ourselves. Enter Steve Brand, the Wilderness Coach. Brand is the owner of Life Strategies Expeditions, a life coaching practice that takes its work and its clients to the wilderness.

"Taking someone outward to look inward to move upward" is how Brand, the Wilderness Coach, explains his life coaching business, or as better remembered with his shorthand, "outward, inward, and upward."

Life Strategy Expeditions evolved from Brand's solitary journeys into the North Georgia Mountains every Friday in the late '90s. As a psychotherapist in Roswell, Brand would schedule all of his active appointments within a four day work week, and leave Friday open for himself. While hiking through the mountains, he realized how therapeutic it was, and began to think about how he could take others along and incorporate the outdoor setting with the life coaching practice.

"No one else is doing a program like this," says Brand. "The wilderness aspect is exciting and new."

The industry itself has grown tremendously in the last few years. In fact, according to the International Coaching Federation (ICF), a coaching credentialing organization, there are about 20,000 full-time coaches practicing worldwide, with three-quarters of them in the United States. Brand feels that in the next ten years, this industry will explode in growth.

Every Friday, Brand and his clients embark on a self discovering journey through the wilderness. There are three different program lengths from which to choose – the "day tripper" (a one-day journey), the "weekender" (a full weekend journey), or the "chance of a lifetime" trip, on which clients get the opportunity to spend a week outdoors in an exotic international location. Whatever the time frame, the trip is designed around the clients' wishes; they can walk, hike, or kayak, while developing a plan of attack for their personal and professional goals.

"When clients are away from the city and the noise, they are able to tap into the power of the great outdoors," says Brand. "This is a break in their usual routine, and it may be something as simple as seeing a waterfall or nature that helps them gain perspective on their problems and issues. Another benefit is that a vigorous workout, whether it is hiking or kayaking, increases the body's production of endorphins. Clients get their blood pumping, and suddenly are filled with ideas and creativity."

It is then that clients make decisions to realign their lives, and take their plans back into the city to work it into their current routine.

But before they even set foot outside, Brand has his clients take a personality assessment test on the internet. The assessment is close to 300 questions, and it is where the real journey begins.

"The assessment allows them to take inventory of their strengths, and they may realize they have strengths they didn't know about," Brand says. "It also provides them with a measurement of their current satisfaction level in their lives."

Using the 24-page booklet produced from the test, Brand talks to clients individually about their results and what they are looking to accomplish in life. He is quick to point out that a life coach is not a therapist; rather someone who helps you set and reach goals in your life.

"A coach helps someone get to where they want to go in life through goals," he said. "Clients might want to start a new business, or write a book, but are stuck and unsure what direction to take. This is where a coach steps in and helps them to the next plateau of success."

Brand explains that many people do not understand what holds them back from achieving their goals and dreams. Coaches work with clients to visualize their successful destination, and help them gain momentum to achieve success.

For more information about the Wilderness Coach, Life Coaching Expeditions or Life Strategy coaching, contact 770-641-8726 or visit www.thewildernesscoach.com