



LIFEPILOT: Inspired Self-Discovery

Program establishes positive philosophy for life navigation

“With the simplest toy, the most complicated computer, car, boat or aircraft, you receive a set of instructions—an operations manual! This is not the case with human beings,” says **Peter H. Thomas** (*WPO Arizona, WPO British Columbia*). So, Peter has created the operations manual for your life. It is called LifePilot, and it is quickly gaining followers. Peter, who calls himself the ‘Chief Pilot,’ for the program, is a gregarious, energetic businessman who built Century 21 Realty into Canada’s largest and most successful real estate network. Retired 15 years ago at age 50, he does not need to build another business. LifePilot is a passion, his commitment to sharing valuable knowledge.

LifePilot stands out from other goal-setting programs because, instead of lecturing a roomful of attendees, it places each individual in charge of the process by first examining and writing down what is important to him or her. This information is then used to guide each participant in crafting a truly unique life navigation plan. As Peter explains, LifePilot workshops provide positive and practical tools that will be useful for years to come. “Many of us keep on going down the ‘freeway of life,’ even while we are doubting whether we are on the right road. Most of us probably need to stop and figure out where we are and maybe turn back to get onto the right road. This applies to even some very successful people,” says Peter. “It is often a simple matter of having the correct tools with you.”

The program begins with a four-hour workshop facilitated by a LifePilot “navigator,” a certified and highly-trained program leader. The group is deliberately

kept small to achieve maximum effectiveness. Self-discovery is the hallmark of each seminar, whether offered as a family workshop, couples retreat, or WPO Forum. According to Peter, “LifePilot gives you a moment in time to pause and take stock of every single thing you are doing. Every single thing you do should fit within one of your values.”

The LifePilot approach is intended to awaken each individual’s “inner genius.” Peter explains how this happens: “It’s really very simple. The difficult part is identifying the time to do it. You see, one thing leads to another. From a distance a forest looks like it is impregnable, you can’t get through it. As you get closer, you start seeing the tree trunks, branches, and the pathways through it. It is exactly the same with LifePilot. As you examine each thing that you do each day, you begin seeing things more clearly. Then you can start deleting those items that don’t align with your values and adding things that do.”

Peter explains that there are five basic elements to the LifePilot workshop:

- Extracting a value set from each individual;
- focusing on what is most important to the individual;
- visualizing each participant’s goals;
- seeking what provides inspiration; and,
- reflecting on the process and its success.

“You know one thing you need to put in your article,” Peter tells this writer in a burst of inspiration, “Fun! People have fun in LifePilot workshops. There is a lot of laughter. There’s camaraderie. And there is sharing of experiences.”



attitude | motivation | commitment



embrace for LifePilot

The LifePilot workshop experience is aimed at establishing positive thoughts, words, actions, and values. The participants agree:

“LifePilot has given me both the tools and the motivation to take charge and set my future life course. I felt so good about what I described to my wife as a “Life Altering” experience with LifePilot that I convinced my whole family to attend a future presentation!”

— **Bill Swinimer**,
Chairman and CEO,
PCL Packaging Corp.,
WPO Toronto

“... the wonderful package that you’ve created that is a very practical and workable way to manage one’s Life. So if destiny is making the choice to attend, life is moving in the right direction.”

— **Bud Kanke**,
President
Kanke Seafood Restaurant Inc.
WPO British Columbia



LifePilot was created in 2001, but Peter says it really originated 33 years ago as a result of his experiences with the Young Presidents' Organization. At YPO, he says he was able to focus on what was most important in his life. The success that followed for him drove his desire to share his knowledge with others. "Back then, at a YPO University," Peter explains, "I learned that I needed to think about my values. I wrote them down and stayed focused on them. Within 90 days I had changed my whole outlook, realizing that I was not living my life in accordance with my values."

During all of the success in Peter's life came tragedy. Peter lost his son Todd to suicide in 2000. Focusing his energy and his grief, he established the Todd Thomas Foundation as a place to direct the profits from LifePilot. Today, the Foundation works "to raise the awareness of the magnitude of mental illness and the effect it has on individuals as well as our society, to erase the stigma associated with it and to search for effective treatments." So far, the organization has raised more than \$1,000,000. Among the many projects the Foundation is funding is research and development on a model Crisis Response Unit. The first such unit is located at Canada's Victoria Royal Jubilee Hospital. It is aimed at providing "timely, appropriate, and dignified care for individuals living with mental illness and psychiatric disorders." (More information about the Todd Thomas Foundation is available at <http://www.toddthomasfoundation.org> and "Looking at Mental Illness" *WPO World*, Vol. VII, Issue 2, October 2001).

At the end of each workshop, participants take home a handsome binder filled with all of the elements of their personal LifePilot plans. It maps out a route to continued personal growth and guides individual goal adjustments. To keep the individual plans fresh over time, space is allocated for workshop veterans to attend future workshops at no additional costs.

From the exuberance expressed by participants, it is pretty clear that the LifePilot experience is without parallel. Peter Thomas has worked to refine and focus the process for big returns to the participants on a small investment of their time and effort. The result is a refreshing new approach to guiding individuals toward the establishment of positive thoughts, words, actions, and values— providing effective tools to help themselves and others in every aspect of daily life. ■

LifePilot is for individuals, Chapters and Forums as a WPO resource. Contact Erica Smedley-Cox at esmedleycox@wpo.org or call 703 684 4911. For more information about LifePilot go to www.life pilot.org.



"Nearly every LifePilot graduate I talk to says, 'You know, Peter, LifePilot got me at just the right time.' Now, I've heard this so often that it leads me to conclude that we are going through so much change that the timing is always right."

—Peter Thomas

LifePilot results

Course guides participants toward positive thoughts

- Enjoy a fulfilling life using your values and priorities
- Embrace your future by mapping your ambitions
- Clarify what is really important to you, and those you love
- Enhance personal growth by reflecting on your past experience
- Build a personal environment of peace and clarity
- Develop strong, healthy disciplines to follow your dreams and maintain wonderful relationships
- Discover the formula to change the way you approach a new venture