



A Conversation with Dave Wheatner

By [Chris Young](#)

Guided by a background in public-policy management and counseling psychology, Squirrel Hill resident Dave Wheatner wants to make an impact on the world. Though the notion is far from unique, the soft-spoken 33-year-old takes a different approach. He offers his services as "whole-life" coach, teaching people to be more socially and ecologically conscious as they pursue their goals. And he walks the walk: Wheatner is a strict vegetarian, bikes regularly and even built his own rainwater barrel system in his back yard to conserve water. An avowed idealist, Wheatner believes that if enough people took time to understand themselves and the world in which they live, humans could eventually solve the problem of global warming.

Why did you decide to start life coaching?

Part of my purpose is to innovatively catalyze and create for a healthy and sustainable world. I enjoy helping the world on a larger scale. I really like working one-on-one with people, really seeing the transformation.

I'm basically having an effective exponential good by working with people who have the values to help the larger world.

What's with the orange rain barrels on the side of your house?

I've got a large rain-barrel system I built earlier this year when I was working with a life coach. It's been very useful. We were wasting a lot of water, so now in a big rainstorm we catch 300 gallons ... I've had questions asked like, "Do you make beer in there? Do you make wine in there?" I say, "Nah, it's just rain water. Sorry."

They're always surprised when I say that this is probably where things are headed. It just looks odd now because we're the only ones you see who have them. But eventually everybody will have to have them.

On your Web site you ask, "Can life coaching stop global warming?" Well, can it?

If enough individuals in idealist professions choose to seek life coaching, then I think over the long term it can make a big difference.

Coaching would help us take a more vision-based approach. Global warming tends to be one environment where there are a lot of feelings of burnout, disillusionment. It's easy to get caught up in the negativity. Coaching helps with connecting your everyday life to the bigger picture and breaking it down so that we're maintaining that balance in our lives.

What kinds of personality traits do you look for in a client?

Someone who spends time thinking about themselves and thinking about the world, but who wants something different. [Coaching] works best with someone who is really seeking a meaningful, authentic life. ... It's largely client driven. It depends on where the client wants to focus the most. If they say, "I want things in my professional life, I want things in my interpersonal life or I want things in terms of how I'm making a difference in the world," then we'll hone in on those areas.

This all sounds pretty idealistic. How do you respond to people who roll their eyes at it?

I think that sometimes we don't have enough of this kind of thinking. A lot of times we don't let ourselves envision what we want because we allow ourselves to get pulled back by current realities.

It's kind of like a runner in a race. Maybe the reality is that the first time out, it's going to take me eight or nine minutes to run that mile. But I'm going to do better if I envision myself running it in five or six. There need to be more people who aren't afraid to think outside of that box. If we didn't have people who did that, we would never progress as a society.



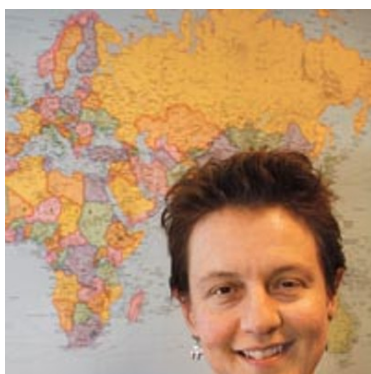
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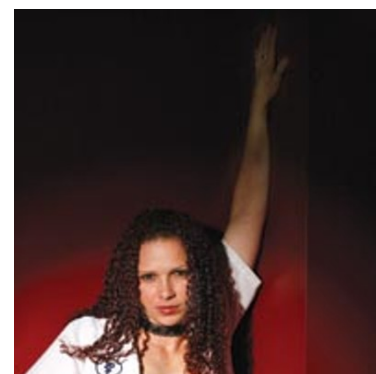
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