

Camino Del Alma

Way of the Soul



Alamy

Press Kit

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Founder

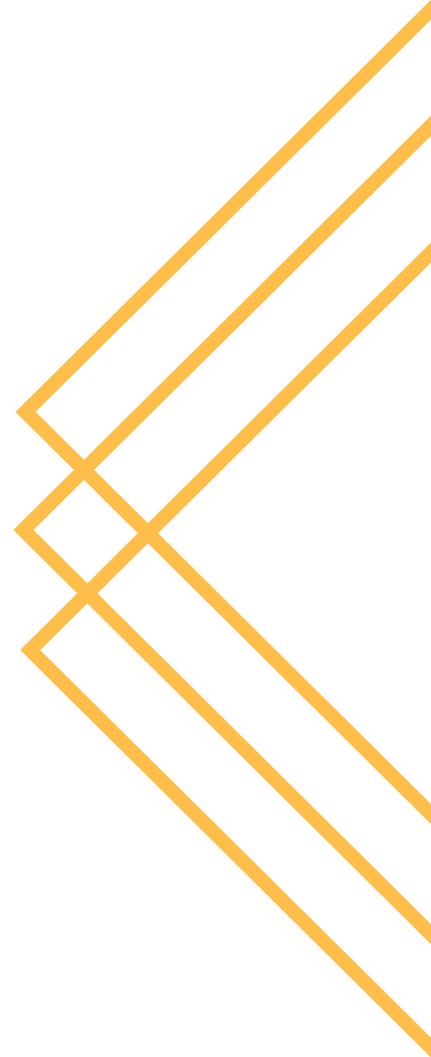
Humbly sitting and assisting others heal from severe trauma, **Ernie L. Vecchio** has spent his career understanding the human psyche and its response to suffering. His clients would say: *"It is sad that someone has to miss a spinal cord or be amputated to wake up to the value of their inner life!"* Today, Ernie offers evidence that these shared inner journeys had a common theme. If brought into our awareness, these insights offer context and a deeper meaning to being human. His book *The Soul's Intent* introduces us to the nonlocal wisdom of 'soul' as witness. He states: *"Many of us forget that this intelligence is available all the time. We just have to give it station in our lives. It isn't a question IF humans suffer, it's a matter of HOW."* Many teachers are implying that humanity is cleansing and suffering itself awake to the present moment. The reality is that most of us will never have a context for this possibility unless we go looking for it.





Camino Del Alma

The *Camino Del Alma* or **Way of the Soul** is a pilgrimage that will follow the southern leg of the American Discovery Trail starting from Lewes, Beach, Delaware on March 11, 2018 and finishing in California on March 11, 2019. Touching thirteen States this inaugural event is a State by State invitation to hikers, cyclists, or anyone interested in covering their State's *portion of the route* for spiritual retreat and growth. Pilgrims can join founder, trauma psychologist, author, and wisdom teacher Ernie L. Vecchio who plans to do 3500+ miles of the trail. Hoping to start a conversation about the importance on having an inner life, Vecchio will be encouraging seekers to ask questions about his life's work—The Soul's Intent.



Route



Adapted from <http://www.discoverytrail.org>

The American Discovery Trail (ADT) is 6,800+ miles that stretches from Cape Henlopen State Park, Delaware, to Pt. Reyes National Seashore, California. It is the first coast to coast, non-motorized trail that provides trail users the opportunity to journey into the heart of America's cultural heritage, landscape and spirit. Whether you set out for a short walk, camping excursion, or a vision quest the ADT experience is one you will not forget. The human spirit is refreshed when it comes in contact with the natural environment. Get out on the trail and rediscover yourself.

Donate to the ADT

[Pay Pal Link](#)

Press Release

Camino del Alma 'Way of the Soul' Coast to Coast Pilgrimage

MARCH 11, 2018. A pilgrimage is often a time of personal reflection and transformation that allows one to seek meaning and purpose in their life. The choice of taking time away from the 'noise' of daily living for spiritual reasons can be enlightening and rewarding. Though the *Camino Del Alma* or **Way of the Soul** inaugural pilgrimage is not a journey of sacred or religious significance, it is an east to west open-ended undertaking where spiritual seekers are encouraged to ponder their lives. Joining them on the path is its founder trauma psychologist, author, and wisdom teacher Ernie L. Vecchio. *"Accessing the soul's intelligence guarantees we are navigating the human experience with feeling and integrity versus simply following the ego's directions. There is no better way to feel our soul's presence than hiking or bicycling in nature."* Vecchio says.

Vecchio will arrive in Lewes Beach, Delaware at the Cape Henlopen State Park on March 11, 2018 with the intent of hiking 3500+ miles across the country. Hiking and biking through thirteen States of the American Discovery Trail he will arrive in California on March 11, 2019. His message: *"When we lose the confidence of our inner voice, we live in fear of it,"* he said. *"I can't think of a more important discussion to be having with people than giving station to their inner lives."* He's one of a growing number of people taking to the 'road less traveled' and mirroring Scott Peck's book of the same title. Peck's message was the same. It's important for human beings to look inward, something Vecchio feels we've stopped doing.

Press Release

Continued.....

While the *Camino Del Alma* or **Way of the Soul** may not have the religious meaning of Spain's Camino de Santiago, this was Vecchio's inspiration. *"Hopefully, sharing the experience across the country will start a conversation about existential meaning that is lacking for so many people."* he adds. In addition to walking for spiritual reasons, Vecchio is dedicating his cross-country quest to raising money for the Compassionate Studies Institute (CSI) an educational program that offers a psycho-spiritual understanding of the human condition. People will also be encouraged to donate to the American Discovery Trail.

Vecchio hopes to make this an annual event, inviting outdoor enthusiasts and people that love hiking to cover their State's portion of the ADT every year. *"I think it is safe to say that pilgrims occupy a special realm when they step outside the culture for a moment."* he says. *"It's one of the few places where we can make a direct human connection and be equal."*

Individuals that want to take a break from their lives are invited to hike the *Camino Del Alma* and restore balance. Vecchio emphasizes that people don't need be unhappy to take a timeout. A vacation from the mundane and routine is beneficial, even when everything is okay. *"We're happier people when we can remove ourselves from the noise of everything—inside and out,"* Vecchio says. *"You can't experience life one step at a time, the adversity of hundreds of miles, people's tenacity to endure, hear their stories, and not be a different person in the end. I think that's the point."* He said.

FAQ

1. When/Where will the pilgrimage begin?

Of course, the idea of a pilgrimage starts when one leaves their front door. Wherever you are, this is your beginning. In this instance, and similar to the Camino de Santiago in Spain, I want to earmark the American Discovery Trail as 'the way' in the United States because it runs east to west. I like the symbolism of beginning where the sun rises and hiking towards the sunset. This orients each pilgrim to reflect on change regardless of where they are on the path. A pilgrimage can be a valid spiritual endeavor even though the trail may not have religious significance. Meaningfulness in life is determined by those who seek it. This experience will be no different. Acknowledging that an inner path exists IS the beginning. The Camino Del Alma will begin in Lewes Beach, Delaware and end in Pt. Reyes National Seashore, California. The starting date for this inaugural event is set around my one-year commitment (March 11, 2018 to March 11, 2019) to complete the journey.

2. What can people expect?

The American Discovery Trail (ADT) is the only course of its kind. It covers 6,800+ miles and provides the opportunity for pilgrims to journey into the heart of America's culture, heritage, landscape, and spirit. Altogether, it connects 5 scenic, 12 historic, and 34 national recreational trails. Traversing numerous pioneer trails, it leads to 14 national parks, 16 national forests, and visits more 10,000 sites of historic, cultural and natural significance. Clearly, there is a lot to see!

FAQ

3. How much does it cost?

Of course, the only cost to hike the ADT is the blisters, sweat, sore muscles, and maybe a few tears of joy. **The ADT is free.** However, I have created a registration page to create a mailing list for those who wish to follow my work. When someone does the Camino de Santiago in Spain, they get a stamped booklet of each village they pass through proving they've done the journey. In the end, they get a certificate of completion. I thought it would be nice if pilgrims who hike the **Way of the Soul** also received proof of their experience. Registration grants access to Café Press where individuals can purchase the **Camino Del Alma** logo on a tee shirt, coffee mug, etc. to celebrate their participation. Mark-up is minimal and purchase of the items is not required.

4. Who can participate?

The pilgrimage is open to anyone who wishes to do it. Hiking and bicycling are both possible ways to cover the trail. I plan to alternate between the two depending upon how many people join me. Those portions of the trail where I am alone, I will likely alternate to rest my muscles. If pilgrims are with me, I will hike. It is my hope that each individual State (with varied distances) will have participants. For example, crossing Delaware is 45 miles, Maryland 167 miles, and West Virginia 288 miles, etc. The hope is that individual hikers will set a minimum goal for their State's portion of the ADT and join me when I am passing through. They can do a distance they are comfortable with depending on their own goal. Whatever portion they complete, they will be able to say they participated in the *Way of the Soul* pilgrimage.

FAQ

5. How can the interested hikers/bicyclists find you?

I will be live streaming or blogging the experience daily. Individuals can go to my website at www.ernievecchio.com to monitor my progress. They will have access to me on Facebook and Ramblr. Ramblr is hiking app that allows me to video, audio record, take pictures, and journal my experience in real-time. This means people can literally see where I am on the path and join me. My email is thesoulsintent@ernievecchio.com if people wish to contact me directly.

6. Why are you doing this?

In my work with severe trauma, I spent decades in the interior lives of thousands suffering with despair. So much so, that the external fell away. When I reentered the world years later and began to write, I discovered something very disturbing. The culture had lost its compass. For generations, we cultivated and held sacred the importance of having an inner life; only to find today that we've stopped teaching its value. This is most evident with those born in the last three decades.

When trauma happens we are thrust into a psychological crisis that causes us to seek a spiritual solution. Organized religion barely helps. My patients discovered when their rigid beliefs fell away, profound inner truths came through. Information they were otherwise cut-off from before, was now available. I want to remind people that this exists. Where they called it their *'invisible something else'* my writing named it *The Soul's Intent*. Imagine, this intelligence is never off, never away, and always within reach. And, we don't have to wait for a despairing moment to access it.

FAQ

7. What do you hope to accomplish?

On a professional level, I hope to establish the **Compassionate Studies Institute** and teach spiritual seekers and professional helpers The Soul's Intent. Within these teachings exist Intentional Guided Evolution and Gifted Compassionate Therapy, an all-encompassing psycho-spiritual approach to the human experience. Also, I hope to connect with 'the spirited' among us who care about our 'lost compass' problem. Hopefully, they'll be motivated to make a stand. We have forgotten that the 'spirited' in the culture have always been responsible for our ethical clarity. Today, we are spending an enormous amount of time arguing right and wrong with words like real and fake. This is not only confusing but inaccurate. Discerning true from false was never a moral problem, it is an ethical one. Ethics are at 'the heart' of the rules. Imagine that a lost compass also means lost ethics.

We have generations of young people without motivation or a clear context to solve this problem. Meanwhile, they are growing more and more apathetic. Since the last group of teenagers to 'take hold' of this passion was my own, I am choosing to ignite it in others to those who will listen. There is an alarming statistic that reflects my observation. The leading cause of death between the ages of 15-35 is suicide. The leading cause of death from 35-50 is overdose. This means we have millions and millions of Americans between 15 to 50 operating with little to no connection with their inner lives. If I can start a conversation about this issue alone, that will be accomplishment enough.

FAQ

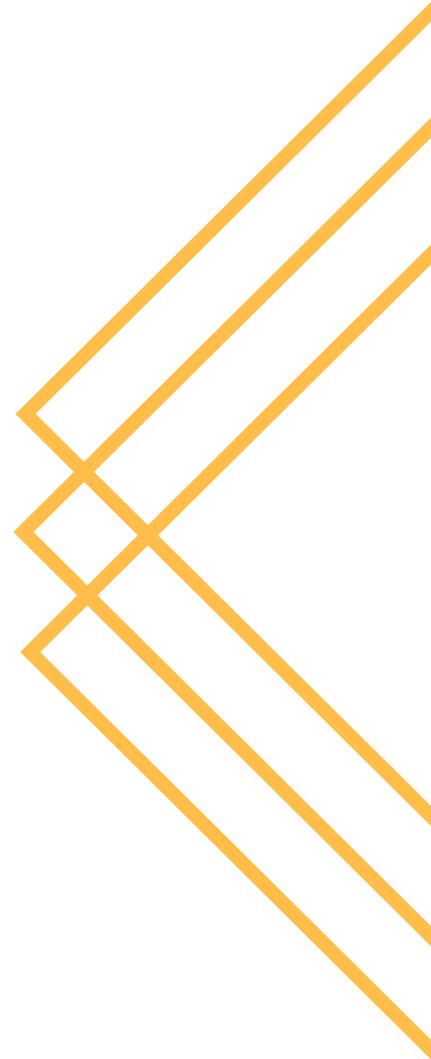
8. Why now?

It seems wisdom has an expiration date. I'm not getting any younger. It also comes with a unique dilemma. Once you have it, you can only give it away at the capacity someone can receive it. Then, it can only be given one piece of information at a time. Said differently, it's almost impossible to give wisdom away. My work with suffering has taught me much about the human condition. My patients forced me to merge the spiritual and psychological in a way that ends up being palatable for many. In fact, it answers some of life's biggest questions. It seems only logical that I try to share it with the limited time I have left.

The ***Camino Del Alma*** is my way of giving back the depth of my personal and professional journey —on a path with others. I was told by a marketing person that for \$12,000.00 dollars up front she would bring my work to the public. Also, if I didn't have at least 200,000 people following me, I shouldn't even bother to write or share my message. I jokingly asked: *"If Buddha, Jesus, or Mohammad were alive today, could they get traction in the culture without you?"* She didn't miss a beat: *"That's right. They could not!"*

Since I don't want to believe her, if not now, when?

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FAQ

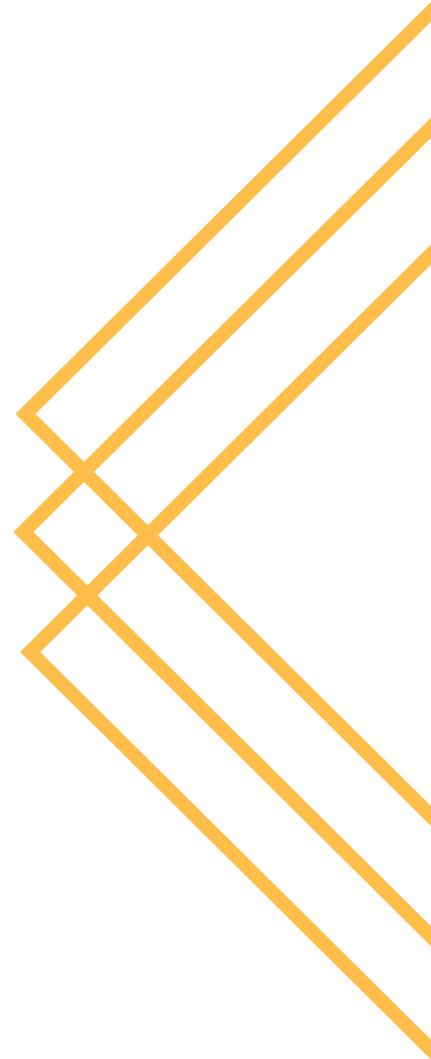
9. Who is likely to join you?

The short answer is hikers and seekers. Truly anyone and everyone who reflects about life and does so in nature. Part of my curiosity and reason for taking on such a commitment is to find out if there are more seekers in the world than not. It seems we are deficient these days of philosophers—those who naturally love wisdom. I see this as a wonderful opportunity to dialogue with people about their lives. Wisdom has taught me that life is not about finding answers as much as it is coming up with better questions. As a teacher, I look forward to the questions.

10. What is your message?

When we lose confidence in our inner voice, we live in fear of it. This is debilitating when we forget how to navigate our way out. My work with despair revealed continuity in *The Soul's Intent*. By this I mean, we all have an inner GPS. The soul observes, the human spirit motivates, the ego adapts, and the heart points the way. How can we ignore this wisdom? Imagine, this inner voice we fear is ego, only 25% of a larger navigational system but still drowns out everything. Because it lacks context the ego also lacks compassion. In short, when we observe our lives with neutrality, use our passion to grow, and move in the direction of our authentic truth--the ego has to follow.

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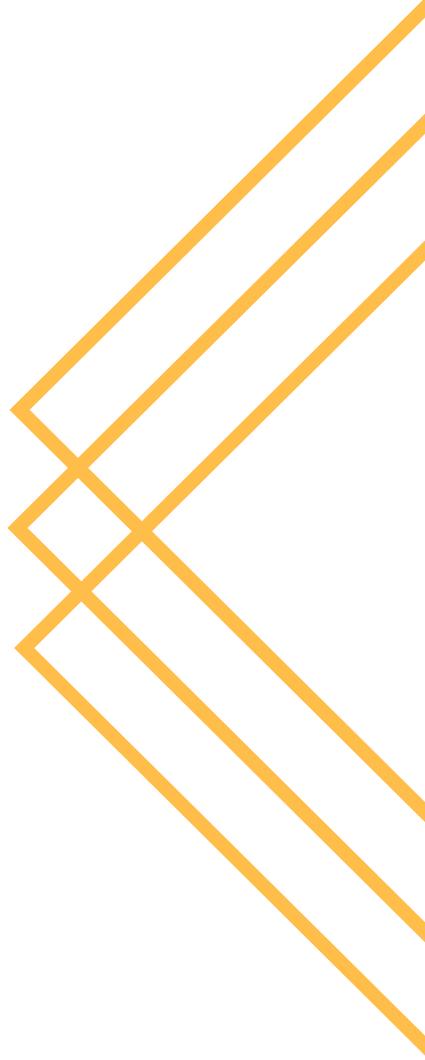


Registration



Contact

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Donation



Compassionate Studies Institute

The Compassionate Studies Institute (CSI) is an educational program uniquely focused on the 'whole' of the human condition and intended for professional helpers as well as those interested in personal and spiritual development. Those who seek CSI Certification understand the importance of an integrated philosophy of life and wish to expand their context for 'being' in the world that is intentional, guiding, and evolving. Students will learn terminology and gain a precision of understanding that brings integrity to an otherwise 'blurry' but important stage of human development. Though these teachings culminate within *The Soul's Intent* (Vecchio©2008), individuals will also gain knowledge that follows the continuum of Intentional Guided Evolution (IGE) and the heart-centered focus of Gifted Compassionate Therapy (GCT) (Vecchio©2018).

