

# Failing Forward

MBA graduate finds his calling through love of adventure

BY EDWARD PISHIYSKI ('15)

**Westminster MBA graduate**  
Andrew Taylor didn't always know what he wanted to do. He went through a lot of failures and a few unsuccessful businesses before he found his true calling: guiding individuals through wilderness adventure therapy programs. Inspired by his passion for adventure, the outdoors, and helping others experience the beauty that exists around the world, Andrew is now making his dreams come true in Costa Rica as the executive director for Pure Life Aspiro.

**Why is adventure important?**  
Growing up in Salt Lake City, I was constantly exposed to adventure. It taught me discipline. I remember backpacking in the Uintas with the Boy Scouts; I remember

taking a break, getting up, walking 30 feet, and wanting to take another break.

**How did you get here?**  
I was lost in my late 20s. I had a lot of ambitions and a few failed businesses. I just didn't know quite where to land. My career path has been full of failure. Developing a career and becoming an entrepreneur did not come naturally, but I was motivated and always had this dream to make an adventure therapy program in Costa Rica. I co-founded Pure Life Aspiro to help young adults find their path.

**What is Pure Life Aspiro?**  
It's a 60- to 90-day wilderness adventure therapy program for young adults ages 18-24. Our clients suffer from depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and failure to launch. We get them out of their comfort zone and put them in a foreign environment. We challenge them with

adventure activities like waterfall rappelling, whitewater rafting, backpacking, and surfing. We pair these activities with group and individual therapy in such a way that the challenges our clients are facing in real life transfer into these activities.

**What do you do?**

I perform administrative duties, and I meet with the students every week. I teach them our curriculum: life skills workshops based a lot on my personal experiences and things that I've gone through to find my path in life. One of my favorite things to talk about is failure and how important it is. Fail fast, fail often, and fail forward.

**Why did you choose to earn your MBA at Westminster?**

It was the perfect match. There are a lot of reasons people go to graduate school: some for post-placement, some for prestige, or maybe to get a raise at their jobs. I just wanted to learn.

**What is your favorite part about the Pure Life Aspiro program?**

When someone says "I can't do it" and then he or she does. For people who don't think they can do anything, it's a big deal when they rappel a 150-foot waterfall. They start believing. We call it self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a belief in one's own abilities to overcome. That leads to self-esteem.

**What are some of your adventures?**

I've run rivers in New Zealand, South America, and Central America, as well as some of the biggest rivers in North America. The most terrifying and gratifying adventure in my life was paddling Cataract Canyon while the Colorado River was running at 55,000 cubic feet per second. **W**



## Who's this?

Andrew Taylor

## Graduated

MBA 2010

## Vocation

Executive Director,  
Pure Life Aspiro

## Residence

Costa Rica, full time

## Tallest waterfall rappelled

150 feet

## Hobby

Mastering surfing

## Rivers run

20—all over the world

## Personal mantra

**Just do stuff.** Fail and do. It will eventually get to something. The worst thing is to just sit and do nothing.

**FOLLOW THE ADVENTURE ONLINE  
AT PURELIFEADVENTURE.COM**