

Conversation with an Adventurer: Warren Miller

[Interviewed for “Spiritual Adventures in the Snow: Skiing and Snowboarding as Renewal for your Soul” © 2009 www.spiritualadventurersinthesnow.com. No portion of this may be reprinted for any reason.]

Warren Miller is an iconic figure in the world of adventures in the snow. Known as the “godfather” of action sports films, he shared the excitement of extreme athletics with the countless people who have watched his films over six decades. Many young adventurers grew up inspired by the beauty and energy Warren created on film in some of the most famous snow around the world. As the co-Founder and Director of the Warren Miller Freedom Foundation, he is continuing to inspire young people, helping them to learn to create solid economic freedom through entrepreneurship.

You spent decades documenting adventures in the snow, conveying not only amazing athletic feats, but giving the viewer a total experience of the motion, the passion and the extraordinary rush that happens when skiing or riding in these phenomenal places around the world. What “spirit” of life and sport have you sought to convey to the audience through your film shots?

I loved sharing... sharing the freedom I found in doing something I loved... whether it was stories as a kid, photos taken on scout trips... or when Ward and I were filming each other on the ski hill in Sun Valley, we had a great time making fun narrations to hide our poor photography. Honestly, what is life all about if we can't share what we have or know?

What have you noticed most about the attitude that the athletes you worked with have? Why do they seek out, live for, these adventures? What are their best characteristics?

Any challenge met, no matter how small at one's life's early years builds the confidence to attempt something a bit more of a challenge. This is important in sports, business or relationships...a successfully met challenge gains us the confidence and self esteem to face our next life's challenge. This is how we grow and become strong. Our skiers do it, the young people in our programs do it, and as they expand, they realize that they can do nearly anything. An important thing to learn!

You definitely are comfortable with challenge. Much like the way you encouraged young people to face challenges on mountain faces, you continue that today with your Freedom Foundation, which encourages young people to accept the challenge of taking an idea and creating an avenue for self-confidence and building relationships. Why is this important for young people, or really, for any of us?

It's the only way we can grow as individuals. My wife started the Warren Miller Freedom Foundation in honor of what she saw in my (and her own) career... entrepreneurship is

only successful if one is able to act and make decisions on one's feet... 'Shooting from the hip'. She is empowering young people to take the challenge of making economic freedom for themselves and for their future employees... again the value of ownership is a huge self-esteem builder... as when you run your own business, you become stronger. At the same time, there is much more to life and the freedoms achieved by developing a business in which others depend upon you, which is not understood unless experienced.

Thanks so much for your comments. What can people do to get involved in supporting the Warren Miller Freedom Foundation?

Thank you for your interest! Check out the website at www.warrenmiller.org to learn more about us and get involved. The greatest help at this time is to encourage a school, YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, or other organization with a facility, access to young people, and leadership, to develop a partnership with the WMFF and open workshops in their locale. The more we can help spread this program, the greater chance we have of bringing the small business community back into strength for the next generation. Remember, the small business community is the backbone of our society...fiscally as well as ethically. When one meets the needs to run a successful business...taking care of customers, acting responsibly, etc., they do wonders for themselves spiritually as well as the community.