

# Bill Ester's Bio

Bill Ester is passionate about mountains, pianos and people. He's also fond of boats, bicycles and beaches, as well. And is an expert at helping people and companies turn setbacks into strengths, rekindle their passions, and rethink their reasons for existing.

Through his signature keynote message, Fired Up On Purpose, Bill uses his passions and his expertise to remind his audiences that:

- We need to live on purpose and with a purpose
- Wishful thinking won't work, it takes action
- It's all about teamwork
- All the hard work pays off

Bill grew up on a farm in northern Illinois along with his parents and three brothers. He attended Illinois Wesleyan University where he studied music education, piano performance and accounting (don't even ask how that came about). He met his wife, Nancy, in a piano practice room at college. When they got married, instead of going on a honeymoon they used their wedding gift money to purchase a piano. (Yes, they still have that same piano.) Bill and Nancy have three adult children.

Bill is an adventurer who has lived life to the fullest. Some of his favorite outdoor activities include climbing mountains, riding bicycles, and snorkeling coral reefs. He is the first to admit he would probably jump off a cliff if Nancy wasn't there to stop him. Some of his zaniest stunts include bicycling a hundred miles without getting off the seat (ouch!), driving from Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Seattle, Washington without sleep (he's insane!), and unintentionally plowing his 25 foot powerboat into 18 inches of water at 20 miles per hour (what an idiot!).

His careers have been as varied as his hobbies – accountant, musician, entrepreneur, other-the-road truck driver, life insurance salesman, mortgage loan officer, furniture refinisher, bicycle mechanic, house painter, corporate jet mechanic (yes, he is even licensed to work on airplanes), pizza delivery guy, Dippin' Dots franchisee, professional speaker.....

Bill knows about having a bad day. While working a part-time truck driving job, he was involved in a horrible accident that burned him quite severely...8,500 gallons of gasoline blew up and completely engulfed him. In a matter of seconds, his life was turned completely upside down and would never be the same again.

Surviving a big burn is not easy. It is just as much a mental war as a physical one. It is a head game. It is mind over matter in the purist form. And Bill chose to wrap his mind around two passions that have been a part of him since he was very young.... playing piano and climbing mountains. He used those passions to mentally work to his advantage. He so desperately wanted to climb mountains again and play the piano again, he was willing to endure physical and mental anguish beyond description.

It was over two years of surgeries, therapy, and hard work before his doctors finally cut him loose. And what he learned through that process, that he wouldn't trade for anything in the world, are insights, lessons that have guided his life ever since.

Bill directs the Milwaukee Area Burn Support Group, has been heavily involved in a summer camp for burn injured youth, is a former executive director for the Wisconsin Alliance for Fire Safety, and is an active member of the Phoenix Society – an international burn survivors' support group.