

A CONVERSATION WITH:

Dr. Andrew Mecca

Dr. Andrew Mecca is Lifeplan Institute's Chief Inspiration Officer and Co-founder. He brings a unique blend of experience, dedication, inspiration, and insights to the challenge of helping today's youth build self-esteem and reach their full potential. Andy has focused on helping kids at the grassroots level for more than 30 years. A national leader in the field of youth mentoring, he has authored several books including, *Lifeplan: Tools Every Teenager Needs to Thrive, Not Merely Survive*.

Andy served as California's Drug Czar from 1991 to 1998. He was Executive Director of the California Health Research Foundation for 13 years and was Marin County's Chief of Alcohol and Drug Services for 12 years. He also directed the Army's Drug Treatment Program in Vietnam, for which he was awarded the Bronze Star. Andy currently serves as President of the California Mentor Foundation.

For 30 years, Andy has been a substance abuse program consultant in Australia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, India, China, and the U.S. He holds a M.A. and Ph.D. in Public Health from the University of California, Berkeley.

What's a Chief Inspiration Officer?

Someone with the good fortune of having people believe in the vision they've offered. I want to inspire people to share in developing Lifeplan. Together we're creating a force for helping millions of kids that is truly without limits.

Why does Lifeplan matter?

Because every ship seeking a shore needs a compass - and Lifeplan represents that compass. It galvanizes the most effective strategy around youth development, which is mentoring. This is a plan that all young people can use to achieve their highest dreams and aspirations.

Who does Lifeplan help?

Every young person, parent, coach, and mentor who helps the young person build their life plan. As the virtual community grows, the Lifeplan culture itself will help everyone grow stronger, more capable, and more successful.

What's the coolest thing about Lifeplan?

That it's available to everyone. There are absolutely no socio-economic, spiritual, or galactic boundaries. Every young person can create a life plan and access what they need to succeed along that path. And a trained mentor can easily work with not just one, but a dozen kids. The opportunities are limitless.

What's your role?

My role is to tell the story, based on four decades of working with young people and six decades of living. Lifeplan is the culmination of my life's work.

What does Lifeplan mean to you?

I'm humbled by being part of a team that is committed to something so much larger than us as individuals. This is truly a pioneering opportunity to help young people thrive.

What's your quote?

My grandfather was my mentor and the wisest guy I've ever known. He said, "The loudest statement you can make about the world you envision is what you do in your own life." If you truly believe in kids, give them a path to success. Become a mentor.

What are going to do next?

Hug my wife of 40 years when she walks through the door, and fix her dinner. She's at the core of Lifeplan. She's my inspiration.