

Potter's Inn

A Soul Care Intensive at the Potter's Inn

A Soul Care Intensive is a private retreat where issues of faith, life, work and relationships converge for conversation, prayer and spiritual guidance. The Soul Care Intensive combines guided conversations, pastoral counseling and spiritual direction to offer the participants a blended retreat of depth, rest, evaluation and God's blessing.

During the retreat, participants are guided on a 360 degree walk around the most important issues in their lives. It is a time to evaluate the trajectory of their life and make adjustments.

Each soul care intensive is designed for each participant and they are not cookie-cutter, program driven, agenda-led experiences. The participants set the issues that will be discussed by sharing their own story, journey, struggle and issues.

These times are experiences where God's grace and healing converge offering renewed hope, spiritual passion and companionship on the journey.

Market-place and ministry-place leaders find that particular issues face in their own spheres of influence are explored giving insight into what is happening in the personal life of the leader and their hearts.

Here is a sampling of conversations we explore:

- Intimacy with
- God
- Soul Care
- Spiritual formation
- Spiritual growth
- Spiritual vitality
- Disappointment in the journey
- Desires and Longings
- Experiencing God together
- Marriage issues
- Improving communication
- Conflict styles and resolution
- Exploring Intimacy
- Separation and Divorce recovery
- Grief and loss
- Vocation as pilgrimage
- Passion and dreams
- Goals and desires
- Fulfillment and legacy
- Leadership styles and conflict
- Debriefing for Christian ministry leaders
- Missionary Debriefing

Lodging: Participants stay in a cabin at Potter's Inn at Aspen Ridge (booked separately).

Travel: Fly in/out of Colorado Springs or Denver. Potter's Inn at Aspen Ridge is 1 hour drive from COS. A car is preferred.

Meals: Participants make meals in their fully equipped cabins. Groceries are not included.

Cost: Cost varies depending on length of the Soul Care Intensive. Please inquire.

Schedule: Participants meet for 3 hours in the morning with afternoons and evenings free. Time is needed to process the morning conversation and to read materials that will be provided.

What is being shared about the *Potter's Inn*...

The heart of the matter - that's what Steve Smith reliably gets to. It's where longings meet transcendence, where pain meets hope. Let Steve guide you through conversations into what life is really about, into the heart of the matter.

Dr. Larry Crabb, author, counselor, speaker

Each of our Board members and their spouses were deeply affected as Steve led us through "Return of the Prodigal". Steve's sensitive and loving approach to this diverse group of seasoned business and ministry professionals was eminently appropriate and greatly appreciated. His rich insights into the Scriptures along with his personal transparency had a powerful impact. I highly recommend Steve to anyone seeking a fresh, meaningful time of growth and renewal, led by a gifted servant who has experienced the Potter's Hands.

**Larry McCooey
President, The Alliance Development Fund, Inc.**

You two are masters at bringing people to a place where they are free to open their lives to each other. Some of the testimonies around that room were amazing. One needs some distance to appreciate how rich they were.

Gail MacDonald, author and speaker

We were moved, melted and molded some more at the Potter's Inn. Recent seismic events in our lives had left us broken, shattered and in much need of mending. This weekend was yet another God-ordained step in the healing process. Steve and Gwen ably apply the only balm that heals: the love of the Father through the indwelling life of Jesus Christ.

Alice and Jim Ferguson, Arizona

The Potter's Inn weekend was sheer refreshment! The small group setting on Friday and Saturday followed by exciting worship and powerful preaching on Sunday was the perfect combination. The Potter's Inn weekend was exactly what I and the Arlington family needed. Thanks for your transparency, creativity, and spiritual energy. The small group setting allowed for personal reflection and healing and Sunday worship for celebration of God's faithfulness. The Arlington family will be reaping the spiritual benefits for years to come.

Steve Gandy, Arlington Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC

Having just returned from our first Potter's Inn Weekend, we can enthusiastically endorse this special ministry as very unique and rare among Christian conference experiences. Steve and Gwen Smith have wonderful hearts of compassion that enables them to communicate the message of God's love in a way that affirms and restores his audience. Their capacity for connecting with and caring for their listeners facilitates an openness that is both healing and restorative. The experience of a Potter's Inn Weekend is a guarantee of spiritual renewal and blessing for those that attend!

Mike and Susan Gardner, Calvary Church, Charlotte, NC

The Potter's Inn created an environment that was conducive to addressing the emotional and spiritual stress that can result being involved in ministry. The theme of the strong hand and the loving hand of God working the clay of our lives resonated with our staff, particularly those who have been on the potter's wheel for many years. The way that Steve and Gwen invested personally by getting to know our staff made it seem like we were hearing from one of our own members, rather than an outside speaker. The sense of renewal and closeness among our staff at the end of the two days was apparent to all.—

Pat Stewart, CEO, Charlotte Eagles, Mission Athletes International

I have personally experienced the ministry of Steve Smith in my own life and development and have found it to be most helpful and encouraging. He not only has the ability to address men's issues from a very biblical vantage point but also keen insight into where people are at in their 'spiritual journey'. He is a valuable resource for the Kingdom of God.

**Steve Sonderman, Men's Ministry Pastor, Elmbrook Church,
Author of 'How to Build a Life Changing Men's Ministry'.**

My time at Potter's Inn was restorative and rejuvenating. I came expecting the indescribable beauty of the Colorado Rockies (I after all live in this beautiful state), I did not come expecting the trail of prayer, the challenge to rest and rethink how I live my life, and the love lavished on me by Steve and Gwen. The beauty nourished, the prayer brought me back to the feet of my Father, the challenge opened my heart to remember in all of the busyness of life and ministry there is really only one option for fulfillment, and the lavishing love escorted me into the healing of my heart.

-- Sharon Hersh, author and speaker

As long as our culture continues to live at break-neck speeds, ignoring God's command to enter his rest, we will continue to live with our souls empty, our lives having little eternal impact, and our desire for contentment elusive. The ministry of Potter's Inn stands out as a beacon to those who want to get off the hamster wheel and learn more meaningful, sustainable ways of living. The value of Potter's Inn cannot be overstated in our culture today. For more than 4 years now, I have intimately observed the dramatic change in people's lives as they have entered into a time of reflection and spiritual renewal at Potter's Inn as Steve & Gwen have debriefed many of our missionaries. When God's servants, like Steve & Gwen, who are so well versed in the gyrations of the soul are able to create a process of renewal like they have at Potter's Inn, the results are astonishing. When such people and processes are applied in a beautiful, natural setting like Aspen Ridge the impact is even greater. Thank you for considering how you may enhance the astonishing renewal we are seeing at Potter's Inn by making Aspen Ridge even more conducive to God's restorative purposes.

—Dr. Steve Sweatman, Mission Training International

Thanks for the incredible spiritual adventure you led us on this weekend. It was one of the most significant experiences in 15 years of ministry for me. Why? It was raw life-on-life honesty dealing with the issues men face—whether in vocational ministry or marketplace ministry—because it illustrated for me Christ's identification with the woundedness of our deep heart! I valued so much doing it with exemplary men such as you to lead us, and for the transparency and desperation of the men who climbed the summit together. May "the Journey" truly be symbolic of our spiritual conquest and ascent individually and collectively!

-- Warren Frisen, Compassion International

Like many men, the lure of a successful career kept my motor going. I cared deeply about the image that I projected as a pastor, but neglected my heart; the wellspring of life. Through the course of the retreat, I realized that I had many doubts in my heart about who I really was and whether or not I had the stuff it takes to make it in my career. I not only didn't know what was in my heart, I didn't even know where my heart was. Thanks to my expert guide in Steve, I began to realize that more than anything, to succeed as a husband and as a dad - the most important roles in my life - I needed to live from my heart again. A weekend in the wilderness refreshed my soul, allowed me to find the heart that had been lost for so long, helped me to regain needed balance in my life, and reminded me that I am God's beloved; his masterpiece created to do the good things He planned for me long ago.

—Dave Roddy, Pennsylvania

Our times of solitude and times of community fed into each other in a unique way to further explore the soul issues. WE needed the quiet times to hear what God was saying apart from all the distractions of everyday life; and we needed the community time with Steve and Gwen to help shape what we needed to be examining during our solitude times. The resources (books and reading) that Potter's Inn gave to us during our alone times were incredibly beneficial and we would not have found those on our own pondering. Having a place to come to from out of town automatically removed us from all distractions that was needed to do the work we did during that week of intensive with Potter's Inn. The blending of Scripture, life story telling and reflection, worship and music, soul food and laughter; tears of grief and hope; God's creation in nature; communion; and solitude time – all created a safe and holy place for God to do his work in our hearts. As long term workers overseas, we have been so thankful for the passion God has given us for the nations, and yet the fuel tank of our hearts was on empty. Taking the risk and the time to come away for our week intensive has impacted/still impacting all areas of our life – our marriage, our calling and vocation, our parenting, and most importantly our relationship with our Father. Our week with Potter's Inn was one of the most significant, sobering, and life-giving weeks in our marriage and in my life

.—Will and Susan, Central Asia

“My husband and I attended our first Potter's Inn retreat in October 2000. We fondly refer to that weekend as the rebirthing of our marriage, in the purest sense-- a weekend that saved our marriage. We were the typical dechurched couple, two kids, two budding careers, spinning out of control on the hamster wheel of life. We thought we knew what success looked like but as we lived through that weekend we realized that we were so far off the mark. Our marriage was in trouble, we were living in denial and so desperate for a break through.....something to rescue our family. Throughout the retreat we learned about Soul Care and our need to experience God's love below the water line. We learned how to sit quietly and listen to the voice of our Heavenly Father. We learned how to experience God's beauty by getting out in nature. We learned how to have real community by “quaking” together – truly a life changing mountain top experience.

We know first hand the value of the Potter's Inn ministry. We have seen many lives transformed including our own. There's a huge need in our culture today to hear the message of Soul Care and Spiritual Transformation. To date we are not aware of another ministry creating life change in the retreat format like Potter's Inn. God is using Steve and Gwen to fulfill His purpose and to share His great love story—

--Fran and Mike Helpingstine, Chapel Hill, NC