



Sharon Wood

Mother, Mentor, Mountaineer and Guide

Sharon Wood holds the distinction of being the first North American woman to summit Mount Everest, the highest mountain in the world.

Born in Halifax, Sharon grew up in Vancouver, British Columbia and moved to the Canadian Rockies at seventeen. She soon signed up for a rock climbing course, and at the age of eighteen began her career as a climbing instructor. Sharon Wood earned her Climbing Guide status, then began working six months of each year as a helicopter ski guide. For the remaining six months the mountaineer engaged in her passion - climbing the highest mountains she could find.

On May 20, 1986 Sharon reached the summit of Mount Everest. "It was the accumulated investment of epics and failures that I celebrated, cherished and drew from that got us down that night," reflects Sharon. For this achievement and many others, she received the inaugural Tenzing Norgay Award as "Professional Mountaineer of the Year" from the American Alpine Club and the Explorers' Club of New York.

Recognition of her achievements also includes an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Calgary and a Meritorious Service Medal from the Governor General of Canada. Now settled in the Canadian Rockies at Canmore, Alberta, Sharon Wood continues climbing as well as raising her children and speaking about her adventures at presentations across North America.

After Everest she had moved on to other adventures. Much in demand as a public speaker, she travels North America sharing her experiences and her approach to risk.

Sharon explained her motives in a recent interview. "The constants that I have strived to maintain through all of these things is ...the steep learning curve, the intensity, perhaps a certain degree of risk....and tremendous adventure....and that ongoing, never ending quest for self knowledge."

Sharon has co-led a number of fund raising expeditions with Rudy Massimo. Together, they have raised funds for Outward Bound Canada. Sharon brings a wealth of guiding and leadership experience to Rudy Massimo & Associates.