

Sherpas - the unknown people

What exactly is a Sherpa? Most people don't know and most have never even heard of the word Sherpa. Well, Sherpas are natives of Nepal and are remarkable guides for mountaineers who trek up the mountains of the Himalayan mountain range. They are Buddhists.

About one third of the Sherpas who live in Nepal, live in Terai, a low, damp, hot area which harvests crops such as sugar cane and rice. (Most of the people in Terai are not Sherpa though.) Some Sherpas have carefully made their living by farming. Their main crop is potatoes, but they also grow rutabagas and other crops.

One job Sherpas do is working on the great flanks of Mount Everest. In 1991 an unique expedition called 1991 Sherpa Everest Expedition brought Sherpas to the summit of Mount Everest, carrying the pride of the people. They are a hard working, happy, and dedicated people who can be counted on in difficult situations.

An ethnic enclave of 35,000 Buddhists living mainly in the Hindu kingdom of Nepal, the Sherpas are well-known as high-altitude porters for mountain expeditions and guides. Until Westerners created a job market in the early 1900's, Sherpas never climbed mountains. Since the kingdom of Nepal opened its borders in 1949, Sherpas culture has been tested. The economy has been restructured by mountaineering and commercail trekking. Forests have been denuded for visitor's campfires. Gore-tex parkas have replaced chubas, traditional robes, and Snickers bars have become as common as yak butter.

We Sherpas have long respected our mountain environment, because of all that it provides us. The mountains deliver us our water, with which we irrigate our fields. The pastures produce grass and fodder for our livestock, and medicinal plants for curing our bodies. And the cliffs and high valleys offer refuge for spiritual practice, for wonder and reflection. Indeed, the mountains are where our livelihoods, and our legends, were born.

My climb of Everest really began years ago, when I was eighteen. An Indian expedition came through Darjeeling en route to the mountain, and I asked my father to help enlist me on the team. He told me that he climbed so that we wouldn't have to. That was my first obstacle, and the path to finding those footsteps took me through college in America, to the tops of smaller peaks, and by way of my father's death, then my mother's death. Each of these trials prepared me, I learned, for the challenges that confronted me on Everest.

My father showed me the path to the summit of Mt. Everest [Chomolungma], and I followed in his footsteps. But he also knew that I would have to find my own way, that I would have to climb the mountain myself. Only when I reached the summit did I fully understand this, and I understood him, too, in a way I had not before. Indeed, as I gazed across Nepal's fertile valleys and Tibet's wind-swept plateau, I felt my father there behind me, off to the side where a patch of rocks meets the snow, just below the summit. He told me he was pleased that I had climbed Everest, and that he knew I would be the son to do so. Later, my uncle informed me that this wish was exactly what Tenzing had shared with him, in confidence, years before.

* ³You can't see the entire world from the top of Everest,² my father had told me after his successful 1953 climb. ³The view from there only reminds you how much more of the world there is to see and learn from." Indeed, what I learned most from both my father and the mountain was respect. They both demanded it, and when I see climbers flaunting that respect, displaying arrogance in the lap of their great teacher, I feel they are putting themselves at great risk.

During six previous attempts to climb Chomolungma, my father retreated not in defeat, but in reverence and humility. He told me that he was able to reach her summit in 1953 as a visitor on pilgrimage -- only by virtue of respect for the deities who inhabit the mountain and her foothills. Sherpas feel that some of the many deaths on Mt. Everest can be attributed to a lack of respect, and to improper motivation when climbing the mountain. My father has asked me to continue the tradition of honor and homage to the Himalaya, and all mountains, for we

will we be protected only if we carry genuine respect in our hearts.

The goddess who resides on Everest also resided in my father's heart, throughout all seven of his attempts on the mountain. Clearly, she was blessing him when he reached the summit, in 1953, as she was me in 1996. After our climbs, we have continued to pray to her, thanking her for granting us safe passage, invoking her for continuing protection, and asking that she bless us with understanding and compassion.

The understanding that my father gained from the mountains -- a message that much of the world didn't want to hear -- was that it didn't matter who actually placed their foot on the summit first. My father and Hillary were joined by a common rope, and neither could have made the climb alone. But mainly, the argument of who was first is unfair to the selfless spirit of mountaineering, and it defiles the goddess of Everest, for the mountains are no place for politics and ego.

It is said that a millenium ago, the great yogi-saint Milarepa warned against defiling or polluting the surroundings of Chomolungma -- Mt. Everest. In the 16th century the people living on her flanks forgot these words, and a period of hardship and suffering befell them. I believe that the recent increase in Himalayan climbing deaths, and disastrous avalanches and landslides, are symptoms of a new era of pollution and defilement. We must reclaim respect for the mountains and the fragile environment that surrounds them.

What is the meaning of the few brief moments in human history when people have stood atop Everest or other high peaks? Its meaning depends on the motivation of the person standing there. Those who are prepared to truly see and listen will find something different, and greater, than what they were seeking. They will find that the spirit and blessings of the mountains can be found, ultimately, within all of us.

For me, mountain climbing is an intensely personal experience, it is the intersection of my heritage with my spiritual belief and practice. Some climbers are driven by personal achievement and the desire for a trophy. Others are drawn to the mountains by something more mysterious, something more deeply personal, and I feel that these climbers are sharing my pilgrimage. We are companions on the same journey, compelled not only by a desire for self-understanding, but by a need to experience and understand the nature of the world.

I felt a tremendous sense of achievement when I reached the summit, but I also found it to be only a first step, a beginning. This was a daunting thought, but only until I realized that Everest was a *necessary* first step, the step that freed me from my ambitions and my inadequacies, launching me onto the path of mindfulness and understanding.

-- Jamling Tenzing Norgay

Introduction to Jamling Tenzing Norgay

In 1953, humankind reached a new pinnacle when Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay ascended to the summit of 29,035-foot Mount Everest. These two men faced the grueling hardships during this inaugural expedition, pushing the envelope for humanity without the aid of modern equipment and setting unprecedented standards for the climbing world. These pioneering adventurers explored the thresholds of physical limitations when they scaled the icy slopes of Everest, encountering some of the most severe weather conditions on Earth.

The saga, however, does not end here. Both the suffering and the triumph of these two men have inspired dozens of today's climbers to summit Mount Everest. Defying Mother Nature has resulted in many tragic incidents, but the tales of personal accomplishment and survival in the face of ultimate adversity reflect the intensity and drive that are deeply rooted in the human spirit.

Jamling Tenzing Norgay, the "Son of the Everest Pioneer," did not idle in the shadow of paternal legacies. He is a member of a living dynasty of climbers, with 11 of his relatives summiting Mount Everest. Jamling's spiritual journey has led him to an attachment to the Himalayan region and its jagged 8000-meter peaks. Because of his acclaimed mountaineering expertise, Jamling is a highly sought after guide who leads novices and experts alike into his hazardous domain, maintaining an ancient family profession in a modern era. Based upon his experience and reputation as a world renowned mountaineer, Jamling was also chosen as the Climbing leader of the International climbing team that created the awe-inspiring IMAX documentary film, 'Everest'. Jamling recently entered the literary world with Touching My Father's Soul, (an International Best Seller) a poignant reflection on his relationship with his father and his 1996 Everest ascent.

Physical accomplishments aside, Jamling has been instrumental in bringing much needed social services to many of the more remote Himalayan villages. His philanthropic contributions are as valued and honorable as his mountaineering endeavors. Please join me in welcoming Jamling Tenzing Norgay!

About the Speaker

Not only did Jamling Tenzing Norgay make it to the top of the world's most forbidding mountain – described by the Sherpa people as “The Mother Goddess of the World” – but he also helped capture it all on film. As the Star of Director David Breashears Imax film Everest, Norgay helped to portray not only the physical challenges of the Mountain, but also the mental and spiritual challenges faced by the climbers.

Described as the “Titanic of Documentaries,” Everest has played to sold out audiences across the country, capturing for the first time on large format film the breathtaking view from Everest's summit. Filmed during the same spring that nine people on Everest died in a sudden storm, it depicts the selflessness exhibited by Norgay and his companions in risking their own lives to save their fellow climbers.

While filming on the mountain, Jamling thought often about his father, trying to imagine what he had gone through in the early days. “ It was much harder then, “ Norgay said. “ There was no route; he and (Hillary) didn't even know if the summit was achievable. Many had failed.

On his summit day, as the younger Norgay approached “The Balcony“ (at 27,000 feet Hillary 's and his father's last camp), Norgay looked for remnants – but of course, there was nothing but snow and ice. “ I never felt so strong in my life. It was as if my father's spirit was with me,” he says, describing his conditions as he inched closer to the top. “ Just when I thought I'd never get there, I saw Ed Viesturs coming down and he said, ‘Hey, it's right there”.

Norgay recalls feeling so happy that he cried. A Buddhist, he planted a lungta (prayer flag) and photos of the Dalai Lama and his late parents in the pristine summit snow. Then, just as his father had done 43 years earlier, he left a small toy of his daughter 's and struck “the pose” – the same dignified stance his father had assumed in 1953, which had etched an indelible image in the minds of the millions who had read about it afterward.

Norgay released his new book “Touching My Father's Soul” in the spring of 2001 in San Francisco, and it has been released in 18 languages since then. His book has reached the 24 spot on the New York Times Best sellers list, and # 15 in Germany. It has been nominated for 3 awards in Canada, London and the U.S.

Today Norgay runs his adventure travel company “Tenzing Norgay Adventures” in Darjeeling, India and is often asked whether there are more big summits in his future. “I promised my wife that after Everest, I would never climb again,” says Norgay.” I will not break my word.

Forbes Magazine Article 1998

IF YOU HAD WRITTEN the movie script, it couldn't have turned out better: Jamling Tenzing Norgay, 33, son of the famous Tenzing Norgay, is retracing his father's historic steps to Mt. Everest's elusive, 29,028-foot summit. It's May 23, 1996 - just two weeks after a record nine people have been killed in the mountain's worst disaster ever.

And you know what - Jamling makes it to the top! In 1953, Miyolungsangma, the resident goddess on Everest, had granted Tenzing Norgay safe passage to the sacred summit of Everest. Now, in 1996, she grants Tenzing's son the same honor. It was the culmination of a life-long dream for Jamling. "My father discouraged his children from becoming mountaineers because it was dangerous," says Jamling today. "And he knew, since he and Edmund Hillary were the first men to reach the top of Mt. Everest. But I had dreamed of climbing Everest ever since I was a boy."

Jamling was born on April 23, 1965, in Darjeeling, India, the fourth of six children. By age six, he had already shown a penchant for peaks, scaling mountains in Sikkim with his dad.

Jamling quickly became his father's right hand man on climbs that the elder led for the Himalayan Mountain Institute. But when he shared hopes with Tenzing of someday climbing Everest, his dad expressed disappointment. "My father told us he had become a mountaineer so we wouldn't have to," says Jamling of the dangerous, age-old profession many native Sherpa people undertake to make ends meet. Still, Tenzing never actively discouraged his son from pursuing the dream.

In 1985, Jamling moved to the U.S. to attend Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, where he studied Business Administration and graduated in 1989 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. While there, he worked as a black-belt instructor in karate and Tae Kwon Do.

In 1986, the great Tenzing passed away, and Jamling began to think harder about Everest. Even though his dad had made a better life for him than most Sherpa would ever know, Jamling wasn't rich. To be a lead climber on an Everest expedition cost at least \$35,000 - more than Jamling could save from his job running Tenzing Norgay Adventures. Jamling also had responsibilities: his wife, Soyang was pregnant with daughter, Deki.

Jamling was invited on an American Everest expedition in 1995 as assistant base camp manager. But in 1995 IMAX movie Director David Breashears came to Nepal in search of participants for his Everest movie. "Jamling was perfect," says Breashears. "I was looking for a climber to define the culture of the Sherpa people. Who better than the son of the first Sherpa to climb Everest!"

The Sherpas are an ethnic group that migrated to Nepal from eastern Tibet

around 1500 AD. The word Sherpa means "eastern people." Many are farmers who grow wheat, potatoes and barley, and raise yaks. But because of generations of acclimatization, they are also well suited for high-altitude climbing, and many become mountain porters.

Jamling immediately brought spirituality to the IMAX expedition. In Kathmandu, at the beginning of the climb, he sponsored the lighting of 25,000 butter lamps in supplication to the Deities, asking for protection and success. He also gave offerings at monasteries en route to base camp.

While filming on the mountain, Jamling thought often about his dad, trying to picture what he had gone through in the early days. "It was much harder then," Jamling says. "There was no route. He and Ed didn't even know if the summit was achievable. Many had failed."

On his own summit day, as he approached the Balcony - at 27,000 feet, Hillary and his dad's last camp - Jamling looked for remnants but, of course, there was nothing but snow and ice. "I never felt so strong in my life. It was as if my father's spirit was with me," he says, describing his condition as he inched closer to the top. "Just when I thought I'd never get there, I saw Ed (Viesturs) coming down and he said, 'Hey, it's right there.'"

Jamling was so happy he cried. A buddhist, he planted a lungta (prayer flag) and photos of the Dalai Lama and his late parents in the pristine summit snow. Then, just as his dad had done 43 years earlier, he left a small toy of his daughter's and struck "the pose" - the same dignified stance his father had assumed in 1953 that had etched an indelible image in the minds of the millions who had read about it afterward.

For his achievement, Jamling received His Holiness The Dalai Lama's Award, and the prestigious National Citizen's Award from India's President. Jamling is the tenth person in the Norgay family to stand at the top of the world.

Today Jamling is hard at work promoting Everest for co-sponsor Mountain Hardwear while running his Adventure Travel Company "Tenzing Norgay Adventures" in Darjeeling. Everest was one of the highest grossing movie in North America while only playing in 32 IMAX theaters - an amazing feat. The movie has already played worldwide in almost 170 IMAX theaters.

What's next?

He now personally guides Treks and Trekking peaks in Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal.

When he is not guiding he spend a lot of time traveling around the world doing lectures as a motivational speaker to a variety of Groups, Corporations and Universities.

He also continues his involvement with the "Tenzing Norgay Climbing Club" that he started to help keep kids off the streets. Considering all his achievements, there is no doubt he will live up to his full name, Jambuling Yandak, or "world renowned."

But are there more big summits in Jamling's future? "I promised my wife that after Everest, I would never climb again," says Jamling. "I will not break my word."

*Written by Jim Clash
Forbes Magazine*

Some of the places Spoken

Royal Geographic Society , Hongkong
Deutsche Bank, Hongkong
Hongkong land, Hongkong,
Merrill Lynch, Bangkok,
Seagate, New Zealand
Tennessee Aquarium, Chattanooga, USA
Yakima Town Hall, Yakima, WA ,USA
Pierce College, Puyallup, USA
Chester Forum, Virginia, USA
Maritime Aquarium, Norwalk, USA
Northland College, Wisconsin, USA
Virginia Air & Space Center, Virginia, USA
Redwood College, Eureka, USA
Union Planters, Imax Theater, USA
Piper Jaffray US Bancorp, Minneappolis, USA
President's council, Piper Jaffray US Bancorp, Florida, USA
Memphis Museum, TN, USA
Proctor & Gamble, Ktm, Nepal
Institute of Business Management, Phoenix, AZ, USA.
Discovery Place, Charlotte, USA
American Himalayan Foundation, SFO, USA
Museum Of Science , Boston, USA
Montana State University, Montana,USA
22. Mountaineers Club, Seattle, USA
Rensselaer Union, NY, USA
Kent State University, Ohio, USA
Salem State College, MA, USA
College of the South West , NM, USA
Appalachian State University, NC, USA
International Outdoor Festival, Aspen, CO, USA
Arkansas Game & Fish Commission, AK, USA
Whitman College, Walla Walla, USA
UVA Newcomb Hall, FL,USA
Johnson C. Smith University, NC,USA
Canoecopia , WI,USA
Wisconsin Gas & Electric, Milwaukee, USA
Alliant Energy, Madison, WI, USA
Penn StateUniversity, Erie,USA
6 shows in Any Mountain Stores, USA.
Royal Colloquium, Sweden,
Coordinamento Vicentino Enti Locali per la Pace, Thiane, Italy
U.S. Senators, National Air and Space Museum, WA, DC

National Accountant Conference, Malaysia.
General Public, Kuala Lumpur
University of Seattle, WA, USA
Tibetan Folklife Festival, Salt Lake City, USA
IMAX Theatre, Duluth, USA
IMAX Theater, Victoria, Canada
Science North, IMAX Theatre, Ontario, Canada
IMAX Theatre, Toronto, Canada
IMAX Theatre, Quebec, Canada
Kramer IMAX Theatre, Regina, Canada
Old Port, IMAX Theatre, Montreal, Canada
IMAX Theatre, London, U.K.
IMAX Theatre, Scottsdale,AZ, USA
Cincinnati Museum Center
Bench Mark Outfitters, Cincinnati, OH, U.S.A.
Museum of Science, Boston, U.S.A.
Tech Museum, San Jose, CA. U.S.A.
Canadian Investor Relations Institute, Ontario, Canada
The Smithsonian Associates., Washington, D.C.
Science North Foundation, Sudbury, Ontario, Canada
Denver museum of Natural History, Denver, CO.
Raytown, MO
Claremont McKenna College, CA
Special Event at His Holiness the Dalai Lama, N.Y.
Over 40 Lectures on tour with Mountain Hardwear, U.S.A.
Over 30 Lectures with Book tour in the U.S. and Europe.
Thunderbird Business Management, Phoenix, AZ, U.S.A.
Claremont College, CA. U.S.A
Royal Geographic Society, London
Manchester University, Manchester, U.K.
Cotswold Outdoors, Nottingham, U.K.
Invensys Software systems, Bangkok,
Torello International Mountain Film Festival
Mc Data, Denver, U.S.A.
Qualcomm, San Deigo, U.S.A.
International Communication Consultancy Organization, New Delhi, India
Fidelity Investments, Bangalore, India
Tata Steel , Jharkhand, Bihar , March 2010
Nasscom , Chennai, July 2010

Television, Film, Radio and News Media

Jamling has featured extensively on television, including several interviews on CNN, two interviews on Charlie Rose Show, Good Morning America, over one hundred major radio programs in the U.S. Europe and Asia including print media such as New York Times, Chicago Tribune, U.S.A. Today, Times of India, L.A. Times, San Francisco Chronicle, South China post, Outside Magazine, Forbes Magazine, La Montagenes, Femina Magazine, National Geographic Magazine, and Publishers weekly.

Listed below are some of the documentaries and media appearance Jamling has made in the past few years:

IMAX Everest film March 1998

National Geographic documentary "Surviving Everest" celebration the 50th anniversary of the 1st Ascent of Mt. Everest premiered April 2003

National Geographic Documentary "Mission Everest" India March 2003

CNN live interview, San Francisco, April 2001

CNN live interview, Kathmandu, May 2003

CNN live interview Vancouver, April 2001

CNN "Talk Asia", with Lorraine Hahn January 2003

CNN "Business Unusual" May 2001

Good Morning America April 2003

BBC Whales, Documentary 2002

New Zealand T.V. Documentary 1998

West McLaren Mercedes Formula One documentary 2002

Live "Urban Rush" on Shaw TV, Vancouver, Canada May 2001

Live, Headline News, New Delhi, India May 2004

Live, Star News, May 2003

Charlie Rose Show, New York, April 1998, April 2003.

WGN TV Morning show.

Special Interests:

Jamling has organized over 500 students visiting the Himalayas and working on projects such as Reforestation, Clean up of trails and Everest Base Camp, Waste disposal projects in the Everest Region, water testing and other community projects.

He has also been involved in 3 expeditions on Mt. Everest and the Khumbu region in cleaning up efforts on Everest.

Jamling continues to guide treks and climbs with his Adventure travel "Tenzing Norgay Adventures" extensively in Sikkim, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Philanthropy:

Jamling is a member of the Sherpa Trust, an organization founded by his late father to assist the local people of Darjeeling, especially to help the widows and families of Sherpa climbers that have died on the mountains, with education & medical help. He continues to raise funds working closely together with the American Himalayan Foundation on some of their 120 projects in the Himalayas.

Books and publications:

<i>Touching My Father's Soul</i>	Harper Collins
<i>In my Fathers footsteps</i>	Nepal Travelers' Tales Guides
Mountains as an Existential Resource, Expression in Religion, Environment and Culture	"Ambio" A Journal of the Human Environment

Outdoor Equipment Involvement:

(Includes field testing, promotion, lectures)

Mountain Hardwear, Richmond, California, U.S.A.

Revo Sunglasses, San Jose, California, U.S.A.

Recent Presentations:

HongKong Land, Deutsche Bank, Merrill Lynch, Malaysian Institute of Accountant, Procter & Gamble, Thunderbird Business Management, IMAX, Salem State University, Penn State University, Montana State University, U.S.Bank Corp, Piper Jaffary, Seagate McData, Qualcomm and several universities, corporations and town speaker series.

AWARDS & FELICITATION:

- 1984 Pioneer award for outstanding outdoor achievement
Pathfinders Award for Solo Expedition Survival
Silver Medalist, Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme (DEAS), India
- 1985 Secretary for Pioneer activities (membership 600 students)
Gold Medalist, DEAS, His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh
- 1996 His Holiness The Dalai Lama's Award for Climbing Mt. Everest.
- 1997 National Citizens Award from the President of India.
- 2003 Everest Foundation Award "Jewels of the Nation" from the
Prime Minister of Nepal.
- 2003 Felicitation from the Nepal Mountaineering Association.
- 2003 Felicitation from the Nepal Mountaineering Federation.
- 2003 Everest Medal from the Crown Prince of Nepal
- 2003 I.M.F. Felicitation from Sir Ed Hillary.
- 2003 Award from the Malaysian 50th Anniversary committee.
- 2003 Felicitation by the Himalayan Environment Trust
- 2004 "Sikkim Samman" Award from Chief Minister of Sikkim

“TOUCHING MY FATHER’S SOUL” to “TOUCHING MY FATHER’S SOUL”

An Odyssey to the Top of Everest

An illustrated presentation by Jamling Tenzing Norgay

“I climbed Everest so that my children wouldn’t have to.”

Ever since Jamling Tenzing Norgay’s father, Tenzing Norgay, spoke these words to his son, Jamling had been seized by a passion to follow in his father’s historic footsteps — to step onto Mount Everest’s icy skin and learn the lessons she has to teach. Destiny reserves the telling of some tales for certain people. In the illustrated presentation, ***Touching My Father’s Soul – An Odyssey to the Top of Everest***,

Jamling brings to life a profound and compelling adventure, interweaving the lives of a family, a mountain and a people, and of climbers facing nearly insurmountable obstacles. It is a story of disaster, triumph, professionalism and the resilience of the human spirit. Clearly, it takes an unusual level of aspiration to simply decide to attempt Everest. To reach the summit and return safely to base camp demands extraordinary commitment and perseverance. On Everest, the stakes are high: Only one climber in seven who attempt it reaches the top. Of every five who do reach the summit, one dies trying.

The challenges are nearly overwhelming. Even veteran climbers face hypoxia (lack of oxygen — and the reduction in strength that accompanies it), altitude sickness, intestinal sickness, severe weight loss, homesickness, brutal weather conditions, recalcitrant porters, strained international group dynamic (11 teams crowded onto the mountain in 1996), and “objective dangers” such as being crushed by apartment-sized blocks of ice that litter the Khumbu Icefall, a glacier in motion.

Planning an Everest assault begins with piecing together a strategic puzzle: the pyramid of support whose foundation is balanced on the edge of an ominous, shifting glacier at 18,000 feet. Two tons of food, cooking fuel, supplemental oxygen, rope, hardware, tents — all must be carefully packed and dispatched in stages to the four high camps on the mountain. The leaders must exercise judgment, and in this case they were obliged to make sure that Sumiyo would return home safely, to have a future chance for the summit.

Within the “death zone” above 26,000 feet, a teammate or other climber in trouble puts all nearby climbers at risk. Judgment calls are difficult, and at this elevation they are downright arduous.

In ***Touching My Father's Soul – An Odyssey to the Top of Everest***, Jamling uses expedition slides to illustrate not only the organization and dynamics of the IMAX Filming team's Everest climb, but he explores the natural and human events that led to the loss of 8 climbers in one storm and 12 climbers over the season. The IMAX team responded to the tragedy skillfully and compassionately, by shifting gears and immediately dedicating all of their oxygen and resources to the rescue. Two weeks later, following intense soul searching, consultation with Jamling's family priest and study of weather conditions, they reached the top with the IMAX camera. One seldom sees such a level of organization and team effort: to film from the summit required that 11 people reach the top along with the camera, while 40 others delivered supplies and provided critical backup.

Throughout, Jamling interweaves the little known story of his father's historic first ascent in 1953, with Edmund Hillary, and shows how the mountain has changed in the past half century — and how it hasn't.

The Message

As Jamling found on Everest, in this captivating program we find more than personal triumph and family honor. We discover that climbing this mountain safely requires leadership, planning, confidence, commitment, apprenticeship, experience, humility -- all in a measured balance. For each of these attributes, Jamling provides examples of how they were used to further his team's effort, how they contributed to their safety, success and response to the tragedy.

With the right combination of attributes and proper motivation, climbers are sometimes granted a chance to step onto Everest's icy skin, and then retreat, taking with them important lessons about the human condition and what it takes to succeed. Indeed, the Sherpa people especially recognize that one can't conquer Everest, and that respect and experience are one's most essential companions. The objective is not the top of the mountain, for that would be like setting a goal of swimming to the middle of the ocean. Or, as team member Ed Viesturs put it, "Getting to the top is optional, but getting down is mandatory."

Aspiration and ambition are essential, but the mountain cannot be climbed on hopes and dreams alone. In this program, we learn about what it really takes to succeed, and we learn some of the lessons that this dangerous mountain has to teach us.

It turns out that Jamling did have to climb Everest -- in order to learn these lessons himself.