

# THE CLIMB OF MY LIFE

Kelly Perkins  
Heart Transplant Recipient & Mountain Climber

**I climb some of the most recognized peaks in the world. And when I do, I bring along climbing gear, warm clothes, food supplies, and the heart of woman I've never met beating inside my chest...**Kelly Perkins

At the age of 30, Kelly, an avid outdoors enthusiast, was diagnosed with viral cardiomyopathy, a condition that slowly destroyed her heart muscle. For more than 3 years, she lived in and out of the hospital, so frail that her husband Craig had to carry her up the stairs. In 1995 she received a heart transplant and began reclaiming her life, one mountain top at a time.

Despite the fact that no heart transplant recipient had ever climbed the peaks of some of the world's most recognized mountains, Kelly was determined to be the first to ascend these magnificent wonders while inspiring others and serving as a positive example for organ donation. Since 1996, Kelly has climbed to the peaks of many mountains, including Mount Kilimanjaro, The Matterhorn, El Capitan and Half Dome in Yosemite, CA.

The transplant did not just give Kelly a second chance at life; it also gave her a new perspective on the plight facing the millions of people worldwide that are in need of organ donors. Kelly's story is one of personal triumph that she hopes will be replicated by transplant recipients worldwide as she now fights to honor those donors and recipients that have gone on to have successful lives.

Kelly tells her amazing journey from the brink of death and despair to the thrill of scaling renowned and symbolic mountaintops in her inspirational tale of survival and triumph.

Kelly Perkins is the author of *The Climb of My Life, Scaling Mountains with a Borrowed Heart*, published in 1997 by Rowman & Littlefield. She and her husband (and climbing partner) Craig are leading crusaders for organ, blood, and tissue donation, and have been featured in media such as *NPR*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Associated Press*, *Self Magazine*, *NBC News' The Today Show*, *Oprah & Friends with Dr. Mehmet Oz*, and *ABC News' Good Morning America*. Together they founded HydraCoach, Inc., a sports/medical device company, and they live in southern California. For more information, please visit [www.theclimbofmylife.com](http://www.theclimbofmylife.com).

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