

### **Three Cups Of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote . . . One School at a Time**

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by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin

Greg Mortenson is the co-founder (with Dr. Jean Hoerni) and Executive Director of non-profit Central Asia Institute [www.ikat.org](http://www.ikat.org). Since a 1993 climb on Pakistan's K2, he has dedicated his life to promote community-based education and literacy programs, especially for girls, in remote mountain regions of Pakistan and Afghanistan. Mortenson is also founder of 'Pennies For Peace' [www.penniesforpeace.org](http://www.penniesforpeace.org) and co-author of the No. 1 New York Times best-seller, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School At A Time* (Penguin 2007) [www.threecupsoftea.com](http://www.threecupsoftea.com)

In *Three Cups Of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote . . . One School at a Time*, Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, recount the journey that led Mortenson from a failed attempt to climb Pakistan's K2, the world's second highest mountain, to successfully building schools in some of the most remote regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. By replacing guns with pencils, rhetoric with reading, Mortenson combines his background with his knowledge of the third-world to fight terrorism with books, not bombs, and successfully bring education and hope to remote villages in central Asia.

In 1993 Mortenson was descending from his failed attempt to reach the peak of K2. Exhausted and disoriented, he wandered away from his group into the most desolate area of northern Pakistan. Alone, without food, water, or shelter he eventually stumbled into an impoverished Pakistani village where he was nursed back to health.

While recovering he observed the village's 84 children sitting outdoors, scratching their lessons in the dirt with sticks. The village was so poor that it could not afford the \$1-a-day salary to hire a teacher. When he left the village, he promised that he would return to build them a school.

From that promise grew one of the most incredible humanitarian campaigns: Greg Mortenson's one-man mission to counteract extremism and terrorism by building schools—especially for girls—throughout the breeding ground of the Taliban.

In an early effort to raise money he wrote letters to 580 celebrities, businessmen, and other prominent Americans. His only reply was a \$100 cheque. Selling everything he owned, he still only raised \$2,000. But his luck began to change when a group of elementary school children in River Falls, Wisconsin, donated \$623 in pennies, inspiring adults to take his cause more seriously. Twelve years later he has built fifty-five schools.

Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin have written an account of his accomplishments in a region where Americans are feared and hated. In pursuit of his goal, Mortenson has survived kidnapping, fatwas, repeated death threats, and separations from his wife and children. Yet his success speaks for itself. This year the schools will educate 24,000 children.