



Rona Maynard
Speaker | Author | Mentor

Biography

Rona Maynard has spent her career bringing people together through stories—on the page, at the podium and at the workshop table.

With her first published story, written when she was 14 and widely anthologized in textbooks, Rona started a conversation about bullying that still brings her fan mail from young readers. She later honed her narrative skills as an award-winning journalist, a memoirist and former Editor of *Chatelaine*, where she attracted a new generation of readers to Canada's number one women's magazine and led the most ambitious rebranding in the history of an icon. Rona became known for the honesty and humour of her editorials. When she shared her history of chronic depression, responses poured in from grateful readers who found solace and hope in her story. Under Rona's leadership, *Chatelaine* won international honours for reporting, art direction, overall excellence, diversity and newsstand sales.

When Rona had fulfilled her mission for *Chatelaine* and met every benchmark of success, she stepped down to write the book her readers had been asking for: *My Mother's Daughter*, a memoir that Alice Munro has called "wonderfully honest and enthralling." Now that she has told her own story, she helps other people tell theirs. She leads a hands-on memoir workshop for writers at all levels and a companion workshop on brand building through storytelling.

Rona's narrative gifts are front and centre at the podium. In every keynote speech, she strives to do two things: strike the chord of recognition with stories, and deliver some laughs. Her favourite comic target is her own mistakes.

In a previous career as a magazine writer, Rona brought national attention to long-ignored issues that ranged from why child support goes unpaid to what's wrong with workers compensation. She contributed hundreds of articles to national magazines including *Chatelaine*, *Canadian Business*, *Maclean's*, *Today's Parent*, *Best Health* and *MORE*.

Rona's personal honours include a Woman of Distinction Award from the YWCA of Metropolitan Toronto, a Woman of Action Award from the Israel Cancer Research Fund, a Media Award from the Canadian Nurses Association, two Honourable Mentions in the National Magazine Awards and a Toastmasters Communication and Leadership Award. She holds a National Champion of Mental Health Award from the Canadian Alliance on Mental Illness and Mental Health.

Rona volunteers for the International Women's Forum and was a founding member of the advisory board for Our Sisters' Place, which assists women suffering from postpartum depression and other emotional disorders. Married to her best friend for more than 40 years, she has a son, two grandsons and a passion for road trips.