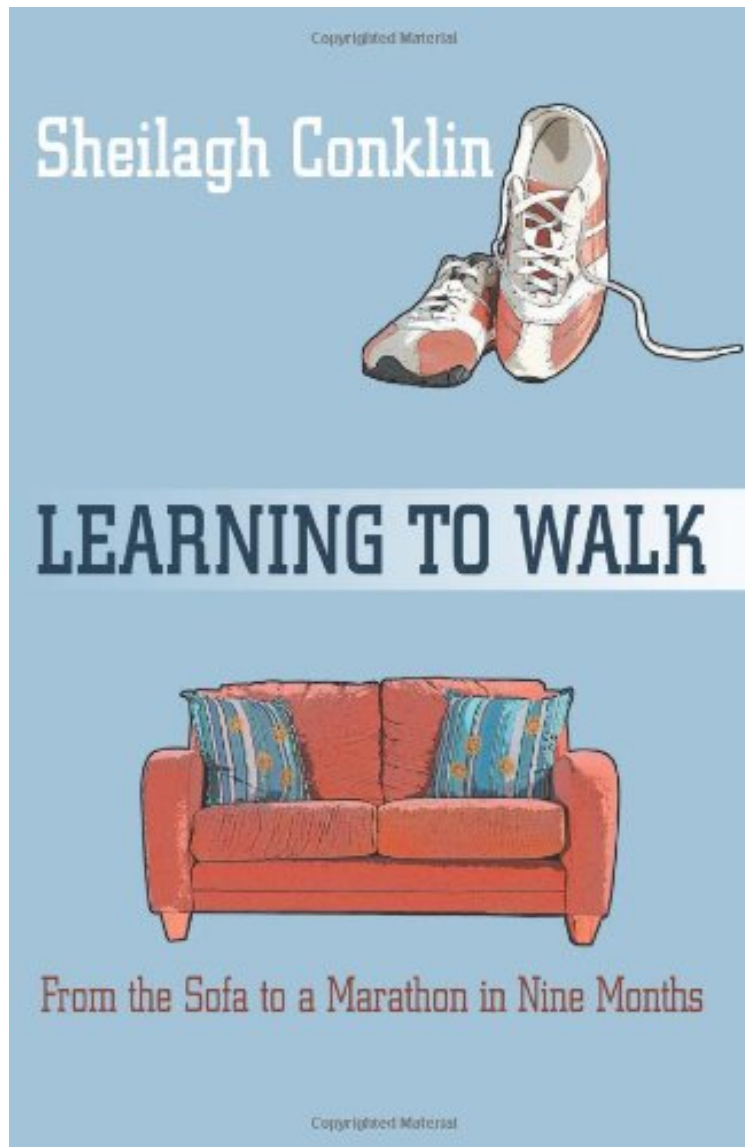


Learning To Walk: From the Sofa to a Marathon in Nine Months

Sheilagh Conklin

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Sheilagh Conklin : Learning To Walk: From the Sofa to a Marathon in Nine Months before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Learning To Walk: From the Sofa to a Marathon in Nine Months:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Adventures in Marathon WalkingBy Christine WhittingtonConklin's very entertaining and sometimes rambling book resembles a warts-and-all blog about her fairly idiosyncratic and often

ill-advised strategy for making the journey from the sofa to the marathon in nine months. The self-described "trophy wife" hopes to also lose 50 pounds along the way in the hopes of eventually ditching her industrial-sized underpants. She has no trainer and no apparent overall plan, except for not eating junk food, not eating fried food, not eating after dinner, and walking more. Almost despite her efforts, she increases her mileage (but not really enough) and succeeds in losing weight and investing in better underwear. Clearly a joiner, an extrovert, and an empathic and altruistic person, Conklin involves a huge support group and cheerleading section of family and friends. She chatters with her fellow marathon walkers and on her cell phone--I am afraid that she would end up in the bushes if she attempted that near me! She is motivated by the charitable cause for which she is walking to earn donations, which may be the secret behind her success. Almost a textbook in which NOT to do to walk a marathon (e.g. train by swimming, complete a maximum 15-mile training, compete with brand NEW running shoes (really!)), Conklin succeeds--barely--despite her hilarious missteps and ends up seriously hurting for two weeks afterwards. Along the way, she does impart a few bits of good advice, the best being the importance of making sure that all of the "engineering" works--no rubbing seams, pinching toes, chafing bra straps, etc.--by wearing one's marathon outfit for an entire day before the event. Many readers will enjoy and be inspired by Conklin's book--if she can do it, so can I! Some, however, may be discouraged by her extreme difficulties with finishing the marathon. Read Conklin's book for inspiration, then check out Dave McGovern's *The Complete Guide to Marathon Walking* for less entertaining, but more serious and practical advice.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fun read
By AmyJ
This book made me laugh, while at the same time motivating me to get up and move. I, too, am 50 lbs. overweight middle-aged. After reading Ms. Conklin's book, I have been looking for walking-friendly marathons to participate in. I think she was very correct in saying that if you sign up with someone else, you are then committed and feel less inclined to back out. Her writing style, choice of words, and honesty make for an entertaining read. The only thing that I couldn't relate to were the expensive gym memberships, swimming membership, home treadmill, etc. These opportunities would be great for training, don't get me wrong (I'm just jealous), but just aren't in everyone's budget. I didn't get discouraged though as you can walk (and therefore) train for free anywhere. Read the book!

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Hilarious but I still don't know enough to do a marathon
By jnanabay
A hilarious read. I laughed loud and often. The author takes me by surprise with her brash and unexpected observations. She reminds me of the kind of humor on a sitcom like "Roseanne." Nevertheless, if I truly want to walk a marathon, I'd need a more systematic discussion of how to prepare. I still don't know enough to go out and walk 26 miles, but I'm happy I read the book.

Sheilagh admits to being a Ding-Dong-loving, forty-five-year-old mom, 50 pounds overweight, with no significant athletic experience. But she agreed to join the Children's Tumor Foundation Marathon Team, vowing to complete the Portland Marathon on October 1, 2006, while raising funds to help end neurofibromatosis or NF, an often devastating genetic disorder. Like pregnancy, she had nine months to prepare for the marathon. Nine months to transform from a middle-aged, chubby, sedentary woman to a participant in an activity usually reserved for the elite athlete. The first trimester: an unwitting conception followed by big plans, but no outward signs of progress. The second trimester: significant changes, crazy discoveries, and the realization that she had no business doing a marathon or ever wearing a thong. The third trimester: discomfort, victories, and coming to terms with the inevitable. Labor: a grueling day-long push to finish the Portland Marathon. Quirky, humorous, and brutally honest, *Learning To Walk* takes unpredictable side trips, yet, at the same time, stays focused on a singular experience and goal--finishing the Portland Marathon. Everything that crossed Sheilagh's path is explored and nothing is off limits.

About the Author
Learning To Walk is Sheilagh Conklin's personal account of her journey to complete the Portland Marathon in 2006. Having been both a small business owner and employee of a large international corporation, although interesting, did little to help her prepare. Ms. Conklin lives in the Seattle area with her husband and children.