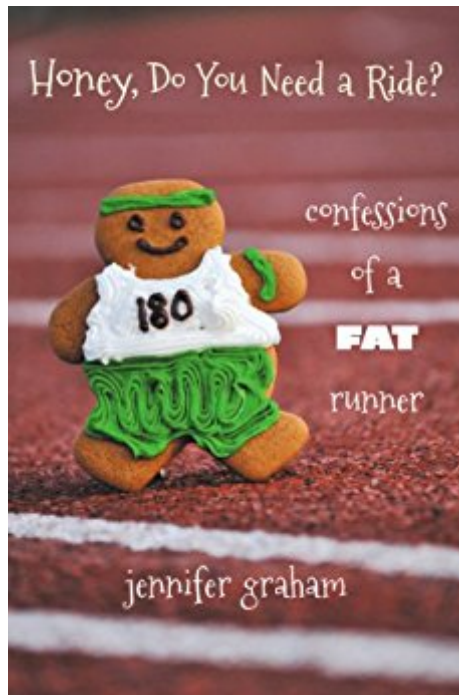




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# Honey, Do You Need A Ride? Confessions Of A Fat Runner



## Synopsis

When Michael Scott fantasized about his ideal life on "The Office," he said, "My wife is a runner and it shows." Jennifer Graham is not that wife. In fact, she's not anyone's wife anymore, and she's been running for more than 10 years without losing any weight, getting any faster or looking any more like a runner. Moreover, she looks so unlike a runner that sometimes, when she's out trotting happily on the road, a passing car slows and the driver will ask if she needs a ride home. Despite the indignity of it all, Graham believes that somewhere within her walrusy husk, there's a kernel of an athlete, if only she had a big-name coach, like, say, Alberto Salazar. Or Steve Prefontaine. Well, yeah, he's been dead for more than 35 years, but that's a minor metaphysical challenge more easily overcome than making a thick, slow mom skinny and fast. Graham, a newspaper columnist with the heart of Erma Bombeck, the soul of Anne Lamott and the girth of G.K. Chesterton, shares her experiences of growing up fat, becoming an improbable athlete in adulthood, and battling daily with a malevolent scale that mocks her physical ambitions. Coached by the spirit of the great Prefontaine, she tries to run away from a difficult divorce while training for the same half-marathon she'd run 10 years earlier. Along the way she learned some lessons that will touch anyone who ever blew up a marriage, chased a donkey, or kicked a scale. Praise for "Honey, Do You Need a Ride?" ---"Here's to the mid-pack runners, the back-of-the-pack shufflers, the start-slowly-and-taper-off champions. Just remember: there's a lot more of us than there are of them (those tall skinny Shirtless Wonders). And Jennifer Graham tells our story beautifully, with unflinching honesty and laugh-out-loud humor." --John "the Penguin" Bingham, author of *The Courage to Start*, *No Need for Speed*, and *An Accidental Athlete* Jennifer writes like an old friend speaks, in a voice you know and love. Her descriptions of running heavy, whether with added weight or added burdens, make her experience universal to runners and non-runners alike. Her overcoming spirit makes you want to cheer for her, run with her, or eat a pint of ice cream with her! Ultimately, it's not the size of the body but the size of the heart that counts. And this runner's heart is huge." --Kristin Armstrong, mother of three, Contributing Editor for *Runner's World*, and author of *Mile Markers: The 26.2 Most Important Reasons Why Women Run* Jennifer Graham may think she's different from the skinny Shirtless Wonders she sees trotting at a faster pace, but she's not. She knows that running, like a good book, can help you to live, and she's every bit as serious, dedicated, and impressive as the folks at the front of the pack. She may, however, be funnier and more fun than most of them." --Rachel Toor, author of *Personal Record: A Love Affair with Running* Jennifer

Graham is the hilarious, pee-your-pants running partner you wish you had. She's'll make you want to move to Boston just to pound out a few miles alongside her and slam down a ginormous hot-fudge sundae with her post-run. If you love running, laughing, eating, and reading in equal measure, you's'll love this book." --Eileen Button, author of *The Waiting Place: Learning to Appreciate Life's Little Delays*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Eureka! I found it! Though reading a book about running by an overweight, middle-aged, divorced mom with four kids wasn't what I expected to find. Jennifer Graham, an admitted "fat runner" (it's in the book's title and she tells the reader she's a fat runner in just about every chapter), is a surprisingly down-to-earth and very humorous writer. Sure, this is about how Jennifer's dream of running all the way around Lake Kiawah in South Carolina started her on a lifetime of enjoying the aches and pains of becoming, sloooowly, a marathoner. As we follow her struggle to lose weight, run a full mile, raise four children, somehow get through a very painful divorce...and keep two donkeys...we are treated to Jennifer's incredibly funny thoughts on her topsy-turvy life.OK. So how

did this 232 page memoir motivate me? After reading all about Jennifer's determination, despite her physical self-consciousness, I was inspired to blow the dust off of my old running shoes and try to get back in shape...taking it one day at a time and not expecting a miracle overnight. Too, I think we sort of have something in common: She was unhappy with her weight while I'm unhappy with my age. Being unhappily 68, and feeling it every morning when I wake up, keeps me fully aware of my mortality. If Jennifer could do it, so could I. Jennifer gets help along the way from her "coaches." She couldn't afford a professional trainer, so she talked two world famous runners into advising her for free. Unfortunately, both coaches, Dr. George Sheehan and Steve "Pre" Prefontaine, have been dead for quite a few years. But that didn't stop her from listening to them. As Dr. Sheehan wrote : "For every runner who tours the world running marathons, there are thousands who run to hear the leaves and listen to the rain, and look to the day when it is suddenly as easy as a bird in flight." "Pre" said, "Over the years, I've given myself a thousand reasons to keep running, but it always comes back to where it started. It comes down to self-satisfaction and a sense of achievement." Sounds pretty motivational to me. I highly recommend this book. 5 STARS

I've recently begun running, well shuffling. I'm 37, slow, out of breath, can't run a mile without stopping 3-4-5 times. I'm a 162 pound (and proud cuz it's 5 pounds less than 2 weeks ago) mother, with a c-section scar. I didn't know why a still small voice in my head has been whispering "run" to me for more than a year. 3 weeks ago I listened. I don't really know why. It is against the better judgement of any pro. I am weak, and tired. I am in pain every time I run...but I still keep going. It is becoming a part of who I am now, as well as a future as yet undiscovered me. I've been looking at every place runners converge trying to find what inspires me to contend. I've found nothing except this book. All the knowledge and instruction and even items in properly prepared inventory cannot touch what it is when the inner spirit prods you to get up and run. Not to nor from anything or any where. Not to compete. Just run. Jennifer has inspiringly laid out before us all, the not so easy explanation, as well as the encouragement, both from success and failures, to keep going. Keep running. Never stop. Become the body in motion....

First of all, I am a runner but I am not fat, so that had nothing to do with why I gave this book five stars. I was searching on-line for a good, non-fiction running book that had a different angle/perspective than other books I've read. I have only been running for a couple of years, but I found myself COMPLETELY RELATING to this woman from the very beginning. I literally NEVER played organized or team sports and when I was forced to, I was always near the last to be chosen

on a team, which made it easy for me to identify with her. I was surprised to learn about one-third of the way thru, that Jennifer Graham is from my adopted home-town and the fact that she didn't jump on the "Hate South Carolina Bandwagon" really impressed me! Yes, it is hot here. So what. I loved her determination and grit. This story was extremely motivating to me and I have already recommended it to all my running friends.

This is a great book that any runner who is overweight can related to. Highly recommended to anyone who is a runner and has struggled with weight issues.

This book started off good. It was very funny and relatable. Several times I laughed out loud. As it went on, it became boring (the author talking at length about her divorce) and strange (the author communicating with dead athletes). Still enjoyed it over all, however.

Jennifer's view of running from her perspective is perfect. Everyone who started running didn't start fast. We all have a beginning and the journey to the end is the best part. Well done.

I knew exactly what Jennifer was talking about - having endured the 'kindness' or plain disdain of others coming upon a non-athletic looking middle aged woman exercising or out running. What's sad is I know that kind of treatment was a big player in keeping me from being active when I was younger. What a shame. I'm glad Jennifer was brave enough to put her experiences on paper. Thank you, Jennifer!

It is a well-written book about Jennifer's inability to accept herself as "a real runner" through the variety of challenges that come with relationships, children and major life changes. It's an inspiring story, with lots of humor, that I think most women can relate to in terms of self-image and athleticism.

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