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When celebrated radio personality and columnist Kerre Woodham found herself forty, overweight and depressed she faced two choices - do nothing and probably not make it to fifty or do something and get her life back. Fortunately for all of us, and especially those women who like to eat and dress well, she decided to fight back. Leaving kilos of herself and two bra sizes behind 'somewhere in the Waitakeres' she embarked on a fitness and training regime, with a goal to complete the Auckland marathon. to the laugh out loud delight and support of her readers and listeners, she battled her way to fitness and achieved her goal - then decided that she didn't want to stop. With the 2008 New York marathon in her sights, Short Fat Chick documents her life changing decision to get fit and stay fit, eat what she wants and still wear a size 12 dress. With insightful comments and fitness and training tips from her personal trainer, Gaz Brown, Kerre tells it like it is and takes the reader on a journey of self discovery and self discipline we can all admire and emulate.

Short Fat Chick to Marathon Runner Details

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Marita Hansen says

A fun read with some great Kiwi humour. I actually finished reading this book after my first marathon (in Singapore) and was surprised at how much preparation Kerre put in. No, actually, I wasn't surprised, because I'm the "she'll be right" type that turns up to things without training. I did no training for my first half marathon, and trained for a month for my first marathon. I was pretty happy with the results, but yeah, I wouldn't recommend anyone doing what I did, because I'm naughty :) Though, Kerre's book made me want to do more so that I could achieve a better time, plus I REALLY want to do the New York Marathon after reading about her experiences. It sounded like one of those fantastic lifetime experiences that you don't forget.

She has some training schedules at the back of the book for people that are interested in having a schedule (I don't like schedules, so I ignored them.) Plus, Gaz, her fitness trainer, also has an input into the book. In addition, there are a group of other people's experiences at the back, and some photos.

But, don't go into reading this book and think it's going to give you great inspiration--that should come from yourself. This book is more about Kerre's experiences. She is someone who I would never have thought would run a marathon, let alone completing two. So, if she can do it, and do it well, then why can't you? I suppose you could call that inspiration in itself.

***The best line in the book was when Kerre was about 6KM away from finishing the Auckland Marathon. She overtook some young guys. Here is what she wrote:

"Behind me I heard a groan that came deep from the soul of one of the likely lads. 'Oh *!@#,' he said. 'We've just been passed by *!@#-ing Kerre Woodham!' A bad day had just got a whole lot worse -- a gorgeous fit young thing had been left in the dust by an overweight boiler from the 'burbs. Yes! Score one for the old ladies!" (Page,76).

P.S. I do train now. I run for three hours twice a week (not always pleasant in Singapore's heat), plus do gym work and some shorter runs. My next goal is the Singapore Standard Chartered Marathon (which I think is in November of this year) as well as a 30KM run a month or so prior. I'd also love to do the Auckland Marathon (New Zealand) when I go back home.

Any Length says

A very inspirational book that had me grabbing for my running shoes. Also a good book for people who want to exercise but have been told "you'll never make if you keep enjoying good food and/or a glass of wine". If Kerre did it, so can we. Go Kerre!

Deb says

The parts of this book that were good, were really good, and funny. But they were mixed in with so many

parts that were not so good that it detracted from the flow of the story. I also found the name dropping a bit dull.

I am inspired to read more of Kerre's writing, but I felt that this book was a short story padded out to fill a book.

Lynn says

So much fun to read! I am a running walker who at 48 years old have decided to "run". First it was just a non timed fun 5k, but six months later I'm addicted and want to attempt longer runs. Reading this book (and listening to Karre's awesome narrative on Audible) is great inspiration that I can do this. I recommend this book to everyone, but especially to someone who is thinking of taking up running for the first time in their life.

Aaron D says

Heard about this book on the radio in 2013, radomly found it at Savers Second Hand shop in Upper Hutt in 2015. As a Short Fat Dude contemplating running I thought I'd give it a look. Inspired me a bit, but made me realised I still got a ways to go in my "Marathon Journey". Easy read (this is the first full book I've read in 15 years), the larger print a heaps of photos allowed me to complete this in 3 short years lol. Good to read about another side of the lady from the Radio / TV so yeah.

Vanda says

An enjoyable book telling the story of Kerre's endeavour to take on the challenge of the Auckland Marathon, and then New York marathon. Each chapter was followed by an take on her efforts by trainer Gareth Brown, which were useful. Appendix of training schedules for complete beginners to build up to a marathon look handy, but, no - I have no ambition to run a full one!

Danika says

This book did exactly what I needed it to do. I'm on a bit of a health kick (in the best way, in that I'm all excited about going running and stuff), and Kerre's story has helped buoy me a little further along.

I'm thinking about doing a 5K run in July. As in, a race. (To complete, not to win.) Who is this person I am now, I don't even know.

Also, all schools should be forced to teach kids to run BEFORE making them do a 1.6k/1mi run. I never knew that running could be fun. THAT'S YOUR FAULT, SPORTS TEACHERS.
[/irrelevancies]

Patti K says

Parts were good, a lot was dull, and a lot of just filler for the book I think. The name dropping and grand placed she toured sounded like bragging and the way it was written was unnecessary. How many times do you write 'you just have to go.....'. I finished the book after putting it down a few times.

Running Like a Girl was a much shorter read with much more helpful advice/information, and a wonderful inspiration I'd rather recommend that book instead of this one.

M says

OK - I am never, ever going to be a runner. I am more of a slow walker, 5 pound dumbbell lifter, deep breather, and also, I enjoy the occasional bike ride. But I loved this book.

I found it very inspirational. It inspired me to do a little bit more on my bike, walk a few steps more, breathe a little bit deeper, and progress to slightly heavier free weights.

Makes me want to go to the New York Marathon—just to be in the crowd. Well done Kerre.

Devi Sykes says

Loved it. Very inspiring and insightful.

Rose Neild says

Was beginning my return to running, wondering if I was up to the task I had set myself and then I re-read Kerre's book. I did laugh, took sound advice (do not run in a g string) and believed! If Kerre can do it (twice, and laughed all the way) so can I. I loved the stories from the other team members in the appendix. Marathon runners come in all shapes and sizes and are all running for their own reasons. Great fun.

Deyara says

Good read about Kerre's experiences. Didn't inspire me to do one though :P

Lindsay Eaton says

Really enjoyed this. I read it because I identified with the title - found it very motivational. Heaps of ideas about how to start running and go about training for a marathon. Good on you Kerre - you're an inspiration!!

Debbie says

Maybe I'm beginning a mid-life crisis [g:], but I feel the need for some new challenges in my life (other than parenting teenagers which is challenging enough but not in a rewarding way!) and I also feel the need to step up my exercising. And I start to wondering if I could run a marathon, and I remember that Kerre Woodham has written this book, so I get it out from the library and continue wondering while it sits on my bedside table.

And then I go and see Diana Gabaldon on her tour Down Under, and Kerre Woodham is the compere for the evening, and she really is a 'short, fat chick' (and very intelligent and very funny and a great MC) and I think, well if Kerre can do it, surely I can. So I finish the other books I was reading and I pick up Kerre's and I'm laughing out loud by the third paragraph and already starting to visualise myself running the New York Marathon!

This is a great book, It's funny and motivating and full of good advice and Kerre tells it warts and all. And she really isn't built like a runner, at all, but she runs two marathons, which is totally inspiring. But, despite how much I enjoyed this book, I have always loathed running and I know this is not going to happen for me. But, it's a great book and it has affirmed my need to do something challenging, it just won't be a marathon!

Starfire says

I *really* enjoyed reading this book - it was wonderfully light-hearted and true laugh-out-loud funny after the seriousness of Chi Running, but it was also very inspirational.

I'd never been able to run before (I've kept trying to and injuring myself), until a few months back when I discovered the Couch 2 5k programme. That got me to a point today where I can run for 30 minutes (sometimes. On a good day. If the stars are properly aligned); and I've been looking around for books on running for both technique and inspiration to help keep me going with it.

I've done a lot of distance walking as well (I took part in the Oxfam Trailwalker 100km walk, and did regular half-marathons early this year), but the idea of distance running has just never been realistic for me. After reading Kerre's book though? I have to wonder. If I can do 20 hours on my feet to walk 100km (alright, 88km then - I had to pull out early), surely I can look at a long lead-up training programme to get myself to the point where I can spend 5-6 hours on my feet to run (or more likely run-walk) a marathon? I'm now at the point where I've all-but decided that if my Trailwalker team for next year doesn't come together by mid-November, I'm going to switch focus and look at marathon training... and hey, this book has a lovely long-leadup programme at the end of it that assumes someone is starting being less of a runner than I am now, so I know it's not toooo unrealistic for me.

So yeah - there's empirical proof for you that I found the book inspirational. As for the writing itself... I really enjoyed it - at least most of it. I could have done with less of Kerre calling herself a fat cow (or other words to that effect) when she started off at the weight I'd *like* to get to as my ultimate goal weight - and she's only a couple of inches shorter than I am. But then again, she's in the world of show business, MCing and public speaking, and I guess the rules for what's "normal" and "acceptable" are different.

There were some moments in the book where I literally had tears rolling down my face at her turns of phrase

though - starting with the decal on the front cover, exhorting readers NEVER to jog in a g-string... and followed up by a solid section on why you shouldn't bang your personal trainer. My ultimate favourite, though, was from a section where she was talking about one of her long training runs in Tauranga, where she's been out for a night with the girls the evening beforehand, and she's just got back to the hotel at 1am. The hotel owners are marathon runners themselves and know the kind of thing you need for fueling up before a run, and to minimise the amount of chafing your clothes are going to cause you while you're out.

Kerre describes, "The owners had kindly given me a lift back, and as one of them had run the Comrades Marathon, they'd taken an interest in my training and offered to provide me with what I needed for the run in the morning. I shall never forget the look on a lovely English couple's faces when, just as the lift doors were closing to take us three guests up to our rooms, the manager said, "I'll have the Vaseline and the banana brought up to your room in just a few minutes."

So yes. I think the running world needs more books like this. **8/10** quite happily :-)
