

"...You too can become a triathlete...This book will help you..."

-Chrissie Wellington,
Ironman World Champion and Author



triathlon for the every woman

You Can Be a Triathlete. Yes. You.

meredith atwood

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Meredith Atwood

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Triathlon for the Every Woman: You Can Be a Triathlete. Yes. You. Meredith Atwood

Triathlon for the Every Woman is a hilarious, fun and informative read--full of expert advice, training tips, and stories to turn a tired, busy woman into a tired, busy woman TRIATHLETE--no matter her size, age or place in life. Meredith Atwood, an overweight and overworked wife, mother and attorney, went from the couch to the finish of a half Ironman triathlon in a little over a year. Her book, full of contributions from expert coaches, nutritionists and athletes, takes the reader through the disciplines of swimming, biking and running. In addition, the book includes comical accounts of battling the scale and the balancing act of training with a spouse, kids and a full-time job. The book will inspire and entertain-- and have even the busiest of women taking on the challenge of swimming, biking and running. Even for those lacking in time, motivation or hope, Triathlon for the Every Woman will turn everything around and make any woman a believer.

Triathlon for the Every Woman: You Can Be a Triathlete. Yes. You. Details

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Author : Meredith Atwood

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Anne says

Plutot developpement personnel que sportif, ce volume comprend des elements tres interessants, parfois utiles, dans une forme et un language tres accessible.

Elise says

I just love this book so much. It has always been a dream of mine to do a triathlon and I'm getting closer to it. But this book isn't about doing a triathlon, even though it totally is, it's about turning your life around in the most important way: getting your body and mind in shape in the midst of and in honor of all of the challenges of parenting, being a wife, a friend and a career woman. It's about teamwork within your family, showing your family the importance and the determination required to stay in shape and to create a healthy life. I found myself in tears at parts and laughing out loud in others. I am completely and utterly inspired to keep moving even in the hottest month of summer in India. High five.

Marissa says

Well, this book has helped me figure out that I never want to do a triathlon, so . . . there's that! Thanks, Swim Bike Mom!

On the one hand, I appreciated that this book gave me a real feel for the nitty-gritty of completing a triathlon (of a couple different lengths). I especially appreciated a feel for a beginner's training schedule, which is \$@#*ing nuts. (I mean, seriously. I also have two small kids, and while I understood Atwood's argument that having a fit, happy parent who is sometimes out training is better for kids than an out-of-shape, unhappy parent who is always around, *there are limits to that dichotomy*. This woman and her husband have like a solid month where they're racing every weekend?? Who the hell is watching their kids, and don't they miss them?? Not to get all "I didn't have kids to let other people raise them," because that's insulting to working parents, but like . . . at some point enough is enough when it's just some hobby, right?? I don't miss huge chunks of my children's lives to do a podcast or play chess.)

On the other hand, holy hell, this lady hates fatness. I should give her credit for never allowing her printed words to betray hatred of *other* fat people, but she sure hates *her own* fatness. Even when she's training hard and being more athletic than 90% of Americans, she still evinces this hatred of her body that I think would be better addressed in a therapy session than in an 11-mile run.

Another positive/negative: Atwood is very encouraging in terms of "anyone can be a triathlete," particularly focusing on people with disabilities, which is nice. On the other hand, no matter how she tries to spin it, good god, tri-ing is an expensive sport!! The clothing, the bike, the babysitters, the (multiple!) gym memberships, the glucose gels, the race registrations . . . she really tries to make it out like "oh, just skip your morning Starbucks and it's no big deal," but this is a rich person's sport. At the time of her writing, she was a lawyer and her husband was a Ph.D chemist, and they live in a pretty low cost-of-living area, so I get it, they can

afford it without much trouble. But a little awareness that they have to be in the top 3% of Americans in terms of income would've been a nice thing to admit.

Anyway. It's a weird book that definitely feels like "blogger got a book deal." The worst part of this is the shoddy editing job; I think I counted half a dozen edits I would've made just on the first two pages. The best part of this is that it feels conversational and intimate, just like most blogs do.

If you're a woman seriously considering triathlon and you've never been much of an athlete, I actually think this might help you make a decision as to whether it's a worthwhile pursuit. It certainly threw cold water on my nebulous notions that it might be a fun thing to do once.

Justine Olawsky says

I cannot say truthfully that I read every word, but I thumbed through it pretty thoroughly. I am doing my first triathlon in (gulp) less than 2 weeks. I thought that this book would give me a good overview of the whole ~~agonizing~~ ~~ordeal~~ exciting challenge. It does do that. Unfortunately, I do not think I am going to take much of the advice, just because I am not willing to invest any money and excessive training in an event I think I will only do, maybe, once a year. I am also already in pretty good shape from running.

The author's voice, which started out funny, grew quickly grating to my ears. She apparently has a blog where she writes about being a chubby, over-worked, mom triathlete, and you can really tell. There is a rash of bloggers-turned-book-authors that is spreading lately across the world of publishing. I guess there is a better chance of being published if you have built up an audience on-line; however, there is a certain ineffable vibe that seems to permeate these "mommy bloggers" writing. I dunno, maybe it's too chatty and personal for me? Reminds me of one of those great quotes I once read in a Wall Street Journal editorial and clipped to keep forever: *The therapeutic ethos of recent years has encouraged each of us to get every thought off our chest, lest we suffer from the ordeal of civility.* I need some distance, yo. I think I am just tiring of reading women who are not Jane Austen.

This could have been (and probably once was) condensed into a series of blog posts.

Libby Chmielewski says

This book was so helpful & inspiring. I was in awe of Meredith's determination throughout her entire journey. She never quit. I feel like I know her free reading the book. There was so much good insight & advice.

Elizabeth says

For woman from an everywoman, this read on the triathelte's journey into the sport doesn't come from the fitness magazine cover woman who most women can't relate. Meredith Atwood is a spirited, supportive working professional and parent who entered the multisport lifestyle in her our of shape years. She blogged for a few years about the experience before penning this comprehensive overview.

The book includes excellent discussions of each of the sports, how they work, what gear is essential, what type of people to seek out and where you can make the most impact. Because triathlon is an endurance sport, Atwood talks a lot of psychology. All humans talk themselves out of their potential. Atwood gently but firmly reinforces that we are capable of more. We can do more with our bodies than we know and how that feels from the other side. She talks about body image and self shaming and repeats over and over again to cut it out and just do.

Meredith Atwood was over 250 lbs at one point. She talks about the weight loss journey. She also speaks well to clothing and equipment brands for the starter athlete that no running or other multisport book I've ever read has done. Knowing what to Google when you're ready to splurge on expensive triathlon gear is important. The industry both men's and women's still focus on the already superfit body type.

The book concludes in her personal experiences as race reports when she's completed half and full Ironman races. The reports are well written and provide a very realistic journey of the races and what goes on in your head and with nutrition. She recounts the fear of openwater swimming and overcoming with inspiration.

I've read a bunch of triathlon and running books. Atwood's is by far the most honest, most realistic, and most accurate of the sport. I see more beginners than experts. I see more weekend warriors and recovering mom-bods. I see more struggling to overcome their fear inside and getting solid support from the women they race with than in any other aspect of women's communities and support.

Meredith Atwood is flawed and passionate and normal and weird and open and honest. Her book on triathlon is a must read for all female triathletes especially those in the beginning of their tri-journey. Her book would also be educational for the men in the sport and those who support their women in the sport who want to understand more of what goes on in women's heads.

I read the book as audio. I liked the content. The narrator sounded like she had a head cold during much of the narration. And mispronouncing Calliou will have any parent stop dead in their tracks the same with Gu gels. Even so, it's worth the time to listen on some long walks and runs if you have the itch that multisport might be something you want to explore.

Jo * Smut-Dickted * says

This might be one of my favorite books when it comes to fitness and middle age. Atwood narrates a tale here that will be familiar to so many of us - whether it is that you are an Athena (fancy way of saying more than 150lbs or so) or you are someone who did not think you could do it. She really is for the every woman. Now granted her background is athletic (more than couch potato) but it's not as if she was only a year or two out of that situation. She's got a real job and a real family and real issues. There are injuries, self doubt, and family commitments that all converge to make things not as easy as you might think. It takes dedication and perseverance and that is what I think you can get out of this book.

I've seen some reviews that say maybe this one is a bit long winded. I didn't find it so. I was utterly fascinated pretty much the whole book. The amount of detail she uses as she breakdown races made me feel like I was there with her and REALLY was motivating. There is some (there is *always* some) do as I say not as I do but it doesn't really detract. Also this book did not come across as whining and obnoxious. I've read a few lately that are similar where that tone was something I didn't really enjoy. Atwood has a coach but it grows organically and it never seems to put her up on an elite status as far as "well this book is for

everywoman who clears \$200K per year" - like another book I have been listening to.

I found her blog/website to be also very interesting. One of my biggest fears is that I'll look stupid. This is not the same as having people look at me because of my body - truth be told I'm at about 26% Body Fat and I may be carrying a few extra lbs but overall I'm happy with my weight and that's not my issue. It's more the fear of embarrassment heavy on the looking like an "ass" part of it. Just sayin'.

REALLY enjoyed this book. Felt it was worth every penny. I'll go back to it I'm sure again and again for inspiration. Outstanding!

Janelle says

This book is a training and race memoir with a bit of cheerleading thrown in. The balance between the two works for the first two-thirds of the book, and then I wanted much less of Atwood's play by plays of her races. For example, I'm not sure I cared too much about the four races she ran in the run up to her first half Ironman competition.

I don't follow Atwood's Swim Bike Mom blog, so this was my first introduction to her writing style. While I appreciate her efforts to keep it real, after 200 pages, I wanted to spend less time with Meredith being Meredith, and more time reading about... something else. (I wish I knew what that something else was.) To be fair, Atwood does a good job bringing in other voices to talk about various aspects of training and racing. However, after the experts's roundtable portion of the book, it's all Atwood, all the time, and that's when I became frustrated with the book.

I wasn't sure why I was being told the story of four races in four weekends before the big race at the end. Was the point to reiterate (again) that Atwood feels fat and uncoordinated? That she felt both prepared and unprepared for the upcoming competition? To hear yet another tale of panic in the water or an argument with her spouse? It was more of the same, without adding to the overall. There's a whole interlude with an injury that felt more appropriate for the blog than the book as well. (Your mileage may vary, of course. I felt it didn't tie in as well as it could have, but it's entirely possible to enjoy the detour.)

On balance, this is probably a book I would read again, but only the first 1/2-2/3 of it. I would skip the end entirely.

Heather says

I loved this book! I laughed at some parts and cried at others and finished it feeling super motivated! It's a great mix of Atwood's personal journey with expert advice on everything from motivation to nutrition. I'm in awe of how much she accomplished in a year- going from near couch potato to finishing a half ironman in a year while working full time and raising two little kids. She is honest (and funny!) about how hard it was and how much she had to sacrifice and why it was totally worth it. If you are even thinking a tiny bit about doing a triathlon or are looking for advice about how to balance training with life-this is the book to read! I highly recommend it!

Mary says

I am familiar with Meredith Atwood. I've enjoyed reading her blog the past few years. I really fell in love with her after listening to a podcast of Another Mother Runner, June of 2013. Dimity McDowell and Sarah Bowen Shea interviewed Meredith Atwood. Her story of beginning triathlon is inspiring. I love her humor and honesty. I appreciate how this book is broken down into not only a "How to" guide but also Meredith's journey into the world of triathlon. I listened to the audio version of this book while on long runs. This book made me laugh as well as cry. I think anyone would enjoy this book not only a newbie who is considering her very first triathlon to a seasoned triathlete who is considering their first Ironman. She provides lots of valuable advice as well as fabulous quotes and motivational bits that I love. I will be picking up an actual copy of this book. Thank you Meredith for writing this book. "Just keep moving forward."

Pen says

As a baby triathlete (or pre-triathlete) I found this book funny and inspiring. Whilst not a technical "how-to" it does give you a clear idea of what to expect in triathlon and how to start preparing. It made me want to go out and do a tri right now!

One note- whilst I appreciated and recognised the battle with "the fat stranger" I found Atwood's continued referral to herself as fat throughout the book annoying/frustrating. Particularly when the pics she included show a fit not fat woman. But that's her circus and her monkeys, not mine.

All in all, a good, fun, inspirational read and I would recommend for anyone interested in developing their athletic skills, triathlons or otherwise.

Sara Caruso says

Perfect book for anyone considering getting trying a triathlon. A fun read and very inspiring.

Miranda Moberg Diaz says

I don't often really strongly recommend books, but I absolutely loved this book. LOVED IT. Meredith's snarky and comical musings on her journey as a 'fat triathlete' are so endearing. The real joy in this is Meredith's keen ability to let herself get completely vulnerable in sharing the ups and downs of her journey as a triathlete. She is beyond human and lovable and completely inspiring. Not to mention she's an amazing writer.

If you've ever even said the word triathlon to yourself, pick up this book. But beware-she'll have you believing that you too can do it, and you just might run to sign up for your first tri. You'll fall in love with her cast of characters including Coach Monster, The Expert and Mountain Goat among others and laugh along the way as you learn that yes, people do pee through their wetsuits, fall off their bikes, and get kicked in the face and keep on going. ;)

Jennifer says

I have mixed feelings about this book. Atwood's basic premise is that if she, a fat lawyer and mom, can find the time and willpower to do triathlons, anyone can . . . and should. Part of this speaks to me. As a mother of two young children, exercise is a huge key to maintaining my sanity and happiness. However, I have a hard time fully buying into the overweight, non-athlete description of herself that Atwood pitches. Atwood reveals at times that is a former competitive weightlifter. I think she mentions having done swim team as a kid, and in the midst of describing how she doesn't know how to ride a bike, she reveals she's using clipless pedals. While I am sure there are far more athletic people out there, and being overweight definitely does not help with running, Atwood sounds pretty athletic to me. I think she is exaggerating the challenge she experienced to try and appeal to the reader, but to me it felt disingenuous.

Atwood includes a section each on how to swim, how to ride a bike, and how to run. These sections are lengthy. Halfway through the bike section, I started feeling really stressed about whether I could really do a tri - it seemed so complicated. Then I read the run section. Now, I have been running for 25 years, and there's really not much to it. Running shoes a very nice to have, but not necessary. Beyond that, all you have to do is walk out the door and start moving. Meanwhile, Atwood recommends ice baths. Really? While many professional and serious amateur runners use ice baths (and I have taken a couple myself), I would not advise any new runner to take an ice bath. Atwood also suggests that it is critical to go to a running shoe store to get yourself observed on a treadmill before buying shoes. Nice to have? Yes. Necessary? Definitely not. I suspect the sections on swimming and biking were similarly over the top.

In general, Atwood is over the top. However, she is also over the top in her enthusiasm and belief that the reader will find happiness in the triathlon. Her enthusiasm is mostly encouraging and inspiring. I'm not sure I'd recommend this book to a friend, especially a male or childless friend, but I enjoyed reading it.

Jill says

I laughed out loud at the craziness of this endeavor we put ourselves through, otherwise called "triathlon." As a lawyer, mother, and new triathlete (have I really earned that title yet?), I related to virtually all of Ms. Atwood's anecdotes and frustrations. My only reservation is that the book had to end and yet my training pain continues without a current antidote!
