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## **WOULD-BE MARATHONER STRUGGLES TO OVERCOME DOUBTS**

By Krista Jahnke

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Sometimes when Lisa Newman runs, she pounds her fist into her chest and says to herself, "Come on, Newman!"

"It's really funny," she said.

It's also necessary. The fact that she is planning to run 26 miles in four weeks is ever-present. The training runs are longer and the weekly mileage greater.

One moment, Newman, a 36-year-old shift supervisor at Starbucks who has lost more than 100 pounds since late 2007, feels sure she'll complete her goal of finishing the Detroit Free Press Marathon on Oct. 18. The next, doubt and apprehension creep in. The mood changes can come mile-by-mile.

"I'll think, I have to run 26 miles?" Newman said. "Is this really a good goal for me?"

And "I'm definitely not going to set any land speed records."

She jokes but also admits she feels pressure. Her story has been public for months. What if she doesn't finish?

"I really hope to," Newman said. "I really want that medal. If I don't, I'll be mildly disappointed. Actually, I really feel like I'll finish it. But there may be some walking in the second half."

Newman finds reassurance in the fact that she's stuck to her training plan. It said to run 35 miles the week of Labor Day; she did, with a long run of 13 on the holiday.

"But then I think, 'Do they really know?'" Newman said. "They don't know my body. But I know my body, and I'm going to listen to it."

That's why that long run was only 13. She'd wanted to do nearly 15, from her house in Roseville to her mother's near 24 Mile Road. But 2 miles shy, the heat got to her, and she called her mom to pick her up.

"That one was hard on me," Newman said. "It's been getting challenging for me."

Newman described the run was a "constant mental battle." And that's become a trend: Right now, she has a goal to not dread going for a run.

"Being honest, as much as I think it's cool to run, I'm still not that person who thinks, 'Oh my god, I've got to run,'" Newman said. "There are days I'm like, 'Do I have to do this today?' And I think, 'Yeah, you've got to run 26 miles. You probably should.'"

None of this is unusual, said Luke Humphrey, a local running coach and owner of Hanson's Coaching Services. Humphrey is a seven-time marathoner with a personal best of 2:15:22.

"If you're going from the point of barely running a mile, to now running 13 miles straight, that's a big jump," Humphrey said. "Then to say, 'I have to double that?' That's a huge mental trick to try and get over, even for me. I never think of it as a full 26. That's just flat-out a long way to run."

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Humphrey urges runners to think of it in manageable parts – one 5K, then another. And after hearing about Newman's progress, he thinks she's on track to finish.

She can also find reassurance in her closet, where she keeps a pair of her old size 28 pants. Holding them to her waist, they swallow her. She now wears a 16. And, after conferring with her adviser at Henry Ford Weight Management System, Newman has a plan to slim down by 20 more pounds before the race.

Together they identified convenience foods that won't derail her diet – a small chili from Wendy's, a lettuce wrap sandwich from Jimmy John's or a 6'9inch turkey sub on whole wheat from Subway.

So the plan is there: Follow the diet and training schedule, which included an 18-miler last week and an approaching 20-miler. Then she has to work on believing that thing that she truly does know deep down.

“This is about changing my life and having a goal,” Newman said. “It's about living a healthy lifestyle and encouraging other people who feel overwhelmed that can't lose the weight. I'm going to finish this, and winning is finishing. One hundred pounds ago, this wasn't possible for me.”

*The fit offers news, trends and advice on running, yoga and other fitness pursuits every Sunday. From interesting places to run and moves that will make your abs scream to metro-area trainers, check in every week to give your workout a boost. Contact KRISTA JAHNKE: 313-222-8854 or [kjahnke@freepress.com](mailto:kjahnke@freepress.com)*

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Lisa Newman has lost over 100 pounds  
(KATHLEEN GALLIGAN/Detroit Free Press)

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