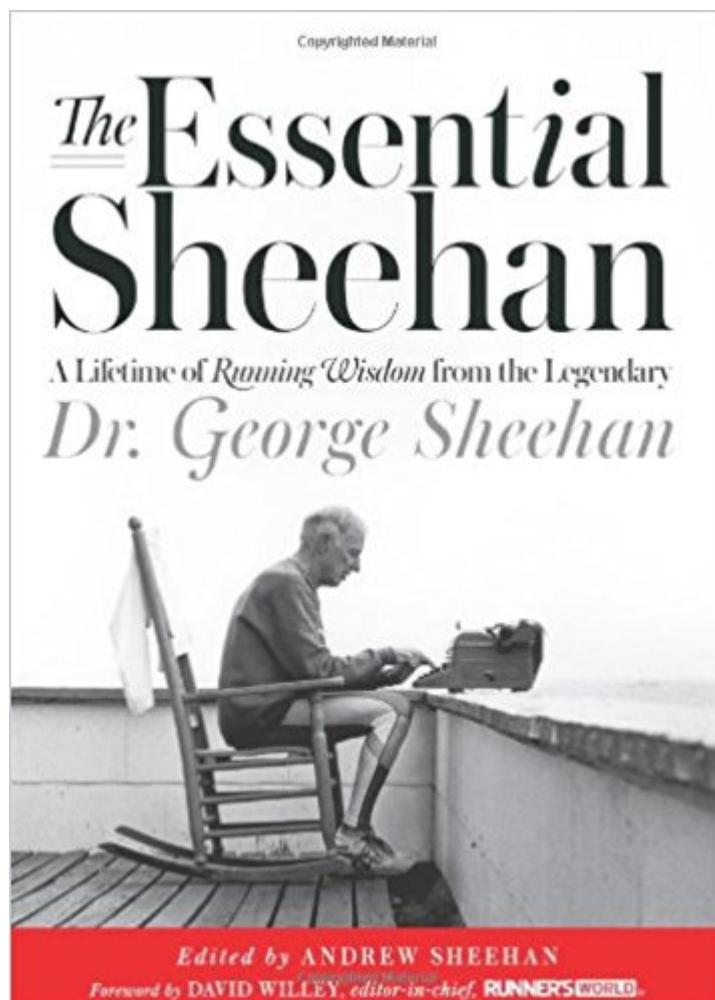


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The Essential Sheehan: A Lifetime Of Running Wisdom From The Legendary Dr. George Sheehan



Synopsis

Runners and readers whose connections to the sport date back to the 1970s surely remember Dr. George Sheehan, the New Jersey cardiologist and writer whose unique approach to the joy of exercise helped spark America's fitness boom. As a columnist for his local Red Bank Register and later as the medical editor of Runner's World and through eight bestselling books, Sheehan became, through the influence of his example and writing, the spokesperson for an entire generation of runners and the manifold benefits they discovered through the running lifestyle. Sadly, several of Sheehan's books are now out of print, and the hundreds of newspaper magazine columns he penned over the last 25 years of his life have been lost to time. Until now. *The Essential Sheehan* is a collection of the best running pieces George Sheehan wrote in his lifetime, many of which ran in Runner's World when Sheehan was a columnist there. This collection illuminates Sheehan's lasting influence on running culture and is a reintroduction of George Sheehan to a new generation of runners and readers.

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Customer Reviews

âœNovember 1 marks the 20th anniversary of Dr. George Sheehan's death and the publication of *The Essential Sheehan: A Lifetime of Running Wisdom* from the Legendary Dr. George Sheehan (Rodale). "Twenty years after George Sheehan's passing," says Mark Weinstein, executive editor, Rodale Books, "his message is as relevant and as needed as ever, if not more so. Sadly, the vast majority of his work is now out of print, so the idea behind the release of *The Essential Sheehan* (and the re-release of his classic, *Running and Being*) is to introduce his writings to a whole new

generation of readers and runners" There will be an excerpt of The Essential Sheehan in the December issue of Runner's World and there will be promotions at both the Chicago and New York marathons. • • PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY • This book is sure to inspire • • EXAMINER.COM • This is a must-have book for any runner. • • SALTMARSHRUNNING.COM • Reading this book will be a major treat • • RUN BLOG RUN • These excerpts from his books and columns can help provide the renewal many of us may be able to put to excellent use when we 'hit the wall' of life • Call it a gold-medal read. Dr. Sheehan's worlds are timeless. • • RUN BLOG RUN

DR. GEORGE SHEEHAN was a respected cardiologist, accomplished runner, and bestselling author of eight books on the importance of exercise and sport. One of the pioneers of the fitness boom of the late '70s, he was dubbed by many as the runner's "guru," but his audience encompassed all athletes. He passed away in 1993.

Dr. George Sheehan was a cardiologist, runner, writer, and philosopher. Yet no label is sufficient for him. And of all that's been written about him, I wasn't truly impressed until I read this book and heard from Dr. Sheehan himself. There is something in his writing that makes this book hard to put down. It's honest and insightful, direct and inspiring. Sheehan's voice is like Thoreau's (whom he often quotes): calm and wise, inviting us to walk along with him. In the process, he stirs our deepest desire to be great. This is the kind of writing I always look for, but seldom find. Sheehan loved running. He loved running in every season, and in any condition. He loved the soul cleansing affect it had on him, he loved the agony of pushing himself to the limit in every race, and he loved both the solitude and the camaraderie he found in running. And he wanted others to share that love. Sheehan believed that life should be simple, that people needed to free themselves from the things that squash creativity and play. Play, he believed, was serious business, and people should make time for it: "Certainly, a case can be made that the true object of life is play." For Sheehan, running was play. Throughout these writings, we hear the importance of becoming the best we can physically, mentally, and spiritually. Sheehan urges readers to be heroic, something he believed could happen through running: "This stage on which we can be bigger than life is a place where we can exhibit all that is good in us. Courage and determination, discipline and willpower, the purging of all negative impulses—we see that we are indeed whole and holy." The Essential Sheehan is a treasure for runners, especially those of us who are getting older. Here's a man who ran competitively into his 70's, who could break a five minute mile when most men his age wouldn't walk a mile, who ran a

3:01:10 marathon when he was 61. We want to hear everything he has to say. But his wisdom can be applied to any sport, or art, or even life. The writings are taken mostly from the 70's and 80's, so some of the descriptions of shoes and clothes are dated. I don't see many runners in turtle necks or leather tennis shoes today. But the writing is timeless. As David Willey writes in the introduction: "There are things from the past--even forgotten, old-school things--that still matter today....In our over-digitized and under-exercised culture, George's writing may be more urgently needed now than when it was originally published."

Don't be misled. This is not a book on the form of running, the way to run faster, longer or be the best. This is one man's philosophy, love, joy, highs and lows of his experience being a runner. If you are a runner, it is easy to relate to his view of running. Don't buy this as a training book. Buy it to experience the almost religious experience of running. For those of us that started running before the running "craze" of the late 70's and early 80's, George Sheehan was the guy who understood our passion. When your friends and relatives look at you and ask "Why do you abuse yourself like that.", Dr. Sheehan understood. Gone for more than 20 yrs. I can open this book and still feel his passion and joy. No runner from my era would ever rate this book less than 5 stars.

In Medical School, while in the Medical Library, I read the journal "The Physician and Sports Medicine," where I first 'met' Dr. Sheehan. I started running in Jr. High School, stimulated by Gerry Lindgren who was the first High School runner to beat Russian distance runners. Until Lindgren, longdistance runners, classically, weren't 'supposed' to reach their 'prime' until they were 30 years old or older. Gerry and his High School coach, Tracey Walters showed much younger runners could become world class at distances of 5,000 meters and longer. Lindgren and Walters set the stage for later world class runners including Steve Prefontaine, Frank Shorter, Alberto Salazar, and others. Sheehan taught me philosophy of running (as an aerobic exercise), and as he mentioned, a way to 'take your mind out of gear' so one could experience 'eureka' moments as one's subconscious 'solved' the problems (he referenced Archimedes and his bath). He didn't necessarily give running as a 'proprietary' therapy, rather as 'generic' therapy. Perhaps Jim Fixx, Kenneth Cooper, MD, and others might have been influenced by Sheehan.

As an injured runner, I may not be able to run the way I used to--or would like to. However, I can cozy up with Sheehan's book and enjoy being inspired. Sheehan was a well-known author of several running books. His attitude about running and life are inspirational and contagious. If you

love running--or the sport (even if you don't actively run, like me), you'll find pieces of yourself all over this book. Dig in and enjoy!

This is a classic "must read" for any runner. No one captured the easence of running and runners than George Sheehan. I've read and reread most of what he's written and continue to enjoy it. His words live on.

If you are a distance runner (good, bad or mediocre) it verbalises so much of what you might be thinking when you are in the zone. It ticked all the boxes for me regarding the positive side effects of running.

I am a 68 years old distance runner. I read running books and religious books. This is the perfect blend. Dr. Sheehan is one of the best 20th century writers I have read. His revelations on alcoholism, cancer, life, running and death have made me a better runner and a better person. I will read the book again. Please read it and get better as a person and a runner. Don't miss this gift. Incredible.

A man with deep thoughts and strong legs. This book captures many of his inspiring thoughts on running. I gave it a lower rating b/c it focuses too much time on his various philosophies. At many points it read more like a religion book than a running book. I skimmed a lot most of the second half of the book because of the philosophical musings.

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