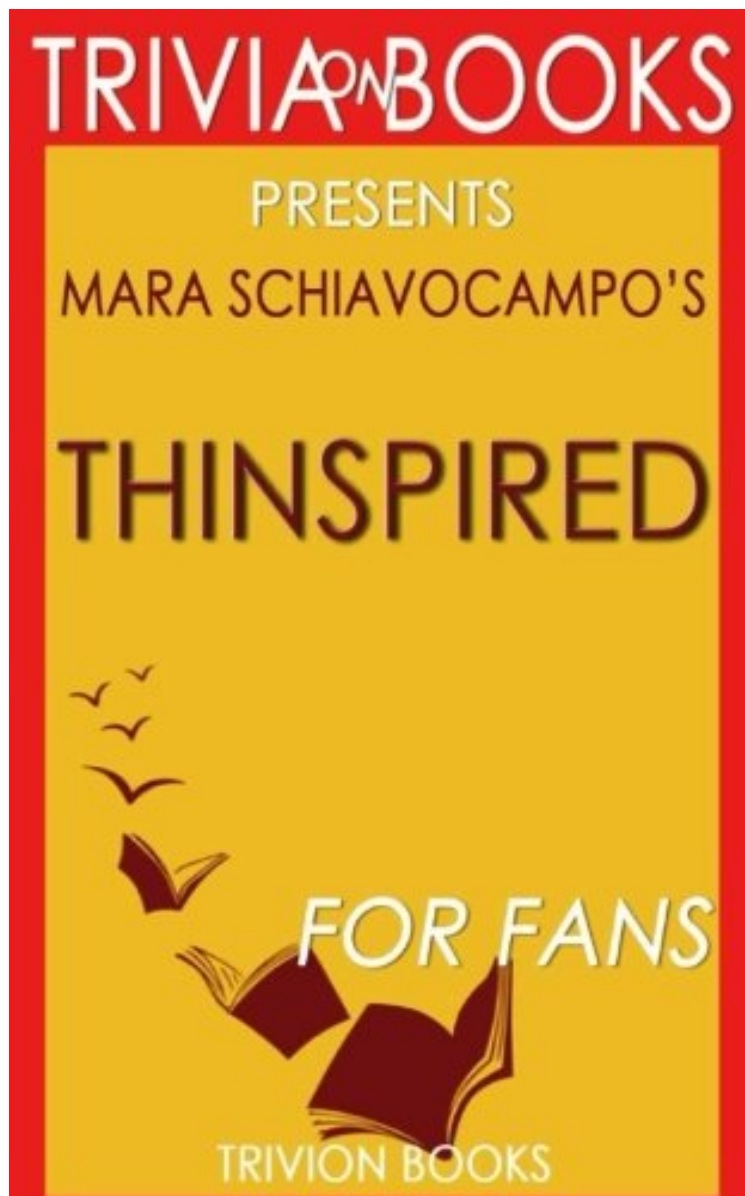


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## **Trivia: Thinspired by Mara Schiavocampo (Trivia-On-Books): How I Lost 90 Pounds -- My Plan for Lasting Weight Loss and Self-Acceptance**

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Trivia: Thinspired by Mara Schiavocampo (Trivia-On-Books): How I Lost 90 Pounds -- My Plan for Lasting Weight Loss and Self-Acceptance:

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Trivia-on-Book: Thinspired by Mara Schiavocampo Take the challenge yourself and share it with friends and family for a time of fun! Mara Schiavocampo lost around 40 kg by taking baby steps. In the process, she found a way to keep fit and thin, which worked for her. In Thinspired, she shares these nuggets of information with her readers. These include concentrating on eating healthfully, exercising regularly, getting sufficient sleep and planning your day well in advance. The only way to achieve big results is to make big changes in your lifestyle. These things can make a huge impact on diverse areas of your life, so you need both commitment and proper planning for the program to work. Schiavocampo also gave a few recipes at the end that readers might enjoy cooking and eating. You may have read the book, but not have liked it. You may have liked the book, but not be a fan. You may call yourself a fan, but few truly are. Are you a fan? Trivia-on-Books is an independently curated trivia quiz on the book for readers, students, and fans alike. Whether you're looking for new materials to the book or would like to take the challenge yourself and share it with your friends and family for a time of fun, Trivia-on-Books provides a unique approach to Thinspired by Mara Schiavocampo that is both insightful and educational! Features You'll Find Inside: 30 Multiple choice questions on the book, plots, characters and author Insightful commentary to answer every question Complementary quiz material for yourself or your reading group Results provided with scores to determine "status" Promising quality and value, come play your trivia of a favorite book!!

"... a must read" (PerezHilton.com)About the AuthorMara Schiavocampo is a two-time Emmy Award winning correspondent for Good Morning America and all other ABC News shows, who Marie Claire dubbed the next Diane Sawyer. She lives with her family in New York City.Excerpt. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.THINspired Chapter I MEMORY LANE From the Beginning All right, guys, get your violins out. My history with weight issues isnt exactly cheery. Ill start by saying this, though: I never feel sad or angry when I think of any of what Im about to share. I fully subscribe to the belief that everything Im not makes me everything I am. Its all part of what makes me, me. Like so many kids who grew up in the 1980s, I spent Saturday mornings binge-watching cartoons. At the risk of sounding like an old grump, we didnt have it as easy as kids today. There were no cartoons on demand through YouTube, or twenty-four-hour cable channels like the Cartoon Network. None of that. You pretty much had one window for all of your prime kid shows, and it was Saturday morning. My siblings and I would wake up well before my parents, rush to the family room, and camp out under the TV for hours. It was about as good as it gets. Unfortunately for me, those mornings were always bittersweet. Most weeks, at some point during our cartoon-a-thon, I would get called away. As soon as I heard my name being shouted from a neighboring room, my stomach would clench into knots. I wished I could run away and hide. I thought maybe if I ignored the call, it would go away. But that never worked. It was time for my weekly weigh-in. As part of a family members loving but misguided attempt to help me shed baby fat, each week I was summoned to stand on the scale. Lets call this family member Aunt Shirley. Aunt Shirley firmly believed that a womanor young girl, for that matterwould never be happy if she was overweight, destined to be completely ostracized from society, like a modern-day leper. Youll never have a boyfriend if youre fat, shed say. No one will want to be friends with you. Youll get picked on at school. While I was indeed a little bit chubby, I was by no means fat. At nine years old, I was your pretty typical round kid. But Aunt Shirley saw my roundness as the early stages of obesity and was determined to stop it. The weigh-ins were designed not just to monitor my weight, but also to motivate me to drop pounds. The problem is, as a kid, I really had no idea how one lost weight. Sure, I knew it had to do with food and exercise, but just in broad terms. As far as I was concerned, whether I gained or lost weight that week was due to the luck of the draw. It seemed like pure chance. So Id take a deep breath, step on the scale, and hope for the best. Some weeks I lost weight, and some weeks I gained. When the number

dropped, I felt like a huge psychological weight had been lifted as well. Aunt Shirley would smile in vindication, as proud of herself as she was of me, thinking her approach was finally working. I felt a sense of pride myself, as though I had actually accomplished something in being lucky that week. Adding to the glory of the moment was the relief that I knew I was as far as possible from my next weigh-in the following weekend. And to top it all off, I would get a reward. Are you ready for this? Perversely, my prize was often food. Aunt Shirley would proclaim that I would be allowed to have ice cream for dessert that night, or some such treat. Hows that for confusing? To put it mildly, Aunt Shirley was far from perfect. Then there were the weeks when I gained. To this day, those were among the most humiliating moments of my life. I felt an overwhelming sense of shame; guilty of a terrible sin, publicly revealed. In those minutes I felt so very small, exposed, vulnerable, and utterly worthless. All I wanted was to disappear. Aunt Shirley would look so disappointed. She would scowl and shake her head as if to say, Whats wrong with this child? Thats often when she would regale me with her predictions of a fat and lonely future. Then I would learn of the consequences. Weight loss came with a reward. Gaining led to a penalty. Most often I would have my allowance taken away for the week. But the real punishment had already taken place, in the way those moments made me feel. Aunt Shirleys weight loss plan didnt end with the scale. It was a near-constant system of pressure. At dinner, she would scold me for eating too much. Shed call me House (as in, big as a house) while I was eating, as though it was my name. Another serving, House? If she found the remnants of an unhealthy snack in the cupboard or fridge, shed bring it directly to me for a confrontation. Is this yours? shed ask. Do you know how many calories this has? Dont you know eating this stuff will make you fat? What are you thinking? She was utterly obsessed with controlling my food. There was never a reprieve, not even on Thanksgiving. Pie?! Youre having pie? In hindsight, as an adult, I can see that Aunt Shirley, being obese herself, was dealing with issues that went far beyond me. She was phenomenally undisciplined about her own food, often eating like a medieval king. It was far easier to place an iron grip on my habits than lead by example and change her own. But as a kid, I thought it was all my fault. I wore shame like a second skin. Lets just say I developed a complicated relationship with food and my weight. The thing is, I was a headstrong kid, and after a few years of this torment, I went from shame alone to resistance as well, rebelling against Aunt Shirleys oppression by secretly bingeing. This was my guerrilla warfare, undermining the obligatory diets by eating junk as often as possible, but always in private. I would tiptoe into enemy territory (the kitchen), sneak food back to the bunker (my bedroom), and launch my secret assault, scarfing down whatever I had been able to steal, from doughnuts to chips to an entire can of cake frosting all by itself, scooping it up with my bare fingers. It wasnt about the food. It was about control. Those binges became such a comfort; brief vacations from what felt like daily monitoring of every morsel I put into my mouth, most often followed by a lecture. I learned that there was only one way to really relax: Eat. A lot. Eating without being watched, monitored, or scolded was absolutely blissful. There was the pleasure of the food, the freedom from Aunt Shirleys control, and the symbolic middle finger I was extending her way. It was intoxicating, and it became my drug while I was still just a child. The weigh-ins finally stopped when I hit middle school, after I learned how a scale worked in science class. The teacher explained that a key component of the scale was the metal spring inside. That afternoon I went home, unscrewed the back of the scale, and lo and behold, a spring! I took it out and put the scale back together. It worked like a charm; when I stepped on the scale the needle didnt move the slightest bit. I might as well have been made of air. Mission accomplished! That Saturday during my weigh-in, Aunt Shirley looked perplexed, but she let me off the hook. Much to my great relief, she never got around to buying another scale. By the time I graduated from high school, I was a size 14. Not large by any stretch; in fact, thats the size of the average American woman today. But at five feet three, I was definitely plus-sized, and by no means thin. Aunt Shirleys harassment continued until the moment I left for college, as did my bingeing. Its no wonder I went clear across the country for school. When I arrived at the University of California from Maryland, I quickly learned theres no better motivation to get in shape than living someplace where the sun shines every day! I wanted to wear shorts and tank tops year-round, just like the other girls. Aunt Shirley wasnt around, so there was really no reason to binge. I had no one to rebel against. Plus, I was having a ball. Who needs to self-medicate when youre living with all of your best girlfriends on one of the most beautiful college campuses in the country, going to class fifteen hours a week and partying all the time? I started eating less and less. I exercised. I lost twenty-five pounds and slipped into single-digit sizes. I was surprised by how easy it was. Ive beat this thing, I thought, dusting my hands off, inner demons vanquished. Alas, theres this funny thing about those demons: While were proclaiming victory, theyre out back doing push-ups. After graduation I landed what seemed like a dream job in New York as a reporter and anchor for a national college television network. My first on-air gig, the position came with a decent salary and lots of perks, including a seasonal allowance for clothes and makeup. It was great, except for one small thing: I had to watch myself on television. You see, for a girl like me, there are two problems with that. First, everyone looks heavier on screen. Second, most people who work in front of the camera are impossibly thin to begin with. It was like being dropped into an alternate universe where everyones smaller but youre suddenly bigger. I was totally and completely unprepared for how I would feel having to watch myself all the time. You know that feeling when someone shows you a photo of yourself, or you catch a glimpse on home video, and youre horrified? Is that what I really look like? you think to yourself. Well, I had that moment every single day. So how did I deal? I didnt. I snapped, my newly buff demons strolling right back into my

life. Within three months of getting that job, I developed a raging eating disorder, descending into my darkest period. I should have been having the time of my life: twenty-two years old; living in New York; dream job; decent salary; great boyfriend. Nothing Aunt Shirley had predicted was true. Still, I dealt with my insecurities exactly as I had at nine years old, by bingeing. But this time, I wasn't sneaking a doughnut here and there. I would consume massive quantities of junk food—burgers, pizza, chips, cupcakes, and ice cream—literally eating for hours, until I went home and fell asleep. Then I would wake up and go right back out for more. I would wander the city and eat, like a zombie. Candy bar at the corner store. Eat it while walking to the deli. Ice cream sandwich at the deli. Eat it while walking to Burger King. Sit at Burger King and eat a burger, fries, and a shake. Walk to the pizza shop. Eat a slice at the shop and get one to go. Eat, rinse, repeat. For hours. Each and every day was filled with the desire to devour. It never went away. I would tell myself not today, but the beast would say just one, and they always won the argument. I felt utterly hopeless and powerless. And the worst part was watching it all unfold on camera, as I gained weight and started to look worse and worse. I was a wreck and everyone could see it. Soon I descended into a full-blown depression. I was not well. If I wasn't working or eating, I was in bed, lights out, blinds drawn, even in the middle of the afternoon. I would lie there and pray for an accidental death, wishing I'd get hit by a car while crossing the street the next day, or some such fatal freak accident. I often fantasized about the mattress opening up and magically swallowing me whole. How lovely would it be to simply disappear? Ask me how I climbed out of that hole and I have no clear answer. But by the grace of God, slowly, gradually, I did. Progress came in tiny increments. First, I stopped getting worse. I still binged regularly, but not as often, and when I did, the episodes weren't nearly as bad. They felt more like brief periods of release than a total and complete loss of control. The moments of deep despair became less frequent, until they virtually disappeared altogether. Then light started to creep in, and the greatest gift of all emerged: optimism. I got distracted by life more interesting work, planning a wedding, renovating a home. I had things to look forward to. When I looked up, years had passed, and mercifully, I was okay. The darkness of my life gave way to dawn, then sunshine. Looking back on that time, I realize one of the worst parts of depression was that I had no idea how bad things were until I was on the other side. I didn't see how deep the hole was. Because of that, I now pay very close attention to my emotional state, always vigilant, like a night watchman. Making sure I'm feeling okay is a priority, because I never want the darkness to get a foothold again. What helps me the most with that is simply going through the motions. Fake it until you make it, as they say. I still have days where something has gotten me down, and I don't want to get out of bed. But I go through the motions, one step at a time, and that always helps. Not sometimes, always. Just get out of bed, Mara, I think. Just do that. Good girl. Now let's get dressed for the gym. You don't have to actually go. Just put your clothes on. And so forth. The routine gets me through. When it came to my body image after emerging from my depression, I was undoubtedly better, but far from fully healed. Thankfully, age and maturity brought a certain amount of acceptance and comfort in my skin, but I did in fact want to be thinner, to look and feel good. Furthermore, I wanted it to be a permanent part of my lifestyle. I was exhausted from a lifetime of dieting and thinking about food. I wanted to be healthy, and more important, sane. So over the course of the next few years, I tried lots of different things to varying degrees of success. Of course I attempted every formal diet plan; counting points and carbs, signing up for programs online, buying weeks worth of prepackaged, vacuum-sealed food. At one point I even joined a bizarre food cult requiring members to adhere to absurd food restrictions, attend fellowship meetings, and completely submit to the direction of a more advanced sponsor. While I did lose weight from time to time, nothing ever became a lifestyle. I always felt like I was sprinting through a marathon, which is completely unsustainable. At some point I'd stop running, and all of my progress would be undone. After a time, I was done with all of the gimmicks. While part of me accepted a less than perfect reality, the desire to really live a healthy life was always present, like an old sports injury. You may move through life like everyone else, but you always feel that nagging pain. I lived a double life. On the one hand, I was mature enough to realize that life's too short for self-loathing. I appreciated and loved myself, curves included. It wasn't an act, either. I really felt fabulous most days. Not only was I holding my head high as I moved through life, but since I was one of the few plus-sized women on television, I also felt a tremendous sense of pride in representing the average woman with style and poise. I took that very seriously and wore it as a badge of honor. If I walked around like a shrinking violet, ashamed of my size, what did that say about our viewers, most of whom looked more like me than anyone on television? That's not me. I wore bright colors, the highest heel I could find, and hair so big and bouncy someone once asked me if I was from Texas, which I took as a compliment! But on the other hand, I still longed for the lifestyle I so desperately craved, one where I looked and felt as good as possible. I ended up settling somewhere in the middle, between the years of radical dieting, and a miserable state of depressive binge eating. My default lifestyle became a genuine attempt to be healthy, but unknowingly going about it entirely the wrong way. I was working hard, but not smart. I ate virtually nothing but packaged food, things like frozen dinners and low-fat graham crackers. I wanted my food to be healthy, but effortless. I never cooked. I might as well have used my oven for shoe storage. If my meal wasn't packaged, it was takeout: a whole-wheat bagel at the deli, or a salad from a restaurant. I bought things that sounded healthy, like a slice of yogurt loaf, which was essentially a big ol' piece of marble swirl cake. I genuinely wanted to do what was best for me, but I didn't know how. Then there was the exercise part. Through the years, my fitness routine was as varied as my diet attempts. I went through a phase of working out to those cheesy TV fitness

shows, the ones where people who look like they stepped off the set of a soap opera hop around on the beach. I went through a Tae-Bo phase, buying up anything Billy Blanks was selling. Every now and then I would jog, but I was always more excited about whatever cute gym outfit I was wearing than the actual workout. I absolutely hated exercising. I despised it. It was like going to the doctor: you know its good for you, but it sure aint fun. Just like my diet plan, eventually my fitness routine settled into a default. While I did go to the gym, I thought I got points just for showing up. I didnt work very hard at all, most days reading Us Weekly on the elliptical for thirty minutes. If I wiped my brow it was just for effect, because I barely broke a sweat. Every once in a while Id swing by some weight machine and do a few reps. Naturally, none of that gave me the results or consistency I was looking for. Okay, so thats the sob story. Now to a happy place. Lets fast-forward to today. As I mentioned, Im currently ninety pounds lighter than my heaviest weight, and a size 6. Its the first time in my life Ive been a single-digit size, and the smallest Ive ever been. In fact, I often buy a size small, which still boggles my mind. I always think to myself, This must run big. Its taking my brain a while to catch up. For the most part, I have a great relationship with food. I eat fresh, healthy fare: mostly chicken, fish, eggs, fruits, veggies, and nuts. Generally speaking, I dont eat any flour, dairy, or grains, or drink wine (my beloved wine!). I cook 90 percent of what I eat: broiling fish, roasting chicken, and pureeing squash. I dont count anything. I dont measure portions. Im not clocking the time until my diet ends. This is not a race. Its a well-paced walk through life. I exercise every day. Not because I have to, but because I want to. I absolutely love my workouts. No, seriously. I love them. Id happily get up from my computer right now to go for a run. Oftentimes working out is the most fun Ill have all day. I have endless energy, sometimes so much so that when Im sitting in the office I feel fidgety, and start thinking to myself, Man, Id love to ditch this place for a workout. As I mentioned, I used to go to the gym just to check a box. Now I go hard. I exercise intensely, whether its Spin, running, or strength training. When Im done, Im drenched in sweat. If Im not going to work hard, I tell myself, I might as well stay home. I leave the gym feeling empowered, energized, refreshed, and always wanting more. My body has changed completely. Not just in the way I look, but in the way I feel. If I miss a workout or make a few unwise food choices, I feel it in a way that I never have before. Its like a hangover. I just feel totally blech. My body is used to clean food and lots of activity, and when I dont get it, I feel lousy. So why am I telling you all of this? Is it to flaunt my discipline and commitment to a healthy lifestyle? Hardly! Im hoping that you find it comforting and inspirational. Chances are that no matter how long youve struggled with your weight or what kind of torture youve put yourself through, Ive been there. There is no one less likely to succeed at a lifestyle overhaul than me. Im not naturally thin. I didnt grow up playing sports. I love sweets so much I have literally poured sugar down my throat. But I did it, and you can, too. You absolutely can. Believing that has to be your first change. If Im honest, I also have to admit that Im writing this for myself. Remember how in college I foolishly thought Id won the weight war, once and for all? Im much wiser now. I dont believe anyone vanquishes lifelong struggles. We all have our demons. Our best hope is to manage them. Given my history, it was really important for me to take note of my own personal journey, because I know for certain that at some point in the future I will need to refer to these lessons. I will never again be so arrogant as to believe that Im cured. Unfortunately, Aunt Shirley lives in my head as much today as she did twenty-five years ago. I just do my best to keep her quiet.