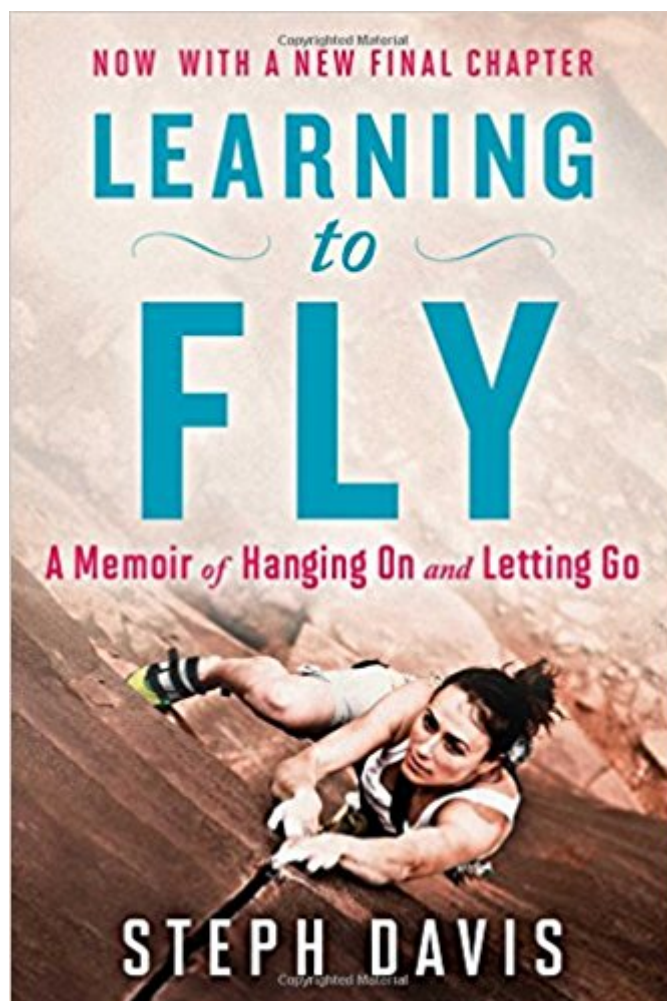


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# Learning To Fly: A Memoir Of Hanging On And Letting Go



## Synopsis

WITH A NEW EPILOGUE BY THE AUTHOR World-class free climber Steph Davis delivers a thrilling and infectiously interesting (San Francisco Book Review) memoir about rediscovering herself through love, loss, and the joy of letting go. The paperback includes a new epilogue in which Davis shares how her husband's tragic accident has affected her relationship to climbing and flying. Steph Davis is a superstar in the climbing community and has ascended some of the world's most awe-inspiring peaks, but when her husband makes a controversial climb in a national park, the media fallout and the toll it takes on her marriage suddenly leaves her without a partner, a career, a source of income... or a purpose. In the company of only her beloved dog, Fletch, Davis sets off on a search for a new identity and discovers skydiving. Falling out of an airplane is completely antithetical to the climber's control she'd practiced for so long, but she perseveres, turning each daring jump into an opportunity to fly, first as a skydiver, then as a base jumper. As she opens herself to falling, she also finds the strength to open herself to love again, even in the wake of heartbreak. And before too long, she meets someone who shares her passion for living life to the limit. With gorgeous black-and-white photos throughout, *Learning to Fly* is Davis's fascinating account of her transformation. From her early tentative skydives, to zipping-up her first wingsuit, to surviving devastating accidents against the background of breathtaking cliffs, to soaring beyond her past limits, she discovers new hope and joy in letting go.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The life of dedicated rock climber Steph Davis comes crashing down after her husband makes a

controversial climb of a popular Utah landmark. The fallout from what Davis dubs "the debacle" is extreme. She is vilified by the climbing community and the authorities, dropped by her top sponsors, and her marriage hits the rocks. Davis takes a break from her climbing career and explores a new pursuit of skydiving and, eventually, BASE jumping. Along the way, Davis finds a new sense of self and new love. Multiple photographs are interspersed throughout the text, and while it's interesting to see Davis climbing, diving, and jumping, many of the images, at least in galley proof, run off the page or are too dark to be clearly understood. Davis's heavy focus on her travails becomes somewhat exhausting, and the other characters remain two-dimensional. In addition, she devotes many pages to detailing her various jumps and climbs; this level of detail will appeal to fellow rock climbers and skydivers, but more casual memoir readers will have a harder time connecting to the content. --Eve Gaus --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Thrilling and infectiously interesting, I found this book a great read and hard to put down. What's next, Steph? Everest? (San Francisco Book Review) In becoming a skydiver and realizing how little she can control, she learns to trust herself again, lets go of her need for total self-reliance, and finds renewal. . . . Davis's philosophy of facing one's fears will strike a chord with readers. (Publishers Weekly)"[Davis] provides a gripping account of how she overcame her fears and her delight as she mastered the skills needed to skydive." (Kirkus Reviews) Learning to Fly is a fascinating read. It looks inside the mind of a unique individual. Davis lives a life very few will understand. Her willingness to push herself physically while protecting herself emotionally is on. (Rita Golden Gelman, author of Tales of a Female Nomad: Living at Large in the World) Really an inspiring book, not only to get oneself outdoors, but to realize that, even with the loss of absolutely everything that seems important, it's not only possible but imperative to move forward and continue to enjoy life. Deftly written with Davis's outward journey mirroring the journey within. --midwestmultisportlife What puts this book out front in the adventure category is that Davis doesn't bog it down with clunky 'climbing as journey' metaphors but they are in there, anyway. She just sort of lets her story shake it all loose, slowly revealing bits of herself--- sometimes she figures stuff out, sometimes she makes mistakes, but her hope is that only she gets hurt in the process. --Kyle Wagner The Denver Post blog Alive, passionate, intense . . . about everything, Steph Davis climbs vertical slopes, drops out of planes, leaps off of cliffs, and in the process teaches us all how to deal with the devastations, the fears, the challenges, and the joyous moments of life. Steph takes the reader on an emotional roller coaster full of highs, lows, and love, and it's contagious. You won't walk away unaffected. --Rita

Golden Gelman, author of Tales of a Female Nomad

I was in a bad spot, rock bottom is over used but it's the only way to describe it. S\*\*\*\*ty job that barely paid my rent, cheating girlfriend, morbidly obese, raging alcoholic. That was me, after reading this book it helped me realize that overcoming those problems was my way to happiness and I had no one to blame for my extreme depression and anger but myself. You can't control other people's actions, but you can control being around them or having them in your life and how you respond to adversity. This isn't just about skydiving (although once I lost the weight I tried it, AMAZING!!!!) it's about learning to be who you are and enjoy all that life has to offer. The ups and downs of your journey are just as important as where you end up. Fantastic read from start to finish.

I found this book to be very enjoyable yet gripping at times. There's adventure, there's humor, there's pet's, who doesn't like that ?...If you're a climber/skydiver/Base jumper I think you will enjoy this book...If not,..I think you're still in luck.This book had no trouble holding my attention. I rapidly tore through it, finding it very difficult to put down. If you're a climber or retired climber you will especially appreciate the climbing sections. While reading the free soloing sections I almost felt as if I was there....my heart would race a bit and I found my hands sweating....I'm still not sure if the anxiety I felt while reading was due to fear for her (despite her great talent and meticulous preparation) or that it just reminded me of various dicey situations I gotten my own self into on climbs years ago where I thought my doom was imminent ! ;-).. ... .. She goes in detail on her mind set and preparation for such climbs which I found great reading....and certainly could be applied to other facets of life...As for the sky diving, BASE jumping and wing suit flying ,...none of which I knew anything about,..I thought the author did a great job of explaining the process of getting involved in such endeavors. It was exciting to read as she rapidly progressed. I would think this would be great required reading for someone thinking of pursuing these sports... Wing suit videos are all over the internet,..but it was nice to read about some of the nuts and bolts and what it really takes to get going in that sport.....Again,... while reading the author does such a great job of describing everything,..you feel like you are there falling through space along with her....I bought authors earlier book, "High Infatuation" with this and recommend reading it first. This book follows it nicely. I also debated on the hardcover vs. Kindle edition...I'm glad I went with the hardcover as I found myself flipping back and forth often, especially the pictures...and it will be nice to have it on a book shelf as warrants a re-read in the future. I also found myself going to the internet to watch the authors various video's that pertained to that section of the book I was reading...While the footage is no

doubt amazing to watch, the old adage holds true..The book is better than the movie...To close, while it goes without saying that Steph Davis is a tremendously talented, hardworking, meticulous athlete,...she is also a gifted story teller.

I started Davis's book with anticipate of climbing anecdotes; epic sends and frightful epiphanies up on the wall. Childishly I felt a little bait & switch when the memoir started pivoting around skydiving and base jumping, something I personally have no interested in taking part in. I mean, after all, she's cranking a beautiful splitter on the cover, right??Come full circle and Davis's book not only sunk it's hooks into me, but it left me with days of fruitful contemplation, self-reflexion and a newfound insight into a sport/activity that I knew little about. Thankfully, those climbing stories also showed up... in spades! Oh how the old adage rings true, "don't judge a book by it's cover."If you're looking for streamline, elegant prose look elsewhere. But if you are ready to be moved by someone's personal journey about a rise from confusion and into clarity, pick this one up.

The most inspiring, heart-wrenching, candid, and touching book I have ever read. I will never forget Steph's outlook on life after reading this, probably because I'll read it 10 more times. Being a climber and an aspiring sky diver, Steph Davis is my biggest hero but not because she is so badass (because she is) but because she lives her life with such grace. I truly look up to her in every way. I really hope I get to meet her one day. Thank you for changing my life, Steph. Your memoir is a masterpiece. A perfect balance of adventure, suspense, explanation, humor, emotion, and love.

I'm not a climber or a base jumper, but I found Steph Davis's approach to life, her ways of dealing with fear, and her no-holds-barred enjoyment of the pursuits that thrill her soul, to be incredibly inspiring and helpful.

I enjoyed reading this book - even though I do not rock climb or skydive. Steph is a fascinating person who describes her extraordinary life like it is not a big deal. I liked her message about "not being able to go back" once she's jumped, and also it was interesting to read her views about death and change and fear. There are many big ideas that we can all relate to in this book, even if we do not participate in extreme sports.

I have climbed for some 40 years, a fan of Steph for 15, and was expecting a good read. But this was much more. It flows, as she opens her heart, her very soul, to the reader, who is pulled from

triumph to tragedy and back again. In the end, one feels drained, but happy, as when arriving at the chill spot after the crux of a wild climb. Can't wait for the next installment of her most adventurous life...

I really enjoyed this book. I found it at the Denver airport while I was wasting time because of a flight delay. I love that her life is so outside the box. I love the mountains but am afraid of heights so her mountain climbing, parachute flying, base jumping life style is great to read about. I get to vicariously live through her adventures. I love the way her life is simple. It's about the climb, the experiences, the challenges and being out in and on God's beautiful creation. I love that she had (has) no TV. I am sometimes guilty of watching life instead of living it. Steph has inspired me. I just turn 50 last year but I have 20 plus more years for adventure. Thanks Steph, great book. Thanks for sharing your life.

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