

Ep #160: Commitment... Even When Nobody Else Is Watching



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With Your Host

Jill Angie

[The Not Your Average Runner Podcast](#) with Jill Angie

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That's the decision. The decision isn't like, I need somebody to motivate me. If nobody else cares about what I'm doing, I'm not motivated. That's not the problem. The problem is you have to decide, am I willing to do what it takes to become a consistent exerciser or am I not willing?

Welcome to *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. If you're a woman who has never felt athletic but you still dream about becoming a runner, you are in the right place. I'm Jill Angie, a certified running and life coach and I teach women how to start running, feel confident, and change their lives, and now I want to help you.

Hey rebels. Well, fall is almost here. I can't believe it, which means it's time for pumpkin spice lattes and sweaters and I cannot fucking wait. I know not everybody likes this season. I'm aware that there are some of you sad about the departure of summer, but it is not me, and for real, I will take fall over any other season. Just bring it on. It is the best.

But seriously, aside from the cooler temperatures, I love fall because it always feels like a new beginning. January, I don't know, it just doesn't resonate with me. It's cold, all the fun holiday stuff is over, it's basically just a big long stretch of several months of nothing.

Fall is way more fun and even though I'm not in school anymore, I swear to god, I still get excited for all of the back-to-school activities. Especially office supplies. Is anyone else here with me? I'm legit going to be heading to Staples this weekend to stock up on all their sales because you can never have enough highlighters.

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And now they make erasable highlighters. This is a thing. I'm obsessed with them. So that's my pitch for fall. But speaking of new beginnings, so the fall semester of the Rebel Runner Roadmap does start in less than two weeks, and this is probably the best time of year to start running, because again, the temperatures are coming down, especially if you live in the south and it's just been like an oven where you live.

Temperatures are starting to come down, the air is a little bit less humid, conditions are becoming kind of perfect for running. So normally, I would add that the kids are back in school, which means you'll have a bit more time, but of course, maybe that's not true for you.

And there is a lot in the air right now, there's a lot of uncertainty and I know a lot of you are trying to figure out how the hell you're going to work from home and school your kids from home or whatever crazy schedule your school has come up with. So I know that there's a thought maybe in your brain that's like, actually, now is a terrible time to start running because everything is just all up in the air.

But you know what, here's the deal. Running and exercise doesn't just give you a fitter body. Running and exercise helps you become a more calm person overall and calm people handle all of life's unexpected challenges much, much better.

Like finding out your kid's school is suddenly going virtual and you got three days to figure out how to deal with it, if you're exercising regularly, feeling calm, feeling in control, you are going to handle that circumstance in a much different way than if you have got no outlet for your stress.

And spoiler alert, the challenges are coming. We are not done with this pandemic. I can promise you, I would stick my life on it that there is plenty of unexpected shit that's going to come up in the next 12 months. So you

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can be prepared by starting to run now, getting that into your routine so you can better handle everything that comes up, or you can just do nothing and be extra stressed the next time a monkey wrench is tossed into your schedule.

So just join the Roadmap today. Let me help you get your running routine started so that this coming semester goes smoothly no matter what happens. Whether your kids are in school, whether they're off in a dorm room, whether they're grown up and they're just - work is driving you crazy. Whatever it is, join the Roadmap today, let me help you get your running routine started so that you're able to handle no matter anything that happens coming up this fall.

So you can do that by going to rebelrunnerroadmap.com. The sign-up link is there. It's rebelrunnerroadmap.com and let's just get this figured out so it's one less thing you have to worry about.

So last week I taught a killer online workshop about how to stop making excuses so you can start working out consistently, and I know I talked about it incessantly on the podcast before I taught it, it was so good. You guys, it was so freaking awesome.

We did a whole section where we just took our usual excuses, like our favorite playlist of excuses, and we found very effective ways to combat them so they don't stop you from doing what you want to be doing. And I think one of the things that was so very enlightening for everyone attending the class was seeing how most of the excuses were actually things that everyone was already thinking about.

It wasn't like one person came up with an excuse and nobody said, "Oh, I've never said that." One person actually said, "I've totally used the excuse of not wanting to take another shower," and I'm like, yep, me too. And I

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have actually used the excuse of I woke up with great hair and I don't want to mess it up.

I mean, and again, there were people that were like yeah, totally, me too. So we had a good laugh over some of those kind of silly excuses that we all have. And they're funny, but there were also a lot of excuses that people shared that stirred up some more intense emotions.

I really want to talk about one of them today because I know that a lot of you have said the same thing to yourself. I know I have said it to myself in the past. So here it is. Nobody else gives a shit if I get my workout done so why should I bother?

I'm just going to take a moment and let that land because I know you've said some version of that to yourself at some point. I think there's a lot to unpack in that statement. The first of course is that the inner toddler belief that we are getting away with something is we skip our workout and nobody knows.

I think on some level, all of us are still an inner toddler, or maybe we have an inner teenager that's like, you can't tell me what to do. I think it's pretty common to have this sort of lingering belief. We might get older, the number on our driver's license might get bigger, but the inner toddler or even the inner rebellious teen is always in there trying to get away with something.

Like oh, I wonder how little I can do and still make this work. So I think that's part of it, but really, I think the deeper part is a flawed belief system that working out is something that we maybe do for other people's approval or to satisfy someone else's expectations or that it doesn't count unless someone else is watching.

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But really, working out is something we do to care for ourselves. And you know this and I know this. This is never something we do for other people. We do it for ourselves, but I think in this society maybe, I don't know, we've kind of forgotten that self-care is the most important thing we can do because you can't help other people.

You can't serve other people. Can't take care of your kids or your partner or be the best employee at work or be the best daughter or sister or friend if you're suffering, if you're not in your peak performance.

So I think - I mean, there are so many things that we do for ourselves that nobody else does give a shit about and we still do them. I mean, nobody cares if I eat cupcakes for lunch every day. Really, nobody cares. Nobody cares if I eat a salad for lunch every day. Nobody is watching what I eat for lunch or tracking it or really saying anything about it.

But you know what, I don't eat cupcakes for lunch every day because it doesn't feel good when I do it. It feels gross and awful, so even though nobody's watching or keeping track what I eat for lunch, I still try to eat things that make my body feel good most of the time.

I'm not perfect. I'm human. I do eat the Cheetos from time to time. Even though my toddler is like, we should have cupcakes and Cheetos for lunch and maybe a bottle of Prosecco too, my inner grown up is like, that's not going to feel good. No, we're not going to do that.

So nobody is tracking whether I exercise or not either you guys. And it's kind of funny. Nobody gives a shit if I get my workouts done and I'm a running coach. So why do I exercise every day? Again, because it just feels so much better when I do.

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In the moment, it doesn't always feel great. Just like it's so interesting, when you're eating cupcakes for lunch, it feels good in the moment, feels terrible later. So I'm always like, I really don't want to feel terrible later, I'm going to skip the cupcakes even though it doesn't feel as exciting in the moment to eat a salad.

Exercise is the same way. In the moment, exercise doesn't always feel great. A lot of times it feels terrible, and by terrible I don't mean painful. But it's always going to be easier to stop moving. It's always going to be easier and more comfortable to sit down or lay down or get a massage.

So exercise isn't something that gives us that instant gratification like eating a cupcake or taking a nap, but I do it every day because I feel so much better when I do. So I know that today's exercise, this morning's exercise is going to make this afternoon so much easier. I'm not in the mood a lot of time. Most of the time. But I know I'm going to be so much happier with myself if I do it so I do, even though nobody else is watching or cares.

Because nobody is ever going to care enough. Really hear me on this because when you say nobody else cares if I get my workout done, why should I bother, it's such a thought error to say that because nobody else is ever going to give a shit. And if they do, it's probably not for the best of reasons.

So you have to be the one who gives a shit. If nobody else can care enough, nobody else can want it enough if you don't. So you've got to generate the internal caring because you cannot rely on anyone else's oversight or anything to make you get it done.

So if this is a thought that you've had, I want you to spend some time thinking about why you need someone else to care about whether you worked out. Do you need the recognition? Do you need approval? Do you

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need a hey, great job? Do you need a kick in the ass? Do you need someone to call you up and say, hey, it's time to go workout?

Which is so funny, right? We think that if somebody else knows that we didn't work out, if somebody else is disappointed in us, then that's more of a motivation than being disappointed in ourselves. But somebody else's disappointment in you for not doing it, you can't feel that.

You really can't. The only emotions you can feel are the ones you generate with your own thoughts. So your disappointment in yourself is the disappointment you should be worried about. So I mean, let's get back to the recognition.

If you need recognition, if you need approval, if you need someone to say, hey, great job, if that's the case, there are plenty of places to get that. First of all, if you're in the Rebel Runner Roadmap or you've moved on to the Run Your Best Life program, all you have to do is put a post in that group and you're going to have a dozen nice job, congratulations, within a few minutes.

But what that does is creates a little quick shot of dopamine in your brain and it doesn't last. If you need somebody to check in on you and make you do it, again totally different. Why is it that you won't do something awesome for yourself unless somebody makes you?

Really think that through. Why won't you do something awesome for yourself unless someone else is making you? That is fucked up. What are you thinking? Why do you think you need encouragement or tough love or something else to get you to do something amazing for yourself?

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I think in that situation, the brain processes, the thought processes that are going on is, oh, I'm not strong enough to stick with an exercise plan on my own. And again, that's a thought error. You don't need external motivation. That is bullshit. You are absolutely strong enough. I mean, come on. Stop lying to yourself. Stop hanging out in your own little pity party. You are 100% strong enough to get yourself to exercise.

You just don't want to. Let's tell the truth here. The problem isn't that you're weak or undisciplined or lazy or not able to motivate yourself. The problem here is that the benefits of exercise, like a stronger mind, a stronger body, feeling better, having more energy, all of that great stuff, those benefits just aren't that important to you.

And I know the truth hurts a little right now. You might even be a little bit mad at me. But the sooner you own this truth, the faster you can feel better. Because you are at a decision point. You're sort of like, waffling back and forth like, I really want this thing but I don't want to do the things that'll get it for me.

You're either willing to do what it takes to become a consistent exerciser or you're not. That's the decision. The decision isn't like, I need somebody to motivate me, if nobody else cares about what I'm doing, I'm not motivated. That's not the problem. The problem is you have to decide, am I willing to do what it takes to become a consistent exerciser or am I not willing? That's it.

When you make that decision, the excuses become irrelevant. For example, I'm going to give you two examples. The first one is I want to do an unassisted pull-up. That would be so awesome. When I think about doing that, I'm like, damn, to be that strong, hell yes.

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But here is the problem with that. It's going to take a lot of time in the gym. Especially at my weight. If I weighed 125 pounds, it would be a lot easier and faster to get there. It would still take a lot of work, but it would take less work and less time. But if I want to do an unassisted pull-up without losing weight, we're talking probably a couple years of really focused work in the gym.

Like hours per week. I could do a little bit less work in the gym and work on losing 100 pounds, but either way, I'm spending - I'm devoting a lot of my time to this particular goal. And you know what, I don't want to do the work to get there. I just don't. Maybe someday, but not now. I have other things that I want to spend my time on, other things that are more important to me.

So instead of beating myself up because I'm not doing the workouts to be able to do an unassisted pull-up, which by the way, has been on my list of goals for several years, this year I decided that's actually just not a goal of mine right now. It's not something I want to pursue. I just don't want it that badly.

So I don't make excuses about why I can't do the training. I don't care if anybody else knows what I'm doing or not. I just decide it. Now, if I decided the other way, that I was all in, that it was something I wanted more than anything else, guess what, I would still have excuses but they would pale in comparison to my reasons for wanting it.

We're going to talk about that in a moment. Because your reasons for wanting something, when they are really strong, those excuses, they're just dust in the wind. So I took a similar approach with dating after my divorce. I wanted to meet somebody new. I ultimately wanted to be partnered up with somebody new.

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And I knew that the chances of finding the perfect mate would go way up if I went on a lot of dates. I know I told this story before, but seriously, it's really, really applicable here. I set a goal to go on 50 first dates in like, nine months. 50. I was 49 at the time, I said before I turn 50, I'm going to go on 50 first dates because I knew that the chances of me finding the perfect person, me sitting at home watching Netflix is not how I was going to find my perfect dude.

So I was like, I'm going to go on 50 first dates, I'm going to get really good at dating, and then I'll reevaluate. And I knew most of those dates were not going to work out. So I had a million excuses not to do this. I don't want to be rejected, it will take too much time, I don't know where to meet 50 people, online dating is weird and awkward, I don't know what to write in my profile, I'm too old, I'm too fat.

I seriously had all the excuses. But I wanted that result of being with somebody new, being with my perfect mate, I wanted it badly. So I was willing to do whatever it took to meet that person. And by the way, I was not in a hurry. And I think that's another thing. When we're in a hurry to get out result, then we're like, we have all the excuses in the world. I was not in a hurry, I said I'm willing to do what it takes to meet that person, even if it's 10 years from now.

So I also knew I was going to have some feelings along the way. Probably a lot of hurt feelings. I was going to feel rejected; I was going to feel awkward and uncomfortable and all the things. I was also going to feel a lot of fun things. It's very flattering when you have somebody who's interested in you.

So I knew I was going to have a lot of different feelings along the way, and so I dove in. And it was weird and uncomfortable. It was a lot of moments where I was like, why am I doing this? But I had my reason. I wanted to be

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partnered up with somebody. Not just anybody. Not like my first marriage. I wanted this to be the somebody, the one that was perfect for me.

And of course I met him. I met that perfect person for me, the very best human I've ever known, and that's Andy and we're married now. But here's the deal. At the time we met, he lived in New Jersey, I lived in Pennsylvania. We had zero friends in common.

If I had not screwed up my courage and gotten past all my bullshit excuses to put a profile on Tinder, we would never ever have met. I mean, really think about it. He was not my first date. I think he was like, number 17. I went through quite a few first dates that did not really pan out before I met Andy.

So here's what I want to point out to you. Not one person cared whether I met somebody new. Nobody else besides me. I was the only one who cared. I could have easily spent my evenings with friends or alone with my kitty, been totally happy. I like my own company. I don't need anyone else.

And to be honest, it would have been way easier to do that because I went on a lot of dates with dudes who were just all wrong. I spent time texting back and forth with probably 10 times as many who never evolved into dates because they didn't match up with what I was looking for, but you know, I went on a ton of dates. I got dressed up, I made an effort.

Staying home and just waiting for the perfect guy to find me would have been much, much easier, but I chose the more difficult route because I wanted to make it happen. I decided I wanted the result of a new mate more than I wanted the comfort of staying home and avoiding rejection.

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And that is the thing. If you want to become a consistent exerciser, you have to want it. You have to want that result more than you want to stay in bed a little bit longer or whatever thing you're doing besides your workout. You need a reason that is so strong no excuse can touch it.

Now for me, for the dating piece, the reason I went on so many dates is that I wanted to be partnered up with somebody amazing. I didn't want just any partner. It had to be somebody that was absolutely exceptional, and I knew that person wasn't just going to show up in my life randomly.

I was like, I got to put myself in situations where I can meet this person. So I had to get busy looking. Now for you, the reason you might want to become a consistent exerciser could be as simple as I like how I feel when I'm exercising regularly, or my day goes so much more smoothly when I start it with exercise.

But your reasons can't have anything to do with anyone else. If your strong reason is tied to someone else's support or approval, you are screwed. Because eventually, they're going to forget to tell you good job, or they won't call to check in or they won't remind you to do your workout. It has to come from within you. You have to light your own damn fire.

So strong reasons sound like this, and I'm taking these directly from the workshop. I actually kept a record of all the reasons people came up with. This is a small sampling of some of the actual reasons that attendees from this workshop came up with during the class.

And I'm going to read them to you because you might resonate with some of them. You might be like, that's a good reason, I'm going to steal it. Or it might trigger something in your brain and you might start thinking a little bit differently, so I'm going to read some of the best ones to you.

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Okay, here we go. This rough time is going to pass no matter what. I can either be better on the other side of it or not. I want to finish my half marathon in under three hours. I want to complete the Dopey Challenge. Every single workout will help me get in shape to accomplish that goal.

I am a singer and I know that exercise will really improve my breath control. If I strength train, I can get to the top of a mountain easier. I hope to qualify to run the Boston Marathon when I'm 60. Four years out from now. It is one of my bucket list items. I really want to climb several mountains next year with my friend.

This is one of my favorites. I want to do stuff I like whenever I want to. I want to run the Chicago Marathon for my 40th birthday next year. I have osteoporosis and diabetes runs in my family. I want to control how I feel as I get older. I don't want immobility to be a part of just getting older. I can control how I age.

I want to age gracefully and be physically independent as I get older. Planning my workouts in advance and adhering to that schedule keeps main control of all my schedule, not just exercise. I will not be held back by my body anymore. That's one of my favorites.

When I stick to my plan, I take back power over the outside influences that call me worthless or less than. And again, this is like, I talked about how your reasons can't have anything to do with anyone else, and this kind of has something to do with somebody else saying you're worthless, but it's basically using exercise to negate those influences on your life.

And then the final one is I can be consistent while everything feels unpredictable right now. So these are some strong ass reasons that are very personal to the people who wrote them. I encourage you to think hard about your own reasons and come up with some strong ones to help you

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get past that excuse of nobody else gives a shit if I work out so why should I bother?

Because that is a bullshit excuse if I've ever heard one. Okay my friends, don't forget, the fall session of the Roadmap is open now for registration. Class starts on September 13th. We're going to do a lot of excuse work in this class along with teaching you the fundamental skills of running. It is the whole package.

We don't just teach you - I don't just give you a training plan and say go run this many minutes or this many miles. We work on everything related to your running life. So go to rebelrunnerroadmap.com to sign up. Do it right now before the next podcast in your playlist starts playing and I want you to stay safe, get your ass out there and run, and I will see you next week.

Oh, and one last thing. If you enjoyed listening to this episode, you have to check out the Rebel Runner Roadmap. It's a 30-day online program that will teach you exactly how to start running, stick with it, and become the runner you've always wanted to be. Head on over to rebelrunnerroadmap.com to join. I'd love to be a part of your journey.