

Ep #16: 5K Training Series Part Two - Create the Perfect Strategy



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With Your Host

Jill Angie

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Welcome to *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. If you're a woman who is midlife and plus sized and you want to start running but don't know how, or if it's even possible, you're in the right place. Using proven strategies and real-life experience, certified running and life coach Jill Angie shares how you can learn to run in the body you have right now.

You are listening to episode number 16 of *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. I'm your host, Jill Angie, and in this episode, we're continuing with the 5K training series. Today's topic is training strategies. Part three is going to be race day strategy and that'll be next week.

I also have an Ask the Curvy Coach question from Missy, and then I have a question for you, and then of course, we'll talk about my latest obsession. So whether you're a brand-new runner, an experienced pro, or maybe even just thinking about it because all your friends are doing it, you are in the right place.

So let's start with my question for you this week. I want to know what you call yourself. And what I mean by that is when you're talking about your body, for example, I call myself plus size sometimes or fat, or sometimes curvy or voluptuous. All of these words feel pretty good to me or neutral, and I'm definitely not offended by the word fat.

In fact, I actually like using that word sometimes because it's short and it takes less effort to say and it's pretty clear what I mean. So I'm also just kind of lazy that way when it comes to words. But if I'm being honest, I do use the word plus-size frequently because I think it's the word that most people can - it's very clear what I mean, it's not polarizing like the word fat

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is, but it does indicate that my body is maybe larger than, you know, what you might see on Instagram.

So anyway, plus size does annoy me a little bit because it implies that my size is somehow - and I'm using finger quotes here, outside the norm, that it's like, an exception to the rule and that, you know, the fashion industry needs to accommodate us. And spoiler alert, what the media and fashion industry consider to be plus size is actually the average woman's size today.

I mean, it's like a 14 or a 16 is what the average woman is, and plus size is really considered anything size 12 or larger. So that actually means that more women are plus-sized than not, but yeah, we still use these words that imply those sizes are out of the ordinary. And this kind of gets to me a little bit but on the flip side, I like the thought of plus size being something fabulous, right? It's plus, it's more, it's extra.

And I am nothing if not extra. I'm loud and I'm boisterous, and I'm proud of it. So from that perspective, I guess I do kind of like plus size, but in general, the origin of the term plus size comes from the fashion industry and it does have that implication that we are not - that we're outside of the standard sizing, and I don't necessarily love that connotation.

But everybody's different and everybody has words that they like to use that make them comfortable, that make them uncomfortable, and I'm trying to find out what everyone else thinks. So I'm curious which words you use to describe your body. Do you use fat? Do you use plus size? You say thick or fluffy or chubby, stocky, Rubenesque, voluptuous, curvy, something else? I would really, really like to know what your words are and why you like those words.

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So feel free to hit me up at podcast@notyouraveragerunner.com, that's the email. You know, shoot me, like, drop a post in the Facebook group that you can also find, [Facebook.com/jointhecommunity](https://www.facebook.com/jointhecommunity). Join the Facebook group there or if you're already a member, I would love to hear from you. I would love to know if you have more than one favorite or which ones make you cringe and why do they make you cringe.

So like I said, hit me up in the Facebook group, let me know, tag me in an Instagram post and that's - I'm just really, really curious. So let me know what you're thinking. Okay, and real quick, before we get into the Ask the Curvy Coach question this week, I need to share a really fun story with you.

Now, I want you to file this under the you never know who you might inspire file because my podcast producer Pavel has obviously - he listens to every single episode and in fact, I even answered his question in episode six about fitness trackers. But anyway, he's been listening along and he just told me last week that hearing about running every week - you know, just constantly being in this mode of like, listening to me talk about running has actually inspired him to start running himself.

And I just think that's so awesome, and I mean, honestly, I hear about stuff like this all the time. Sometimes from friends on Facebook or whatever, or sometimes from clients that I'm working with or people in the Facebook group that they've been out there running and somebody in their life has been watching them and got inspired and excited to do something that they wouldn't have necessarily done otherwise.

So I just think that's a great reminder for all of us that every time you go to the gym, every time you go outside and run, every time you talk about your running or you post it on Facebook or something like that, you are showing other people what is possible for them. And you might be helping

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somebody else to get started running just because you're doing it. And so you just never know who you're going to inspire and I think that's why it's so important for all of us to get out there and do our thing and be the rebel runners that we are.

Okay, so let's move on to Ask the Curvy Coach, and this question - this week's question comes from Missy, and she writes, "Before I was a runner, I would skip days washing my hair. Since I have become a new runner, I wash my hair every day because I sweat a bunch. So I got a shorter haircut to manage my time better in the mornings before work. I'm washing my hair every day. My friend has suggested wearing a headband to absorb the sweat and then using a dry shampoo. What do you do?"

So first of all, this is an amazing question, Missy, and I'm going to share what I do and what works for me. And what works for me obviously doesn't work for everybody, but you know, my pull amongst a lot of runners that I know, girlfriends, and just people on Facebook that I know, they actually do very similar to what I do.

So I wash my hair every two to three days. So I wash my hair basically two to three times a week, and in between washes, I just thoroughly rinse the sweat out with water in the shower. So after I get done with a run, if it's not my day to wash my hair, I take a shower and then I just rinse, rinse, rinse the water - the sweat out of my hair and then I just go ahead and style it as usual.

I comb it, I don't usually add more product on the days that I do just a rinse because otherwise I get product buildup and I have really fine hair and so my hair ends up kind of looking dirty and a little kind just weird, I guess, if I put too much product in my hair. But water is pretty much always enough to

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get the sweat residue out, and you know, my hair smells fine and everything, and it looks normal. It doesn't look dirty or anything like that.

I don't think you really need shampoo, I think just a good rinse after you've gone running is totally fine. And then like I said, two to three times a week I actually do shampoo my hair and then on those days I'll put more product in it. So I hope that helps, and your magnet is on its way.

And if you want to get your question answered, all you have to do is email me at podcast@notyouraveragerunner.com. I pick a new one each week to read and answer, and you can ask me anything. Like, we just heard from Missy, if you want to talk about hair, I'm all about it. Now, if I pick your question to answer on the show, I'll also send you a Not Your Average Runner car magnet.

Alright, let's move on to our main topic for this week. Now, if you listened to episode 14 and decided it was time for you to start training for your first 5K, this episode is for you. Once you've made that decision, the first step is really to find a training plan. Now, there are hundreds, possibly thousands of them out there, and you can get books or apps, or sometimes when you sign up for a race they'll give you a free training plan to download.

And then there are tons of local clubs all around that have in-person 5K training groups where you can actually run with other people, and maybe you even do the whole race together at the end. Now, there's a ton of options out there, and when you're deciding which plan to use, there are actually a few things to consider.

Now first, I want you to think about your current running pace. Many training plans out there such as - like the Couch to 5K app, or the C25K that you've probably seen, they actually assume you're going to be running

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maybe a 10 or 12-minute mile or faster, and what those plans do is they train you to do a 5K, which is equivalent to about three miles, in like, 30 minutes.

And I know that all sounds great, like, "Oh yeah, I'm going to run three miles in 30 minutes," it's a great goal but the problem comes into play is that these plans, first of all, are usually like, only six or eight weeks long, and if you're a new runner, that's not necessarily long enough. And if you're a new runner and you're listening to this podcast, which means that you're probably a plus size, or heavier runner, or whatever terminology you like to use, it also means that you're probably not running a 10 or 12-minute mile.

So, if you're currently doing some kind of intervals, like a 30 second run or a 60 second walk, and you're going maybe 15 minutes per mile, for example, it is extremely unlikely that you're going to be doing a 5K in 30 minutes in like, six to eight weeks. It's not that it's impossible, but it's really not very likely.

And what that does, you know, like you get to the end of the training plan and the Couch to 5K one in general, and I'm not picking on that plan, I'm just saying this is an example of how they train is they just have you doing runs for 30 minutes for the whole training plan. By the end of the training plan, you know, you start out doing a minute run, a minute walk, and by the end, six to eight weeks later, they've got you doing like, 14-minute run and then a one-minute walk break, and then another 14-minute run.

And that is really a fast progression for a new runner or for somebody who is a heavier runner. So what happens is you get to the end of that training plan and maybe in that time you're able to do two miles, but you really don't have the result it promises, which is getting off the couch and running a 5K in 30 minutes in six to eight weeks.

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So you know, what happens is we get frustrated and we maybe even want to quit, and that's the last thing I want for you. So if you are listening and you're currently able to run a 10-minute per mile or faster pace, Couch to 5K is probably a great choice for you. It's definitely convenient, there's actually a bunch of different options, but if that's not you, we do need to get you a training plan that works for you.

So here's what you need to look for. And by the way, just go on Google and like, search for 5K training plan, you'll get so many options, you won't know what to do with them. So I'm going to give you a list of criteria that I think are important if you're a brand-new runner and you're trying to train for your first 5K.

Now, the first is the length of the plan. I want you to look for something that's at least eight weeks, but preferably 12. And this is really kind of important, especially if you're not currently doing three miles on the regular, like, taking a little bit longer, taking more weeks to train means that you're going to ease into it slowly and have a much lower chance of getting injured. So that's something you want to look for. Eight weeks is acceptable, 12 weeks is much better.

Now, your training plan should have you running - and when I say running, I mean run/walking, so like, interval running or just straight running, but I want it to have you do at least one run a week where it's three miles. And maybe not for the first month of your training plan, but at least for the back half, at least for the second month and the third month leading into the race, you want to do one run a week that's three miles. The other runs can be shorter, that's totally fine.

You also want a training plan that doesn't have a pace requirement. So that means - you know, like the Couch to 5K kind of has a pace requirement.

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You kind of have to be doing a 10-minute mile to complete their program. And so you want to look for one that basically just gives you the mileage that you're going to be running and doesn't tell you how fast you have to do it. And that applies to training groups as well, and we'll get there in a moment.

Now, the other thing I want to make sure you understand is that a training plan for beginners that has you running more than four times a week is going to be also probably too much too soon. And I think for a 5K, for your first time around, three times a week is actually ideal. That gives you plenty of time to rest and recover in between your training runs and like, really lowers your chance of injury.

And the other thing you want to consider is you don't want a training plan that's going to have you running back to back days. So you always want to leave - when you're brand new, you always want to leave one day in between your runs so that your body can recover and so that you can start paying attention. Like, am I developing any injuries, yes or no.

Alright, so that's like the plan itself. Now, if you're joining a local group, or even a virtual online group, make sure that they have a plan in place for slower runners. And this actually really applies mostly to in person groups. Now, you want to ask them if they're friendly for beginners, and of course they're going to say yes, but very often when they say yes, what they mean is they're thinking a beginning runner is 10 to 12-minute miler.

That might not be you. So you need to know if you're going out for these group runs is there are going to be somebody running at the back to make sure you don't get lost, to make sure you don't get left completely behind. Will the rest of the group be waiting for you at the end until you're done? Like, you don't want to go out for one of these group training runs and then

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you fall behind everybody else, you get back to the start place and everybody else is in their car and gone because they're done.

Like, make sure this is a group that's going to hang out and wait for you to finish. These are really important questions to ask because like I said, so often these in person groups say they're beginner friendly, but what they really mean is that they think a 10 to 12-minute mile is a beginner.

And there's nothing wrong with that obviously, but this actually is why it's so important for all of you guys to get out there and run in public and interact with other runners, to show up at races and to represent that not every single runner is doing an eight-minute mile, or a 10-minute mile, or even a 12-minute mile, right?

Claim your place at the start line and show the world the diversity of what runners look like. Show people that courage and commitment that you have and I know I keep talking about what it means to become a rebel runner, and I really think that that's what it's all about. It's basically showing up and saying, "Hey, you don't have to look a certain way or go a certain pace to be a runner."

But I digress. So anyway, that's what you're looking for in a training plan and in a training group. Now, there are plenty of great books out there that serve this need. Obviously in particular, I can recommend my book, *Not Your Average 5K*, which does have a training plan, and there's actually two training plans that come with that book depending on your current fitness level. And then of course they can be modified as necessary.

Jeff Galloway also has quite a few plans and books on run-walk intervals that are really, really good. And if you listened to my interview with Denny

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Krahe last week, you'll also know that he's got a great book out there called *Be Ready on Race Day*, which helps you create your own training plan.

Now, at this time, I'm not really aware of any good apps out there that meet the requirements that I sort of set out for you in this podcast. That doesn't mean that they're not out there, just that I haven't found one yet. And of course, obviously if you know of one, please let me know.

But at some point, in the hopefully fairly near future, I will be creating a *Not Your Average 5K* app so definitely stay tuned for that. But in the meantime, you know, just go on Google and look for a training plan that works for you or grab my book. You can get it on Kindle, it's super and then you download the training plan from there.

Now, once you've got your training plan, the next step, and this is super important is to actually black out all the time on your calendar that you're going to be training. So if you're going to be training three times a week, I want you to look at your training plan, look at your calendar, and it's from the race date, work backwards and like, literally write all of those runs into your calendar or put them in your Google Calendar or your iCal or your phone because you want to make sure that your training doesn't fall by the wayside just because you forgot you're going away almost every weekend between now and your race and oh crap, when am I going to get all my training runs in, right?

So make sure you know ahead of time which days you're going to be running and then you can modify on a weekly basis based on your family and social schedule so that there are no surprises. And I really - I can't stress this enough, one of the most common reasons that people don't stick to their plan is because something always comes up.

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So block out your calendar ahead of time like an appointment with yourself, and yes, there may be things here or there that happen, but if you have it all planned out ahead of time, there's a lot less likelihood that things are going to come up because you're already going to know about them.

Now, if you have a shared family calendar, go ahead and put it on there too and make sure your family sees this as a priority for you. This is going to help them respect the time and if you show that it's important enough to you to schedule in ahead of time, it'll be important to them as well.

And honestly, like let's get real here. 5K training doesn't take that much time. Now, with a three day a week schedule, twice a week you'll probably need about 45 minutes and that might be on a Tuesday and a Thursday, and then an hour on your weekend day. So you might run Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, 45 minutes Tuesday, 45 minutes Thursday, and then block out an hour for your workout on Saturday.

You probably spend more time than that watching Netflix each week, so if worst comes to worst, you can just catch up on your shows after the race and use the Netflix time to train. I promise you you'll be far more refreshed and renewed and rejuvenated after going for a run than you are catching up on Game of Thrones.

Alright, now here's the last piece. There are going to be days when you just don't feel like following your training plan, that you'd just rather sleep in a little later or go out for happy hour after work or whatever. And here's the thing: just know ahead of time that it's going to happen. It's not a matter of it, it's a matter of when. And when it happens, you're just going to say to yourself, "Oh yeah, I knew this would happen but I've decided I'm just going to go anyway."

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Just decide it ahead of time that you're not going to listen to your 5am sleepy self because she has terrible judgment. You're going to listen to your 7:30am self that just got her run in before work and is really freaking proud of herself.

And you actually can do a lot to prepare for that like for example, putting your alarm clock on the other side of the room, packing your gym bag the night before, planning - I love this one. Plan to meet a friend for your run, and preferably someone who's going to publicly shame you if you don't show up.

So like, eliminate all of the obstacles ahead of time and you're going to have a lot more success. And then again, just remember, like, there's going to be plenty of days when you don't feel like doing it. It doesn't mean anything's gone wrong, doesn't mean you lost your mojo. It just means you're normal and you're human. And you're just going to say to yourself, "That's right, I knew this was going to happen, I'm going to go anyway."

So there's one more thing that I want to cover, and that's about your pace. So remember, if this is your first 5K, your only goal is to finish it. Finish it feeling good. You don't need a goal time, you don't - just plan to get yourself from the start line to the finish line. That's all you need to do. The time that it takes you to do that is irrelevant. There'll be plenty of other races to work on that, and for right now, your goal is just to finish feeling good.

So when you're training for your race, I want you to remember that. So there's going to be no judgment from your inner mean girl of how long it takes you to do your training runs, or making comments to yourself about your speed, none of that is allowed. And if your inner mean girl starts her shenanigans, you tell her I said to shut the fuck up, alright? She is not your

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trainer, she is not your coach. I am, and I say whatever pace you run is absolutely perfect.

Here's your challenge for this week. I want you to go out right after this podcast, Google training plans or download Not Your Average 5K and grab the plan out of that book, and then schedule all of those individual runs into your calendar, and then get out there and get busy. Next week I'm going to cover everything you need to know to make race day the best day ever. So I want you to make sure you come back for that.

Okay, this week my obsession is Instagram, and to be clear, I'm always obsessed with Instagram, but I'm really extra obsessed with it this week. And that specifically I'm loving following all of the body positive and plus size fitness accounts that I can get my hands on because there's so many out there and they're really setting an example of what is possible.

And now, one thing I know for sure is that when it comes to social media, we really absorb what we see a lot of, and we compare ourselves to it and begin to believe that it's the norm, right? So if your feed is filled with ripped bodies doing one handed pushups in a bikini, your brain is going to get the message that you should be doing that too, that it's the thing to aspire to.

And now, I am not knocking being able to do a one-handed pushup in a bikini. More power to you if you can do that. I just think there are other things in life to aspire to, especially if you're new to this running journey. Like, being kind to yourself and others and learning to love your body as is instead of needing it to change so you can be happy.

Now, one way to do that is to fill your social media feed with people who are doing exactly that. People who are rocking the body that they're in right

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now and people who are super inspiring and people who are fit and just like, really showing you an example of what's possible for you.

Now, of the top of my head, I'm going to list out some of my favorite accounts, and of course, if you don't follow me on Instagram, you can look me up at @NotYourAverageRunner. I'm totally there and I've got all kinds of good stuff on there.

But I want to share some of my favorite Instagram accounts with you, and if I'm missing any of your favorites let me know, and of course, the spelling of some of these is a little funky so I made sure to go into the show notes, or make sure that you go into the show notes because I'll have all of the spelling and the links in there so that you can make sure you're following the exact accounts that I'm going to lay out for you.

Now, the first one is of course, Mirna Valerio, and she's on Insta @themirnavator, and you might remember her from episode 12. Then we have Martinus Evans of @300poundsandrinning, and Latoya Shauntay Snell of @runningfatchef, and stay tuned because both Martinue and Latoya are going to be on the podcast in a couple weeks, and you do not want to miss that interview because it's super fun.

We also have Megan of @BodyPosiPanda, and she's one of my favorites because she has got rainbow hair and every time I see - and she wears bikinis all the time and I'm just telling you what, like, she's just as cute as a button and I love everything about her. And so every time I see her photos come up on my feed I'm like, "Yay."

Alright, next is Melissa of @YoursTruelyMelly, and truly is spelled t-r-u-e-l-y. I also follow @Fabuplus magazine, and you may have seen me - I've written a few articles for them and oh my gosh, such a great magazine,

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such a great body positive resource. I also love Anna Guest-Jelley of @curvyvyyoga, and also in the yoga vein and the self-love vein, Jessamyn Stanley of [0:26:45.6 @jessamynstanley] @iamjessamyn.

Now, another one that I love is Erica of @curve_model, and you might remember Erica from on the cover of Women's Running magazine a couple years ago. She did a great photo shoot. I also love @effyourbeautystandards and eff is spelled eff in this name, and effyourbeautystandards just kind of pulls great body positive images from around Instagram and compiles them into their feed.

And then another one of my favorites is @ExercisingFoodies, and this is Helen, who lives in New York City, and she actually has a body positive running group in New York. And so I would love it if you'd go check her out, and if you live in New York City, this is an awesome resource for you to find a running group that works for people of all paces.

Okay, all of these links, like I said, are going to be in the show notes, so make sure you head over to notyouraveragerunner.com/16 to check them out. Well, that is it for this week, my friends. This time, like I said, always go by so quickly.

So if you're a brand new runner or you just want to email me each week - if you just want me to email you each week with inspiration, tough love, or to find out where Not Your Average Runner is going to be travelling next, I want you to head over to notyouraveragerunner.com/start, where you can sign up for a one week jumpstart plan and what'll happen is you'll get a few emails from me giving you some guidance on how to get started and you'll also start getting weekly emails from me about everything that's going on with Not Your Average Runner, and lots of tips and help and guidance on how you can be the best body positive runner out there.

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So that is it for this week, and as always, it has been a pleasure talking to you. I'll see you soon, bye.

Thanks for listening to this episode of *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. If you liked what you heard and want more, head over to www.notyouraveragerunner.com to download your free one-week jumpstart plan and get started running today.