

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

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.

Hey rebels, you are listening to episode number 67 of *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. I'm your host, Jill Angie, and today's episode is all about self-limiting beliefs. Now, the season of new year's resolutions is almost upon us and if you're like most people, you basically spend December thinking about who you're going to be when January rolls around. You're cataloging all the new habits you're going to implement and it's going to be a fresh start and you're going to feel so happy and proud of yourself.

And then January comes and after about a week of trying to make your resolutions stick, you pretty much go right back to your old habits and say, "Better luck next year." So what we're going to cover today is why that happens and how to identify it in your own life.

And this week we're actually going to start off with my latest obsession because I'm basically devoting the whole episode to it, and it's the book, *The Big Leap* by Gay Hendricks and it is a good one. Now, this book is for you if you've noticed that when things get really good in one area of your life, another area starts to fall apart. Or maybe you're working towards a goal, you do really well, you make a lot of progress, you start getting pretty close, and then all of a sudden for some reason that you cannot fathom, you lose your mojo and you fall short of getting there.

I mean, we have all been there, right? Maybe it's that you started running and you're loving it, you're training for a race even, but then a month before the big day, you inexplicably lose all your motivation to keep going and you just quit. And it just feels like it came out of nowhere, right? Or maybe you

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

worked really hard to save up money for an amazing vacation and then right before it's time to pay for the trip, something comes up that you have to spend that money on instead, and then you never get to take your trip.

Now, the author of *The Big Leap* believes that most situations like the ones I just described are actually self-created. Even if it doesn't seem that way, even if it seems like these are things that are just happening to you, he believes that a lot of the time, it's self-created. Basically, we create barriers to our own happiness and fulfillment. We self-sabotage when things start going too well and if we want to break out of that cycle and achieve what we really want out of life, we need to identify those patterns and then get busy rewiring our brains so that we move forward.

Now, I have read a shit ton of self-help books, and some that have even talked about this topic. I usually get something out of all of them. I just love to read self-help books. But so often they really are full of common sense. There's nothing earth-shattering. It's basically common sense said in a way that resonates with you. But the way this particular book is written and the concepts about why we hold ourselves back from what we really want, well, it actually was earth-shattering to me.

Like, my mind is blown, holy shit, this is why things always go wrong for me at the last-minute level of earth-shattering. Now, I'm not going to do a full book report here because I think this one is a must read for anyone who's on a path of improving themselves, whether it's running or something else. But I am going to pull out a few concepts that I thought were sort of, kind of revolutionary and that I think you can also easily apply to running. And then I'm going to encourage you to get the book and read it for yourself and just let me know, report back to me and let me know how it went.

So the first concept that the author introduces in the book is that each and every one of us has what he calls an upper limit, and here's how he defines it, "An upper limit is a limited tolerance for feeling good." Now, when we hit

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

our upper limit, we manufacture thoughts that make us feel bad and they stop our forward trajectory.

Now, when you first hear that definition, it kind of sounds crazy. Like, why would we limit our ability to have happiness? Why would we do that? But if you think about it, we all know that one girl that always dates the wrong guy for her, she repeats the pattern over and over, and then she complains because she can't find love. And you can so clearly see that she's dating assholes. Basically the same asshole with a different name over and over again, but she honestly doesn't understand why every guy she dates turns out to be a jerk. She thinks she's just got bad luck romantically.

That's her upper limit. Or actually, as the author puts it, her upper limit problem. And we can't see our own upper limit. That is the problem. It always seems like it's something that happens to us, that we have bad luck, or we're just destined to not achieve what we want in life instead of seeing it as something that we're creating for ourselves.

Now, in the example of our romantically challenged friend, she has a limited capacity for happiness in that area, and so she creates situations where she's always dating guys that meet her limited expectations. And there's an even better example in the book of how we create our own barriers without even realizing it. I just love this so much.

Now, in the early days of steam-powered trains, and this is like, over a century over, scientists believed that the speed of the trains had to be kept at 30 miles per hour because if they went faster than that, the human body would explode. This cracks me up. So they had absolutely no evidence for this whatsoever, but it was sort of a limiting belief at the time. Not sort of. It actually was a very limiting belief, and it kept the trains really slow. Until one day, someone decided, what would happen if they went over that speed, and voila, now we have trains that can go 200 miles per hour and not one person has exploded.

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

And this also applies - there's a perfect example of this in the history of running. Now, many years ago, the Olympics didn't allow women to enter as running athletes. So women couldn't run in the Olympics, it just wasn't a category because there was a belief - just buckle yourself in because you're not going to believe what I'm about to say - there was a belief that if women ran too far, their uteruses would fall out.

Again, this cracks me up. No evidence whatsoever. No woman's uterus ever fell out from running, but the men in charge, the patriarchy decided that women shouldn't be running in the Olympics or running at all because their uteruses might fall out. So one day somebody decided to challenge that. Uterus didn't fall out and fast forward several decades, women are now successfully running in the Olympics.

I mean, it's silly when you think about it now because obviously the human body can go over 30 miles per hour and women can run without their uteruses falling out. They run very far. Women run 100 miles sometimes. Their uterus stays locked in place. But at the time, it was such a limiting belief. Everybody believed it, and they didn't see it as a limiting belief. They saw it as a fact.

And this is really like, that whole concept of facts versus thoughts that we talk about a lot and that I mention for sure in episode 33, which is called How to Coach Yourself, that basically, there are facts in the world and then there are thoughts about them, and if we have enough thoughts and if we believe them hard enough, they become a whole belief system and then they become very limiting beliefs.

So I hope that that's - I can't believe I just went into the uterus story, but I think it applies. Anyway, I think that this whole concept of limiting beliefs that we create for ourselves really applies well to running because I do see it all the time in my clients. Very simple example is in half marathon training, and I've had so many clients say they've actually done their

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

training plan and all the way up to an 11 or a 12-mile run. So super close to 13 miles, and then said to me, "I don't know if I can finish the race. I've never gone that far, I can only do 12 miles," which sounds completely crazy, right?

13 miles is only one more mile than 12 miles, but if you have this overarching limiting belief that you can't do it, that you're not somebody who can run a half marathon, you will find all kinds of evidence that you're likely to fail, even if you've already basically achieved that goal. And even if you go into a race or if you go into race day with that mindset that you're not somebody who can run a half marathon, I guarantee there will be some unexpected reason you don't cross the finish line, or you might even find a reason not to show up at all.

Or here's another example. Take my clients that start running and love it, and this happens a lot. They start running, they're so excited, but they also have this limiting belief that they don't stick with anything. They just see themselves as a quitter. And they tell me all the times in the past that they've started a new habit or workout routine and then quit after a few months and they're like, "Why should this one be any different? I know how good I feel when I run but I'm just a quitter."

So if that's your belief system, I promise you, you're going to quit. If that's your upper limit that I'm not somebody who can stick with something long enough to make it a real permanent habit, if that's your upper limit problem, you're going to quit on yourself.

So here's a couple clues that you might have an upper limit problem. If you ever find yourself saying, "Why does this shit always happen to me?" you might have an upper limit problem. Or if you're somebody who quits on yourself a lot, if you look through your life and you're like, "Wow, I am somebody who gives up right before I get to my goal a lot," it might just be

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

an upper limit problem. You just might have a belief about yourself that's causing this to manifest.

Now, before we go any further, I want you to take a moment, and you can even pause this podcast if you want to, to really think about whether you have an upper limit problem in your life. And if so, what is it related to? Now, we have a million reasons why we can't do things in our lives that we want to do. Like, we have this idea that maybe we'd someday love to run a marathon but we can come up with a million reasons why we can't, right?

And if you've ever found yourself saying this, like, "Yeah, I'd love to run a marathon someday but it's just not possible for me," and then listed all the reasons why, like, "I'm too slow, I'm too fat, I'm too old, I don't have enough time to train, I don't have enough support from my family, it's too cold out, it's too hot out, there's no place near my house to run that far," there's always reasons why you can't do something. But I bet you know of other people in the same situation that have overcome these exact obstacles.

I mean, you know who these people are and you think, "Oh yeah, but they're a special unicorn. It's easy for them. They're more motivated than me. They've got more support than me," whatever it is. We always - any time we have evidence that it actually is possible for us, we come up with reasons why it's not.

So all of that is a big fat lie. Here's what's really going on. Sometimes we just cling to our idea that something is not possible for us and we literally argue in favor of our limitation. It's insane. Basically, if somebody comes up and says, "You can't do that," if somebody came up to me and said, "You could never be a runner," I would want to argue with them. I would argue in favor of not having a limitation. I'd say, "No, here's all the reasons why I can be a runner," and actually, I did just have that conversation with my knee doctor recently.

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

But when you have an upper limit problem, you argue the other way. So perfect example. Somebody comes up and congratulates you on a recent race finish. Maybe you just ran the first half marathon and they come up and they say, "Oh, that's so amazing," and you say, "Oh, thanks, but I was really slow," or, "I came in almost last," or, "I'm not a real runner. I just walk-run." We argue in favor of being limited. We argue in favor of not being as amazing as we think we are.

Or somebody comes up - this literally just happened to be the other day and I found myself doing it. Somebody comes up and says, "Oh, I really like your outfit," and then you point out the stain on yourself from where you spilled coffee. Like hey, thanks for thinking I'm awesome but I'm going to tell you all the reasons I'm not. We like to argue with things if they don't fit into our self-limiting beliefs.

So if you have an upper limit problem that you can never be as attractive as you want to be or you can never be the type of runner that you want to be, if you have that self-limiting belief, then when people come up to you and say something that is outside of that belief, that they basically think you're amazing or they think you're beautiful, you're going to argue with them. You're going to keep that - you want that belief, that upper limit that keeps you from feeling too good about yourselves because you can't handle - we have this limit in our lives of how much good we're willing to feel.

So I know that sounds a little bit confusing, but basically, the author asks this really profound question in the book because I would not have said that I'm one of these people that has a lot of self-limiting beliefs. But the author asks this profound question in the book that made me really stop and think, and that question is, how am I getting in my own way?

And it's a pretty simple question, but it's also really scary because if we know the answer, then we have to do something about it, right? We have to step out of our comfort zone and risk failing. And I guess I kind of was like -

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

I heard that question, I thought, "Wow, if I ask myself that question on a daily basis, I'd probably clear out half the shit holding me back."

So I decided to take a look at where that might be happening in my own life. And right now, my biggest issue is injuries. I've had so many injuries this year. So many fucking injuries. I had plantar fasciitis and then I had an arthritis flare in my knee, and now I have a torn meniscus. And it seems like every time I get back on my feet, I start running for a few weeks, and then something else happens. And it is maddening. Like, I just want to get the fuck out there and run and I'm kind of pissed. I've had quite a few temper tantrums about it in my own head and maybe some of them out loud.

But I just kind of was like, alright, what if that's actually just my upper limit problem, creating situations to keep me from being too happy? What if I actually have a limited capacity for feeling good about my life? And anybody who knows me would say, "Oh no, you don't have that," but I was like, let's just ask the question.

And I thought, well frankly, the rest of my life is going really, really well right now. Like, blissfully awesomely great. I'm with a partner that I absolutely adore, and obviously that's Andy, and The Not Your Average Runner business is really taking off, I'm helping more women than ever achieve their running dreams, and I'm happier in my own life than I have been in years.

And I found myself saying, you know, if it weren't for these nagging injuries, well, everything would be perfect. And I thought, oh, that's kind of clue there that I don't have the capacity right now for everything to be perfect in my life. What if I've created a situation for these injuries to get in my way so that I still have something to complain about, so that I don't have to have everything be perfect because it's just too much for me to handle?

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

This is crazy, even saying it out loud. But I started looking at how I might have created this and lo and behold, I can totally see it. So I guess it was 2017 I started getting really sort of lackadaisical with my strength training. Simultaneously was when my social life, my dating social life was starting to heat up and I was starting to have a lot of fun. I was really started to enjoy myself and I started saying fuck it to way too many strength training workouts.

Even though I know that strength training is so critical to my overall health as a runner, I was just sort of like, finding all these reasons to skip workouts. And I was also drinking way more than I usually do. Not like, getting drunk all the time, but definitely going out for a drink a few times a week, which is actually more than my body likes, and I know this. And I got really sloppy with my nutrition, eating a lot more junk food than I normally allow, and overall, my body just wasn't feeling too great, but I was having so much fun elsewhere in my life I didn't really notice.

And then I started slacking on my running and I started gaining weight and by January 1st I was like, alright, I started to notice. I noticed that my clothes didn't fit, I noticed that running was feeling harder, I noticed that my body just didn't feel right. And so I was like, January 1st, I'm going to get back at it, of course, do those resolutions, which I really don't believe in, but I fell into that trap this year. And of course, I completely overdid it. I got plantar fasciitis and it took me six weeks to eight weeks to recover from that, and then I did and I started running again, and again, I overdid it.

So you know the story, right? Looking back at that, I'm like, wow, I created that entire situation. I was having so much fun in one area of my life that I let another area that was really, really important to me kind of fall by the wayside and these injuries, I can honestly say I kind of did it to myself. Now, did I ask for any of this? Absolutely not. But I created a situation for all of that to happen.

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

And so I thought, you know, I wonder if I've done this elsewhere in my life too. So I kind of just looked over, back over the past 35, 40 years, where I can actually remember, and especially my 20s and 30s, I can see so many examples of how things would go really, really well, I'd be really excited about the direction my life was going, and something would happen elsewhere and I'm looking back and I'm like, oh, I can see how I created that situation.

So for me, there are clear patterns emerging and I'm sort of excited to be able to see them. I mean, first of all, instead of just thinking, "Oh, I've had bad luck," like, that's such a powerless place to be. Oh, I'm just somebody who bad things happen to. If you walk through life with that belief system, you're kind of screwed because you're basically - bad shit's just going to happen to you. You're going to look for evidence of it.

So if I can look back and say, "Oh, these are things that I created for myself, and wow, if I created those negative situations, those negative patterns, like maybe I could create positive patterns." If I have the power to create this stuff, let's use the power for good instead of some negativity.

So I kind of think that for some people, just being aware that this is a thing is actually enough to break the cycle and redirect, but for the rest of us humans, us mere mortals, The Big Leap, the book, The Big Leap actually lays out a path to figure out what your upper limit problem is, to bust on through it, and really whether it's in running or somewhere else in your life, if you think you have an upper limit problem, or even if you don't because before I read this book, I would not have said I had one. Clearly I do.

So I encourage you give it a read and apply it. I'm going to actually follow every single step in the book and I'm going to come back in a few months to let you know how I went. And I'll tell you this much; I am going to beg the author to come on this podcast because I really think that we need to hear what he's got to say.

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

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

I would love to hear if you did the same if you read the book, if you tried it, or if you begged the author to come on the podcast. Any of those things. Yeah, let's take the big leap together, my friends. In fact, this was actually really kind of fun to do this whole sort of reviewing a book for the podcast, and I think we're going to start doing book club in Run Your Best Life, and we're probably going to do this one in January. So if you're not in Run Your Best Life, get in there now because you might want to go grab the book, read it, because I think we're going to do this one in January.

Okay rebels, we already did my latest obsession, which is the book that I've been talking about for the past 20 minutes. So if your upper limit problem is related to running, and you want some help getting beyond it so that you can start running the way you want to run and live your life the way you want to live it, frankly, sign up for a quick consult with my team to learn more about how we can help you do that.

Just go to talktojill.com and you'll fill out an application explaining what's going on with you, what you need, and we will get you started. This is especially for you if you're struggling right now to stay on track with your running and keep going through the holidays. I know you're out there. I can feel you. I don't believe in resolutions. Every time I try them they don't work. I think they're just a terrible, terrible idea.

What I really believe in doing is the mental work that is necessary to stop quitting on yourself and stay on track despite everything going on in your life. Holidays, summer, whatever it is that's going on in your life because honestly, our lives are never calm, right? Let's be honest about this.

So I would prefer to help you stop quitting and stay on track so you don't ever have to start over, so you don't ever have to feel like, oh my god, a new year's resolution, I have to do it because my life is such a disaster. Sometimes you just need a coach to help you identify the things that are

Ep #67: How to Stop Self-Sabotage

holding you back and work with you on a plan to keep you moving forward. And I know that I and my team can be that coach for you.

So if you're heading into fuck it mode for the next two months right now because you think it's too hard to stick with your fitness routine while the holidays are happening, set up a call with us so we can help you out. Just go to talktojill.com, go right now. We have very limited spots available during this holiday season because everybody wants to talk to us right now. We've only got a few spots left. It's first come first serve. Talktojill.com, go right now. Just go.

Alright rebels, that is it for this week. Everything I mentioned in this episode, which is basically the book, *The Big Leap*, can be found in the show notes at notyouraveragerunner.com/67. I'll talk to you soon.

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.