

Ep #180: Small Changes for Big Results with Kiah Twisselman



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Jill Angie

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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.

Jill: Hey Rebels. So I'm here today with an amazing guest. You are going to love her as much as I do. We've known each other maybe a couple months. It hasn't been that long. We sort of met on the internet and we are - we seem to be soul sisters. I just love her.

So her name is Kiah Twisselman. She is a life coach and she likes to describe herself - and it's such a beautiful description - as a cattle rancher turned life coach, which I fucking love. And she helps women create a life they love by making small changes.

And so we're going to talk all about her story, her running journey, and how she helps people with this amazing strategy that she has. So Kiah, welcome to *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*.

Kiah: Thank you Jill. I've got to say, I'm geeking out about this because - and I talked to you about this before but me and my girlfriends have been superfans of you for a really long time, and I joked with you that I manifested this friendship. But I feel like we've been friends for a lot longer because you have been my running guru, speaking words of wisdom into my ear for a very long time now. So I'm just happy that we can be friends in real life, or I guess virtual life, but that counts these days, right?

Jill: Someday we'll meet in person I'm sure. Okay, so let's just bring it back to the beginning. Let's - why don't you tell people a little about your really

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amazing story so that they can kind of get to know you? So I'm going to turn it over to you and let you tell your story.

Kiah: Okay, awesome. So I'm going to try to be brief. Now you can cut me off at any time because I tend to be long-winded. But I am, like I said, cattle rancher turned life coach. So I grew up in very rural California, like an hour from the nearest grocery store, gas station, civilization of any kind. I am a rural ranch girl.

And I grew up in the agriculture industry and I love it so much. I'm still very involved. My family still ranches. We've been in the same spot for now seven generations. But growing up, I have always really struggled with my weight, ever since I was little. There was a not a time when I was younger that I don't remember struggling with my weight.

And as a result of that too, struggling a lot with my body image. And it felt to me for such a long time like it was this curse, this curse that I was dealt, that I was dealt this bad genetic can, that I was a victim of the world, victim of these circumstances.

And that really led into years and years and years of me going on and off the yo-yo dieting cycle, thinking that weight was the thing that was in the way of me being successful, being happy, all these things, which of course I learned now is not necessarily the case.

But it took a lot of hardship for me to get there. And when I was 25, so a few years ago, a little over two years ago, I was working in Kentucky for the Kentucky Beef Council. I'm still a ranch girl. Makes sense that I work for the Beef Council. And in that job, one of the things that I was in charge of was our nutrition program.

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So I was in charge of working on behalf of Kentucky's cattle farmers and promoting their product with customers and consumers, teaching them how to cook beef, teaching them about the nutritional benefits of beef. And I felt so hypocritical and like I was doing a disservice to this industry that I grew up in by being a voice for its nutritional benefits without being really an image of what most people think health looks like.

And I felt very conflicted in that role. And it was on a work trip from Kentucky to Arizona, I was getting on an airplane and it was the first time in my life I had to ask for a seatbelt extender. And just by chance, that same day, I happened to buy Rachel Hollis's book, *Girl, Wash Your Face* in the airport bookstore. And the only thing I could do after asking for that seatbelt extender on the airplane to not burst into tears on this work trip was to shove my face in that book.

And in so many ways, it felt like that moment, that seatbelt moment and the fact that I bought that book really saved my life because that book was kind of my wakeup call that I wasn't taking ownership of my life and my choices. And while it was a hard pill to swallow to think it is my choices that got me here, it was also the more freeing thing to think if it's my choices that got me here, then it can be my choices to get me somewhere else.

And that's really where my personal development journey started. And later that year, October 1st, I joined Rachel Hollis's Last 90 Days challenge, which started with five simple habits. And I said, you know what Kiah, we're going to show up and we're going to do this, not from a place of self-hate and wanting to change our bodies, but we're going to do this from a place of self-love and learning how to love our bodies enough in a way that we're going to show up and honor it well by moving it, by fueling it well, by hydrating it well, by speaking to it kindly, which is something that I hadn't done for a really, really long time. And fast forward, after my first 90 days, I

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lost 25 pounds. And in one year, I lost over 103 pounds with small baby step changes.

Jill: Oh my gosh. I love this. Because that's the journey that I've sort of decided to take for myself this year is to lose 100 pounds, which I actually haven't said out loud on this podcast. So surprise everyone. But what you said about making changes from a place of love versus a place of hate, and versus a place of I need to lose weight so that I can be lovable, so that I can be worthy, that's not a super helpful thought to have, right? And it's going to result in just continually beating the shit out of yourself, or if you do lose the weight, being unable to maintain it.

So I guess what I'm super curious about is what were some of the changes that you made and what were some of the thoughts that you had as you were making those changes?

Kiah: Yeah, so in terms of the actual - I guess the logistical changes, like what physical changes I made in my life, it started with me really having to get honest with myself about the excuses I was setting up. And I guess really that had to do with a mindset shift.

I realized that I was really playing victim to all of these circumstances in my life. I was playing victim to my genetics, thinking I was dealt the bad genetic can, there's nothing I can do about it. I was playing a victim to my job, saying I don't have time because my job is so demanding. I don't have money because I'm not paid enough at my job to afford a gym membership.

I even blamed my fiancé, my boyfriend at the time because I told myself if he won't commit to doing this with me, then I can't be successful. And I

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realized that I was putting all of this power on these circumstances outside of me and so the first thought that I had to change was that I am in control of my own life, I am in control of my own schedule, my own decisions, my own perspective, which is really the number one thing that had to change first.

And I'll say too, when I started this health journey, early on, I discovered Corinne Crabtree's podcast, Losing 100 Pounds. And I am not lying when I tell you that that podcast changed my life. Because Corinne was really the one that made me approach weight loss for the first time in my entire life, not from a place of okay, what do I need to change, what do I need to eliminate from my diet and how do I need to torture myself with exercise that I absolutely freaking despise.

Instead of looking at it that way, which is the way that I'd trained myself to think I had to do this for so long, she was the one that really taught me first this idea of how our thoughts really control everything. Everything in our lives. And that was groundbreaking. I mean, life-changing for me in such a big way.

And one day I hope to meet Corinne and just give her the biggest hug because she was really the one that helped me get my mindset right when it came to this. Learning how to speak to myself better, learning how to realize the way that I was self-sabotaging my journey, and not just my health journey but my whole life journey.

I realized that these thoughts I was thinking about myself were impacting my physical relationship with my body, but they were also impacting the way that I showed up for myself for the dreams that I had on my heart. When I started my health journey, that's also when I decided to start my entrepreneurial journey.

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And I don't think it's by accident that my entrepreneur journey and my health journey really flourished together at the same time. And I think it's because so much of the work I was doing, it wasn't just changing my diet and changing my exercise. It was changing my brain. And that influences every aspect of our lives.

Jill: So beautifully said. So first of all, I love that you started with Corinne because she's just one of my favorite people. She really is. But what do you think was the biggest mental shift that you made? You talked about owning your choices, what - is that the biggest mental shift you made? Or do you think there are others that fell into place as a result of believing I get to own my choices?

Kiah: Yeah. So something that's interesting about that, I think owning my choices was one of the big ones, but I think the second one is not owning all of my thoughts. I think this seems so simple, but the realization that just because I have a thought doesn't mean I have to believe it. That seems so simple like duh, but that was groundbreaking for me.

I was like, oh my gosh, I am not my thoughts. I'm a human, of course, I have over 60,000 thoughts a day. Odds are there's going to be some shitty ones that don't serve me. And guess what? I don't have to put any weight or time or energy into them. I get to observe them with compassion and curiosity and let them just float right on by.

And learning how to do that, learning how to be really compassionately curious about my brain instead of judgmental about it was really a big shift. And it took a lot of time. This is the hardest work of the journey. I think people assume that your health journey, your physical and mental health journey has to do with the hard part is giving up sweets and going for runs.

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And it's like, no, that stuff is way easier than digging deep and doing the mindset work on your brain.

Jill: That stuff all just falls into place once your brain is where it needs to be.

Kiah: Absolutely.

Jill: So as you were talking about not having to believe the thoughts in your brain, it occurred to me that our brains are kind of like, the internet or Facebook. When you're scrolling through Facebook, you're going to see stuff that you're like, that's not right. And you have two choices. You can just keep on scrolling, or you can engage with it and argue with it and judge it and be like, that's dumb.

How do you end up feeling when you get into the comments on a post on Facebook? You feel awful because nobody changes any minds. It's ridiculous. But if you keep on scrolling, you're like, oh, I don't have to engage with that, I can just keep going, that's such a powerful way to approach your brain like you did. Just like, I don't have to engage with you, thought.

Kiah: I love that visual too. That is such a good visual and a good way to think about it. Oh my gosh, I love that.

Jill: Yeah, we should do some kind of fun graphic of your thoughts like a Facebook feed.

Kiah: I love that idea.

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Jill: So fun. So you talked a little bit about your philosophy on change and so forth. How does running fit into all of it? Because you're a runner now, which is the best ever.

Kiah: So the other thing I'll say, mindset is everything and I think relating the mindset as well as your lifestyle shifts, I think that the key here and something that I really preach and teach my clients and my community is really focusing on the baby steps.

I think a lot of us have this tendency to want to dive headfirst, we want to see instant results, quick progress. And so we clean out all the "bad" foods from our fridge, we join the gym, and we start really hard. We're thinking this is the year I'm going to change everything.

And then what happens is we end up getting burnt out three weeks in, "falling off the wagon," and then continuing this cycle of start overhauling our diet and our lifestyle overnight, getting burnt out, quitting, starting again, quitting, starting again, quitting.

And so really, I think the key here is the small changes and committing to allowing it to take however long it needs so that you only have to do this lifestyle shift really once and have it be a slow progress where you create the life that you want.

And that really played into my running journey as well. So I will say Jill, for the longest time, running was my least favorite activity of all time. If you asked me would you rather get a paper cut in between every single finger or go on a run, I probably would have been like, give me the paper cuts because running is the worst. That's how much I despised it.

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And I feel like I had a really traumatic relationship from it from like, my high school PE days and being the slowest one, not being able to run a mile without stopping. And so I just always told myself I am not a runner, I am not someone who enjoys running, I can't do it, it's not for me.

And as I embarked on my health journey, I realized that my journey was really about proving myself wrong in so many ways and really challenging the thoughts and beliefs that I had about myself. And so the fact that I was able to lose over 100 pounds in one year, I was like, you know what, I can do freaking anything.

I just did what really felt impossible to me in so many ways, and I told myself I can lose over 100 pounds in one year, I think I could probably learn to enjoy running. So I did not start running when I first started my health journey. I didn't start running until after I lost most of my weight. But I decided, you know what, I'm ready for this next challenge and I'm going to start with baby steps.

So I didn't just start running. I didn't start running a 5K day one. I started jogging a little bit. And I remember the first day, it was January of 2020. I ran my first mile straight without walking, the first time ever in my entire life was January of last year. And I felt like a million bucks. I was like, can you freaking believe that I just did that?

And it felt like I was on top of the freaking world. And as I started this running thing, I discovered your podcast and me and my girlfriends became superfans because just like with Corinne, what I loved about your podcast was you were teaching these tangible tools when it came to running, but you talked so much about mindset.

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And really realizing the way that mindset plays into everything, even the way that we speak to ourselves and what we're believing while we're out on a run, that was a huge game-changer for me.

Jill: And I love what you said about you didn't set out to learn to run. You set out to learn to enjoy running, which is all the mental work. Because when you enjoy something, you're much more likely to do it. So I think it's so much easier to say I'm going to learn how to enjoy running.

It makes your life so much easier when your goal is to enjoy running, rather than I'm just going to become a runner because you become a runner and you still have a bullshit story in your head about this is the hardest thing ever, I'd rather have paper cuts than go running, right? Then you're going to struggle with it.

And then the consistency's not there and over time, you don't really change much because you just kind of keep reinforcing that belief that you don't love running. But when your goal is like, I'm going to learn how to enjoy it, that requires so much more of your brain. And then your body just follows.

Kiah: And what I think is so great about that too, exactly what you just said too I think can be applied to our health journeys. If we can say - instead of saying I want to lose 100 pounds, because I feel like we all have a lot of thoughts about what that's going to take in our brains. What if we said I'm going to commit to learning how to enjoy creating a healthy lifestyle?

That feels so much better and so much more exciting and it doesn't feel as painful as maybe just telling ourselves I need to lose weight. You know what I mean?

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Jill: Yeah it is, it's a totally different approach. And I mean, one of the things that I do when I'm working on a big goal is I start - even when I'm trying to change my thoughts instead of saying, okay, I'm going to go to a thought of I love making these changes, I start out with a little tiny version of that, which is I'm learning to like eating slightly differently.

So can you speak to that a little bit? It's not just the actions that we take little by little but our thoughts. Changing those little by little. How do you approach that process?

Kiah: Yes, and I think that's so powerful. I always say that the magic is in the baby steps. Not just in like, oh, we're going to start walking and then we're going to start jogging and then we're going to start running, but also with the mindset piece. And something that I talk to my clients a lot about is the tool or the method of creating these ladder thoughts.

And it's basically creating these baby steps with the way that you're thinking. So where you're starting out right now, let's just say in your running journey, if where you're starting out right now in your running journey is I despise running, that thought doesn't make you feel good. It doesn't make you feel inspired to go for a run.

So I think the first step, the first baby step in that ladder, the next rung up isn't going from I despise running to I like running. There's a lot of gap to fill there. And so I think the first step when it comes to just baby-stepping up that thought is creating a neutral thought about running.

So instead of saying I despise running to I like running, maybe your next thought to practice about running if you're wanting to become a runner is

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just saying like, I can run. That's not saying you hate it, that's not saying you like it. It's just having a neutral perspective about it. Like I can run.

It's appreciating your body's ability to run. It doesn't say how far, how long, or how quickly or anything, but it's just kind of neutralizing that thought. And once you get to that space of being able to neutralize that thought in relationship with running, then you can take it up the next rung up the ladder, which maybe you can go from I despise running to I can run to I am learning to enjoy parts of running, or the benefits that running gives me.

And you can keep kind of baby-stepping up those ladder thoughts, practicing those thoughts until they believe true. And then continuing to challenge those perspectives until eventually, you get to that goal thought of oh my gosh, Christmas miracle, I think I actually enjoy this thing, which is what happened to me very unexpectedly.

Jill: What was that moment? Was it after you ran a mile without stopping for the first time? Was that the moment where you were like, wait a minute, I think I actually like this? Or was it a different point in time?

Kiah: I think that that was definitely one of them because I think that was the first thing that I had to do - the first thing in my running journey that I accomplished that made me feel like, oh my gosh, I am so much more capable than I give myself credit for. And that in itself feels really good, and I can get that feeling through running and continuing to challenge this perspective and belief about what was possible for me.

And it felt exciting to be basically like, create this new identity for myself. Because I also realized along my journey that we create all of these labels

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for ourselves that are completely made up. We put ourselves in these boxes, nobody else put us there except us.

Another example not related to health or running, but I told myself for so long that I was not a hat person. And I was with one of my girlfriends Jessica, who shout-out to Jessica, she is a superfan, Jill. She's going to geek out that she's going to hear her name on the podcast.

Jill: Hi Jessica.

Kiah: And I was with my girlfriend Jessica in San Francisco one day, we were going out to brunch, and I saw this girl walk - this was before COVID obviously. And I saw this girl walking along the street and she was wearing this really cute felt fedora-y kind of hat. I was like, oh my gosh, that hat is so cute, I wish I could pull that off.

And Jessica looks over at me, she's like, "You know what you have to do to be a hat person, Kiah?" And I was like, "No, what?" And she's like, "You just have to wear hats." And I was like, oh my god, you're right, that's all you have to do. And it seems so silly, but we create these labels out of thin air that there's no scientific evidence behind why I can't be a hat person. I just have to start wearing hats.

And it's kind of the same thing with running. If I want to be a runner, you know what I have to do, Jill? I just have to start running. And we make it mean this huge big thing of I am not that type of person, I cannot do this thing. No, you can be whatever kind of person you want to be. You just got to start doing the dang thing.

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And the other thing that really was exciting on my running journey Jill, my friend Jessica also started her health journey after me and she lost over 50 pounds. And we both watched the movie Brittany Runs a Marathon together, after making this big progress on our health journey. We both were like, balling in tears by the end of it and we looked at each other and we're like, we're going to run a freaking marathon. We're going to do it.

So we decided to start training for our first marathon and we ran our first virtual half marathon this last year. And my fiancé was our mobile hydration station. He drove to the different checkpoints in his truck and we're currently training for our first full that we're probably going to run later this year.

Jill: I love this because that was going to be my next question is like, alright, where are we going with this running? I absolutely love this. So as you were training for your first half and as you train for your first marathon, what are some of the thoughts that you've used?

Because it's so funny because when you set a goal for yourself that you've never achieved before, it's a temptation to say I don't think I can do it because I've never done it before. Well, duh. There was - nobody flew planes before there were planes. At some point somebody had to say oh, I think I can make this thing that flies, or I think I can jump out of a plane.

Things don't exist until somebody thinks of them. So it's kind of a faulty argument but our brains believe it. So what are some of the ways that you got past the doubts and so forth as you were training for that virtual half and as you train for your marathon?

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Kiah: Yeah, I think one of the main thoughts for me, because when I'm out on a run and things start to get uncomfortable, that is when my brain starts piping in with all the reasons I should stop and turn around, or all the reasons I should start walking, or all the reasons why this is way too hard. Because it's uncomfortable.

Running for long distances can be uncomfortable. And there's a difference between pain in injury and pain in just that discomfort. And one of the things that I think helps me to remind myself in my running journey and honestly life journey in general is that there is growth in discomfort. There is growth in discomfort.

And if I was able to go on a run and have it feel easy all the time, I wouldn't be growing as a runner. I wouldn't be strengthening myself as a runner. And so when I am out on a run and I feel that discomfort of okay, this is getting a little challenging, or my legs are feeling a little bit tired, instead of allowing my brain to go down this rabbit hole of excuses for why I should stop, it's also reminding myself like, this may be uncomfortable but in this discomfort is where there is growth.

And I think too, making sure that I honor those baby steps and really remembering that my running journey isn't about going to zero to marathon overnight. But really giving myself grace and making a realistic plan, which is why I love what you teach, Jill, is that you make running approachable for someone who has never gone on a run before in their entire life.

And I think learning how to approach that journey in a graceful way, in a way that meets myself where I'm at is so, so helpful because it makes it attainable, instead of making me feel like I can't do this, I'm not cut out for this. It's learning how to make those baby step changes along the way.

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Jill: Yeah, for sure. And I think that's so applicable to losing 100 pounds as well. If you think to yourself like, I can't do this, it's too much, you're just going to quit. But thinking about well, what's one change that I can make right now.

Kiah: Yeah. And the other thing Jill, and this is something that I feel like I have you in the back of my head. And actually, me and my girlfriend Jessica, when we ran our half marathon, I think we were down to the last two miles and we both were yelling out at the top of our lungs, "These are the miles that we came for."

And we were really channeling our Jill and the idea that yeah, when you get to the end of your run, especially if it's a distance you haven't done yet, it's going to be challenging and difficult, but it's in those last couple of miles, that's the stuff where you're proving to yourself that you're more capable than you thought. That's where you're really pushing yourself, that's where the growth is happening.

And I think remembering that and honoring that can be so empowering. It's like, this is uncomfortable and I'm still going because I'm a freaking badass and these are the miles that I came for.

Jill: I love that. I love that so much. And it's something you said earlier - well, what you said earlier about I'm going to learn to enjoy running, which is think is the thing you've accomplished. I think people get confused and think, oh, enjoying running means that every single step, you're just full of joy and you're like, this is the best thing ever. And that's not really what it means to enjoy running. So can you speak to that?

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Kiah: Yeah, oh my gosh, yeah. So man, wouldn't that be great though? Wouldn't it be great though if every step and stride of enjoying running was joyful? And wouldn't it be great if like, every step and stride in life was just always joyful?

Jill: It would be, but actually, so wait, put a pin in that for a second because I do think that if everything is joyful, then it's so fucking boring.

Kiah: That is true. And I think too that you have to endure the suck in order to appreciate the joy. You can't know true joy or accomplishment if you aren't willing to trudge through the mud. And you can't have the good without the bad. Life is always 50/50. Every journey that you embark is 50/50. And running is no different than that.

But you can't expect to have that transformation without going through the sucky parts. I think that a lot of us assumed that I want to lose 100 pounds, I want to run a marathon, and we think that we're entitled to having it easy for some reason.

And so when we start this journey and things start getting difficult and challenging, we tell ourselves, "I guess I wasn't cut out for this, I guess this is a turning point, I guess this means I'm going to give up." And we think that we are entitled to have that transformation, to reach that peak, to accomplish that goal without having to walk through the hard shit.

And I think it's so easy to look at people that are accomplishing things that we want to do, maybe they did lose 100 pounds, maybe they are running marathons, maybe they have this successful multi-million-dollar business. And you think, man, that would be so cool.

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And then we create all these stories in our brains about how they must have something special that I don't have, they must have some special resource, they must have some special talent or skillset that I lack. Instead of recognizing that they just kept standing back up after every single failure and mistake that they endured. You are not entitled to achieving what those people have achieved if you aren't willing to walk through the hard shit of getting there.

And it's so easy to see someone who's achieved the thing and assume that they had it easy. But what you don't see is the years and miles that they have had to run in order to get there. And I think it's important that we honor that journey and recognize that every day that we show up and go for a run, especially when we don't feel like it, that is where the transformation is really happening.

And we have to honor that piece of our journey, that the hard days, those are just as important, if not more important than the days that we go outside and go for a run and it feels magical. It's the days that we show up and go for a run when we don't want to, that's really where the magic in the journey is.

Jill: Yeah. For sure it is. And I think people say, "Oh, you have to embrace the suck," and I think there's something to that. And first of all, I think labeling it as this sucks isn't super helpful. It's like, this just doesn't feel - but what we do, I do it too. I do it too. And then sometimes I'll be like, does it really suck though?

Because I'm actually able to get out there and run and maybe it was a little harder than usual, but even if - when you say to yourself, I'm just going to embrace the suck, it gives you permission to be like, this isn't the most fun

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thing ever but I'm going to do it anyway and I'm going to enjoy the results of it.

Kiah: Yes, yes. And I think too bringing it back to I'm going to enjoy the results of it, I think that whatever it is that you're pursuing, knowing that if you're trying anything new, it's not going to be easy all the time. There's going to be parts that are going to be challenging. You're growing. Growth doesn't happen when everything is easy peasy. Growth happens in the struggle.

And I think really rooting yourself in a deep enough and compelling enough why is so important because if you are just wanting to be a runner to say that you ran a marathon, cool, that's fine, that's great. But I think that we really need to dig deep and really discover why is it that I'm doing this. What is it that I want to feel as a result of this? What is it that's going to make me want to show up on the days when really sleeping in my cozy bed sounds way more enjoyable?

Because if we aren't really rooted in a deep enough, compelling why, it's not going to be worth it to us to show up and endure the parts that aren't easy, unless we know that there's something on the other side of that struggle that is so much more worth it to us than that temporary discomfort.

Jill: Yeah, that's a great point. And I think a lot of times people think that a race is a motivation to go out and run and that's the thing that pulls them forward. We get confused. We're like, oh, if I just finish this half marathon in under three hours, or if I just finish my marathon, then I can be happy, then I can be proud of myself.

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But really, that's just a circumstance. It's just an event in time. And all of your thinking is what really has to shift to allow you to change your emotional state. And if your why is just because I want to hang that medal on the wall, I mean, that's great. There's nothing wrong with that. But if you want to keep being a runner, it has to keep going.

And I think it applies to losing 100 pounds because if your only reason to want to lose 100 pounds is so you can fit in smaller jeans, then you're going to fit in smaller jeans and you're still going to be the same version of yourself that created the weight in the first place.

And there's one other thing that I wanted to kind of circle back to because you said something about when you look at somebody who's achieved what you want to achieve, what you don't see is all of the years of work. And somebody might look at you and say well, there you were, you had a bad day in the airplane, and you decided I'm going to lose 100 pounds and you did it.

And I suspect that's not at all how it happened, right? That decision in the airplane was probably the culmination of many, many years of thinking and trying and doing. So can you speak a little bit to that?

Kiah: Yeah. So yes, I was 25 when I had what I call the seatbelt moment. But up to that point, I remember looking back Jill, I think the first time I can really vividly remember going on a diet, I think I was maybe 10. My first diet. And I went on the Atkins diet with my parents. And I was really hyperaware...

Jill: Wait, when you're a cattle rancher, you have all the protein you need. Like of course you went on Atkins.

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Kiah: Of course it was Atkins, right? That's why my brother just lost 70 pounds on keto. In my family, I could never be like, I'm going to lose weight and I'm going to go plant-based. They would shun me.

Jill: Anyway, sorry to interrupt.

Kiah: No, it's all good. So my family, my parents have struggled with weight for a long time, my grandparents have struggled with their weight. I come from a family with a long line of heart disease and diabetes. And it is something - I think genetics do play a piece of course in our health.

But I remember going on my first diet when I was 10. I did Atkins with my parents. And I saw some results, we woke up and did our walks around the ranch before going to school, we ate all the beef, all the cheese, but I just remember being on that diet and desperately missing fruit so terribly. I couldn't have fruit on this diet.

And so what happened was I ended up losing weight and I was finally like, yes, I lost the weight, I can go back to normal now. And then I went back to normal, and surprise surprise, I gained all the weight back and then some. And then maybe a couple years later I went on the next diet.

I remember buying the Dieting for Dummies book, I did the Weight Watchers, I did all of these different programs all through my life. I did the yo-yo lose some, gain it back and then some, lose some, gain it back and then some.

And it took a lot of years of trying and failing and trying and failing before this last time, I finally got to the core of it, which was really rebuilding my relationship with myself. Learning how can I learn to appreciate and love

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myself in this body, exactly as it is, 285 pounds, how can I learn to love and appreciate this body just as it is? And from that place, care for it in the way that it deserves.

And that took a lot of practice. And I will admit, I'm a human, I'm still not perfect at it. I think that when we expect ourselves to love our bodies all the time, it's unrealistic. We can continue rebuilding our relationship with ourselves, but no relationship is perfect. Not even the one that we have with ourselves.

So I don't even want someone to look at me now and be like, oh, she went on this journey, she lost the weight, she's done all this work on self-love, she's perfect, she's got it figured out. It's like, no, I still wake up and I have bad body image days. I still have days that I overeat or I might buffer with food. And I'm not perfect, but the difference is I am someone who is committed to this journey and committing to honoring myself, giving myself grace, and standing back up after mistakes.

And something that you said a second ago, Jill, you were talking about how doing - becoming a runner so that you can run a race and put the medal on your wall, that's fine and good, but that's a moment in time. And I think what I realized in my journey was when I started this health journey, I told myself I want to weigh 150 pounds. I had this goal weight.

And full transparency Jill, it's been over two years and I literally teach other women how to create a healthy lifestyle and I still haven't hit my goal weight. But what I discovered on my health journey was that this isn't about a goal weight. It isn't about reaching 150 pounds on the scale. It's not about putting the medal on the wall. It's about the person you become along the journey of getting there.

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And what I discovered was that a goal weight is honestly bullshit. What's so much more helpful is a goal feeling of how is it that I want to feel in my life and in my body. And the way I wanted to feel was I wanted to feel confident, I wanted to feel energetic, I wanted to feel appreciated and respected by myself. And I realized that I didn't need to have a number on the scale to tell me that that's what it was.

It was about showing up regularly, consistently, failing, falling on my face, gaining weight, giving myself grace, and continuing to move forward. It was through all of that hardship and all of those baby steps, and the person I became along the way, that was the real gift here. It wasn't about a number on the scale.

And that's what I really want everyone to realize in this is whether it is that you're training for a marathon, whether it is that you're trying to lose weight, yeah, it's okay to have a goal. It's beautiful to have a goal to reach towards. But the magic isn't in reaching the goal. The magic is committing to the goal and committing to yourself and the person you become along the way to achieve that.

Jill: I'm speechless. I could not have said that better myself. That's just - I'm a little teary. I mean, it's so true because we think that reaching the goal is going to change how we feel and really, we need to change how we feel to reach the goal. And then the goal often becomes irrelevant because we've achieved the real thing, which is creating the version of ourselves that we want to be. I just love that. So good.

Okay, well I think I'm just going to leave it there because I don't know if we can possibly top what you just said. But what I would like to know is how people can find you, how they can work with you. Because you've got a lot of kind of super fun stuff going on right now. So tell us all the things.

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Kiah: Yes. Okay, so for the beginning of the year, I'm currently in the middle of hosting a January challenge. And even though it is towards the end of January, you know what, it is never too late to start. So if you want to join the January challenge, it's called One Bit Don't Quit, and the idea of it is that you pick one bit, one habit or one action step, literally just one, whether it's drinking more water, moving your body for 15 minutes, meditating, journaling, whatever that one thing is, you pick one new habit or action step and you commit to doing it for one month.

And it's really about honoring the baby steps of rebuilding trust with yourself and showing up and keeping those promises by keeping things simple. And so if people want to join the One Bit Don't Quit challenge, they can visit my website at coachkiah.com.

The other thing that I'm really excited about Jill is at the end of this challenge, next week I'm going to be opening up the doors to my digital course. So if people are ready to really create a healthy life that they love, they really want to create this lifestyle and rebuild that relationship with themselves from the inside out, to not only focus on their physical health but also their mental and emotional health, I am opening the doors to Climb, my digital course.

And we are getting ready to kick that off in February. The doors will be opening the last week of January, and I'd love, love, love to have you join this incredible community of women that are just really learning to show up for themselves and create a life that they don't want to escape from. Let's say no to all the fad diets and let's just commit to creating a life we love, learning how to rebuild that self-confidence and trust, and really rebuild these relationships with ourselves from the inside out.

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So I'm really excited about getting that up and rolling and I'm also opening up a membership in March to past students. So once you join the digital course, you're also going to have the opportunity to work with me on a month-to-month basis. You're going to get to hear from guest coaches, just like Jill, and I'm so excited for all of this to come this year.

And if you want to hang out on social, I share a lot of free content on social. I love meeting new people. I am on Instagram, it's my favorite platform. It's @kiah_twisselman and I'm also on Facebook at Coach Kiah.

Jill: I love all of this. Okay, I am so excited for everything that you have coming. I'm so excited. I will be there in the course 100%. So we're going to have links to all this stuff in the show notes, but if you're not a show notes person, Kiah is spelled Kiah. Yes?

Kiah: Yes.

Jill: I know that. I'm looking at your name right now, but kiah_twisselman. It's two S's, one L.

Kiah: Yes. And I think I'm the only Kiah Twisselman out there, so it makes it easy.

Jill: I think you're probably one of the few Kiah's. I'd never heard that name until I met you. And as you know, I had some struggles saying it right several times.

Kiah: That's okay. People call me Kiah all the time, I'm not offended.

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Jill: Well and you know, people call me Angie all the time and I'm like, yeah, whatever, I get it. But it's still nice to have somebody pronounce your name properly. So make sure you check out the show notes with all the links to all of coach Kiah's stuff. She's amazing. Follow her on Instagram, if for no other reason than she has the most beautiful feed with the most lovely pictures of her in - where do you take your Instagram pictures? Are they on the ranch?

Kiah: A lot of them are on the ranch, yeah.

Jill: They're simply gorgeous.

Kiah: My photographer is my fiancé. He is not trained in photography, but he is really pulling it off well, I got to say.

Jill: I'm impressed because I look at your feed and I'm like, she must have a professional photographer that just follows her around all the time.

Kiah: It's just my fiancé. And the great thing about it is he'll yell at me like, "Open your eyes Kiah. No, twist." He's very pushy and I'll get sassy about it when we take my pictures, but when I look at them later, I'm like, wow, I look great in these. He's like, I know, you should trust me.

Jill: I love this. I love this so much. You're a power couple. So good. Alright, so you guys, join the One Bit Don't Quit challenge, join Climb. What's the exact date that it opens?

Kiah: It's going to open January 25th.

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Jill: Okay, January 25th. So if you're listening to this podcast on the day that it opens, or on the day that the podcast drops, you got a few days to wait, but make sure you join the challenge, follow her on Instagram. And yeah, this was super fun. Thank you for joining me today. I really appreciate it.

Kiah: Thank you so much for having me. This is such an honor and also just such a full circle moment for me Jill, I've got to say.

Jill: I love it. I love it. Grateful. Okay everyone, I will talk to you next week, have a fabulous week, get your ass out there and run, and that's it.

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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.