

# Ep #215: Rocket Scientist Turned Odyssey Runner with Melissa Carter



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Jill Angie**

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

## Ep #215: Rocket Scientist Turned Odyssey Runner with Melissa Carter

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 back this week with a super fun guest. This week I am delighted to talk with runner, dreamer, and hardworking free spirit, Dr. Melissa Corley Carter.

Now, Melissa is a like honest to God rocket scientist and Air Force officer turned writer, artist, leadership coach, and resilience champion. And, of course, she's a runner. And after her 20 year dream to become an astronaut was shattered, my heart is breaking, Melissa eventually rediscovered her true purpose, which was to build grounded leaders, connected humans, and powerful teams that change the world.

Now she's living the dream, she's dancing with the universe daily, love this, and joyfully embodying her soul's journey as the barefoot, dancing rocket scientist. So, all that to say she's an amazing person and today we're going to be talking about her book, *Running the World: Marathon Memoirs from the Seven Continents*.

And I just finished reading this book, you are just not going to believe some of the amazing stuff that Melissa has done and experienced and some of the lessons that she's pulled from that entire escapade. So, Melissa, welcome to the show. Thank you for being here.

Melissa: Thank you so much, Jill. Thanks for having me, I'm excited to be here.

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Jill: I'm super excited to talk to you, I feel like you have a lot to teach me.

Melissa: Likewise, oh my goodness.

Jill: So, okay, let's start with the basics because I've got a million questions written down here to ask you. But maybe we can start by having you sort of explain what was this odyssey, I guess, that you went on. Talk us through what the seven continents' marathons are and all of that.

Melissa: Yeah, so running a marathon on all seven continents is a goal that I guess some marathoners have, obviously. And there's Seven Continents Clubs, there's more than one out there. But, yeah, it's sort of just such an adventurous goal. But I'll say that I sort of just stumbled upon it. This wasn't some lifelong dream I had, I didn't even have a lifelong dream to run a marathon.

It never occurred to me to run a marathon until a certain point in my life, it was actually 2006. And I had just started running longer distances with a friend of mine at work. I was in the Air Force at the time, I was a couple years into my first Air Force assignment. And I had a really athletic friend, and she was taking me on longer and longer runs.

I remember my first eight mile run, it was such a milestone and just wobbly legs walking down the stairs. But I was telling my mom about my running pursuits and she actually told me that there was a marathon in Big Sur, which was a place that my family loves. I mean, Big Sur, California on the Pacific Coast is just so gorgeous.

And it was September at the time, and I was like, "The Big Sur marathon is in April. Surely from September to April I could train for a marathon." So

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yeah, so I really just decided to run my first marathon just so that I could run at Big Sur.

And, and then it was actually at the Big Sur Expo that I passed a table for the Seven Continents Club. And so they had their brochures and it just captured my imagination immediately. And I didn't really look back. It just seemed so cool, especially running in Antarctica. You know, it was certainly a little bit daunting, like that has to be crazy.

But that was also part of the allure, I think, was how amazing would that be? And it didn't really occur to me that it would be, I mean, I knew it would be hard, obviously. But it didn't really occur to me to not do it. So just a couple days later, before even the race started, I had already decided to do it. So that's kind of how that fell out.

Jill: Wait, so you had not even run your first marathon yet and you were already planning out running one on each of the seven continents?

Melissa: Mm-hmm.

Jill: I absolutely love that, like you're a girl after my own heart. And there's something that you say in the book that really just caught my attention because you were talking about your reason for doing it. And you're just like, "Why not? Why would I not do this?"

Melissa: Right, yeah.

Jill: I love this.

Melissa: It was one of those things that just so captured my imagination, I couldn't imagine not doing it having had the idea. You know, it really, truly

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called to me and just said, “Hey, this is your thing. You have to do this.” And there was no going back. As soon as it just came up, it was like, “Yes, I have to do this.”

Jill: Okay, so I can totally relate to that. There have been many things that I've thought, “Oh, this –” I love the term “captured my imagination,” because I feel like like that's where we live most of our lives, right, is in our imagination. So I guess in my experience for myself, I'll have something that captures my imagination, but then when it gets time to actually do the thing, I'm like, “Oh, wait, this is going to be really hard. Maybe I want to rethink this.”

So did you have any moments like that? And obviously, you completed the journey. So talk to me about that. Any doubts that you might have had or were there people that were like, “What is wrong with you?”

Melissa: That's a good question. Yeah, I certainly had my hard moments. I mean, I'm not a fast runner so I completely relate to your coaching style and everything of just crossing the finish line is all that matters. And crossing it in your own way, even if it's not even the finish line of an official race. Just working on your own goals and setting your own goals.

Anyway, so I knew it was going to be hard. It was definitely outside my comfort zone as it were, but I honestly don't remember any periods when I thought, “I think I'm just going to bag this.” It never ever got to that. It's hard to describe, it was such a clear yes, that it would never have occurred to me to just stop.

So even though the marathons would be hard, and even though it would take me forever to finish them, and it takes up a whole Saturday doing a

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long run for a marathon. So it was a significant portion of my time for several years. But never really considered throwing in the towel, for sure.

Jill: I love this. And I mean that list of accomplishments that you've created for yourself in your life kind of speaks to that, right? Like you're like a literal rocket scientist. And I feel like that doesn't happen by accident. That's, another thing, you're like, "Oh, it captured—" And you even talk about your dream of becoming an astronaut. I feel like that's probably something that deeply captured your imagination in the same way.

Melissa: Mm-hmm. Yes, and it's been interesting with that. Being rejected from the astronaut program, which happened because of bad eyesight. Actually, I had gotten LASIK eye surgery, but my eyesight before I got LASIK was so bad, I was disqualified anyway.

Jill: Which seems completely unreasonable by the way. When I read that I was like, "Who is in charge? Give me their phone number."

Melissa: Yeah, something about detached retinas, like increased risk and whatever. And I mean, quite honestly, no ragging on NASA. I mean, they have so many qualified candidates, they don't really have to dig into the weeds of the medically unqualified.

Jill: Yeah, but still.

Melissa: Yeah, exactly, but still. It was definitely devastating at the time. It was like your typical dark night of the soul for me, because it had been my dream for 20 years. And so it was quite a recovery process of really kind of becoming okay with life as not an astronaut.

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But I think when you're saying capture the imagination, what I have learned in retrospect, and in everything that I've learned since then, I realize that actually what captured my imagination really was space itself. It was looking up at the stars. It was the cosmos.

And we were also chatting a little bit about Human Design before this. As a Quantum Human Design practitioner, which is all about kind of universal connection and higher purpose, and who we really are in our souls. I think I understood that cosmic connection when I was young, but the only way I knew how to translate it into the world was, "Oh, that means I should be an astronaut."

So in fact, I actually get to live that spiritual cosmic connection dream every single day. So at this point, I don't regret at all not becoming an astronaut because that wasn't the thing. It was the goal behind the goal, as it were. Which I think applies in any coaching scenario. Like what do you really want when you want this thing? Is it the thing itself? Probably not, it's the thing it's going to give you.

Jill: Yeah, I have goosebumps because it's like whenever we're going after a goal, it's really not the goal. It's always the way we think we're going to feel. So as you were pursuing the goal of running seven marathons on seven continents, what do you think was the feeling that you were chasing?

Melissa: Great question. I think it was a sense of adventure. And there was probably a little bit of that's rare. I will confess that I like standing out in a crowd as it were. So it just seemed so crazy and so unique. It was really the uniqueness of it, doing that crazy thing that relatively few people have done. Which, incidentally, was very similar to the astronaut thing. It was sort of like, I want to see if I have what it takes to do this hard thing.

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Jill: Yeah, I'm sensing some themes. So okay, I want to jump around a little bit into some of the individual races. Because we're talking about cosmic connection and so forth, and you did the solar eclipse race.

Actually, I'm going to jump around even more a little bit, because that was in Australia and that was only offered once, right? It's not a regular race because we don't have a solar eclipse every year.

Melissa: Exactly.

Jill: But you said in the book that the solar eclipse race was your favorite of the seven, with regard to cosmic significance. So I'd love for you to say more about that.

Melissa: Sure. Yeah, so Incidentally, this whole astronaut dream that we were talking about, when I found out that I was rejected it was in 2012. I had two marathons left in my seven continents, and I ran both of them that year.

So my seven continents journey and my astronaut journey actually came to a close in their respective ways in the same year. So, yeah, it was pretty crazy. So I went to I went to Rapa Nui on South America, it's Easter Island, that was about a month and a half after the astronaut thing. And then solar eclipse was about six months later.

So the solar eclipse was my last of the seven continents. And the cosmic significance, first of all, yes, the once in a lifetime marathon. A total solar eclipse in and of itself is rare and unique, and the sun and the moon and the earth have to be perfectly aligned.



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So, first of all, we're talking alignment. So not just cosmic alignment, but alignment with our souls and our life purpose. And so in this same time frame when my whole world was turned upside down and I had no more status quo, it was really like a death of the status quo for me, I didn't know what I was going to do with my life after that. I didn't even really know who I was. My identity was completely shaken up because I had always identified myself as a future astronaut.

So it was really like just kind of opening the door to trusting the universe as far as what's going to come next because I had no idea. So there's the actual, literal cosmic alignment going on with the solar eclipse. And incidentally, since I've learned a lot since then about astrology, whatever, I mean, the eclipses are even very significant in our personal lives.

And I know that that tends to sound a little woo woo. But I've embraced the woo woo, the rocket scientist that loves woo woo. And I think it's really all about meaning making. So all the wisdom traditions of the world are really trying to answer the question of why are we here? And where do we fit into the puzzle?

So anyway, so there's that sort of impact of solar eclipse energy. And it just it all kind of comes together into both physical and spiritual alignment as it were.

Jill: I love that. Well, one of the things that I love about eclipses, because I'm trying to think, the last solar eclipse that I saw, it was, was that 2017 or 2018?

Melissa: Yes, the total on here in the US was 2017, yeah.

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Jill: Right, yeah, thank you. And I remember exactly where I was, I made a point of going outside to watch it. And I think what I love about a solar eclipse, or I guess lunar eclipses happen more frequently.

Melissa: They do.

Jill: I don't know. But it's like this moment, there's two things about it. One is it makes you really pay attention to what's outside of the earth.

Melissa: Yeah.

Jill: Because I think we can forget, we're just like, "Yeah, sun, stars, moon. Yeah, yeah, yeah." But it makes you actually look up at the sky and think about the space around us. And it's like a huge number of people are all doing the same thing at the same time. And I feel like there's just, and I mean, I'm not really a woo woo person but with stuff like this, I'm like that many people thinking about the same thing and wondering those big questions about why are we here? All at the same time, I think is super powerful.

Melissa: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely, that wondering. And actually I think solar and lunar eclipses probably happen with the same frequency, it just does depend where you are in the world and if you can see it. But yes, I think that element of looking up at the sky in wonder is a human curiosity and adventure seeking thing. Again, trying to understand our place in the universe, and so it's a beautiful thing.

And I found that actually one of the biggest lessons I then took away from the solar eclipse itself was how little light it took, after the totality, how little light it took to completely light up the world. So it's not like the sun rising, right? The sun rising is gradual, but with the solar eclipse it was dark, and

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then instantaneously, just a tiny sliver of sun and the whole world is lit up like day again.

So to me, that is really a metaphor for how little light it takes to just transform the darkness. So if you feel like you're in darkness or the whole world right now is kind of in a state of turmoil, right? We could really use some light. And I think having that faith that it doesn't even take very much to make that transformation is really inspiring to me.

Jill: Yeah, that's a beautiful metaphor. I absolutely love that. Okay, well, so let's kind of get back into logistics. So can you walk me through or walk— I know the answer to this, but like walk the listeners through what was the order of the continents? And maybe say a little bit about each individual race.

Because first of all, you did seven epic races. It wasn't like you did some local marathon in somebody's backyard, right? These were seven really epic, kind of bucket list races for people. And you did seven of them. So walk us through.

Melissa: Yes, absolutely. So I did Big Sur. And I did Big Sur twice. That was the easy one because it was in the United States. But actually the second time I did it, I was actually living in Monterey, California, which is right next door. So I actually trained on the highway, which was actually a little bit dangerous on weekends because it wasn't closed to traffic.

But in any case, so I did Big Sur twice. And then my next one was Athens. So I did the Athens classic marathon in Europe. And that one was really cool because we actually started from the town of Marathon and did the original course. Where the runner, Pheidippides, the legend goes ran from

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Marathon to Athens to deliver the message of victory and then died on the spot.

What they don't say is that he ran to Sparta and back earlier in the week. So it wasn't just one marathon that killed him, so don't freak out.

Jill: He was an ultra-runner and he probably didn't have enough Gu packets with him.

Melissa: Absolutely, absolutely. So yeah, and we got to finish in the Olympic Stadium in Athens.

Jill: That's so cool.

Melissa: So it was pretty awesome, yeah. So then after that, I did the Great Wall marathon in China. And that was just an incredible experience and had its whole other story going on with that. That was actually my most challenging, it took me the longest of all the marathons.

And there were a lot of complicating factors but it also turned out to be the most rewarding in terms of camaraderie and humans helping humans and teamwork. Yeah, I don't think anyone really finished that race alone. So that's a whole other story that we can revisit if we want to.

Jill: Because that was on the Great Wall itself, so there's a lot of climbing.

Melissa: There's a lot of climbing. The whole race wasn't on the wall but a good portion of it was. So I think it was a six kilometers, and we did that twice. We went there and back but at different points in the race. So most of the race was kind of off the wall, off the wall as it were. But it was, oh my

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gosh, it was hard. It was hard and it was definitely one of those you wonder if you're actually going to finish it.

Jill: Yeah, I bet. I bet.

Melissa: Yeah.

Jill: Wow.

Melissa: Yeah. And then after that I actually, just a few weeks later, did the Safaricom in Africa and Kenya. And that was running in a game park so we said it was the perfect one for anyone who's ever said they will not run unless something is chasing them.

Jill: That's so good.

Melissa: So that was Kenya. And then I did Antarctica and that was certainly an adventure in and of itself. It also involved basically being on a ship, we cruised across the Drake Passage and went down to the Antarctic Peninsula. And I'm just kind of like running through them.

Then was Rapa Nui, again, in Easter Island, South America. So Easter Island was a territory of Chile at the time, I think actually it's not anymore. But I'm going to not speak to that, I don't actually know. So that was where the big statues called Moai are and that was pretty amazing as well. And then we closed with the solar eclipse marathon in Australia.

Jill: Oh my gosh.

Melissa: That was the five second tour.

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Jill: And how long did it take you to complete all of those?

Melisa: About five years.

Jill: So you went from never having done a marathon to completing, I mean, at least eight, right? Because you did Big Sur twice within five years. That's mind blowing.

Melissa: Right. And actually, I ran the Marine Corps marathon as my training run for the solar eclipse. So I did nine in the space of those years. I've done one more since, so I've done 10 total.

Jill: That's incredible. And, I mean, I just want to point out that I believe the first sentence of your book is— Wait, I wrote it down, “I'm not much of a runner.” I'm like that's such an inauspicious way to lead off a book of all these epic adventures. But here's one thing that I want to point out to my listeners, is that you do the run walk method.

Melissa: I do.

Jill: Right? So for anybody who's like, “Oh, well, of course, she's a rocket scientist. And she ran all these marathons, she must be like one of those hardcore, never walk.” No, you have a beautiful approach to running. I love it. So, can you talk a little bit more about why you chose the run walk method? Did you always run that way? Or was it just for the marathons? Say all the things.

Melissa: Yeah, absolutely. Actually, I was introduced to the run walk method by the woman who turned me into a runner in my Air Force assignment. So she kind of I guess was familiar with that and said, “Here's some books. And here's the idea.”

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And it made so much sense to me because I am definitely not your hardcore can't walk, must run every step of the way. Because I really didn't consider myself athletic. So I know that most of you out there maybe have become runners from not thinking you are athletic. And that was me.

One of the things I said in the book was on the seventh grade track team I was the last person to finish the mile in the tryouts. And, yeah, I'm just not competitive. I am not competitive as an athlete. I will play sports, and I'll do running, but I was wasn't on really competitive teams growing up. It never really got into my way of being.

And so yeah, I think in some ways I tend not to be competitive at things I don't feel like I'm very good at because I'm just setting myself up for failure. But in any case, yeah, I didn't have any pride attached to not walking during the race. So that was how I started training immediately. I never had any other way of training.

And I still do it, I'll still take walk breaks. And so I do it in all— I think when I was in really good marathon shape I think I had a threshold of like 10 miles. If I was going to go 10 miles or more I would do run walk. That threshold is much lower now.

So I'll basically run, walk if I'm running less than a mile. Because, first of all, I think if you use different muscles, even Jeff Galloway, kind of the proponent of the run walk method, people actually improve their times when they do that because of the rest and the alternating muscle groups factor.

So it sounds like, “Oh no, I can't walk, that will make me slower.” It doesn't actually make you slower. I mean, I was slow, period. But in any case, I'm a huge fan of the run walk method for sure.

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Jill: Yeah. I mean, unless you're an elite and you're trying to run a four minute mile or something. Almost every single one of my clients when I work with them and I start saying like, "Hey, let's just try a few little walk intervals, let's just see what happens." And they come back and they're like, "Okay, well, I just finished a 5K three minutes faster than my fastest time." I'm like, "Oh, imagine that."

Melissa: Yeah, totally.

Jill: But I think it's fun. I'm so glad that you mentioned it in the book, that that's the method that you use. Because I think it makes it a lot more accessible to people to think, like it allows them to have their imagination captured by such a huge goal because they think maybe this is a thing I could do too. So I appreciate that so much.

Okay, I've got so many questions down here. I'm not even sure where I want to go next. Okay, one of the other favorite things that I had about this book was at the end of each chapter, and you describe things so beautifully. And I'm thinking, "Oh, I can almost see it." And then you get to the end of the chapter and then boom, you've literally provided these gorgeous photos of the experience.

So can you talk, because you almost did like a photo journalistic approach to this. So tell me a little bit more about that.

Melissa: Yeah, so I've always loved photography. And I took gazillions of pictures on all of my trips and came home and a little online photo albums out of them. So this all happened, I'll say the seven continents journey, I finished in 2012. So we're going on almost 10 years ago. And it didn't occur to me to write a book about it for quite a while.



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So it was just for me, I would go on trips and I would take lots of pictures. And that's what I did because I liked photography. And I liked capturing the moment and capturing the beauty around me. I really like composition, photographic composition. So like taking a shot that just looks cool.

And so I had all these pictures, and incidentally, a couple years ago, in 2019, I was actually trying to write a book about leadership. And I was struggling because I was thinking everyone and their dog has written a book about leadership. I don't know what I'm going to say that's different from anyone else.

And I had been asked some questions like, if "it" had already arrived, whatever "it" is, what would you be doing? Like if whatever you're aiming for was already here, what would you do? And the idea of photography came up to me and I thought, "Oh, yeah, I'd maybe reconnect to my photography."

And then through some other kind of either journaling experiences, I got to this point where I was like, "I don't know what I'm doing. I don't know what my soul work is. What is my soul work?" And it was one of these pause, stop trying to figure it out with your mind and ask the universe moments.

And literally, within 10 minutes the idea came down. So what do I already have? A coffee table book. I have pictures. I have this journey. I have, oh my gosh. So I always kind of poo pooped stories like that, right? Oh, the voice of the sky, whatever. And I was like, "Oh my gosh, that was my voice from the sky moment."

Jill: I love that.

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Melissa: So, yeah, then actually once I got that idea, which I had not ever really thought about before, that was actually when I started to see the patterns of the fact that the marathons actually paralleled my inner life transition and transformation as it were.

So a lot of the lessons that I got out of the marathons, I actually got out of the process of writing the book. So even though, yes, of course, I loved all the stuff at the time, it was the post processing that really drove a lot of those lessons home. And so it was really amazing.

So the photography, just the love of photography just sparked the journey as it were into even the self-awareness that came out of piecing it all together.

Jill: I think that's amazing. Because so often we finish a race and we're like, "Okay, that's done. What's next?" And you probably had the same experience of like, "Okay, on to the next one. I got four more continents to go to." And so this book kind of gave you the gift of revisiting that and really creating even more meaning out of it.

Melissa: Yes, yes. And I had made a little, actually a collage after each one. And actually, the pictures of the collage are in the book. But yeah, so I actually also have them on my wall.

So it was funny, because I realized I've had all this stuff just staring me in the face that's been saying, "Do something with me, do something with me." But yeah, so it really is a cool way to really reflect and remember, and like going through my notes. Because I kept all my little journal notes from the trips and stuff. And I was like, "Oh, wow, I don't remember thinking that back then. That was cool." So it really is a cool way to revisit what was really going on for me at the time.

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Jill: Oh, absolutely. I just absolutely love this. You make me want to do the seven continent marathon. Maybe I'll do like a 10K on every continent.

Melissa: There you go, cool.

Jill: And I think what it what it really does is make me think like, "Okay, what is a travel and running goal? Like, how can I incorporate them?" And maybe it's just running a race in every state or running a race on every continent. But it gets the wheels turning.

And I think that's one of the beautiful things about this book is it's not like you have to do the same thing to get this epiphany. It's like, "Hey, this is how I created a new awareness about myself through this—" I keep wanting to say odyssey, I don't know if that's the right word or not.

Melissa: Odyssey is great, yep. I think it fits.

Jill: But one of the things, when I'm working with clients I tell them very often like, we've sort of touched on this already, the goal is not the goal. The goal is the person that you become in the process of achieving it.

And so I kind of want to talk a little bit about Human Design because that seems to be one of the sort of, I don't want to say strategic byproducts, sort of like maybe unexpected byproducts of this whole experience. Because becoming a Quantum Human Design leadership coach is what you've done as a result of the universe shut the door on the astronaut, but then it opened the store elsewhere. So tell me all the things about that.

Melissa: Yeah, and I'll say that's a relatively recent development for me.

Jill: Interesting, okay.

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Melissa: I was actually almost done with the book before I jumped into Human Design. And I love Quantum Human Design, I say Human Design for short, but Quantum Human Design is sort of the next evolution of Human Design. And if anyone's not familiar with that, that's okay. It's not super duper widespread, we're trying to make it more widespread.

But Quantum Human Design is really a way of understanding your unique energy blueprint and how you take in energy, how you radiate energy. Really getting to know who you really are, because basically, we all grow up in a bit of a conditioned society that tells us what we're supposed to do and be.

And it tells us that success is a corner office and a house with a white picket fence and a fancy car and this, that, and the other thing and whatever. And everyone goes out chasing that thing, and then they get all that stuff and they're like, "Why am I not happy?" And so it's really about reconnecting to what really lights you up, and it's really about being who you are.

So, for me, one of the biggest, biggest things I've taken away from life in general, that the Human Design language just echoes is that you are here to make a difference in the world not by what you do, but by being you. So it's not about your job, it's not about the actual work that you do. It's bringing your most fulfilling and fulfilled energy to the world and just having your being be transformational.

I mean, we are here to be in community and inspire each other and do work that lights us up. And so all these trappings that we're sort of taught to chase after are not really the things that will fulfill us.

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So quantum Human Design really helps you understand how to listen to your own inner wisdom so that you can follow your own path and not just check the boxes that someone else has checked. But to make your own way.

And your career path is not in your in your Human Design. But how you ask yourself questions, and how you learn, and how you relate to yourself and connect with yourself can help you find out and reconnect, really, to what you're really here to be. And it's in your being that maybe you find some things that you do. It's like, who are you being while you're doing? Does that makes sense?

Jill: It does. And I just like the way you explain that. Because I don't know if it's just like a human nature thing, or if it's how our society has evolved. But I think we are taught that what you do is what matters. And like, yeah, I mean, unless you're just going to spend your 90 years on this planet, or you're 80 years on this planet laying down with your eyes closed. Like, all right, most of us are not going to do that.

So what you do, we have choices in what we do. But that's not the important, it's like who you are, the energy that you put out into the world that is so much more important. And then that influences what you do and what people around you do too.

Melissa: Exactly.

Jill: I have not really dived, dove in, I don't know the correct tense of that word. But I have not spent a ton of time studying it but I'm super intrigued by the concepts and by the fact that— Well, how would you describe what is Human Design? If I wanted to come to you and say like, “Okay, how do I

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start figuring out my Human Design?" What all is involved in that? I'm going to do a terrible job explaining it, you're the expert.

Melissa: Yeah, it's so fascinating. Yeah, so basically you'd say, "Hey, I want to understand my Human Design." And we look at your Human Design chart, which is actually based on birth date, time, and location. So it's really about what were the cosmic energies that are involved. And actually it involves not just your birth date, but a point three months before as well. So sort of a soul birth date and a body birth date, if you will.

And so you actually get information about life purpose and soul purpose. And again, this is not about a job. It's about what energies predominate, like what are your spiritual life lessons that you're going to be encountering and learning through your life.

So maybe you have a repeated pattern with just having this one kind of relationship that you just feel like you keep repeating over and over and over again. Maybe there's some energetic like archetypes there. So this is really all about different kind of human archetypes and energetics. So maybe you've been expressing that in a lower expression of energy.

So all the energies and the archetypes in the chart have an unbalanced expression and a high, like a balanced, sort of masterful expression. And so it's really about becoming more aware of what energies may predominate in your chart. And also realizing that in fact we all have all of the chart.

So it's not like you only have a piece of it, like this is the only piece that applies to me. No, no, no, it's really all about whether you are maybe learning it on your own, through your own inner experience and exploration, or whether you may be learning it through relationships.

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So maybe it actually is being in the presence of another person that you tend to learn more about this other kind of energy. So it's putting language to things that you maybe already know about yourself but either haven't been allowed to express because society doesn't actually really cater to most people's natural state of being. Our society is not really built for the way humans are.

Jill: Yeah, we kind of messed up there.

Melissa: And I tend to believe everything has a purpose. So I feel like we needed that part to get where we are, but it's not working anymore. So we're on the verge really truly of creating something completely new. And there's a lot of creativity that we have, I think, maybe lost track of.

Everyone is creative. Everyone is an artist of life and we tend to think you're only creative if you actually paint or sculpt or whatever. But everybody's creative. And so Human Design really puts you back in touch with your inherent creativity, your inherent soul energy, and your inherent way of being and helps give you language and ability to rewrite your narrative so that you're telling a more powerful story about who you are.

Jill: Oh, I love that.

Melissa: I'm not sure that was simple at all. But hopefully that helped.

Jill: But I think Human Design is complex, right? Because we're humans, and, I mean, we are complex. We really are.

Melissa: Yes.

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Jill: But what I'd love to know is has the knowledge you've gained through studying Quantum Human Design, has it changed you as a runner? Has it changed how you approach your running? How you approach your goals with regard to running? Has there been any impact in that area? Or are you like, "No, that's totally separate."

Melissa: I think with this kind of thing, it impacts every area of your life and it has certainly impacted every area of mine. Because we're whole people, I mean, we may try to compartmentalize different areas of our life but they're all interrelated.

And that's actually the thing about Human Design, is that it helps you see the inherent connection between first of all you and your soul, between you and other people, you and humanity, you and the cosmos. And we are all the same energy. We basically are the universe and we are all made of the same stuff.

So I think with my running, it's actually helped me just, I mean, I was a pretty laid back runner anyway, but it's helped me become even more laid back and just really not attached to the outcome. Really embracing following where the journey leads and not saying, "I said this week I would run X number of days and X number of miles and whatever, and so I must do it." And then that makes it not fun. So it's like I'm going to try to run this many mornings this week. And I'm going to just get out there and do it.

And so it's a lot of, I guess, let me say a lot more compassion for myself for just experiencing the journey. And in fact, the more I apply that, actually the more that I run, because I'm actually not beating myself up for not running because it's an integration into a way of being, if that makes sense.



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So Human Design has helped me have faith in the process and ask questions as to what is the next right step? And I don't need to know all the steps in the future. This was actually a thing I wrote in my book too, that you don't have to have the whole plan figured out. Just maybe just take a step in a direction.

And Human Design really solidified that for me. So I do it with my running, I do it with my daily life and everything. Because I typically make more things on my to do list in a day than I can ever get done. And so it's a constant practice of, A, not putting so many things on my to do list and, B, being kind to myself when I don't get them all done and just being like, "All right, what is the most important thing I need to do today?" And just focus on that and see what answer comes.

So Human Design is really about getting out of your head, using your head to ask questions, and then seeing what answers come in. Because when we try to fight and figure out with our minds, we actually shut down our creative process.

Jill: Yeah, I love that so much. So good. I just love all the things that this journey has led you to do and become. So as we're wrapping up today, is there one sort of takeaway message that you'd like to share with everybody?

Melissa: Yes, I think it's so important to realize, really and truly, you do not need to run a marathon on all seven continents to have an epic life. You are already powerful, special, and unique. And you are here to make a difference, not by what you do, but by being you, for sure.

Jill: I love that. Just so beautifully said. So how can people find you? First of all, how can they learn more about the book? How can they learn more

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about your Quantum Human Design work? And you're a coach within that arena, so give us all the information about how people can get in touch with you.

Melissa: Yep, absolutely. The best way is that my website, which is [resilienceactually.com](http://resilienceactually.com), R-E-S-I-L-I-E-N-C-E-A-C-T-U-A-L-L-Y.com. And the book is [resilienceactually.com/runningtheworld](http://resilienceactually.com/runningtheworld). Maybe a little simpler one, [runningtheworldbook.com](http://runningtheworldbook.com) also redirects to that page. So you can find more about the book there.

And then if you go to the work with me section on my website, you'll be able to learn more about the Human Design stuff that I do. I absolutely love it and I would love to share it with you too.

Jill: Yes, please make sure you go and check all of that out. And the book. I mean, I have sort of an advanced copy of the book. So has the book been released?

Melissa: So yes, it actually took a little bit of time in the shipping. But I will say actually, today was the first day I saw that it was not out of stock on Amazon.

Jill: Oh, yay! Okay.

Melissa: So you can go to Amazon, you can also order it directly from my website. But it's on Amazon and it might take a little bit longer in shipping, but it is available, yay!

Jill: Yes, and it really is like a beautiful, beautiful book. The photos just, like it's so fun to hear somebody talk about an experience. But then you

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followed it up with the pictorial evidence. So you can actually visualize, like when you're talking—

I'm going to jump back to the Safari or the race that you did in Kenya, where you were in a game Park. And you talked about the reticulated giraffes and the special zebras with the skinny stripes, right? And I'm just like, "Huh, I wonder what that looks like." And I'm like, "Maybe I should Google it." And then, nope, you have pictures of all of it at the end of that chapter. I was like, this is amazing, right?

So the book is not just captivating from a reading the story perspective, it's also very captivating from seeing the experiences through your eyes. So I deeply appreciate that you included that. So all y'all need to go read this book and go visit Melissa's website, learn more about Human Design. It's really kind of fascinating stuff.

Melissa, I want to thank you so much for joining me today and telling your story.

Melissa: Thank you so much for having me, Jill. It was such a pleasure. I really appreciate it.

Jill: Yay!

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](http://rebelrunnerroadmap.com) to join. I'd love to be a part of your journey.