

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

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

Hey, runners. Okay, so this is the first episode I'm recording from our new place in Philly. And in case you hear any car alarms, or sirens, or construction noise, or SEPTA trains in the background, just that's why. And I'm learning that sometimes our neighborhood is absolutely silent, and then at a moment's notice it can get really fucking loud.

And oh, our next door neighbors have three backyard chickens. They are usually really quiet but sometimes they get all riled up for no reason. So if you hear chickens, that is why. It's been an absolute delight living here, we're having so much fun learning all the things about our new neighborhood and just kind of experiencing the city life. Super fun.

Anyway, summer is almost here and this is actually the time of year when a lot of folks start running, or they might start training for a race or something. It's like the month of May, especially in the northern hemisphere, is like the month when everybody gets really pumped to start a fitness routine. So this week I'm going to give you three mindset hacks to help you stay motivated.

Because here's what usually happens, so you make a plan that seems totally doable. You get everything on your calendar, you're super excited thinking about how awesome it's going to be to run three times a week all summer. I'm going to feel so proud of myself.

And for the first week or so you do pretty good, right? You're like, yeah, I'm a runner. Fuck yeah, there's never going to be a time when I don't do this because it feels so amazing. And then I don't know, maybe it starts to feel a

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

little boring or you stay up late one night and the next morning you think I'm too tired to run today. And so you miss a run, and then maybe another one.

And suddenly, it seems like you have to start all over again, right? And that thought feels terrible. And your inner mean girl is, of course, right there to remind you how lazy and undisciplined you are. And then the next thing you know, summer is over and you didn't do nearly as much running as you wanted to. And you're looking around like what the fuck just happened?

Does this sound familiar? Can you relate to this? So this summer I want to try it a little differently, I want you to try it a little differently. Now, I get asked all the time, how do I make myself run when I don't want to? And before we do anything else today, I think that is the wrong question to be asking.

Please stop trying to make yourself do it. Think about how that sounds. It's like I'm going to force myself, like it's punishment. And when you were a kid and someone had told you to do something you didn't want to do, you're like, "Make me." Right? It's rebellious, it's resistant. It's the opposite of ease and motivation.

So making yourself do something you don't want to do feels awful. And for sure it can work in the moment, but it is not a long term strategy. So let's just agree you're going to stop treating yourself like a mule who doesn't want to plow a field. Okay? You are a grown ass adult, you're in charge of your choices. You don't need to make yourself do anything, because if it feels that way, if it feels like you're making yourself do it, you're not going to stick with it for very long.

So how do you follow your running plan on those days when it feels like your motivation has just, poof, evaporated? Well, I'm so glad you asked. So I've got three simple thought shifts for you today that are going to change, not just your running life, they're going to change your whole life. Okay? So let's dive into that.

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

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

The first one is please stop thinking about consistency as 100%. All right? One of the biggest stumbling blocks to staying consistent with running is thinking that if you miss a run or two you've totally fucked up and you might as well quit. Consistency is simply doing the thing most of the time, like maybe 60% or 70% or more.

Consistency is not this same as perfection. In fact, believing that you need to be perfect is the fastest way to becoming someone who quits. If that's your belief, when you do miss a workout your brain is going to start to spin out thinking, "I messed up. I failed. I can't do it." You'll feel discouraged and frustrated and then you quit.

So if your belief is that consistency means I do the thing, I don't know, maybe seven times out of every 10, suddenly you've got room for some fuck ups, right? They're no longer the end of the world, they're just part of the process. And you still get to count yourself as a consistent runner. And I promise you, doing the thing 70% of the time is going to get you results. Definitely more results than it took doing it 100% for two weeks and then quitting.

So let's imagine two different runners training for a 5k. And their training plan is eight weeks long, there's three runs a week. So there's 24 runs total in the training plan and there's two different runners. The first runner believes that she needs to be 100% compliant with her training plan for it to count, and I'm putting count in air quotes. So she does all the runs for the first three weeks, she does the first nine runs no problem.

But then in week four something happens and she misses a couple and she says, "Well shit, I messed up, it's not even worth continuing because I didn't do it just right." So she's done nine out of the 24, all those workouts happened in three weeks. And then for the last five weeks of the 5k training plan she doesn't run at all.

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

Now we're going to talk about runner number two who believes that consistency is 70% or more, that's her personal definition. So over the eight weeks and 24 training runs, she does 17 runs, which is 71%. It's a little more, averages a little bit more than two runs a week instead of three weeks.

Now, at the end of the eight week training plan, which runner is going to be more prepared for that 5k? And I mean, beyond that, which of them is more likely to even show up at the start line? It's totally runner number two who was like it's not going to be perfect. I'm okay, it's going to be consistent. And for me that means at least 70% of the runs.

And so she trains twice a week instead of three times a week for eight weeks, she shows up, she has a fun race, right? Versus runner number one who isn't even going to show up to that race because she says, "Well, I fucked it up. I couldn't do it perfectly, so I better not just do it at all."

So consistency gets results because we just get better at what we repeatedly do. Consistency does not equal perfection, it just means doing the thing more often than not. And if you believe that perfection is your only path to success, you're going to feel really, really unmotivated when you make a mistake.

Believing that perfection is necessary, unless you are a brain surgeon or building a plane, right, perfection is a motivation blocker, right? Like there's very little need for perfection in this world. Even nature is totally imperfect, right? So, motivation does not come from, "Oh, I am perfect so I feel motivated."

Motivation comes from thoughts like I can do this, even if I make some mistakes. I'm just going to do what I can, right? So I want you to explore the possibility that you can be a consistent runner and get amazing results without being perfect.

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

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

All right, if you can shift that belief in your mind, it's going to help you get out of your own way so that you can become an imperfect runner instead of an ex-runner. Okay? It's a big difference. I'd much rather you be an imperfect runner and do two out of your three runs a week and make some progress, instead of quitting and just sitting at home like complaining to yourself because you failed, right?

So, that's mindset shift number one. Okay, mindset shift number two is to stop comparing your current self to your past self. And I hear this all the time from my runners, especially if they've been injured and they've had to take a break or, I don't know, maybe they had a baby and of course they took some time off for recovery.

And what they say is like, "Oh, I used to be able to run faster. I used to be able to go farther. It used to be easier." Or, oh, this one is the worst, "When I was thinner, I could do all of these things. Here are all the things I could do and I was thinner." So please, please stop. You are not your past self anymore. She does not exist, she is only in your mind at this point.

The only versions of you that you have any control over are who you are right now in this exact moment and who you are going to be tomorrow, or next month, or next year. Okay? You do not have control over the past. The past has happened, the past is over. And living back there in the past, letting your brain just lament how much fitness you've lost or how much time you've wasted, it is the opposite of helpful.

It is the opposite of motivating because when you think that way, "Oh, I've wasted so much time, I've lost so much fitness," you feel inadequate, sad, guilty, and those emotions are motivation blockers. I mean, if you want to think, "Well, I did it once, I can do it again," I'm actually all for that, right?

Use your past experiences as evidence that you can do whatever it is you want to do right now. But measuring your current self against your past self

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

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

and finding everything lacking is going to make you feel the opposite of motivated. All right?

So notice, is this a thought process that you indulge in frequently? Do you like wish you could get your past body back or your past running performance? And when you think those thoughts, “Oh, I wish I could just have my old body back,” how do you feel?

And many people would say, “Oh, I feel motivated when I think about wanting to get my old body back.” But do you really? Right? Or do you feel more like wistful, or sad, or discouraged? Because wishing your life was different is not motivating. Wishing is just crossing your fingers and hoping for the best.

Deciding who you want to be right fucking now in this moment with these existing circumstances, that is motivating, that is moving forward. Wanting to go back in time is unmotivating because it's not possible. So your brain is like, “We want this thing, but it's not possible. But we want it but it's not possible.” And you just kind of get stuck in this loop.

So there is a difference between compare and despair, and then deciding you want your future self to be different from who you are now. One of those is stuck wishing things were already different, right? Wishing you could bring the past back. And the other looks forward to what you can control, which is your thoughts, feelings, and actions right now.

So, again, wishing is different from creating. Wishing is not motivational. Wishing is crossing your fingers and hoping for the best. Creating is deciding, “Okay, this is what I want. And here's what I'm going to do to get it.” So your past self is gone. I want you to spend your thoughts on what you want to create for yourself going forward, that's what's going to help you bring the motivation back.

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

And the third and final mindset shift, this one's going to sound a little weird because I often tell you to do the exact opposite. But I want you to start thinking about the immediate gratification instead of the long game.

And just hear me out, so very often I suggest if you make choices with your future self in mind, right, the version of you that's running a half marathon, for example, it's going to help you stay on track. Because when you think, "Oh, I don't want to screw my future self over" you get up and you do that training run even when you're tired or whatever.

But sometimes we just need a little immediate gratification, right? We're like, I just want to feel good right now. I don't want to wait six months, I want to feel good right now. So when you are struggling to create some motivation for yourself I want you to forget about future you. Just forget about her for a moment.

Let's focus on current you the one who's feeling, I don't know, guilty, sad, frustrated, discouraged, overwhelmed. What's going to make you feel better right now in this moment? Endorphins. Seriously, they're like magic. And how do we get endorphins? Running. Okay? You cannot get endorphins from Cheetos, or online shopping, or Netflix, I have tried.

None of that works because endorphins are chemicals produced by the body to relieve stress and pain, physical stress and pain. And they're released when we do hard exercise like running. They work similarly to a class of drugs called opioids. That sounds familiar, right? And if you get enough endorphins in your body, they can produce a feeling of euphoria.

And you know that like after you have a hard run, you feel that calm and relaxation and your whole body just feels good, right? Those are endorphins. And contrary to popular belief, most people don't experience a runner's high during the run. It is afterwards when you're finished and you get this flood of endorphins that you feel amazing.

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

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

And I guess, technically, it's not immediate gratification because you do have to put in a little bit of effort for it and it takes a while to kick in, right? It's not like you put your shoes on and like boom, endorphins start showing up, right? You got to spend maybe 20, 30 minutes running. But it's so much more gratifying than the feeling of skipping that run and spending 20 to 30 minutes scrolling Instagram instead, okay?

So if you decide to think about running as the way to get that euphoria, that floaty, calm, relaxed feeling in 30 minutes, it becomes a lot more like instant gratification and a lot less like work. Okay?

All right. So let's recap real quick, three mindset shifts to help you stay motivated. Number one, consistency is not the same as perfection. Number two, stop comparing your current self to your past self. And number three, think of running as immediate gratification. And I promise, if you work on making these adjustments to your thinking, motivation is going to be a lot easier for you. It really, really is.

Now, if you loved today's episode, you are absolutely going to love the class that I'm teaching on May 22nd. It's called How to Become a Consistent Exerciser. And it's a three hour live workshop where we are going to dive deep into motivation, excuses, and even creating a personalized exercise plan just for you.

Now, this class starts at noon Eastern on Sunday, May 22nd. It is \$39 to join, there will also be a recording if you can't make it live. Okay? So I know that Sunday's, you know, people have a lot of stuff going on and I know that you might not be able to make it live, although you're going to want to because I'm going to do some like really fun stuff on the live call. But there will be a recording, and I will be sending out the recording later on that day. So if you can't make it live, you can watch it later that night. Okay?

Ep #248: 3 Simple Ways to Stay Motivated

So to register, all you have to do is go to notyouraveragerunner.com/workshop. That's notyouraveragerunner.com/workshop. And again, Sunday, May 22nd, noon Eastern, a three hour live workshop where we're going to dive deep into motivation, your excuses, and creating a personalized exercise plan for you. All right, so head over to notyouraveragerunner.com/workshop to sign up. I hope I see you there.

And what did you think of today's episode? If this has been a helpful episode for you, I would love it if you'd share it on Instagram and let people know. All right? I love you, stay safe, get your ass out there and run.

Hey, real quick before you go, if you enjoyed listening to this episode, you have got to check out Up And Running. It's my 30 day online program that will teach you exactly how to start running, stick with it, and become the runner you have always wanted to be. Head on over to notyouraveragerunner.com/upandrunning to join. I would love to be a part of your journey.