

## Ep #252: Redefining Rest for Runners with Melissa McKool



### Full Episode Transcript

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**Jill Angie**

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## Ep #252: Redefining Rest for Runners with Melissa McKool

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, runners, so I'm here this week with a super fun guest. Her name is Marissa McKool and cool is right in her name, I absolutely love this. I don't think I've ever told you how much I love your name, by the way. And she is a former public health leader turn career and life coach. She is the host of the *Redefining Rest* podcast. And we're here to talk about all things rest this week.

So, Marissa, thank you for joining me. Welcome to the show and hi.

Marissa: Hi, thanks for having me. And a fun fact about my last name, it is very cool, I get lots of comments about it. But it's also not my original last name. My Arab family emigrated here and it was Makhoul and we don't know how it changed whether we had to assimilate or they couldn't spell it, right. Who knows? But either way, I'm like, it's cool. I'll take it.

Jill: It's cool and it's so fun because it almost sounds Irish now, right? Because it's M-C-K-O-O-L.

Marissa: I think it's actually Scottish.

Jill: Scottish, okay, got it.

Marissa: Yeah, yeah. But, I mean, I could have ended up with a worse assimilated name, so it's okay.

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Jill: I love it. Right, the original name is amazing and the new name is amazing and so it's kind of a win win. So why don't you go ahead and tell us a little bit about who you are, who you help, and well let's just start there and see where we go.

Marissa: Yeah. So actually, Jill, you know this and for everyone listening, I've been a listener of this podcast since before I was even a coach. And you always talk about how women struggle saying they're a runner. This was what I would always say, which now I laugh at, I'm an athlete but not a runner.

I played competitive soccer, I was midfield, and now looking back I'm like, what? But in my mind a runner was someone who loved running, who it was so easy for them. And when I was in soccer practice I was dying. I could not wait for the run drills to be over. So it's funny, listening to this podcast once I got out of soccer and was trying to work out on my own really helped me be like, "No, I am a runner. What am I talking about?"

Jill: You're like literally running every time you get on the soccer field.

Marissa: Literally. This is how you know brains are crazy. My brain is like, "You're not a runner," except for I'm running miles a day.

Jill: Exactly.

Marissa: But yeah, so I used to work in public health for over a decade focused in sexual violence prevention and reproductive health, and found myself really burning out. And I won't get into all the details, but anyone who's experienced work burnout, because burnout can happen anywhere, parenting burnout, exercise burnout. I just felt like I tried all the things and nothing worked.

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And I ended up finding Kara from *Unfuck Your Brain* and working with her and just eliminated my burnout and got so much more mental, emotional, and physical rest from thought work. And when the pandemic hit I just looked around and I was like we really need this message out here about what is rest, why we're not taking it, why we're denying it. We have all these false assumptions about where we get rest, and why we need rest, and when we can get it.

And so, yeah, my mission is kind of just to help people get more rest. And really, I would say stop denying themselves rest, because that's what's happening. We're choosing not to take it and believing we don't have a choice. And so, yeah, my mission is to just help folks, particularly in public health, get more rest and eliminate their mental, emotional, and physical burnout.

Jill: I fucking love this. I just love this so much because I couldn't agree more. And I do, I think people that are in public servant positions in particular tend to be the type of folks that want to serve, they want to do all the things, they just want to keep helping and helping and helping.

And then it's sort of they sacrifice their own health and their own sanity for the purpose of serving others when a little bit of rest probably would make them even more effective in their jobs. Which is what they want to do, what they want to get out of their careers.

But I think for the broader population sometimes, I don't know, I've had this thought myself is like, oh, I haven't worked hard enough to earn the time to rest. So can you sort of speak to that? Because I think especially as women and we're socialized to believe that we need to be productive and always serving and always doing all the things. Can you kind of speak to that belief that rest is something that we have to earn?

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Marissa: Yeah. And I think you're right, everyone experiences this, we're all socialized around this. Every person, no matter your identity, because part of this comes from toxic capitalism and productivity hustle culture. But then based on your other identities, if you have been socialized as a woman, you get additional messaging from the patriarchy, if you're a person of color from white supremacy.

And it shows up with everyone, but even with athletes or runners. I had friends who are professional athletes and it shows up in them struggling to take their rest days. My partner is an avid exerciser, and he got sick for a while, and he really struggled taking time off.

And I think what we don't realize is a lot of what's driving that are these unconscious beliefs that rest has to be earned, rest is for the deserving, and some people deserve it more inherently than others. That rest has to be given to you, or that rest is a reward so you have to do something to get it. And that productivity matters more than rest.

And we kind of end up spending so much time chasing this I haven't done enough, I need to do enough before we can rest. Whether that's resting by taking a day off work, or resting your injury that you're having. And the action of whether or not to rest is driven by what you believe.

It might not come out sounding like you haven't earned rest. Sometimes it does, but oftentimes it's I haven't done enough, I don't have enough time. If I take rest then this XYZ bad thing will happen. But really it's driven by those beliefs, which the patriarchy tells us all the time, hey, as women, you have to check all the boxes, at home at work, you have to check the boxes in what your body should look like, what your physique should look like.

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And we spend all of our energy chasing productivity, chasing these unattainable standards of who we should be, how we should be and denying ourselves rest, because we believe once we get to an arbitrary point of enoughness, then we can rest. But we never let ourselves get there.

Jill: Right. And I would even add to that, I feel like there's a population of folks that, like if we think of people that are working maybe two or three jobs and quite literally do not have either the time or the finances to take a half a day and just rest and so forth. So I think that there's a whole belief system and then there's a whole societal problem as well with folks who can't take what we consider to be traditional rest.

So can we actually define what rest is? Because I think most folks are like, well, rest is lazy. Rest is me sitting on the couch watching Netflix or sleeping. And, I mean, I guess those qualify as activities, although I think watching Netflix might not be super restful. I'm really into true crime and so usually, by the time I'm done watching a series I'm so anxious.

Marissa: And your sleep is not restful because you're having nightmares. Yeah, totally.

Jill: I have to go rest from my rest. But let's talk about what qualifies as rest and then maybe we can sort of move into how you can incorporate it given whatever your circumstances and your beliefs are.

Marissa: Yes, totally. So I love the word traditional you used. I think the way we tend to think about rest socially is it's an action or inaction. So an action might be sleeping eight hours or inaction might be taking a day off, as you said. There's another definition around the physiology of rest, right, like what rest is for your body.

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And rest for your body means a number of different things that can happen whether or not you're taking "actions of rest." So resting your lungs, resting your blood vessels, a lot of these happen like you're not in full control over of course. But I actually like to think of rest as a mindset and what you're thinking for a couple reasons.

One, if you were to take an action of "rest" or an inaction, in order to even do that you have to have a thought that drives that decision, where you believe you can take it and it's worth it, and you deserve it. And in order to get the physiological benefits of that you have to take that action or the inaction and that has to be driven by what you believe.

And then I think there's a second piece, which is the emotional rest. So we don't talk about this very much. But we're not taught to process our emotions, we're not taught what emotions are. And so often we resist our emotions or kind of indulge or get stuck in emotion. And that is not restful at all.

So you can look at rest as a variety of different ways, but I think what is most useful is to point out that anything can feel restful because of your thoughts. So the example I love to give is I think everyone can relate to maybe being on vacation, or on a massage table, or some traditional form of rest and they do not feel restful at all. They're like, "What the fuck? I'm supposed to be feeling relaxed and I am more stressed."

And that's because of what they're thinking. Like I shouldn't be doing this, I have too much to do, this is taking too much time, or whatever the thoughts are. And that's also why some people who run 10 miles, that's super restful because they're not thinking all those stressful thoughts. They're calm, they're present. And other people running 15 minutes can feel really

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stressful, because they're just being mean to themselves in their head. It's giving their brain so much airtime to be an asshole to themselves.

So I think of rest as less about being a fixed finite thing and more about an infinite kind of fluid thing that we get to define for ourselves, that we get to create for ourself. But it all starts in your mind.

Jill: I absolutely love this. The example that you used about getting a massage and not feeling rested, I can relate to that so hard because your brain is going the whole time. And so while your body, while your cells may have gotten some rest, I feel like if your brain is still going and pumping out cortisol and stress hormones and all of that, even though you physically haven't moved for an hour, an hour and a half you haven't really experience the benefits of that.

I mean you get like the temporary pleasure of the sensations of having a massage. But if your brain is going the whole time, your cells aren't resting, your body is really not resting. And so it can seem like what's the point of even doing that? And then afterwards I feel stressed out because I'm also thinking, "Okay, I just took an hour and a half to get a massage. I could have been doing 10 other things and now I don't even feel rested. What the hell just happened?"

Marissa: Yeah, totally. And there's, you know, I'm not an expert in this area but there's even some science that shows if you're not present in that experience, physiologically you might be getting some benefit, but are you really feeling that pleasure in the moment? The answer is usually no.

Jill: Yeah, for sure. So, I think that this concept of resting but not resting applies really well to when we think about recovering from an injury. Because I know my runners spend a lot of time while they're injured and



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“resting” or having physical therapy, thinking about how I'm not getting further ahead in my running, or I'm getting so far behind I'm not going to be able to finish my race and so forth.

And I believe that that actually impacts your body, your body's ability to heal. So what do you think about that?

Marissa: Oh, I totally agree. I mean, when you think about what is stress in the sense of a physiological sense, stress is you have a thought and then your brain sends out messaging to your body to react. That's the stress cycle. And acute stress is okay, like actually that's really helpful.

But when we're resting, or we're supposed to be resting and our mind is going off telling our brain we're in danger when we're not, that we should be stressed when we don't have to, it's sending those hormones, it's sending those reactions. And our body is working overtime on responding to the stress cycle and not working as much on recovering the muscle or the tendon or whatever needs to be healed.

So, physiologically, yeah, I think you're absolutely right. And then also, mentally and emotionally, you just feel terrible. Like beating yourself up and thinking those thoughts, emotionally it does not feel good in addition to the physiological disadvantages to that.

Jill: Yeah, and then it can lead to the action of overdoing it or kind of like starting back to your activity too soon and not being fully healed. And so it's just sort of like a vicious cycle.

Marissa: Yeah, and it can also lead people not to take rest when they need to, which gets them into an injury, right? Like not have the resting periods,

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or when they know they might be getting injured still push it and kind of, you know?

Yeah, it becomes kind of this cycle. Which, to be honest, we've been socialized to have this. We've been taught the cycle of life or our experience should be produce, produce, produce, produce, produce. Then have a little rest when you've earned it, and then produce, produce, produce produce, which is just not true. That's not how humans were designed.

And now we apply that everywhere. I mean, to our workouts, to work, to parenting, to whatever it might be that is kind of the mindset we've been conditioned to have as humans how we should exert and live in the world and it's just not true. It's not how we were designed.

Jill: Yeah, but do think that there's almost like a point of pride in our society of like, "Oh, I only sleep five hours a night. I never rest rest. I'll rest when I'm dead." Right? It's like well, that's actually probably going to happen a lot faster if you don't take some rest.

Marissa: Yeah, and I think that's tied to capitalism around the idea that what matters most is being number one, making the most money, like competition is king. I do think it's kind of tied to, especially in the US, how we've been socialized around that mentality.

I see it a lot with college or master's level students that I work with. You know, it's kind of a brag factor, like, "Oh, I only slept three hours last night." I think it is kind of driven by that capitalistic mentality a little bit, but it's not serving us.

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Jill: No, agreed. So how do you help your clients that come to you and they say, I'm burnt out, right? I'm exhausted, how do I rest? Where do you start with somebody? What's the first type of thing that you ask them?

Marissa: It is really the kind of foundational thought work thinks, right? Because oftentimes the reason we think we're burnt out or exhausted, whether it's at work or physically, is because of something outside of us. Because I have too much work, because the race is too close, whatever it may be. And it's about interrogating our thoughts and really seeing all the spaces where you are denying yourself rest because you believe you don't deserve it or you can't take it and you have this whole list of reasons why.

So for folks who are listening, where this might resonate with you and you're like, oh yeah, I really deny myself rest, or I want more rest. The first step is really interrogating your thoughts. If your brain is saying, "I don't have enough time, I'm too busy, you're lazy," those thoughts aren't true.

And they're really just different ways to regurgitate our conditioning around the lies that rest has to be earned, it has to be deserved, it has to be justifiable. And you have to interrogate that and really be open and curious with your brain. So that's number one.

And then number two is I think we have this idea that rest should feel good and feel comfortable, which it can. But if you're at like the beginning of this where you don't allow yourself to rest, and then you work to take rest before you have "earned" it, of course it's going to be uncomfortable because your brain is still going to give you the thoughts. It's going to freak out because to your brain, you shouldn't be resting. You haven't earned it, you haven't done enough.

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So getting comfortable and allowing your brain to have that freak out because you're building a new habit, like anything else. Like when you try to floss more, your brain is going to talk you out of that shit every single day. It's the same thing with resting and you just be like, okay, noted. I'll send the complaint to HR, we're still going to do this.

And it might not feel the most pleasurable, but that is the practice to get to the point where you have a rest practice, where you prioritize it, and you can enjoy it. And it won't be all the time, but a good chunk of the time.

Jill: So you raised up a good point here because I do think a lot of us don't take rest because we think I don't know what I would do with myself and I'm going to be bored. And this actually just happened. So my husband has this week off from work and last night we were out to dinner and he said, "I miss work." I'm like, really? And he said, "Yeah, I just feel like I don't know what to do with myself."

And so I think that's kind of interesting, because we spend so much time thinking, "Oh, I wish I wasn't working. I wish I had time to do this. I wish I had more time, I wish I had time to rest." But then when we have the time, when we deliberately take it, then we're like, "Shit, now what do I do?" So can you, I mean, you're laughing so I'm sure you've heard this from your clients. But what is that about? What's that all about?

Marissa: I mean, that shit still happens to me and I feel like I've gotten pretty good at this. I think that's one piece, right? Maybe we call it boredom or confusion or something. I think the other piece for some people, the reason they avoid it is because then the distractions are gone and they hear their mean thoughts louder in their head.

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So in both of those experiences, part of it is around the intention. So if you're struggling with rest because when you take it you're just hearing your mean thoughts that you didn't know were there, or they're just so much louder, that's where you do the thought work piece and you detach a little bit and you allow that.

Now if you're taking rest, like you have a week off and you're like, "Shit, I'm so bored." You also have to understand that is also part of our conditioning. We've, particularly since the industrialized revolution and the tech, you know, past couple decades, we have been kind of living in a society where we're told directly and indirectly that go, go, go, do, do, do, should be the status quo.

And then we have devices like phones and social media that actually do kind of produce a reaction from your brain and drip some hormones and different neurological kind of reactions that make it so you feel like that's what you should be doing. So that urge to always do something, that uncomfortableness with not doing something, part of that is the socialization.

So recognizing that, I think, can be helpful. I also think what can be helpful is if you're at that stage, scheduling what you're going to do ahead of time. That's really important because this still happens to me. Like when I finish work early and I didn't expect to I'm like, "What do I do?" I'll check the email, I'll check Instagram, I'll dilly dally and I don't really use my time.

So I think if you can, like if you have a weekend or a week off and you can think intentionally, "Okay, how do I want to use this time?" And you schedule it. Even if it's like these two hours I can do whatever the fuck I want. This hour, I'm going to cook, this hour I'm going to go on a walk. It

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seems stringent and a little bit more like productive, but it gives your brain some direction for how you intentionally want to use the time to rest.

And you get to define what rest is to you. What rest is to me some weeks, instead of doing three loads of laundry, it's pulling out my dirty underwear, sports bras and socks and just washing that shit. And my fiancé is like, "You're crazy. I don't know what you're doing, that's not restful. That would stress me out, I need all my laundry done." It's unique and personal to you what rest is.

Jill: Yeah. Oh, I absolutely love that. I want to shift gears a little bit. I have several more questions to ask but I want to shift gears a little bit because I think up till now we've been talking a lot about people who truly do, even if they think they don't, they still truly do have the time in their schedule to take a day off or to hire a babysitter so that they can just have some alone time.

But I think there's a part of the population for whom that's not actually a reality, right? And I'm thinking like a single mom who's working two or three jobs and is like, yeah, rest sounds great for other people, but how the fuck am I supposed to make this happen?

And I'd love to know what your thoughts are on that because is rest just for people who have privileged lives? Or is there a way that you can kind of incorporate some of these principles, no matter what your circumstances are?

Marissa: Yeah, I think the idea that rest is a certain set of activities or for the privileged is 100% systems of oppression propaganda. Because if rest is a mindset, that means you can feel rest and feel rested no matter what you're doing. It doesn't matter how much money you make, how many jobs

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you work. It can be any activity because of your mindset. That means that rest can be unique and specific to you.

So I think what happens a lot is we get sold this idea that rest is only a certain set of things. So some of the basic things like sleeping, which you might, you know, if you're working three jobs you might not have eight hours to sleep or whatnot. And then we're sold from capitalism that it's a fancy vacation or it's a spa day.

And I think when you start doing this work and really questioning that, what you can get out of it is the expansiveness of what rest can be for you. So, for example, let's say there's a single mom who has kids, who's working, and who's also trying to run and get some exercise in. Yeah, maybe sleeping eight hours a night or maybe taking a vacation isn't possible. But that's okay because they can get rest another way. But they have to figure out what that is for them.

Like what are the things that feel restful? What are the thoughts that they can think that help them take that rest and feel rested? And that's something that only they can decide. But I could imagine some scenarios where maybe rest for them is even just, just sit with me for a second, even getting up 15 minutes earlier. I know that doesn't sound like rest, but to have your coffee without your kids awake interrupting you.

For some people that is restful. Yeah, they're getting up 15 minutes earlier, but to have 15 minutes of just them, just their thoughts could be restful. Now for someone else, maybe not. But this is where we really have to challenge what we've been told about what rest is and is not and really decide what it can be for us. And when are the moments we feel rested? And what's the mindset we need to be in? What thoughts help us? And so you can design like what is rest for you specifically?

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Jill: So that actually leads me into a question that I have that I think a lot of people are going to be having as they listen to this show, which is how do I figure out what is restful for me?

Marissa: Yeah.

Jill: Because I got to tell you, a couple weeks ago I was feeling, it was like maybe three weeks ago, I was feeling so burnt out. Just between moving and running a business and just all the things. I was like, "I can't. I have to take a week off."

And I actually, you know, maybe this was like a couple months ago that I was having this conversation with myself because I remember looking through my calendar and being like, "Okay, there's actually four days in April where I can take time off from work and I'm going to take a vacation. And I'm just going to stay at home. I'm not going to go anywhere but I'm going to take time away from work."

And I was unable to, I mean I took the time off from work, I was unable to rest. At least, obviously, that's just a thought that I'm having. But I just couldn't. I'm like there's so many things that I should be doing. So I kept thinking about, well, I should be packing, and I should be doing this, and I should be doing that.

And so I ended up, you know, I had this vision of I'm going to get up every day and I'm going to meditate, and I'm going to go for a walk or a run, and I'm going to strength train, and I'm going to prep all this food. And I just ended up frittering away the entire week and I felt less rested at the end. And I was so pissed about it. So mad at myself because I'm like I could have been doing so many other things.



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So I think that, for me, that was a really important moment because I realized like, oh, actually maybe I don't know how to rest. Maybe I really don't know how to do this. So yeah. So talk to us about that.

Marissa: Well it sounds like what you're experiencing, which is what gets in our way of rest, is what we're thinking.

Jill: Yeah.

Marissa: Right? Oftentimes we have this perfectionist expectation of what rest should be and should feel like. And then it's not and then we're mean to ourselves. So that's part of it, like what are you thinking. And then the other part of it, which I find folks kind of struggle with is sometimes believing that rest has to be used to do "things." So if you don't feel rested, then you're mad at yourself because if I'm not resting, I should be producing.

I think, I know this probably sounds redundant, but I think it all comes back to the mindset of like what are you thinking and why? Because that's what's creating your experience of feeling rested or not feeling rested.

So the mindset piece, I cannot emphasize enough is so important if you want to experience rest. Not just to take rest, but when you're resting to actually feel like you rested. Now, this isn't to say it's going to feel like, you know, you just got a massage on a beach and won the lottery. Like that's a fantasy and sometimes it feels that way.

But there's a big difference between taking a day off and kind of not being mean to yourself and being okay with it, not not doing things perfectly, getting some stuff done and just kind of feeling okay, feeling a little good. Versus I should have been doing this, I shouldn't have done this, what are

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you doing? And feeling overwhelmed and exhausted because you're just being mean to yourself in your head.

Jill: Yeah, that's for sure what I was doing. Okay, so if somebody's going to create a rest practice for themselves, like what is that? Is that like a routine? What does that look like?

Marissa: Yeah, such a good question. I like to think of rest as planned and unplanned rest. Like what you described, it sounds like you realized, oh, I need to take rest. And you made it happen. So that was kind of a combination of the both. And I think it's helpful to look at it that way because there are some things we can plan on a consistent or semi consistent basis for what is rest for us.

So some of mine, I like to think of it as like create some rest commitments for yourself. Not commandments, you don't have to follow them perfectly, we're no religion over here. But some commitments of what you will try to do for yourself. Or if you'd like to think of it as like a rest manifesto or something. And that changes and it evolves over time, week to week, even.

Some of mine are, and I've learned these because it's through trial and error. What works for me? What doesn't? So for me what's restful for me is getting up at the same time every day. And trust me, there are some days my brain really doesn't want to do that shit. There are some nights where I go to bed a little later than I planned.

But I have learned through trial and error that actually that serves my body and mind best. I find when I do that I have more energy, I make better decisions, I feel better, I'm less groggy. So that's part of my practice. That's part of my planned rest. Am I perfect? No, not at all.

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It doesn't have to be routines. It could be whether it's you meal prep, try to meal prep every week to save you time and maybe you're not perfect at it. Whether it's you buy a Roomba and run a Roomba to vacuum so you don't have to vacuum. I mean anything can be restful. It's like what is going to serve you and help you?

And then there's unplanned rest. When you do realize I need some time, I need to say no, I need to cancel this, I need to change my schedule. And in those moments, that's really where your brain will turn up all the excuses not to. They'll think you're selfish, you're burning them, everyone will be mad at you. And especially as women then we get really caught in to taking responsibility for other people's feelings.

But those are the moments when your body and mind tells you, hey, hello, we need a little rest. Like it's really important to listen and let your toddler brain have its tantrum, but not really give into it and parent yourself in a way of making that happen. And maybe you do it in small increments, and it's not in the way you would hope. But even just like small decisions can make a huge difference.

Jill: I love that. So this has been a really helpful discussion for me personally. So selfishly, thank you for coming on the show because I'm seeing myself in so many of the examples. And actually, yesterday I had some unplanned rest and it was delightful.

I woke up a little bit, I don't set an alarm because I'm somebody who just actually wakes up pretty much at the same time every day. It's like six o'clock regardless. So I don't set an alarm. But I actually did, like I woke up and I just was like, I'm not going to get out of bed just yet. Right? I'm just going to lay here and just savor being in bed.

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It's kind of a funny story. I'm reading, the latest Jennifer Weiner book came out and so I had it on my Kindle and I dropped my Kindle and it fell behind the bed. And I'm like, oh, crap. Now I need to buy a new Kindle. Instead of moving the bed I'll just buy a new one, right?

But then I was like, oh crap, I don't have my Kindle so I don't have my distraction. So I was just kind of like laying there enjoying the sunshine and just kind of, I don't know, like actually relaxing. And I missed my scheduled run time. And I thought, okay, I can still go for a run. I looked at my schedule and I'm like I can move things around.

So I made my husband go run with me, we ran to our favorite coffee shop and got coffee. And then I came home and took sort of a leisurely shower. And basically, I took three hours off in the morning that was totally unplanned, rearranged my schedule. And I did feel rested afterwards because I wasn't spending that time thinking, "Oh, I should be doing something else."

Marissa: Yes.

Jill: I'm not sure why I wasn't thinking that because normally, that's my MO. But I was just really enjoying the moment. And so I love that, because that really hit home for me. That whole thought about unplanned rest and how I think yesterday I just listened to my body and was like, I'm pretty sure I need to do this this morning. And I was right and it was amazing.

Marissa: Yeah, I love that. And for those of you listening, that could have been not restful if you were just beating yourself up and thinking I should be doing this, I shouldn't be doing this. That's where it's not really what you do as much and more of what you're thinking while you're doing it.

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Jill: Yeah, 100% because I've done that exact same thing, not exact same thing. But I've done that, like stayed in bed longer, delayed my run and then ended up not following my morning schedule. I've done that in the past and beat myself up about it and felt completely unrested.

Marissa: Yeah.

Jill: So it was like just sort of a night and day experience.

Marissa: Yeah, and I'll also say what I have found helpful and people I work with do, is really having intentional thoughts to pull out when you need to take rest. So ones I love is I will always listen to my body if it's talking to me. I get to decide when to take rest, no one else. I'm in charge of rest, rest is a choice. Rest is personal, if others don't agree that's okay. They don't have to choose this rest. I get to pick rest.

Talking to yourself in an empowering way is really, really helpful in those moments because the truth is every decision you're saying yes to someone else, or yes to yourself, you're saying no to yourself, or no to someone else. And often it's just like unintentional. And usually when we're choosing not to take rest, what we don't realize is we're choosing to say yes to something or someone else and not ourselves.

Jill: Yeah. Oh, I love that. So powerful. Okay, before we close up is there anything that we didn't cover that you want to make sure everybody knows?

Marissa: Well, what I will say is I know we didn't talk too much specifically about like exercise or running but everything we talked about does show up in that experience. Like I listened to your episode with Corinne and so much of what you were talking about, even just drinking water and how you

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can get so dehydrated and choosing not to drink water. That is an act of rest, of drinking a lot of water when you workout.

It's an act of rest when you choose to recover from an injury. Like yeah, you still have the mindset stuff. But all of this applies to whether you're training for a race or you're just exercising because you enjoy it or you want to feel better or whatever it may be. All of it applies there as well.

Jill: Okay, I love that. Rest truly is actions that are accessible to everybody. Rest is not a spa day or a week's vacation, rest is a state of mind. And from that state of mind, the actions that you take.

Marissa: Yes, in my mind anything can be rest, but it all depends on your mindset.

Jill: Yeah.

Marissa: People can feel rested doing the dishes. People can feel rested doing a triathlon. People can feel rested being in traffic, believe it or not.

Jill: I was just going to say that. I always feel so rested in traffic because I'm in my car, it's comfortable, I got the air conditioning on.

Marissa: And it's just because of your thoughts because there's so many people out there who do not feel rested in traffic because of their thoughts.

Jill: Right. It's so funny, my husband is one of those people. We're so opposite with driving.

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Okay, love that. So rest is really a state of mind. And I think when you believe that it makes it accessible to everybody and then you can customize it as well.

Marissa: Yeah, and systems of oppression do not want you to know that, especially if you live in one or more marginalized identity. They do not want you to know that rest is a mindset. They want you to keep hustling and denying yourself rest and burning out, that is part of their goal.

But I'm here to tell you rest is a mindset no matter your circumstances. Like in the face of a barrier, in the face of a challenge, in the face of promotion of burnout, you can still choose to feel rested by what you think. That's where all your power lies.

Jill: I love that, you can choose to feel rested by what you think, so fun. Well, thank you so much for joining me, Marissa. Now let's let everybody know where they can find you and how they can work with you, all the things.

Marissa: Yeah, so check out my podcast, *Redefining Rest*. It's for public health professionals, but truly anyone can benefit from it. We talk all things rest in all sorts of ways. And you can connect with me on Instagram @publichealthcoach. I'm active on LinkedIn. If folks are on LinkedIn, I'm very active on LinkedIn, Marissa McKool. You can connect with me, I'm at koolcoaching.com, I work with folks one on one, I also have a burnout recovery free course. So lots of different ways.

Jill: Awesome, and we'll have all those links in the show notes. All right, thank you so much for being here today.

Marissa: Thank you, I'm so excited. Thanks for having me.

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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](http://notyouraveragerunner.com/upandrunning) to join. I would love to be a part of your journey.