

Ep #255: Sierra Swofford's 100-Mile Ultra: How It Went



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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

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

Jill: Hey runners. So the day has finally arrived, I'm here with Sierra Swofford to talk about her huge, amazing race weekend for the 100 mile race that she basically was training for two years. There were a lot of moving parts and we have a lot to cover, so welcome Sierra, thank you for coming back and joining me again.

Sierra: Thank you, I'm so excited to give you guys the next episode in what has been happening.

Jill: Yeah, so let's kind of dive right in and let's start with a few days before the race because it wasn't like just drive to the race site and do the thing. There was so much prep work that went into it. So why don't you start there and tell us all the things that happened just to get you to Airbnb even to get started.

Sierra: Yeah, so I live in Oregon and the race is in Utah. And there was so many moving parts to get me, all my stuff, my husband and all the people to Utah. It was three days of intensive traveling with lots of driving.

Jill: Wait, I've got a quick question.

Sierra: Yes.

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Jill: I've got a quick question for you, how many people, so it was you and your husband, and then how many other people did we have to get to Utah?

Sierra: So my mom came as well and she lives in Southern California, so she was the first person we had to pick up on our way out there. She had not been to that part of Utah since the 1970s and wanted to come and support me on the race and see the beautiful scenery that is that part of Utah.

And then I had two crew members, Tanya and Mary. And then I had three pacers, Barbara, Debbie, and Rebecca.

Jill: Okay, so it starts out it's you and your husband and you're driving down to Southern California to pick up your mom.

Sierra: Yes.

Jill: Which is a pretty lengthy drive, for anybody who's not familiar with how big the west coast is, right?

Sierra: Yes, it's like 15, 16 hours of driving.

Jill: Oh my gosh. Okay, so you pick up your mom and then where did you go from there?

Sierra: Then the next day we drove to Las Vegas because that was the cheapest place to fly into to reach that part of Utah. But it's still a four hour drive from Las Vegas to Utah. So we drove from Southern California to Las Vegas and then the next day all of my crew members and pacers, except

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for one who was driving in, flew into Las Vegas and we picked them all up there. And on Thursday drove from Las Vegas up to Utah.

Jill: Oh my gosh. So did you have like a bus?

Sierra: We had two cars full of stuff.

Jill: Got it, okay.

Sierra: Full, very, very full of groceries, running gear, all the things to sustain that many people for like five days of stuff. So yeah, we had very, very full vehicles. We packed everybody in every nook and cranny we could possibly find.

Jill: Oh my God, I can only imagine. And I know you put pictures on social media, I was laughing when I was seeing them because it kind of reminded me of Ragnar, driving from Chicago to Wisconsin for Ragnar.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Okay, so that in and of itself took like three days just to get everyone assembled and all the equipment assembled just so that you could all be in the same place. And you got there on Thursday and the race was on Saturday.

Sierra: On Saturday, it started on Saturday, yeah.

Jill: Okay. So let's kind of talk about like what is it like for the first couple days? Y'all get to this house, and then what?

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Sierra: Yeah, so we only had one traveling snafu, one of my crew members, her first flight was canceled. And so she literally drove through the night to catch her connecting flight so she could still make it to the race. So we had that going on.

So we had one person going on no sleep and everybody else just, you know, normal travel fatigue. I had been traveling for three days. Everybody else had, you know, most everybody was from the East Coast flying to the West Coast and so, you know, you got to get up really early to get a flight in and all the things. And so, but it was just that moment in the airport to see everybody and just get a chance to hug everybody.

Some of the people that came, I had never met in person before and said that they would come and I, you know, had been kind of friends with online. But first time meeting them in real life. And so it was just so amazing to have that moment of getting a chance to hug them for the first time and meet people for the first time that you're going to go on this big adventure with.

Jill: That's one of the things that I kind of love about this story, is it became more than one person's journey to 100 miles. It became a whole tribe, a whole community of people kind of like supporting you. And it was pretty amazing to watch, from the sidelines anyway.

Sierra: Yeah, I had so much support. Like more than I could have ever imagined because when I started planning this, I was like, who's going to come do this with me? Nobody's going to come. And then I had so many people step up and like, no, I want to come, I want to do this with you, I want to support you. And that was just incredible. And again, people I had never met in real life.

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Jill: That's so awesome. We should probably, for anybody who's not aware, you are one of the coaches in Run Your Best Life, working for Not Your Average Runners. So these are people that you've been coaching for months and months that are getting the opportunity to sort of support you. And that's, I don't know, this is one of the things I absolutely love about our community, is how amazing everybody is.

Sierra: Yes. I mean, and so amazing, like I had one of my team come from another country. Like who does that? We had never met in real life, but she flew and she was the one with the travel issue. So not only did she fly from another country, but she drove all night to another airport to catch her second flight to make it in time for the race.

Jill: Oh my God, that's incredible, right?

Sierra: It is so incredible and just so humbling just to feel that community and love so much just from the start. Like before I had even met everybody and before everybody had even landed, it was just so humbling that she would do that for me.

Jill: Yeah. Oh, that's so awesome. Okay, so we've got you, and your husband, and your mom, and five crew members, we've got eight. Am I counting correctly? Eight people.

Sierra: Yes.

Jill: So let's play a little bit with numbers, what does it take to support, so you had to get groceries for eight people, and you had to get an Airbnb big enough for eight people. And then, of course, you had to have all of your equipment. So throw out some interesting numbers. I probably should have prepared you for this. I should have been like, "Okay, there's going to be

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math." But, I don't know, how many pairs of running tights did you have? How many packets of Nun or whatever? Like let's have some fun numbers.

Sierra: Yeah. So, I mean, just not knowing what resources we were going to have when we were going to get there because the house that we rented was kind of a little rural cabin in kind of a vacation community. So we brought everything that we could possibly need. I mean, I dragged my husband to Costco and I'm like how many things of water are eight people going to drink over five days?

So I think we bought like four Costco sized flats of bottled water. We bought, I think, four boxes of cereal and I can't even tell you how many different kinds of milk to get everybody's milk cravings and all the coffee, we had so much coffee for people. One of my team members even brought a bag of coffee that was called 100 mile coffee. I don't know if that was, I can't remember if that was the brand or what it was, but that's what it said on the package.

And yeah, a lot of coffee, a lot of caffeine. We had some specific meals planned so we bought food for that. But then we also just kind of had, you know, make your own sandwich stuff and breakfast stuff so people could eat whatever they wanted.

And I had to make eight drop bags, so I had to have enough food and electrolytes and socks, eight pairs of socks for that. I think I brought like three bras, like five pairs of underwear, like eight or nine pairs of socks. I can't even remember how much electrolytes. I think I put two things of electrolyte in each drop bag.

Jill: So for people who don't know what a drop bag is, can you explain that concept?

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Sierra: Yes, so this race is a point to point, what you call a point to point race. So you start at one point and you end at one point and you don't go back and forth across the same trail. So this race has aid stations along the way and at that aid station you can have a drop bag of your stuff.

So you put whatever you want in it, shoes, socks, food, electrolytes, you know, underwear. Like whatever you think you're going to need at that aid station, and you put it in a bag and you put your name on it and you take it to the race and you say, "Okay, here's my drop bag for this aid station."

And then they take it out there for you because this particular race is pretty remote. So they throw all the drop bags on a truck and drive them out to each aid station. So when you get there, your bag is there full of your stuff that you're going to need for the race.

Jill: Oh, that's awesome.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Awesome. But it also really speaks to the enormity of what you're undertaking, right? Like when you're doing a half marathon, you're going to be gone three, four, maybe five hours and it's like nobody needs a drop bag. But you're going to be out there for 36 hours, you're going to need some extra stuff.

Sierra: Besides the drop bag we had like basically a car drop bag. So I had like a little drawer system set up with like emergency supplies, blister kit, tape, extra clothes, extra food, extra electrolytes for the car. So when the crew met up with me, they had extra stuff as well.

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Jill: Yeah, because the crew, the plan was for the crew, how many different points did you have scheduled for your crew to interact with you?

Sierra: There was only four.

Jill: Okay.

Sierra: So yeah, and then at two of those places, one of them the crew went by twice. And then that was also where, like at mile 57 of the race I would meet my pacers and they could start running with me.

Jill: Okay, so we've got all the stuff assembled for the drop bags and it's Thursday night and we're all hanging out. What do you do the night, that first night? Like do you watch movies or what?

Sierra: Yeah, a lot of talking. The first night I got a special video surprise with good messages from members of Run Your Best Life, well wishes and all the things, which was just amazing and made me cry. So we watched that and that was so wonderful. So the community, again, like coming together to take the time to to send me videos and everything was so sweet and lovely.

So we did that Thursday night and just talked. And then we were all exhausted so we went to bed early.

Jill: Makes sense. And then Friday morning is packet pickup day, yeah?

Sierra: Yes, so Friday was packet pickup days. So we finished putting together all the last minute drop bag stuff, so like the food component to go in there because I didn't want that stuff to get smashed in transit. So we

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finished putting together the drop bags and we were getting ready to go to packet pickup.

Jill: Okay.

Sierra: And I was trying to decide what clothes I wanted to wear at the start of the race. And so I was trying some different things on and then we had an issue. I put some running tights on and I took a couple of steps to see how they felt and my calf muscle audibly popped.

Jill: Oh, that is never a good thing. That's never, ever a good thing.

Sierra: No. So instantly I knew I was in trouble. And we got ice on it right away, one of my pacers, she massaged it. We did, you know, ibuprofen, we did everything. We did all the things that we could possibly do. But it was, I'd describe it kind of like getting a charley horse. Like my muscle just tightened up really badly.

And so we just tried to do everything that we could possibly do. We knew then and there that things were not going to be what we hoped them to be. So after a little bit of finishing the drop bags and doing what we could do with my calf, we drove up to the start line to drop off my drop bags, do bib pickup, you know, do a bit of shopping, therapy shopping.

Jill: Of course, always.

Sierra: You know, just kind of move forward the best we could with the situation that we now had, which was myself being injured. And I knew right away that that meant I was not going to finish the race and that there was a strong possibility I might not even be able to start the race. But we just kind of moved forward as if I was going to start and we were going to do what

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the plan was. We were going to just follow the plan and see what happened.

Jill: Well, let's take a moment and pause there because, first of all, you know, because this is going to be a pretty long podcast, like everybody knows that you did start the race, right?

Sierra: Yes.

Jill: I'm going to do a little foreshadowing, you did start the race. But I think it would have been very easy to say, "Well, fuck it, I've injured myself so I'm just going to pack it up and go home."

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: And I'm sure that crossed your mind at some point.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Like all right, well, this is stupid, I'm just going to go home. But you didn't, right? And you kind of continued on as if like, all right, so let's see what's possible. So I'd love to know the progression of thoughts. And I think it's going to be helpful for other people listening because the thing is, shit happens, right?

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Shit happens when, you can make all the plans in the world and you could get COVID, or you could tear your calf muscle, or like all kinds of things happen. And what we do with it is really, really what matters. So I just think it would be so valuable for people to hear what went through your

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brain, what was your thought process, and just kind of like share your process, I guess, because it was a good one.

Sierra: Yeah, so after we got back from bib pick up and we continued on, you know, working on my calf, massaging, all the things, I got to a point where I was like I just need to step out of the room for a minute. And I went back to the bedroom I was staying in and I just cried. I cried, I sobbed.

And I knew I needed to do that. I knew I needed to mourn it in a way because I knew no matter what happened the next day, I knew my calf was not physically capable of finishing the race. And I knew if I did not take that moment to let it out, let those emotions out, that I would hate my experience and I would look back on it and have all kinds of negative feelings and emotions towards it and I didn't want that. That was not the outcome that I wanted.

I wanted to have the experience of a lifetime. And in that moment I knew I needed to step away and deal with those emotions and that it was okay for me to be sad and upset. I committed two years of my life to training and working towards this big thing. And very visibly, like within Run Your Best Life, very visibly here on the podcast. And it was hard to be like, okay, how am I going to tell people my calf popped.

And I mean it's not something I did intentionally, it was just my body was like, from driving for three days my calf was tight and it popped. And so I took that time and my team rallied around me. My mom, of course, being my mom came and did the it's going to be okay mom stuff, which was amazing and exactly what I needed, my mom in that moment. And I got it out.

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I think I cried for like an hour and I got it out. And I didn't stuff the emotions down, I didn't like hide them. I was very open with my team about how I was feeling and that I needed to deal with it. And they all rallied around me and supported me.

And for people that some of them I had never met before in person, like they gave me exactly what I needed in that moment. And just they knew, like, okay, she needs to deal with this because, of course, just like we do in Run Your Best Life, we work on our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our results, like we use the model. And they knew like, hey, she needs to go and cry. And they supported me in a way that was amazing.

And I didn't know what was going to happen the next day, but I knew that I wanted to have memories to last me a lifetime. And no matter what happened at the start of the race, whether I crossed the start line and turned around and walked back, or tried to do what I could do, I wanted it to be the best experience I could have. And in order to do that I had to let go of my grief and my sadness. And I had to take the time to do that.

Jill: Yeah. I love that. I love that because then that allowed you to kind of like, okay, now what do I want to get out of this weekend?

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: And kind of move into what experience, this is what happened, what am I going to create from it?

Sierra: Yeah, and so I did exactly that, I created one of the best and most amazing experiences I'll have in my lifetime.

Jill: I love that. Well tell us all about that.

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Sierra: So after I cried we did some amazing things. I got some amazing deliveries from some wonderful people and got to enjoy some things that were sent to me.

The little story about this race is that at the end of the race, if you finish the 100 miles you get to ring a gong. And my crew knowing that there was a chance that I may not finish went out and bought me a freaking gong and presented it to me the day before the race.

And I just, I cried again and again. More out of joy, and happiness, and surprise from all these amazing, wonderful things that showed up at the house and this beautiful gong, which I now have sitting behind me and is behind me in any running coaching I do in my office. And I quite frequently ring my gong, although my cat hates it.

But it was just such an amazing rest of the day that day. And then we went to bed early just continuing on with the plan that I was going to get up and cross the start line. And that was the plan for the next day for the race. And that's what we did. We got up early.

Jill: Yeah, what's that like? Because you had, all right, so I think around 8am I texted somebody on your team because it would have been about 5am your time. And I was like, "Okay, is everybody ready to go?" And I was thinking that you guys would have been on your way. And you had already crossed the start line.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: I was like, whoa, I thought I was going to be early. So yeah, let's talk about that.

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Sierra: Yeah, so start time was 5am. It was a rolling start, so you could start anywhere between five and 5:30 but I was like raring to go. As soon as the elite runners went, I went and just started going. And I was like, I can't run, but I'm going to walk. And I think I texted you, I'm like, "I'm going to go till I can't go anymore or they make me stop. It's going to be one of those two things."

And I just started going. Anybody that passed me, which was a lot of people because I was not going very fast, I was like, "Good morning, how are you? Hello, hi." You know, doing the whole thing, "Great job. Have a good run." You know, all the things as at 5am all the people that were running by me up the first little hill, because I'm just trekking slowly up the hill.

I got about a half mile in, because I looked down at my watch and my calf started cramping. And it was pretty significant and I was like, oh dear, here we go. I was like, do I turn around? Because I'm only a half mile in and it's downhill to go back. Or do I just see if it'll shake out? What do I do? And I'm like I'm going to walk like a minute more and if it doesn't shake out, I'll turn around and go back. And it relaxed right away.

And was I healed? No, because I probably had a pretty good calf strain from what happened the day before. But it relaxed enough that I was like, okay, I can keep walking. And I got to see the sunrise in Utah, which is beautiful. And again, every time anybody passed me, "Hey, how's it going?" And totally got to enjoy my run, or my walk, but I still call it a run.

And I knew that there was going to be a really big hill very close to the start of the race because I had done the 30K there before and I had to go up that hill last year and I knew I was going to have to go up it again. And I started going up it and I was like, let's see how this feels. And I made it to

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the freaking top, very slowly, but I did it. And it was very hard, it's a very not even a single track trail going up and there were washed out sections of the trail. So I was using my trekking poles and just hoofing myself up that hill as slowly as I could.

Jill: Okay, so you made it to the top of the hill, what did that feel like?

Sierra: It felt amazing because I was not sure that I was going to, my calf was going to deal with going uphill like that because it was like 700 feet of elevation over a mile.

Jill: Gosh, yeah, that's a lot.

Sierra: Yeah, and so it was a pretty significant climb. And I made it to the top and I was like, okay, let's keep going. Let's see what happens next. And I knew I would see my crew at mile 13, about mile 13. So I was like, you know, that was my first thing, was to just get to where my crew was the first time and see how I felt.

And I was able to text people and kind of keep in communication throughout that section. And yeah, it just like flew right on by and I was feeling good. And then the people from the next set of distances that were coming in after me started passing me. And again, just kept talking to people, "How are you today? Have a good race. Enjoy yourself."

And I just was enjoying the scenery, I was listening to my music, doing all the things and just enjoying the heck out of the day. And I made it to the first pit stop where my crew was, and popped a blister and got right back out onto the road.

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And then about halfway between that point, which was mile 13, to where I would see my crew next, which was about mile 20, I could tell my calf was starting to fatigue. And so I'm like, okay, we need to start talking about what we're going to do next. And so I texted with you, I called my crew and we had a couple of conversations about what was safe for me to continue to do, what was not safe.

I was hitting like a 25, 30 minute mile walk at that point so I was definitely slowing significantly down from where I had been. And we decided, as a team, that at mile 20 I was going to stop. And I felt, when we made that decision I prayed about it, I thought about it, like I talked to everybody about it because I had great phone signal at that point when I was making that decision.

And I just felt so much peace about it and was just, you know, it felt like the right thing to do. I felt like I was capable of doing more miles, but I would not be able to see my crew again until mile 57. And so I wouldn't really have a way to get out without somebody volunteering to drive me back to the start or getting back around the loop that I was on and then walking myself back to the start.

And it was going to be the hottest part of the day, it was going to take me four hours approximately to get to the next aid station, which was a water only aid station. There was no food or anything there, no people there. And then another four or five hours to get to the next one, which there would have been people there.

And at that point, there was a grim reaper time cut off at that aid station that I wouldn't have made. So no matter if I had continued on I would have been pulled from the race at that point anyway.

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Jill: Yeah.

Sierra: And plus that section of the race course is the hardest section of the race course. And so all those things combined, we said let's go out on our own terms when I'm feeling good and call it at mile 20. So that's what we did.

Jill: Well, I love that you approach this as a, you said, oh, as a team we made a decision.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Because I think that when you look at professional athletes, yes, they're the one out on the course, but there's a whole team of people supporting them. And they do kind of make decisions as a group, right, because it's a team effort.

So I just, I love how you approached that and I think you made a really smart decision to say I'm going to go out on my own terms. I mean, because you totally could have said I'm just going to go until they pull me off the course. But that wasn't necessarily in keeping with your decision the day before on what is the experience I want to create for myself this weekend, right?

And so going out on your own terms is like okay, I'm going to create my own experience. And so I think that was just really connected to your whole decision making process. So I don't know, I thought it was a beautifully done decision.

Sierra: Yeah, it was the right decision. And, you know what I got as a reward for finishing early is I got more time with my friends and my family.

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Jill: Yeah.

Sierra: And that also factored into for me finishing early, because we ended up with a whole extra day that we didn't think we were going to have, because I thought I would be running for 36 hours, to just hang out and have fun and do things that we wouldn't have gotten to do otherwise.

And that was such an even bigger reward than trying to push myself to do more than maybe I should have and then being exhausted or hurt or not being able to move or any of those things afterwards. And I got to hang out with my friends and my family and that was amazing.

Jill: Yeah. Yeah, it really was, it was like a nice little bonus gift.

Sierra: Yeah, it really, really was because I got to go on a hike because we were just outside of Bryce Canyon National Park. So we got to go as a group and go on this amazing hike in the canyon. And my leg was feeling good enough that I was able to do it and be okay to do it. And that was just an unforgettable hike to go on with my friends. And so, yeah, it was really amazing.

Jill: And then I think the reason you felt okay to go on that hike is because you pulled yourself off the course before you went past the point of no return. Because I think, yeah, you could have pushed yourself another 40 miles, or more, but who knows what your injury level would have been, and what your recovery level would have been?

So I kind of feel like it wouldn't necessarily have been worth it to push yourself to that point of maybe doing some significant damage to your calf and then having months of recovery. And then as the gift of that decision

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you were feeling okay enough to make the most of the time that you had with everybody.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Yeah, I love that. It worked out beautifully.

Sierra: Yeah, it was great. And I still got a medal because I technically did a 30K and that's a distance they offer at that race. So they still gave me a medal. So even then, I still got some bling to take home with me, which was really cool.

So it's really awesome because that race does have such a rate of people not finishing that they do offer that as an alternative, that if you do finish at whatever distance you do and it's a medal distance, you can still get a medal. And that's really an awesome thing to do for the race.

Jill: Yeah. So like what's next for you? Because this is obviously only your first attempt at a 100 miler. I know that you're like, well, I'm not going to stop until I get to the 100 mile distance. But talk me through, or talk everyone through what your next move is and kind of like what you're thinking long term.

Sierra: Yeah, so the first thing I did was hire a personal trainer when I got back, because I've struggled with so many injuries through this training phase. I'm like, I need to be stronger than what I am, I need to be more consistent than what I am. I need a professional to help me get to my next goal.

And so I hired someone who's an ultra-runner, who's done a 100 mile race, he knows what it takes and he's a personal trainer. And so I'm working out

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with him two times a week right now to get my strength up. I took the month of June off from running. I have not been running and I'm still letting my calf heal. It's not 100% yet, but it's feeling really good. Because I have another 100 mile race in October.

Jill: Yay.

Sierra: So it's a totally different format and a totally different vibe and I'm really, really excited for this situation. We have a ton of Run Your Best Lifers coming to this race. There's more than one of us going after a 100 miler, one of my pacers, she's also going after the 100 mile distance at this race. So she and I will be doing a lot of running together to both try to reach that goal.

And then we've got everybody doing, we've got different distances from 100 miles down. So it's a loop race and we have 55 hours to finish the race. And so it's very doable, it's fairly flat, and I'm just really excited to work on getting stronger and then building my endurance back up for this event in October.

Jill: I love that. And are you going to come back around to the Bryce 100 miler again?

Sierra: So that's a big question and I don't 100% know the answer to, because I've been talking a lot in Run Your Best Life about chasing your big dreams and your big goals. And I have another big dream that I'm kind of chasing and so it's going to take a lot of my time. So having the time, training for 100 mile race takes a lot of time and energy, obviously. And so I am going back to college and chasing a bit of an academic career change dream.

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And so doing that and training for a 100 mile race and working full time is probably not going to happen. So right now we're kind of toying with the idea of after I graduate that I will go back to Bryce and try it again. So maybe like 2026.

Jill: I love that because it's always going to be there.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: Do you want to share what this other big goal is? Are you ready to share that or no?

Sierra: Sure I can share it. I've shared it in Run Your Best Life, so all those girls know and everybody is so excited. I am going back to school for physical therapy. And I'm just really, really excited about this new phase in my life because you can chase your dreams at any age, and it's never too late to try new things. So here we are.

Jill: Exactly. Oh my gosh. I mean, honestly, Not Your Average Runner would not exist if I hadn't had that thought that like, oh, it's okay to change careers and like pursue big dreams, even in your 40s and onward. So I love that. And I can't wait to have you on the show so we can have conversations about physical therapy things.

Sierra: Yes, I can hardly wait for that. Yeah. So my running goals over the time while I'm in school, so the next couple of years will just to be get stronger, get more experience. I'll probably do, I haven't done a marathon yet, so I'll probably do a marathon, maybe some 50Ks.

You know, just get a lot more experience at running some longer distances, but short enough that I have time for everything else and still get to see my

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husband every once in a while. And just get that experience so then next time I do go back to Bryce, it will be with a lot more experience under my belt. And hopefully then I can finish.

I mean out of this year less than 50% finished. Only six women finished out of the women that were there. I think there were 20 women that attempted it and only six finished. It's a pretty brutal race, it is not for the faint of heart. And most first timers do not finish that race, the 100 miler. So I'm excited to get more experience, and learn more, and grow more as a runner and then be able to go back stronger and be able to finish.

Jill: I love this. And I love that, like because sometimes when we set big goals and we don't really understand what we're getting into, right, like then at the other end you're like, what the fuck was I thinking? But if you'd known what it was going to take, you might not have made the leap. So I'm so glad that you chose one of the most badass 100 milers as your goal because it made you stretch probably farther than a different race would have made you stretch.

Sierra: Yes.

Jill: And it made you really examine your thoughts, and your goals, and your reasons for why you want to do this and become, I think, so strong mentally. And then it also pointed out to you these are the weak spots in your body and here's what you need to do to kind of shore that up.

So it's not about like, oh, I failed. It's like, okay, now I know what I need to work on so that next time it goes differently. And I mean, I think that's like the most we can ever expect out of life, right? Is just to learn a lot of lessons because I feel like when our lives, like when everything just works out and we just succeed, where's the fun in that?

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Sierra: Yeah. And again, I had a life changing experience. This was not a failure at all. Like I wouldn't consider this a failure. Things happened that were out of my control and I consider this a success. I did what I set out to do, which was to train for a 100 mile race. And I finished that.

Jill: I love this.

Sierra: So everything else was just fun and frosting on the cake. And I had a fantastic time and I would not change a thing, would not.

Jill: Love it. So good.

Sierra: Even the injury, I would not change that. I wouldn't wish it away because the experience that I had was amazing.

Jill: Yeah. Right, who knows what would have happened if you hadn't gotten injured, but you know what happened as a result of getting injured and it was pretty awesome.

Sierra: Yeah.

Jill: I love that so much. Thank you for sharing this whole entire journey with us because, I mean, first of all, it's shown people the magnitude of what a race like this takes, right? It's not just the physical training, but it's all the preparation. It's the mental training, it's the whole team, it's the community.

But also I think you've shown us how to handle things that don't go your way. How to sort of handle it gracefully and turn it to your advantage rather than kind of sinking into like, oh, it's not fair, right? Because it would be

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very easy for anyone to do that and be like, "I didn't get what I wanted." And you're just like, "All right, well, what's next?"

So I just appreciate so much your approach to training and the way that you so deliberately choose how you want to think about everything, because I think it's created a beautiful experience for you, for your team, and has kind of shown everybody what's possible for them.

Sierra: Yes. And I think one of the biggest takeaways too, well, two big takeaways for me is the community is everything. Having those people around me made that experience a big part of what it was. And two, never stop chasing your big dream because you just don't know what's going to happen. And I never thought at the start of this that I would be a coach in Run Your Best Life and I would be doing all these other amazing things along with it.

And because I spoke boldly two years ago about this little idea that I had floating around in my brain, it really was life changing in so many different parts of my life. I would not be going back to school, I would not be chasing all these other things had I not said to you, "Hey, Jill, I think I want to do this" like really quietly. And the journey that I have been on for the last two years has changed me in so many ways. And so it's become this beautiful thing in life.

And that's why it's like, you know, I'm not afraid to be like, "Hey, I didn't finish. But here's all the really cool things." You know?

Jill: Yeah.

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Sierra: So, hopefully in October I'll be able to say yes, now I'm a 100 miler, but you never know. We'll see what happens because crazier things can happen.

Jill: We know, we cannot predict the future. But all right, well, thank you so much, Sierra, for joining me here today. And as always, we'll have all of your links and everything in the show notes. But real quick, what is your Instagram and what is your TikTok?

Sierra: I am from 100 to 100 on Instagram and TikTok.

Jill: Awesome. All right, check her out there because she's always got some fun stuff to share. And yeah, thank you again for joining me today.

Sierra: Thank you so much, Jill.

Jill: Before we end this episode I want Sierra to ring the gong. Let's close it out with a ring of the gong.

Sierra: All right, here we go.

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.