

## Ep #271: Coach Jen's BIG Announcement!



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Jill Angie**

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Welcome to *The Not Your Average Runner Podcast*. If you've never felt athletic but you still dream about becoming a runner, you are in the right place. I'm Jill Angie, your fat running coach. I help fat women over 40 to start running, feel confident, and change their lives. I have worked with thousands of women to help them achieve their running goals and now I want to help you.

Jill: Hey runners, so I am back this week with one of my favorite guests of all time, the amazing coach Jen Lamplough. And we're going to talk about some big ass goals that she has for herself.

But before we dive into that, Jen, welcome back to the Not Your Average Runner show.

Jen: Thank you so much. It's been way too long, first of all.

Jill: It really has, it really has.

Jen: Yeah, way too long.

Jill: And long as I'm gazing at you over this Zoom call, I can see that you have some Halloween decorations in the back.

Jen: Yes.

Jill: And I know you're not a fan of fall.

Jen: Yeah, I'm not a fan of like cold and winter. And I'm not a fan of decorating for holidays. My house is like a teeny tiny, tiny cottage, so any extra stuff just feels like clutter. So I'm not a huge fan of decorating, and yet...

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Jill: And yet here we are, here we are.

Jen: I have a very festive seven year old who loves to decorate for the holidays.

Jill: So what are his favorite decorations? Promise everyone we will get to running, but you shouldn't see how cute Jen's house looks right now.

Jen: Yes, oh my gosh. So he loves, we have a graveyard with like bones that we set up in the front yard. So it's like he loves it, which also is sort of like, "Hmm, hope that's not anything I need to be worried about."

Jill: Just don't let him watch that Jeffrey Dahmer show.

Jen: God, right? No kidding. And then we have these like fake fingers that I put, I have like a bowl, I'm looking at it over here. I have like a bowl of pine cones and so I have these like fake fingers and fake eyeballs sticking out the pine cones. And he's terrified of them, but he loves them. But he won't touch them, but he loves the gross fake fingers, but he won't touch them.

And then he gets to decorate his room for every holiday too. He has like a little Christmas tree that he puts up in his room. And he has, he's very festive, he loves a party, this kid. So he decorates for every holiday. So he put up his Halloween decorations in his room, but now he's scared of them so he's been sleeping with me for the last few nights because he's afraid of his Halloween decorations. So I haven't slept a wink in two nights. It's like sleeping with a hot, sweaty octopus, basically.

Jill: Oh my god, that's awesome. I love it. He's like, I want all the Halloween decorations. Also, I'm scared, please protect me.

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Jen: Yes, yes. He's right at that age where he's like really intrigued by scary stuff, but he still gets really scared by it. So yeah, it's pretty funny.

Jill: That's awesome. I love that so much. Oh my gosh. All right.

Jen: He makes me festive.

Jill: So you're a little sleep deprived right now.

Jen: I am.

Jill: Which may explain the text that I got from you, like practically in the middle of the night.

Jen: Was it in the middle of the night?

Jill: It was, wait, let me look at my phone.

Jen: I tend to do that to you, don't I?

Jill: You do tend to do that to me. Wait, let me look and tell you the exact time that you sent it to me. Oh, it was 12:44pm, I thought it was 12:44am. Okay, no, all right, it was in the middle of the day so never mind, you're off the hook.

Jen: But I do do that to you an awful lot.

Jill: Right? Right, a few years ago, I saved it, you were like middle of the night, "I think I want to run the Chicago Marathon. Is this a thing I should do?"

Jen: Yeah.

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Jill: And I was, I don't know why I was up at that hour but I'm like, "Absolutely yes, you should do it."

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: And then I got this text from you yesterday, and perhaps you could explain to everyone because we're here to kind of talk about it.

Jen: Yeah. Yeah, yeah. God, why? What is wrong with me? Why? Why do I do this to myself? You know, I did not have a great experience at my first marathon, and we did a podcast about it. I actually just talked about it in a coaching call yesterday or this morning with our Run Your Best Life clients. Podcast number eight, and I only know that because I had to look it up. It was number eight, can you believe that?

Jill: Oh my gosh.

Jen: That was almost five years ago.

Jill: That was so long ago.

Jen: I know, it was like a little baby podcast, like number eight. It's like Ikey's age.

Jill: I think you might have been my first guest. Where you my first guest?

Jen: I think I was actually.

Jill: Yeah, it was either you or Mirna, but I think it might have been you. Oh my gosh, okay, that makes this even more special.

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Jen: So yeah, so I was like not, you know, I didn't have a great race and I'm like, "I'm never do an effing marathon again." I was over it. And then, I don't know, we were somewhere and I was with you, of course, because you sprinkle your Jill dust on me and then I have crazy thoughts.

But we were somewhere and I was like, "I think I need to have a redemption Chicago marathon." I think it was maybe at Ragnar we talked about this, the last Ragnar, I can't remember. And everyone was like, "Yes, do it." And I was like, "Shit, I did that thing again where I said it out loud and now people are like, yes, do it." And so then I've been thinking about it and thinking about it.

Jill: But that was a year ago.

Jen: That was a year ago.

Jill: No, over a year ago actually.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: Yeah, it's kind of been like ruminating in my brain. And so I went to the Chicago Marathon this past Sunday to cheer on some of our Run Your Best Life runners, and we had some runners who ran for the food bank, where I work who ran charity bibs.

I went to go cheer for everybody and it was like partial triggering and partial, you know, it's so inspiring to see. You see every kind of person and every level of athletic ability. And just like all the people out cheering and so many people running for charities. And just like it's so inspiring.

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And of course, it was a beautiful, perfect day. Unlike the day that I did the marathon when it was 85 degrees. This was like 60 degrees, and sunny, and just perfect. And I was like, "Oh, man, maybe I should have that redemption marathon."

And so then I was like, well, it would be two years, I wanted to do it when I turn 50. So I just turned 48 in July, it's now October. And so I wanted to do it like kind of a milestone things. So I'm like, well, maybe when I turn 50, because my son will be a little bit older. He's only seven right now and he was two when I did it last time. And that was hard to deal with a toddler after marathon training.

And so he'll be a little bit older. And I'm not anywhere near marathon ready, or even ready to start training for a marathon. So I have to kind of restart because I've had a rough kind of couple of years with Covid, and getting divorced, and becoming a single parent. And I've had a lot going on, and a big job change.

And so I haven't really been running all that much. And I miss it. Like it's affecting my life, not running. And so I'm like, maybe if I set this as like a two year goal, I can work my way up to it and it'll be my 50th year. And, you know, all of that.

And so that's when I texted you and said, "Hey, I think I'm going to do this thing. Should we do it together?" Like not do it together, but like, I can't remember what I said. I said like, I think I'm going to blog about it. Should I blog with you or blog on my own? And you're like, "Yes, and a podcast and this and this." And I was like, "Oh shit, now I'm doing it."

Jill: I love that. And here's what I kind of want to dive into, because I know that, so you had Covid right in the, kind of like towards the beginning of the pandemic, right?

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Jen: Yeah, it was December of 2020. So like enough people had kind of had it already where they had better treatments by then. But there was no vaccines yet so I had it really badly. I was in the hospital, I wasn't on a ventilator, but I was in the hospital for a week. And I was on steroids for almost a month and it just, it really, Covid, it's not just physical. Like it really messes with you mentally and like I've lost some like short-term memory, I have brain fog, and it's just really messed up my respiratory, my upper respiratory system pretty badly.

And then I got it again, post vaccines and it wasn't as bad, I wasn't as sick. This one was more, it was more coughing. And I think like you can hear my voice is kind of squeaky still. I had it at the beginning of June and I think I like damaged my vocal cords from coughing because I had lost my voice for like a full three weeks. And like just me and Covid do not get along, I'm telling you.

Jill: Well, and there was probably a little like PTSD the second time around from like remembering the first time. Because that was, that was really scary. I remember when-

Jen: I got taken away in an ambulance. Thank God you and Andy sent me a pulse ox.

Jill: Pulse oximeter, yeah,

Jen: Oximeter, yeah. Thank God you did, because that's how I knew I had to go to the hospital. Like I could tell, I could feel it but I was like, oh, maybe I'm just extra tired. And I took my pulse and it was 83% oxygen. And so like my lips were blue and shit, I had to go. My ex-husband came and I had to get taken away in an ambulance in front of my little boy. You know, it was a big deal.



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Jill: Yeah, and so there's the physical toll it took on your body, there's the mental toll it took on your body, and then there's also the emotional toll as well, right?

Jen: Yes, for sure.

Jill: And so, like I know, you said it's been probably a couple years, like it's coming up on two years since you had Covid.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: So what's it been like for you restarting running after that chunk of time off, right? Because a lot of times people are like, "Oh, I fucked around for a couple months and I didn't run, and then I started again." But you had a significant hospitalization, significant illness that affected you for a while. Then you had it again, job change, life changes, right? And so what's it been like for you to restart the process?

Jen: It's been really hard because mostly, so when I would run, most of the time I would get up early in the morning and run. And my ex-husband was here and with our son, and so I could just get up and go. And so like October of 2020 is when we split up. So that was two months before I got Covid the first time, the really bad one.

And so I had to sort of like re-figure out how to do some things because I didn't have backup, you know what I mean, like every day. He's great, we're a great co-parent, you know, he's with our son often and stuff like that. But it's not the same as having somebody living with you who you could just get up at six o'clock in the morning and go running and not wake anybody up and all that.

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I couldn't do that, I couldn't leave him because he's only, you know, he's seven now but he was only five then. And so all of a sudden I was like, "Oh, I have to figure out how to do all this stuff." And I couldn't go after work because I had to go get him most days.

And so I was like trying to figure out like, A, when I could work out, especially running because I didn't have a treadmill and the gyms were closed even anyway. You know what I mean? Because the Covid at the time. But I just, you know, I have always talked about my morning routine, and doing my run in the morning. Like that is my time. It is my favorite time to do it.

And so my whole thought process has been like, well, I can't do it, because I can't do it when I want to. So it's like, yes, Covid affected me, and yes, I have some respiratory stuff. But it's been 90% mental at this point because it's like I don't get to do it the way that I really want to. So I'm just sort of like, you know, pouting and wasn't doing it because it wasn't how I wanted it to be. I didn't have my like perfect setup anymore.

Jill: I think that's really amazing awareness though. That a lot of people just say, "Well, I don't know, I'm just not motivated." But you kind of dug in and figured out, okay, the reason I'm struggling is because I'm thinking this thought. If I can't do it the way I want to do it, I just don't want to do it. But now you're doing it. So talk me through like how you have recreated this routine for yourself.

Jen: Yeah, I haven't gotten a great routine down just yet. I'm still kind of working on it. I just sort of realized, I was talking with a friend who did the marathon the same year I did. They didn't finish because it was so hot, I think they dropped out at like mile 17. So I was like, okay, I'm like, not that there's anything wrong with not finishing, it's everybody's journey. But I was like, okay, I'm like, well, you know, and we talked about how awful that day was.

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I mean, literally, there were people just like dropping like flies. I mean, it was crazy. And so we had talked about that and they used to be a runner too and it's kind of the same thing, like gotten out of it since Covid. And so we were like, "Let's do it together. And let's pick a race in Chicago."

And there's the hot chocolate runs series. And I did the 15k in Philly with you several years ago. It's such a fun race series. And so they have a 5k. I did the 15k with you, but I wanted something fun. I wanted something kind of big and fun that would be kind of motivating. So we were out for drinks one night and we were like, "Okay, let's do it." So we both signed up together.

And then, you know, I've been not training great for it yet. I'm really, this is just sort of like let's just get back in the feel of having a race and trying to train for it. We're probably going to end up walking, I would say, most of it. But just trying to figure out my new routine.

So I've been going to the gym and running on the treadmill. And then my son stays at his dad's one night on the weekend, so like that next morning I've been trying to like get up and go running then. Although I've kind of been, I've been partying a little bit lately. So I need to stop the partying, I think. I mean, it's been a lot of fun. But I also kind of need to get my butt in gear.

And just, you know, doing my strength training and just like easing my way back into it because it's so hard. You get so mental around like, oh my god, I used to be here and now I'm here. And so I keep trying to tell myself like I'm not trying to get back to where I was like, I'm just starting a new journey. Because the more I told myself I want to get back to where I was the more frustrated I get.

Jill: Yeah, I think that's really powerful, what you just said though. I'm not trying to get back to where I was, I'm starting a new journey.

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Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Because that gives you sort of a fresh slate to just say, "Okay, well, what is this going to look like?" Instead of comparing it to something you did before. And by the way, you're kind of mad about how it turned out before, so why would you want to get back to that, right?

Jen: Right, exactly. That's five years ago, Jen. And then I look at like 10 years ago, I remember this time last, you know, 10 years ago, I ran my best half marathon ever. It was like a 12, 12 and a half minute mile. I rocked it. Like it was my best half marathon ever. And then I fell and broke my ankle. And I always am like, "I want to get back to where I was. I want to get back to where I was."

I was at a weight that I felt great at and I was, you know, physically I'm like that was 10 years ago though. The difference between like 38 and 48 is real different.

Jill: Right? It's a thing, it's a thing.

Jen: Yeah, it's real different.

Jill: Because honestly, even if you did get back to that weight that you were at before there's no guarantee that you would be running the same way.

Jen: No.

Jill: Because every runner kind of hits their peak, right? You can't just like keep getting faster as a runner until you die, right? Every runner hits a peak, an age where like this is the fastest they're ever going to be, this is the strongest, maybe not the strongest. But this is the fastest they're ever going to be. And then it's kind of like they kind of slow down from there.

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And so for a lot of people, that peak comes in 30s, 40s, 50s, right? And so chasing something that came before, I understand how we think, "Well, I shouldn't be comparing myself to other people, so I'm going to compare myself to myself." But it's always a losing proposition because you can't go back in time, there is no hot tub time machine, it's not a thing, right?

Jen: No, the past doesn't exist anymore.

Jill: It's doesn't, it's gone.

Jen: It's nothing but a memory

Jill: All we have is right now.

Jen: Yeah. So that's how I'm trying to approach it, of like this is a totally different journey. And the good thing is, is that I did do it and I didn't have a great time. And I know why. Like I know what I did wrong, kind of all along the way.

I mean, I couldn't control the weather, obviously. But all the other shit, it wasn't just the weather. I mean, if you listen to that podcast I had a whole sort of slew of bad choices and circumstances that could I go back, I would have changed.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: So now I can.

Jill: So give me some examples, like what are some ways you're going to approach the training differently this time around?

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Jen: The training actually wasn't my issue. The training I did great at. Like I was an A student, except I didn't do the 20 miler. I only went as far as 18. So I would for sure make sure I got a 20 miles in.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: Like I needed one more long run. And I needed that 20 mile mark, because 18 to 26 was doable, but that was a long eight miles. That was a long eight miles.

Jill: I mean of course it was doable, because you did it.

Jen: Because I did it.

Jill: Right, like I want to make sure that everyone's clear. You finished that marathon, you are a marathoner.

Jen: Yes.

Jill: And it's just a matter of like you have some thoughts about it.

Jen: Yeah, I want the outcomes to be a little different.

Jill: Yeah, you want the outcomes to be different.

Jen: But I was actually a pretty rockstar trainer. Like my training, I actually did a really good job. I was doing yoga once a week, I was doing all my strength training, I was getting all my runs in, I was doing the thought work. You know, you and I were talking a lot and like the training, I did great at minus the not getting the 20 miler in. Which I convinced myself that I didn't need it.

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Jill: Yeah, what would you do differently then?

Jen: So a couple of things. Number one, I bought new shoes too soon to the race.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: And I got a different version. And I asked them, I said, "Has anything changed from this version to this version? Like has the drop changed? Has the..." Nope, nope, nope. And something changed. It was either the drop, like they don't think of the drop, I think. I don't think they always think of that when you ask if anything changed. Because something changed because they were not, they were not the same shoes. And they were not worn in enough, like they were too close to the race.

Jill: Okay, and did you get a long run in with those shoes?

Jen: Nope.

Jill: Oh, yeah.

Jen: It was close to the race and I did not get a long run in with them.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: So that was the number one problem. All the things we teach our clients not to do, I did. So like nothing new on race day, so the night before I ate food I never, like we went out for some restaurant food I never would have eaten. I slept on a couch the night before. It was a Bougie apartment, but I slept on the couch.

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And then the morning of I was like, "I don't need my fuel belt. It's a marathon, they're going to have tons of water and tons of stuff." Well, forgetting that they close the course down because we were slow. So I had nothing. I had no water, I had no fuel, I had nada.

So Thank God I had friends on the course that like brought me, but they were bringing me like red Gatorade. I mean I might as well have been drinking pancake syrup. So I was like, you know, my stomach was upset, it was none of the same stuff I trained with. Like just dumb, dumb moves. You know what I mean?

And then I have come to realize that I am a solo racer. I can train with people, but day of race, like and my friend who I trained with who I love dearly, like we were not the right people to run together. I had started my watch too soon and so my mileage was off about like where we were at on the course. And they were taking the course down so we had no idea.

After like mile 13 we had no idea like what mile marker we were at and my watch was fucked up. So we literally had no idea. And so every half mile she was like, "How far are we?" I was like, "Still don't know." "How far are we?" "Still don't know." And I think she was like getting psycho too. And she's allergic to bees and there were a lot of bees everywhere. I was just like, "Oh my God. Oh my God."

And you know, we were hungry, and it was hot, and we were tired. And thank God, like I said, we had people on the course who rescued us. My sweet boss literally gave us the peanut butter and jelly sandwich like out of her mouth like, "Here you go. We were gobbling it because we had nothing.

Jill: Oh gosh.



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Jen: And then that poor thing, at the end of the marathon, the Chicago Marathon you go up a hill, one hill in the entire Chicago Marathon, it's the last quarter mile, Roosevelt Road. And when you come up that hill, you turn left, and that's where the finish line is, but you can't see it. And so like we're dying by this point, and we're going up this hill like fucking dying.

I'm ready to kill her, she's ready to kill me. And she's like, "Where's the finish line?" And I just snapped. I was like, "I don't fucking know, stop asking me questions." And she got these like big doe eyes and looked at me, and I was like, "I'm so sorry." I'm surprised she's still talking to me, to be honest. I was like, I felt so bad because then we like turned the corner and there's the finish line. I was like, "Sorry."

Jill: It's like, please don't hate me for what I said when I was at mile 26 of the marathon.

Jen: Going up a motherfucking hill at the end of the last quarter mile of the marathon.

Jill: Oh my gosh.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Okay, so that, I mean I think that your assessment, though, of all of the things, like that's a great laundry list of, okay, so when I'm doing my last two long runs, I'm going to make sure I get my new shoes before those last two or three long runs. I'm going to bring the fuel that I trained with. I'm going to bring the liquid that I trained with. Like that's all really good stuff.

Jen: Yeah, I'm not going to eat weird things, I'm going to sleep in a good bed. And yeah, I'm going to race solo. I am a solo racer. I get way too

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mental and I cannot deal with anybody else's mental illness with running, I can only deal with my own mental illness.

Jill: I love that. So, I mean, I think going into this you have a great, and this is, I think, when we think I wish I could time travel back and fix these things. This is a chance for you to kind of like, not necessarily time travel, but get sort of a do over where you're like, "Okay, these are all the things I would change." And now you can go ahead and change them.

Jen: Yep.

Jill: So what do you think some of the challenges, other challenges that you might face, because so you've got a two year lead-up. So you're not actually going to start training training probably for 18 months or so.

Jen: Yeah, so my plan is start with this 5k In November, and then just spend the winter kind of like getting back out there. I actually really like to run outside in the winter because it makes me, because I hate winter. And when I'm not running outside I'm a hermit, like non-moving, I mean, I turn into like a rock in the winter if I don't like get outside and move because I hate being cold and I hate winter.

So even just hiking or some light, you know, just a little bit of winter running or snowshoeing or something. So my goal is to like be outdoor physically active this winter. And thankfully, my son can do it now with me, he's old enough. And he's in scouts and we've got to go hiking and do all this stuff. So I'm like, it'll give me some motivation to do that in the winter.

So I'm going to do this 5k. I may try for a 10k. I did a 10k in February one time on the Chicago lakefront and it was just too cold. And it was snowing and like my butt was frozen. So it was a little too, it's just like the cold is a little too miserable for me.

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So I'm just going to try to get in better shape, like try to get back some of my strength and some of my stamina. Try to figure out some of this breathing stuff. I'm going to an ENT in a couple of weeks because I have this scratchy throat that won't clear up. It's like this persistent dry cough and scratchy throat that I've had since June, since I had Covid in June.

So I'm actually going to see any ENT to see if I can get something, like what's going on with it and try to get something to make it better. Because it's also affecting my sleep because I'm coughing in the middle of the night and I'm snoring really loud, like really bad. And so I keep waking up and I'm not getting good sleep and I'm not getting into deep sleep.

And I'm a sleeper. I've always been a sleeper. I've always been a deep sleeper. Sleep is very important to me and the last, I'd say five or six months has not been great. And so I'm like trying, it's maybe not even quite that long, but I'm trying to figure that part of it out because sleep is so important, especially in marathon training.

But I think part of the sleep might be because I'm not running. So I'm like I don't know, what's the chicken and what's the egg either. So my goal is just to kind of get back some physical fitness this winter and then in the spring start training for a like early summer or late spring half marathon.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: And then do a fall half marathon and just work on trying to like get some endurance back. And then kind of do the same thing over the winter, just like stay in shape and then January of 24 really start training. I want to give myself a long time to really train for the marathon.

Jill: I love that. I love that.

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Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Because I think a lot of folks try to rush the training. And you know, you've seen this happen in Run Your Best Life, we'll have people that join and they'll say, "Well, my big goal is to run a marathon, and I just started running three months ago. So do you think I could do a marathon three months from now?" And I'm like, I do not. I do not think. Like I'm never one to squelch somebody's dreams. But I also feel like, let's be smart about it.

And you're basically starting from zero at this point, right?

Jen: Yeah, pretty much. I'm like a new runner.

Jill: Right? I mean, there's for sure the muscle memory, and there's the mental memory and the love for it. But as far as, you know, you've gone through two bouts of Covid and so your body is kind of starting over from zero as far as the cardiovascular stuff.

And so giving yourself the chance to rebuild that base and reestablish your routine in a way that works for your new life circumstances, right, without throwing the complication of a marathon into it, I think is really wise.

Jen: Yeah, I need to sort of rebuild the foundation before I can launch a rocket. You know what I mean?

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: I can't build the plane and fly it at the same time.

Jill: Exactly.

Jen: It needs to be a fully built plane before I fly it.

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Jill: Yes, let's build the plane, test it out, and then the we fly it.

Jen: Yes.

Jill: I love that.

Jen: Yes.

Jill: So here's the question that I need to know, I mean, you finished that race, like you did. You are a marathoner, you finished the race. When I think of you, I think of like my friend Jen, who's a marathoner. And I know that you, I don't know, did you enjoy your training? Did you enjoy the marathon training?

Jen: I did.

Jill: You did, okay.

Jen: I mean, it was a lot of work. It was like a part time job. But I did very much, I don't know if enjoy is the right word, but it was very fulfilling.

Jill: Okay.

Jen: I don't think enjoy is quite the word I'd use.

Jill: I love that. I love that explanation because that's kind of how I felt about marathon training. I was like, this is not like jump up and down, clap your hands fun. It's not like Lizzo concert fun.

Jen: No.

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Jill: But it was satisfying when it was done, and even satisfying at points during the training as well.

Jen: Yes. And it was very fulfilling because it's like you have like here's my week and this is what it looks like. And it's like, check I did it, check I did it, check I did it, you know what I mean? It's like for a person who likes to cross things off their list and have a plan and accomplish it, that part of it's very fulfilling.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: On the other hand again, granted, my son was two and my ex-husband at the time was not physically super well and it was a hard time in our lives. And so that on top of just the time it takes. And then it's not just the time to do the run, it's the prep for it and then it's the recovery and it's being tired. And then having to chase around a two year old. And it was pretty exhausting.

Jill: Yeah. Well, and we're going to follow your journey on this podcast, you know, every like six months or so I think we'll check in and talk about how it's going. But I am particularly interested for when you really start getting those long runs. And this will be like, actually, while you're in half marathon training next year.

Jen: Yep.

Jill: Like how you're going to set yourself up for success, because you'll have a seven year old maybe, I'm not sure when his birthday is.

Jen: He'll be eight, yeah.

Jill: He'll be eight.

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Jen: He'll be eight when I start. Well, he'll be eight in April. So probably he'll turn eight when I'm doing my first half or around there.

Jill: And like, I really don't know anything about children, but at eight, obviously, he's not driving yet.

Jen: No.

Jill: He's going to require a certain level of supervision.

Jen: Yes.

Jill: But also is that an age where you feel like you can go out and run a few miles and leave him home alone?

Jen: Technically no. Technically that's against the law, they can't be home alone until they're 12 or 13.

Jill: I did not know. See, this is why I don't have kids.

Jen: Right, so technically no.

Jill: Jen is like, "Jesus, Jill. Remind me to never leave you in charge of my child."

Jen: Yeah, but I mean he could like ride his bike with me, you know what I mean, on some things.

Jill: Yeah.

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Jen: Oh really I can just, I can work it out with baby sitters or his dad. It's just easier because he's not two. Two an eight are like night and day, you know?

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: If I want to veg out I can say, "Hey, let's watch a movie." And he'll sit and watch a two hour movie with me, as opposed to being a two year old where it's like, you know, trying to keep them from, you know, sticking their head in the oven. So it's like a total different game.

Jill: Yeah, yeah, exactly. And he understands what you're doing as well, right?

Jen: Totally.

Jill: And so at this point in time you're kind of demonstrating behaviors to him that you want him to absorb.

Jen: Yeah, and he went to the marathon with me on Sunday to go cheer. He was funny because he was like, "They're not really running that fast." I was like, "A, yes they are. And B, it doesn't matter. And C, they're going for 26 miles." I was like, "So shut your little face or you're going to be in serious trouble."

Jill: Was he like, "Okay, all right, got it."?

Jen: Yeah, he was like, "Easy, mom."

Jill: Yeah, that's so awesome. He's such a great kid. He is a great kid.

Jen: He's a smart aleck. I can't imagine where he gets that from.



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Jill: So as we kind of close this conversation up, when you set a big goal, and the big goal is like six months away, or nine months away, or even a year away, it's like you can see the planning, you can see like these are the steps that I'm going to take. And the excitement is already there. But when it's two years out, right, I feel like there's potential for your brain to play some tricks on you.

Jen: Totally.

Jill: And so can you speak to that a little bit? Because I think the next year, the next 12 to 18 months you're not going to be in marathon training. So what are you going to do to keep yourself pumped, to keep yourself amped for this big goal?

Jen: I think partially this, like talking about it with other people, like putting it out there, as opposed to having it being this little secret goal in my head. So we have Run Your Best Life, which is our running group. And they're all super pumped for me and they're going to be on this journey with me as well.

And I'm a coach in that group and I have a certain responsibility to our clients to like coach them, and to coach myself, and to be a role model, and to live and be an example for them. I feel that responsibility. And it's a good responsibility. I don't feel like, "Oh God." You know, it doesn't feel like a burden, it feels like a privilege.

And so that keeps me very accountable. I like that kind of accountability, because it feels very positive to me, as opposed to like, "Oh, you're going to look stupid if you don't do it." You know what I mean? That's not the kind of accountability that works for me. But the responsibility of being a coach and a role model does. So I think that's going to help me do it a lot.

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And I'm not going to look at the next two years, I'm looking at it month by month. And so it's like right now my focus is doing the 5k and having a little bit of fun. And this is just to do it, just to get back, like get my brain back into like, oh, yeah, this is what you love about running. And oh, yeah, this is what you love about races. And like, ooh, the race expo, and swag, and all the people, you know, these are all the things that I love about running.

And even just training on my own and having those peaceful moments on the river and doing a strength training class and like see myself to make those evolutions where it's like, oh, I can lift a little heavier, or oh, I'm not as out of breath. That kind of stuff is very rewarding and I haven't had that for the last two years. And I really, I can see the detrimental effect it has on my life when I don't do it.

And so it's just remembering that, like it's remembering that, like the why. This is why I'm doing it. So I'm really going to take it piece by piece and not look at the big goal. But I'm also going to keep the big goal in sight so that I don't scope creep, you know what I mean?

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: So I don't lose focus.

Jill: Yeah. Oh, love that, I absolutely love that. Okay, so as we close up this conversation, what is one piece of advice that you have for somebody who is kind of in a similar position to you that maybe is thinking about a big, audacious goal 12, 18 months, two years out?

Jen: Yeah, I think there's sort of two pieces of advice, because I think it's either somebody who's starting brand new or it's somebody who used to be somewhere and is "starting over," right? It's the same platform, right? We're starting a new journey, it's get out of your head the like, "Oh, I want to get

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back to where I was." Because where you were doesn't exist, right? So it's like, that thing I said earlier about I'm not trying to go back to our wasn't starting a new journey.

So start there, even if you're brand new to running, this is just a new journey. And keep your eye on the prize, but always remember, and I tell myself and I tell our Run Your Best Life clients this all the time, like the goal isn't really the goal. The marathon is going to be a great thing to do, but that's not really the goal. The goal is to be a person who is at a certain fitness level, who's training for a marathon, who identifies as a runner, who feels good because they're doing those things to work towards that goal.

The marathon is going to be great. You know, it'll be fun, it's beautiful, Chicago is a great city, it's a major thing to do. But just remember, the goal is not the goal. The goal is the journey, and the progress, and the self confidence that it builds, and feeling good about yourself and potentially being an inspiration to others.

You never know who you're going to inspire. And I think it's really important to remember that, not for pressure reasons but because it's a good thing to do in life, right? You want to be a good role model for your kids, or your family, or the people you work with, or even people you don't even know. And so that's sort of kind of where I'm approaching it from.

Jill: I love that.

Jen: And that makes me feel really like warm and fuzzy inside not like, "Holy shit, the pressure is on." I don't do well in that environment. Like if the pressure is on I'm going to tank, right?

Jill: Yeah.

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Jen: I have to have that like warm, uplifting like, "Oh, we're doing this for the greater good."

Jill: Yeah, I love that. I love that.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: All right, well, so where can people follow this journey?

Jen: On my Instagram. So Instagram is @fitfoodiechef, F-I-T-F-O-O-D-I-C-H-E-F. That's probably the going to be the best place. I don't post a ton on Facebook, but I'll use Instagram for that. And then I'm going to be writing a blog and it'll be on your platform.

Jill: Yep.

Jen: Will that be your notyouraveragerunner.com website?

Jill: Yep, it'll be at notyouraveragerunner.com.

Jen: Yep. I'm not on Twitter anymore, I canceled Twitter.

Jill: Twitter scares me, I don't want anything to do with it.

Jen: Yeah, I never use it, people are creeps, yeah.

Jill: Right? I feel like there are some pretty terrifying people on Twitter.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Are you on TikTok?

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Jen: No. No, no, no. I tried, I downloaded TikTok and I was like, "Oh my God," it like gave me an anxiety attack and I'm like, delete, delete.

Jill: All right, so we got Instagram and on the [notyouraveragerunner.com](http://notyouraveragerunner.com) website.

Jen: Like Instagram reels, that's like the old person TikTok, right? Like they take the TikToks and put them on the Instagram.

Jill: Exactly.

Jen: That's how I like it.

Jill: I do too.

Jen: TikTok, there's too much going on. There's like things blinking and like it's just too much.

Jill: Yeah. People can also follow your journey much more closely if they're members of the Run Your Best Life community.

Jen: For sure because, you know, I coach, I do the coaching calls, and then we have a private Facebook group. So I'll definitely be posting in there. And a lot of people are excited for this journey because they've been on it with me since five years ago.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: Or are new to the group and know my story or came to the group because of my story. I mean, I've had that too, you know?

Jill: Yeah.

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Jen: And so some of our local members are like, "If you ever need a running buddy," you know. But I feel very accountable to that group and I feel very proud to be a coach in that group. And so, yeah, it's going to be a little more intimate in that group. They'll get the, maybe even a little more of the nitty gritty.

Jill: I think they'll get the behind the scenes for sure.

Jen: Yeah, they'll get the little man behind the curtain view of this maybe.

Jill: Yeah, so anybody who like really wants that view, just go to [runyourbestlife.com](http://runyourbestlife.com) and join our group and you can see the deal.

Jen: The good, the bad and the very, very ugly.

Jill: Yeah. So we're going to, we'll be checking back, I don't know, probably like six months or so on the podcast.

Jen: Okay.

Jill: But we're going to set up the blog in the meantime and you can follow the journey there. And yeah, thank you so much for joining me. And thank you for texting me in the middle of the afternoon this time.

Jen: Absolutely. Thanks for being on this with me for the last, gosh, what are we going on, six years now?

Jill: I think it's been six years.

Jen: It's been six years, yeah, because Ikey it was one.

Jill: Yeah, it's been a privilege, I've got to say.

## **Ep #271: Coach Jen's BIG Announcement!**

Jen: Thank you, I appreciate it, I could not have done it without you, or continue to do it without you.

Jill: All right. Well, thank you so much for being here. And to all of our listeners, we love you, stay safe and get your ass out there and run.

Jen: Yes. Bye, thanks for having me.

Jill: Bye.

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.