

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

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'm here this week with my two favorite people in the world, the Run Your Best Life coaching team, coach Elle Dee and coach Jen. And the three of us make up the, I always call us the dream team of coaches in what I also like to call the best running party on the planet, which is the Run Your Best Life coaching community.

And so this week we have some questions. We have some listener questions to answer, we're totally going to get to them. But I thought it would be kind of fun to just kind of chit chat amongst the three of us as coaches and as runners so that you can kind of get to know the dream team a little bit better.

Let's start, I'm going to go in order of who I've got here on my screen. Coach Elle Dee, tell us a little bit about yourself.

Elle Dee: Hello, I am Elle Dee. I am in Birmingham, Alabama. I was part of the Run Your Best Life community before Jill graciously asked me to help out with coaching. And it's just been such a big part of my life. I've met so many of you in the community and looking forward to meeting more of you.

I just paid my second deposit in Alaska. So for those who are going to Alaska, I'm hoping to see you down there. And I'm going to be asking probably some of you in the Facebook group, are y'all staying at the Marriott or are you going somewhere else?

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: I cannot believe you're coming to Alaska. I am so – Because we got to run in Wisconsin together twice. We did not get to run together in Texas because both of us got sick. That was delightful. Thank you, Starbucks and their cream and their coffee got us both nasty sick. But we got to run in Wisconsin together twice, and now we're going to get to run together in Alaska. And I feel like I'm very excited about this.

So yeah. Oh my gosh, so fun. And it has been, it's been super fun because I remember when you joined Run Your Best Life. And I want to say it was at least three, maybe four years ago. And you were coming to all the retreats and coming to all the coaching calls. And you happened to mention one day that you were a certified running coach. And I'm like, well, I'm actually looking to hire another running coach. Hi. And then the rest is history. Yeah, yeah. So fun.

Okay, so, coach Jen, you are like the OG coach. You were the original coach that I brought into the fold. And also – Well, you know what? Let me not tell your story. You can tell your own story. You're capable.

Jen: Thank you. First of all, I have so much Alaska FOMO already and you guys haven't even gone yet. I'm so jealous.

Jill: It's going to be pretty epic. I really wish you were going to be there. Maybe next year.

Jen: Elle Dee, were we at both Wisconsin Ragnars together? Did you do both?

Elle Dee: I feel like I did.

Jen: I feel like you did too.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: You did. Elle Dee, you were voted MVP for the first time.

Jen: Oh, that's right.

Jill: How could we forget that? Because you were training for the Marine Corps Marathon and you were like, "I've got to get extra miles in." So we had a couple of injuries. You're like, "No problem, I'll run it. I'll run it."

Jen: Oh my God, that's right. You ended up doing like 30-some miles that weekend.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: And I mix that up with sometimes Michigan because somebody got sick in Michigan too. People got sick in Michigan and so you end up running for them.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: But anyway, back to coach Jen.

Jen: No, how could I have possibly forgotten that? But yeah, so we've gotten to run together twice and been at a couple retreats together too. Elle Dee is also one of my favorite people on the planet besides our fearless leader Jill here. Even before Run Your Best Life existed, I was a coaching client of Jill's. And I came to her with a one year old and a desire to kind of get my life back a little bit and my fitness. And so that's how I started with you in 2016. Is that right?

Jill: Yeah, it was seven years ago.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: I know, how crazy is that?

Jill: That is crazy. And I remember the call that you and I had right before I took you on as a client. And I just remember thinking like, there's something about this one.

Jen: Yeah, I thought the same thing about you.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: There's a saying, and I think it's a Buddhist saying, when the student is ready, the teacher will come. And I remember feeling that way about you. And I was like, I need this person in my life for a multitude of reasons. At first, it was just about the running and the life coaching. But then we became friends and colleagues.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: It bums me out that we don't live closer, because I feel like we would hang out together every day.

Jill: Oh my goodness.

Jen: But yeah, we have such a great relationship. But yeah, if you would have told me as like – I was not a super athletic kid, but if you would have told me as a teenager that someday I would be a running coach, I would have laughed my ass off and taken a drag on my cigarette, you know what I mean? It really is, I mean, it's been an amazing opportunity.

And when I tell people about it and what I do here, they're like, oh my God. People can't believe it. They're all like, "Oh my God, that is so cool." And

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

it's really remarkable to have this kind of opportunity as a middle-aged, fat woman who has been a runner for a long time. But I've always been a slow runner. I've never sort of fit in with the traditional runners, hence our name, right? Not Your Average Runner.

And so I could go on and on and on. But I guess we've got some time, but not all the time in the world. But it's really a privilege in my life to be able to be part of this group, to meet people like Elle Dee and other members of our group that I would have never in a million years probably met before without this group. And now it's like, yeah, it's really remarkable.

Jill: I love this. And so one of the reasons I wanted you guys to be on the show today is I think there's this perception that, first of all, if you're a coach, you're doing everything perfectly and you're always motivated. And you're faster than everybody else, and you go farther than everybody else.

And I think, you know, when people are around me, and this cracks me up that it happens all the time. But I'll be around people that don't know me really well, but they know I'm a runner or they know that I'm a coach. And we'll be having dinner and they'll order dessert, and they'll be like, "Don't tell anybody. I know the running coach is here. Don't judge." I'm like, have you seen me? Like, please.

But it fascinates me that people have this belief that when you are a coach or you're doing something that is perceived as healthy, there's this perception out there that being healthy is somehow being morally superior. And so people kind of get into their heads, and they're like, "Oh, she's a runner, so she must be healthy. So she must be judging what I'm eating. And I'm probably doing it all wrong." And it's like, no, no, just exactly like you, all the same thoughts, all the same things.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

So I kind of wanted to dive in with you guys and have you share what is your running practice like? How many times a week do you run? Where do you normally run? Do you do intervals? Do you ever struggle with motivation? And how do you deal with that?

So I just kind of thought it would be fun to hear like, hey, a day in the life of a coach and recognize that we are just like you. We're just a little farther along the path maybe. So Elle Dee, let's start with you.

Elle Dee: Well, first of all, for anyone who thinks coaches are better athletes or run faster than their clients, I feel good to know because I've been coached by other people before, running and otherwise, and none of the coaches I've had have ran faster than all of their clients. As a matter of fact, the point is to learn techniques, learn strategies, learn to manage the biggest muscle, right, which is your mind.

This is not a drill sergeant moment. This is us on the side of you, not in front of you yelling at you in a funny hat trying to tell you what to do with your life.

Jill: Wait, we need to get funny hats. Can we just agree that right now?

Elle Dee: That's right. Oh boy, a drill sergeant hat in other words. Because if I was going to be running around telling other people what to do with their lives, I would be neglecting trying to figure out what to do with mine.

Jill: Exactly.

Elle Dee: So this is not about that at all. It really, for me, it's been so exciting to work with your clients, work with the people who join Run Your

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Best Life, because they're coming in almost with the bricks of society on their back. Oh, you don't look like everybody who runs in a thing.

Or they go to the group run or the park run and have the experience that I've had, which is everyone disappears in the first quarter of a mile because they're all running six and seven minute miles. So I no longer know where the turns are. We've all had those experiences and we're just here to offer a different experience, which is you are absolutely part of this group. You're absolutely part of the running community.

And running can absolutely be your identity. No matter what you look like, no matter how fast you run or don't run, no matter if you walk, no matter if your whole life goal is centered around running Run Disney, it's all good. And I'm just thrilled to be able to support that.

Jill: I love that. I love that you refer to the beliefs that a lot of us come to running with as the bricks of society, right? Isn't that what it feels like sometimes? That you've just got this weight of this is the way it has to be done, this is the way everybody says it's supposed to be done. And I think that's one thing about Run Your Best Life, is we're just like, actually, there's a lot of ways that you can do it. And let's just figure out the way that works best for you, rather than being super prescriptive.

Elle Dee: Yeah, I just imagine in Run Your Best Life people are standing up and the bricks are falling off on the ground. And they're looking at them like, why was I carrying that around? I don't need that.

Jill: Well, that's so true though. I feel like I've had many moments in my life where I've realized like, oh, I don't actually have to think that way. And then I do kind of look around like, why was I carrying that around for so long? But I'm glad it's gone now.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

But something else that you said about actually you can take on the identity of a runner, I think that's another valuable piece of insight that I think we're taught that you are allowed to call yourself a runner if you run a certain pace, if you have a body that looks a certain way, or if you run straight through without taking walk breaks. Like if you meet this very, very specific, narrow criteria, then you're allowed to call yourself a runner.

And in fact, there's such a wide spectrum of what it's like to be a runner that we often don't realize that we have the ability to just decide. It's almost rebellious, but you can just say, "Yeah, I actually am a runner," and you don't have to meet a certain definition. So thank you for saying that.

Elle Dee: So true. I mean, recently I was listening to you on one of your podcasts and you made the analogy of everybody drives, right? Or a lot of people drive. We don't say to folks who drive 40 miles an hour, oh, you're not really a driver unless you're driving F1. We don't ever say that to people, right? Why are we putting speed limits on other activities that we might be doing?

Jill: Oh, that's good. Did I say that?

Elle Dee: I mean, it's a paraphrasing.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: I'm pulling out the analogy, but it's the same, you know?

Jill: It's true. Right, and if you walk a 20 minute mile, or you walk a 25 minute mile, or you walk a 15 minute mile, nobody's like, oh, you're not a walker, you're too slow. It's like, why do we put these constraints around

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

running that we don't put around other things? Jen, what do you think about that?

Jen: Yeah, I love this because I have not been running lately. You and I did a podcast a little while back and I've gone through some stuff in the last couple of years and I'm still sort of figuring out my running life.

I have a sleep disorder that I just got diagnosed. And now I'm selling my house and buying a new one. And it's just things have been a little nuts and I haven't quite figured out my next foray into running. I figured it out, I just haven't started it. But I still identify as a runner.

Jill: This is why we give ourselves two years.

Jen: That's exactly why I gave myself two years. But I still identify as a runner. I haven't run in a bit, but I still identify as a runner. And you're right, it's a mindset. And so I love that where you can just – I remember learning about just deciding to do and be something and think a certain way and then just doing it, and realizing like you said, like Elle Dee gave the visual of shedding bricks, and it's so freeing.

And when you start to see it come into other aspects of your life. You're like, oh, I didn't have to think that way. And then you kind of get a little bit mad like, man, why did I spend so much time thinking that way? But better late than never, right?

So, I'm typically a morning runner. That's my favorite time to run. And the good news is when I move into my new house, my mom is moving in with us. I'm moving my 85 year old mother in with us and so I can start running in the mornings again.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

So I'm super excited about that. And I just feel like not that I had to wait until I could, but I just feel very grateful that, you know, everyone's like, oh, it's so nice that you're moving your mom in with you, but it's really mutually beneficial because I want to help take care of her. And she can help us too, which is really great because it's just me and my son. And he'll be eight in a month, scarily enough. A month from today, actually. And so it's like, I know, time is flying. So yeah, it's exciting.

But yeah, I love that idea that the teacher doesn't have to know it all. As a teacher, I taught culinary arts for a long time, and Elle Dee you're a teacher too, so you understand this. I would always start my classes by saying I don't have all the answers. I'm a student too. Even though I'm a teacher, I'm a student of life and I'm going to learn from you probably just as much, well maybe not just as much, but I'm going to learn from you, especially not in culinary, when you learn from me.

And people get nervous too when I'm around and they're cooking or something like that. Like, oh, the chef is here, I don't want to cook for her. And I love when other people cook for me. It's my favorite thing in the whole world when somebody else cooks. I don't care what it is, it can be a bowl of cereal, and it makes me so happy.

And so to have that understanding of none of us is the end all be all of knowing everything about running and being perfect at running. That, in fact, is what makes us good coaches, because we understand what it takes to do this thing, and the struggles, and how to get there, and the progress and the mindset and all those things. That's what helps us coach you because we understand it because we are you.

Jill: Yeah. Well, and you said something a few moments ago about I haven't been running recently, but I still consider myself a runner. And can you say

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

more about that? Because I think there's a lot of people who are like, well, if I haven't gone running in six months, then I can't call myself a runner. And I think, well, maybe if you were a runner when you were 20 something and you're 50 now, then okay, maybe I used to be a runner and I'm starting again.

But I kind of think that the runner's identity is a mindset and you get to call yourself a runner at any point in your life. So tell me more about why you still consider yourself a runner, even though you haven't been running regularly.

Jen: Yeah, I mean, I've been running on and off now for the last 22 years or so. And I have periods in my life of running and not running, but I've always identified as a runner. Something about being a runner, for me, is part of my makeup.

For exercise it's what I love to do the most, aside from strength training. I also identify as a strong person and a person who lifts you know. And so those two things, running and strength training, are at my core, the things that I love to do athletically outside whatever it is. Like some people are skiers. I've skied once in my life, I almost died. I'll never do it again. I'm not a skier, right? I don't identify as a skier. It's not my thing, right?

But running is part of my soul and I've never been fast. I've never been what you would consider a "regular runner." But it's always just been part of my soul. I've done all these different races, I am a coach, you know, all of these things just are part of my identity. Just like I identify as a chef. I don't cook professionally anymore, but it's part of my soul. It's part of my makeup.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: Yeah. That's a great analogy, though, right? Because you don't cook professionally anymore, and yet you still consider yourself to be a chef.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Right? Like that's it. And nobody's going to argue and be like, "No, you're not a chef." Like yeah, she's a chef. She's just not cooking professionally right now.

Jen: there's people who would argue with it, but who cares?

Jill: Those are the same people that are saying you're not a real runner if you run slower than a 10 minute mile.

Jen: Right, we don't care about those people.

Elle Dee: Yeah, and also those would be people who are not in Run Your Best Life, because coach Jen regularly has cooking demos where she will have a four course meal prepared and on the table, live, in one hour. I don't know if professional chefs could do that.

Jen: You're sweet.

Jill: Don't you think she needs her own cooking show?

Elle Dee: Yes.

Jen: Yeah, I would love to have a cooking show. It would be so fun.

Jill: Cook your best life.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: Yeah, exactly.

Jill: Cook your best life.

Elle Dee: And we'll have somebody run in with the smoke alarm and just turn it on from time to time.

Jen: Yeah, we have the running joke when I do my cooking demos because I have an old oven and the smoke alarm goes off literally every time I cook. And so we have a joke on my cooking demos because I do them from home on Zoom.

And so my joke is – We have a couple, when the smoke alarm goes off, everybody has to drink whatever you're drinking at the moment. Or if I knock over the camera, I usually end up knocking over the camera at some point because I'm always doing 8 million things at once. So if I knock over the camera everybody has to drink. Or if something breaks or I bobble something, it's like everybody drinks.

Jill: Or if you accidentally say Google and everybody else's Googles go off.

Jen: Oh yeah, because I always set my timer on my Google. So every time I say, "Hey google," everybody's Googles go off.

Jen: So literally my Google is going off. Damn it, I should never have said that. But I think this is sort of like a little behind the scenes of what it's like in Run Your Best Life because coach Jen, chef Jen, does these cooking demos for us several times a year. And like you said, Elle Dee, she gets a four course meal on the table in one hour, live, like you watch it happen. And then we have the recordings in there and the recipes so people can

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

watch them later and cook along and make the stuff. So it's pretty awesome.

There's so much in Run Your Best Life that's not even running related, it's just life related.

Jen: Yeah, it's really more the life skills I've learned in this group. I mean, the running, for sure, but the life-changing things that we learn around mindset and just different topics and different themes and things like that, that we have. It's pretty remarkable.

Jill: Yeah, agreed. So, Elle Dee, what's your favorite part about being a running coach?

Elle Dee: Just hearing people overcome their mental blocks, which I think probably is the biggest thing about being a non-traditional runner, if I may, or a Not Your Average Runner is that there's always a saying that says, you can be what you see.

I don't necessarily believe that, or I believe there's a lot of different ways that we can see things. It doesn't have to be right in front of us for us to see things. How many of us were inspired as a child by things we read, or movies we watched, or even video games that were not in our immediate life, but that inspired us to chase something?

And I think that's true for us as well, that people are coming with whatever is surrounding them, and they say I've gotten this crazy idea, I want to be a runner but I don't know if I can do it. And we're just like, oh no, this is absolutely what you're going to be. As a matter of fact, one of the running jokes in Run Your Best Life is that if you say in front of Jill that you're

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

thinking about doing something running related, that she is going to make you do it.

Jill: Ouch, that's harsh.

Elle Dee: She's not going to actually go to your house and whip you or anything.

Jill: You never know.

Elle Dee: But she says, you have now spoken it into existence, and you're going to call and say I'm not sure whether or not I can run this race or do this thing. It's like, well, you said it now.

Jill: I think that's it.

Jen: Elle Dee, wait, I'm going to correct you. It's not that she's going to make you do it, she's going to make you make yourself do it.

Elle Dee: That's right. That's right.

Jill: Yeah, I will just make you believe in yourself.

Jen: Exactly.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: That's right, because if you're talking about it, that really does mean somewhere in you, you want to do it.

Jill: Yeah.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: Totally.

Jill: Is this a good time to tell the marathon text story, Jen?

Jen: Yes, I mean we've only told it a million times.

Jill: I know, but it's so good.

Jen: It's so good, yes. Are you going to tell it or should I?

Jill: No, I think you should tell it.

Jen: To Elle Dee's point exactly, you speak it out into existence for a reason. Like, there's this little glimmer of maybe this person believes in me enough that if I tell her I want to do this, she won't laugh at me or she won't think I'm crazy, right? And so I think that's the like, dipping the toe in the water. And then she's so enthusiastic and believes you so much. And you're like, oh wait, oh shit, I said it. Now I have to do it.

So I sent Jill a, I don't know, a text or a Facebook message in the middle of the night one night. And I was like, I kind of feel like I want to do the Chicago Marathon. And she immediately wrote back and was like, yes, you're doing it. And I was like, wait a second. And that's how it all started, and then it became this thing of mine.

And it was so crazy because I always said, and I remember the first time I ever talked to you, "I'm not here because I want to run a marathon. I just want to be a regular runner." I was like, I don't even want to do any races. I'm like, I've been there and done that. I just want to have a regular running life. I just want to be a runner. I want to run three or four times a week and that's it.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

And then seven years later now, we've done how many half marathons, and Ragnars, and a marathon?

Elle Dee: You've traveled hundreds of miles.

Jen: Hundreds of miles, the whole country practically.

Elle Dee: Camp and run.

Jen: Became a running coach. I was like who is this person? I always call it magic Jill's fairy dust. I'm like Jill sprinkled her dust on me and now look at me.

Jill: So I just recorded a podcast on motivation and how most people think that motivation is this feeling of excitement that you go like, oh, I can't wait to do this thing. And I don't think that's what motivation is. I think motivation is just a very quiet, calm, certain, I'm going to do this thing. Motivation is really a decision, I'm going to do this thing. And it's the belief that, hey, it might not be pretty, but I'm going to get it done.

And I think that's one of the most amazing things about Run Your Best Life, is that you don't need to wake up every morning like, "I hate to go running today!" Nobody's like that. I'm never, ever like that, ever. And I think that the kind of motivation that we teach in Run Your Best Life, and what we are really good at, the three of us as a team, is helping people see their own potential and enabling their belief in themselves.

And then yes, we will refine and like, okay, let's tweak your training plan. Let's do this, do that. But we're really good at helping people believe in themselves. And then from there, the sky's the limit, like marathons for everybody.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: Or not, right?

Jill: Or not.

Elle Dee: Or not, exactly.

Jen: You don't have to end up doing a marathon. It really could be whatever it is that you want. And maybe that goal and that motivation is the end game, right? Like I just want to, like I said, I just want to be a runner. I just want to run three days a week, right?

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: I call it the running vortex, right? Like, okay, I did a 5k, now I need to do a 10k. Now I need to do a half marathon. Now I need to do a marathon. Now I need to do an ultra. You don't have to get in the vortex. Cool if you do. I mean, people love it. I mean, people are motivated by different things, you know what I mean, to keep them going or what excites them, right?

Some people love the medals. Some people love the race experience. Some people don't want to be anywhere near anybody else when they run, right? Whatever the thing is, it's all okay.

Elle Dee: And it's all okay if you go through periods of your life when you were in any of those things.

Jill: Yeah, exactly.

Jen: Yeah, or none of them.

Elle Dee: Or none of them.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: It's all okay.

Jill: Elle Dee, have you gone through periods where you weren't running, and then come back to running again afterwards?

Elle Dee: Oh yeah, absolutely. And typically it came because of an injury. But even then, I was like, well, I can't run, let me get a bike so I can ride even though I can't run. But lately there have been times when if you get ill or something happens around your life and you decide, okay, I want to take care of this other thing rather than that. You can say, okay, well, I can take a week off of running to do this thing or to take care of something and just work your way back.

I guess one of the things that I might say to folks is, as much as I like social media and find it useful for a lot of things, there is an element in social media of perfectionism. And even though we know that a lot of social media content that's coming at us is curated, sometimes our minds sort of forget that. And we see people's highlight reel and we say, oh, I'm not living the runner's life, or I'm not doing whatever these other running people are doing.

It's like nobody's going to take a picture of the time that they had to duck into the woods to have a nature call. You're not going to see that moment. Or when you trip over something and fall flat on your face, or when you say, okay, I'm just going to do these two miles and call it. You don't get the highlight reel from that.

So one of the good things I like about Run Your Best Life, one of the many of the good things is that it sort of strips away that feeling people have to feel like, oh, I have to be perfect or I'm not going to reach my goals. I mean, how many coaching calls have we all been on where someone will come

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

on and say, I've missed a whole week of training. My goal is over. I can't do whatever it is that I was getting ready to do. And we're all looking at each other like, what do you mean?

Jill: Yeah, you missed a week, big deal. Get back at it, right?

Elle Dee: You know what that means? Go run now.

Jill: Just giving someone permission to think, okay, so I missed a week, so I missed two weeks, so I got COVID and I missed a month. All right, get back out there.

Jen: It's like those influencer fitness people who are like, "Never miss a Monday" or like, "I just did this. What are you doing today?" You know what I mean? That implies so much shame, right?

Jill: Yes.

Jen: We've stripped all that away. So what you missed Monday? Do it on Tuesday, who fucking cares? This group strips away any of that shaming, which I think is so rampant in the fitness industry. This is the antithesis of that, actually.

Jill: Yes, exactly. Like miss all the Mondays, go for it. I'm all in. I feel like we put a moral value on perfection. Like if I do it perfectly, it makes me a better person. It makes me a more worthy person. And I'm like, nope, you're just a person who did it perfectly. That's literally all it is, right? It doesn't make you any better or worse.

Jen: And perfect doesn't exist.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: Yeah, it does not.

Jen: I mean, one person's perfect is somebody else's mess up. You know what I mean? So perfection doesn't exist.

Jill: Yeah. I don't think perfection is a, it might be a satisfying goal when you think in the context of like, I don't know, like closing your Apple Watch rings for every day for a month or whatever. I think there is some sort of satisfaction, like a little dopamine hit in that kind of perfection.

But that's not the kind of result that translates into wellbeing and feeling compassion and love for yourself. It's like that's what you're chasing, like closing your apple rings every day for a month? Because I think we often miss out on connection with the people around us. And we miss out on experiencing our life because we feel like it has to look a certain way and we have to check all the boxes.

And I'm like, yeah, I just as much as the next person like to check all the boxes. But also, I'm not going to be the person doing laps in my kitchen at 11:59 because I can't go to – Right? I feel like that's not a worthy use of my time.

And so I think you're right, in Run Your Best Life one of the big things that we do is try to bust the myth of perfection and just be like, hey, how about you just live a real human life where you get to experience joy and suffering just like the rest of us. And let go of perfectionistic goals that don't really add value to your life.

Jen: Because the day that you don't check the box or close the ring after a month of doing it, you feel like shit, right?

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: So it's like, yeah, my you might have closed all your rings for a month. And then the one day you don't it's like, oh man, I was so great at this. And now look, I messed up. You create this snowball effect of shaming yourself. And so set those goals and do those things, there's nothing wrong with that. But on the day you don't do it, just do it the next day. It's okay.

Jill: And then you celebrate like, oh, look at me, 99% compliance. Way to go, right? Who fucking cares if it's not 100?

Jen: Cs get degrees.

Jill: Right? I always say consistency is like 70%, right? To me seven out of 10. More often than not.

Jen: That's why C's get degrees, Jill.

Jill: That's why C's get degrees. I love that. Right? Exactly. Elle Dee, what do they call the lawyer, the law student who had a C average, right?

Elle Dee: JD.

Jill: Exactly. Exactly, right?

Elle Dee: The same for doctors too, MD.

Jill: Right, I have never asked a physician, I have never asked an attorney that I was thinking of working with like, well, I'm going to need to see your GPA. I'm like, I don't know, they gave you the degree. I'm assuming you're good at what you do. You're good enough, right? Perfectionism fires me up

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Elle Dee: I'm around young people as a teacher, so they're still kind of caught up in competition and comparison. And, of course, heavily dosed in social media and what's everybody else doing and I'm not doing it? And so I see a lot of perfectionist thinking.

And one of the things that I wish that I could – I say it to them, I don't think they believe it. But one of the things I wish I could say to them is, hey, I used to hire people who came to my job and I was a hiring person. I would tell people if somebody came in with a certain level of experience, the only reason I might ask them for a transcript is to ensure they in fact graduated from the institution that they said they did. Do I care what they got? No. Okay? Once you're out of school, we care about what you're doing.

Jill: Right, exactly.

Elle Dee: We care about your experience.

Jill: Yeah, so true.

Okay, so we actually have, I asked in the Facebook group earlier today what things people wanted to hear us talk about. So I have a very long list of questions. I'm just going to pull because we're kind of like, we've been having a good time talking. I'm just going to pull a couple of them and then we can sort of discuss. And so somebody asked, how do you start and stay motivated? And how do you stay out of the motivational dips? What do you guys think about that?

Jen: I don't think I've ever stayed out of a motivational dip in my life.

Jill: I'm like, "Oh, dip yum."

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jen: Yeah. I was thinking like Dairy Queen, like the dipped cone. I was like, mmm.

Jill: Yeah, exactly.

Jen: No, but truly, I don't think that I've ever stayed out of a motivational dip. I don't know, Elle Dee, what about you?

Elle Dee: Same. And that's true of almost everything that I might do. I mean, I think one of our big – I just say, let me just pick up a tool and see what I can work with. One of the biggest tools, of course, is the minimum baseline that Jill teaches in the Run Your Best Life group, because you guys were laughing about the people running around the kitchen. So right now, I don't have any furniture. I just moved, myself, so I don't have any furniture in the living room. So I've been running around doing laps in the living room.

Jill: I love it.

Elle Dee: Because we've had some tornado activity coming through on some days.

Jill: Oh my gosh. Stop, no.

Jen: Oh my gosh.

Elle Dee: So I've just been running around in the living room. I was like, I don't have any furniture, I can just run in here. I was like, I've turned into that person.

Jen: Oh my gosh, that's so great.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: That's awesome. I love it. I love it.

Elle Dee: You know, I regularly, regularly have that moment where I'm like, I don't want to do this or I don't feel like it. Or even I don't even want to see any people today because I'm annoyed at humanity.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: So what's the minimum baseline I can get away with? What's the minimum amount of time? Or can I go somewhere where there will be fewer people around that I don't want to deal with? Or can I do something else that will contribute to what I'm doing?

So I generally try to have stuff in sight line, like I have the weights in sight line. I'm like, okay, you can pick up that bar and you can do a few squats before you go to bed. You can do that.

Jill: I love that. I love that. And I think the whole concept that we should be trying to stay out of the motivational dips, I think that's the thought error. We're human and there's going to be times in our lives where we are feeling more compelled, where something feels easier, and there's going to be times when it feels harder.

And I think the struggle is not being in the proverbial motivational dip, the struggle is believing that something has gone wrong when you're in there in the first place, right? Because motivation does, our willingness, our desire to do things will ebb and flow over time depending on what other stuff we have going on in our lives and where our hormones are at and a million other factors. And so that's really the issue.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

The issue is not the dip, the issue is believing that something has gone wrong and that you need to do something to pull yourself out of it, right? Or, oh no, look what I've done. I've let myself fall into a motivational dip. And it's like it's not quicksand, just don't flail. What do they tell you when you fall into quicksand? Don't flail around and eventually you'll get – I don't know, I'm probably making this up and that's probably a terrible metaphor.

Jen: No, it actually isn't because they do say don't struggle when you're in the quicksand because it makes you fall deeper into it.

Jill: Oh, all right, there we go.

Jen: So no, it's actually a really good metaphor. And it's very true, yeah. Because what happens is when your motivation dips, right, the shame kicks in. And it's like, oh God, I'm not perfect at this. And so you're starting to struggle in the quicksand and you sink a little deeper. And then the deeper you go and then you don't really feel like doing it, so you don't do it again.

And then you're struggling with the thoughts about it, and you go a little deeper. And so if you don't struggle in the quicksand, you'll just, you know, move on.

Jill: Can you float on quicksand? Will you just float away? I don't know.

Jen: I'm ill experienced with quicksand, unfortunately.

Jill: Same.

Jen: Or fortunately, actually.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: I just read a book, it was like, I don't know, I can't remember the name of it. But there were peat bogs in the book, which apparently operate just like quicksand. I had no idea. Ireland is a dangerous place. So there we go.

Okay, another question, which I think is kind of a loaded question. I look at it and I'm just like, oh, I see the thought error in this question. But I want to throw it out to you guys. How do I get fitter so it doesn't feel as hard? That's what she said.

Jen: Elle Dee?

Jill: I couldn't resist.

Elle Dee: It's so funny because if we had a professional runner sitting here, I mean, somebody that runs for a living, they are going to tell you –

Jill: Wait, can I just stop? All of us run for a living, so we're professional runners. But anyway, carry on.

Elle Dee: That's true. But they absolutely will tell you, hey, it's not about this thing getting easier for you. Yeah, your breathing may improve as your cardio improves, all the things. Your muscles can get stronger, all those things can happen. But as you set new goals and new targets, it's going to be –

You know, it's like anything else you would do in life. If you're going to cut up a carrot, you might get better at it but that doesn't mean that the carrot has changed. It's still a carrot. And maybe you sharpen your knife, or maybe your skills get better, but it's still a carrot.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

It's still running. And it's not a situation where you're going to wake up one day and suddenly you're going to be like, oh, well, now I can just float around by Tinkerbell. And running, I won't even feel the ground. It's not going to happen. It doesn't happen to the professional runners, it's not going to happen to any of us either.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: If you keep running, then you're going to probably run at a different pace. You might even run longer distances. And guess what? It's still going to be difficult or it's still going to be challenging. I won't say difficult, but I will say challenging.

Jill: It doesn't get easier because we keep working to the same level. It's just that you're able to do more with the same level of effort that you're putting in.

Jen: Exactly. I remember seeing Mirinda Carfrae, I don't know if you know her. She's a professional triathlete, I think she's Australian maybe. But she's won Kona, the Ironman Kona a couple of times. Incredible, incredible athlete. And I remember I went to go see her speak and I remember all she talked about the whole time as how hard it was. And I remember thinking like, holy shit, it's hard for her too? Like, damn it. It made me so happy.

Jill: Oh, I love that.

Jen: It's hard for everybody.

Jill: Yeah, it's supposed to be hard.

Jen: It's supposed to be hard.

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: And hard is only bad if you think it's bad, right? It's about that mindset, again. It may be challenging and physically taxing, but just because it's those things doesn't make it bad.

Jill: Yeah.

Elle Dee: Right.

Jill: Right.

Elle Dee: I mean, do we think that singers put out less effort because they sing more? I mean, do we think that they've been singing for a couple of years so they just roll out and now I don't have to breathe as hard or project my voice as much? No.

Jill: Yes, exactly. Exactly. I love this.

Okay, last question. So the question was, how do you do easy running when you're already a slow runner? And I think what she meant by this is if you've been told today should be an easy run, today should be a hard run. If you're already a slow runner, how do you define easy? I want to hear what you guys think about that. I have thoughts about this, but I want to hear what you guys think.

Elle Dee: I was on a coaching call with coach Jen and she kind of honed in on the rate of perceived exertion, right? And so I would just kind of touch back to that, which is, if you are breathing really hard, if you are really pounding those feet, during your run intervals, if at the end of your run

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

interval you feel like you're getting ready to fall over, okay, well, that's not an easy run.

And so if you are feeling those things and you have to pull back and either adjust the intervals or adjust the exertion that you are putting forth during the easy part of the run, in other words, you may think I'm running slow therefore I'm running easy, but the two don't equate.

And you can have a 17 minute mile and really be trying to push yourself during the run intervals and therefore – And sometimes, by the way, if you push yourself too hard during the run intervals, it might make your walking intervals slower and then you end up at the same place. To me that's one of the ways that can kind of end up there.

And so when we say easy, we mean easy and the rate of perceived exertion is a great way that coach Jen explained to someone as hey, this is how you can tell when a run is easy as opposed to tempo as opposed to anything else you might be doing. But let me turn this over to coach Jen because it was her idea.

Jen: Well, the rate of perceived exertion isn't my idea. But the idea around there not being a prescription for rate of perceived exertion, right? Like if you join a Couch to 5k group or really any other running group, they're going to be like a seven should be about this many minute mile. And it's like well, that's not true for everybody. For me a seven is probably right now a 17 or 18 minute mile. That is hard for me right now. I have serious breathing issues right now and I'm not where I was before with my endurance.

And so there's no prescription for it. That's why I love the rate perceived exertion to Elle Dee's point, is that's your own rate of exertion. There's no

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

prescription for it. So whatever is easy to you, is an easy run. And if it's not, if it's a pace where you're walking, then walk, that's okay too.

Jill: That's a great point, because I think an easy run, you know, it's based on effort. And if you consider yourself to be a slow runner, if that's how you want to label yourself, I mean, that's how I label myself, imagine that your typical pace is a 16 minute mile. And you're thinking, oh, well, if I do an easy run, then I have to go more like a 17 minute mile. Okay, do that, right?

An easy run, it means that yes, you're going to probably slow your pace down a little bit. You might do an easy run by adjusting it with intervals. So maybe if you normally do a one minute run, one minute walk, maybe on your easy run, do you do a 30 second run and a one minute walk. Or maybe it means that you slow the pace down on the run intervals in general.

But yeah, it is based on exertion and not speed. And so yes, you will be going slower overall, but it's based on the exertion. So if you're already a slow runner, you're just going to get a little slower, that's okay. And maybe easy run days for you are going to be mostly walking or all walking. And that's also okay. That's also okay. It's all good. I guess that's what I'm trying to say.

It's like saying I'm a slow runner, like you said Elle Dee, a slow runner and an easy runner, those two things don't necessarily equate. An easy run for somebody is generally going to be a slower pace than their normal pace. But trying to put parameters around like, well, this is slow and this is fast, it's really, really hard to do that because it is all relative.

So I'd say pay attention to your rate of perceived exertion and then slow it down from there. And that might mean changing up your intervals. It might

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

mean changing up just your pace. It might mean that you walk the whole time during your easy runs. It's all good. And play around with it, too, and see what happens.

All right, well we are totally out of time here. So I want to say thank you to both of you for joining me. We should do this a lot more often.

Jen: Oh my god, yes.

Jill: And I also want to invite anybody who's listening and who has thought like, yeah, those couches, they sound like fun, or that community sounds like fun or anything that we said that resonated with you today, I encourage you to join Run Your Best Life, which is our very warm, welcoming, fun, sort of badass membership.

Jen: Non-judgmental.

Jill: Non-judgmental.

Jen: Shame free.

Jill: Shame free, exactly. So if you want to learn more about how to join Run Your Best Life, you can just go over to runyourbestlife.com and all the details are there. There will be a link in the show notes as well, but I think it's just easier to go to runyourbestlife.com. And hopefully we will see you there. All right? Bye, my friends.

Jen: Thanks for having us.

Real quick, before you go, if you enjoyed this episode, you have to check out Run Your Best Life. It's my monthly coaching program where you will

Ep #293: Behind-the-Scenes with the Run Your Best Life Coaches

learn exactly how to start running, stick with it, and become the runner you have always wanted to be. Head on over to runyourbestlife.com to join. I would love to be a part of your journey.