

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Jill Angie

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

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

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 here this week with the OG goal crusher, Martinus Evans, author of the Slow AF Run Club, founder of the Slow AF Run Club. He's also known as 300 pounds and running on Instagram and everywhere, I think.

He's a cover model for Runners World and just an all-around amazing human, inspirational human and one of the most badass runners I know. And we're here today to talk about your new book. So welcome back to the podcast, Martinus, it's been a hot minute since I've had you on the show. Glad to have you back.

Martinus: Jill, it's been too long. It's been too long, Jill. It's been too long.

Jill: It has been too long. I'm glad we're doing this interview. So tell me what's going on with you. You've got this book coming out, right? Tell us about the Slow AF Run Club.

Martinus: So the Slow AF Run Club is a global community of other badass runners. We're about 10,000 members strong and our goal is to help lower the barrier of entry into running. Our goal in general is to get 1 million people to start running.

Jill: Love this. I love this. I have the same goal, so I'm all in for this. And you recently wrote a book called Slow AF Run Club.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: Absolutely.

Jill: Yeah, so let's hear a little more about that and then we're going to dive in.

Martinus: Yeah, *Slow AF Run Club: The Ultimate Guide For Anybody Who Wants to Run* is my baby. It's something that I spent the past two years journaling, writing, crying, laughing and putting this all inside this book. So, the way this book is set up is part memoir, part instruction manual, part workbook. And it's there to help any individual to start running.

When you think about most books out there, most running books out there, except for yours, they're written by elite athletes and coaches of elite athletes telling people to lose weight and get faster. That's what I'm not all about. I'm all about getting everybody out there and empowering everybody to get out there and start running regardless of their weight and size.

Jill: And so why do you have that mission?

Martinus: It's a mission that's near and dear to my heart. As a person, as a fat runner who's been running for the past 10 years I experienced a lot of things on the course, Jill: Whether it's being heckled by volunteers. Whether it's being heckled by spectators. Whether it's running a race and they take down the signs and then I got lost. Whether it's the race running out of water.

I have experienced so many things throughout this whole industry, yet I keep coming back to it. And it's because I have so much fun doing this and I want to make sure that everybody else has the same fun, but also know what they're getting into and how to get prepared for that stuff.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Jill: All right, I love this. So one of the things that I loved about this book is how you tell so many of your own personal stories and it's really relatable. I'm reading through it and I'm like, "Yeah, that happened to me too." Like those motherfuckers. I'm like, damn it. I can't believe it, like I just can't believe some of the stories that you told.

But I think the most impactful story that you tell is right from the very beginning of how you actually kind of started running. And it was sort of inadvertently inspired. But can you share the story about that first doctor and the conversations you had and what grew out of that?

Martinus: Absolutely. So, listeners, sit back, close your eyes, hear my voice traveling through this microphone into your speakers, through your ears. In 2012 I was a suit salesman at Men's Wearhouse. I was suited and booted, I wore hard bottom shoes all day every day, on my feet for eight to 12 hours a day selling suits. That was my career. Jill is trying not to laugh.

Jill: I'm laughing because, A, I could picture you being really good at that. And also, I'm like you were basically doing a marathon every day because you were on your damn feet standing. But anyway, this is amazing.

Martinus: In freaking dress shoes.

Jill: Right? Yeah, they're not good on the feet.

Martinus: So I'm wearing these dress shoes and I started to develop some hip pain. That then led me to go to a doctor. Never met this doctor before a day in my life except for that day. I go there and I'm thinking I'm going to talk to him about what's going on with my hip, but he had a whole other thing for me.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

So I get there and he's like, "Oh, you have some hip pain?" I'm like, "Yeah, I got some hip pain." And then I started going through my whole spiel, I work at Men's Wearhouse. I'm on my feet. I've tried different shoes, maybe I need some insoles, yada, yada, yada.

He's like, "I know why you're in pain." Oh, what? What? Tell me. "It's because you're fat." What? And then he goes on like, you're fat and you've got two options. You need to lose weight or die. You got a stomach like a pregnant woman. You got these man titties. He just started going off on me. Like it was a rant.

Jill: That is not okay.

Martinus: Not okay at all. So me being the guy I am, I'm still stuck on this. I'm like, what? He's like, "You need to start walking. You need to lose weight." And I'm just tapping my foot. I'm trying my best not to lunge at this guy and throw him against the wall because you've got to remember at that time I had just got done playing football. I was an ex-collegiate football player. And I really just wanted to throw him against the wall.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: It went from a heated debate to an argument. So a yelling match. And I'm like, "Screw you, I'll run a marathon if I want to." And he laughed and he said, "You run a marathon, that's the stupidest thing I've ever heard in my life." He said, "If you try to run a marathon, you will die on that course." So I'm sitting there like you're telling me I either need to lose weight or die, and then if I try to run a marathon I'm going to die anyway. Man, fuck this shit, I'm out of here.

So I leave the doctor's office. And on my way home I drove past a running shoe store. I made an illegal U-turn, I went into the running shoe store. I

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

said, “I need running shoes and I need them now.” They gave me running shoes. I got on the treadmill because I’m like, “Oh, I’m going to go run a marathon today.”

Jill: I absolutely love that. You're like, “Not only am I going to run a marathon, I'm going to do it now.”

Martinus: I'm going to do it now. Jill, can I tell you all a little secret? I did not know how long a marathon was.

Jill: It's pretty far.

Martinus: It is, it's pretty far. But I was like, “I'm going to go run a 5k marathon today.” I didn't even know those were two separate things. I combined my own race, the 5k marathon.

Jill: So you were not a runner before. You were an athlete, but not necessarily a runner prior to this moment.

Martinus: Exactly.

Jill: Okay.

Martinus: So I’m an athlete, not necessarily a runner. I get on the treadmill. There's three treadmills, the only treadmill open is the middle treadmill. So I get on the treadmill and I'm like sizing up these guys next to me. So I look on one side and this guy is going like 10 on the treadmill. Okay. I go look to the guy on the other side of me, he's going like 8.5, 9. I'm thinking to myself like, okay, I can at least do seven.

So I push up seven and the belt is running. And then I remember being like, “Here goes nothing.” I get on the treadmill and it's the longest 15 seconds

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

of my life. I'm fighting to stay on this bad boy but my body's telling me to stop. But I'm like, no, I need to do this 5k marathon today. And then I hesitated, like I was about to press the little red button. I hesitated, boom, I was on the ground.

Jill: Oh my God. You were like one of those YouTube videos of treadmill fails.

Martinus: Yes. So I hurry up and gather myself, the whole gym gets quiet, everybody's looking at me. I grab my cell phone and I get the hell up out of there. And as I go home, I have this tattoo on my right wrist. So as I go home, I go to reach the doorknob and turn the doorknob and I look down and I look at my tattoo.

My tattoo says no struggle, no progress. It's from the Frederick Douglass speech. And I remember looking at that tattoo and shaking my head. I was like, okay, I know what I need to do. And that was the start of my journey.

Jill: Wow. So a lot of people would have quit. A lot of people would have said, actually maybe the doctor is right and I'm going to just return these shoes because I haven't worn them outside. Just go on another diet or what have you. And you're like, no, I'm going to double down.

Martinus: Yeah, I'm going to double down.

Jill: What was the training process like? Because you were literally going from the couch or Men's Wearhouse. I feel like you probably had some really good time on your feet stamina from standing for hours and hours every day. I think that's really amazing, but what was the training process like for you? How did you figure out what to do? When did you find out that a marathon was 26.2 miles? When did that realization hit?

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: So, to start off it was a process. So every day the thoughts of this doctor ruminated in my head. Like this guy was living in my head rent free. So every day I'd wake up and it's like, "You will die. Lose weight or die." I'm like, man, fuck this shit. So I'd get up and go on the treadmill. And then it was just slowly like a slow buildup.

So 15 seconds became 30 seconds. I'd go back again and battle with that for a little bit. And then it was like all right, I'll run for a minute straight. And then that got easier. And then I remember the first time I ran for five minutes straight.

Jill: Oh, wow.

Martinus: That was like the biggest celebration of my life. And then I just slowly started to build up. And then I heard about Couch to 5k and I started doing that. And then I stopped when Couch to 5k was like, run for 30 minutes straight. I ran for 30 minutes straight and I'm like, I didn't run a 5k. What is this? I was like, I didn't run a 5k so I guess I need to train some more.

And then I eventually started running races. So I started running and I eventually got up to that 5k and I started running 5k's. And then I'm like, "Oh, this is fun." And then I remember one 5k I was talking to a guy and he was like, "Yeah, what are you doing?" I was like, well, this is like my third or fourth 5k marathon. He was like, what? Like, yeah, my fourth 5k marathon. And he was like, "Oh, no, no, no, no, buddy, 5k is a distance and a marathon is a distance."

And I was like, okay, well, I did the 5k part. How long is a marathon? It can't be much longer. 26.2 miles. What? So I know for everybody else, anybody who's new to running or doesn't know anything about running, when you tell people like, hey, I'm about to go run a marathon. And they're like, okay, well, how long is a marathon? And you're like 26.2 miles. They start doing a

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

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

calculation in their head, like, oh, this is from here to whatever town the next town over.

Jill: Yeah. It's like, oh, that's two towns over. That's far.

Martinus: Yes. And I did the same thing and I was like, what? So I was like, oh, I definitely can't do this. I can't do no marathon. And then throughout the year, the new year came and I was like, all right, I need to do something. I've been running these 5k's, I ran a couple 10k's, I even ran a half. I was like, all right, I need to do it. I'm going to pull the trigger.

So January 1, 2013, Detroit Marathon opened up their registration for their race. And I remember being like, okay, I can run Detroit. I'll do Detroit because it's my family. I can come home and I don't have to pay for a hotel. But then I found out Detroit is like an international race. I was like, oh, I can definitely do that then.

And then from there, once I made the decision on January 1, 2013, I spent the rest of the year researching and learning and teaching myself how to train for a marathon. So I'd pick up and put down various training plans. Before the Nike Run app they had another app where you could sign up for training plans. I bought books.

And I just went through this whole process of like, no, this is not working for me. Drop that training plan, pick up another one. No, that's not working for me. Pick up another one. And next thing you know, I amassed 10, 15 running books. And I remember looking at all this stuff and it's like none of this stuff is working. What do I do?

And I started talking with some friends and I had one friend who was like, well, I know you said these training plans are not working for you, but I'm going to give you some type of guidance. Here it is, every week do a mile

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

longer. After four weeks, back up three or four miles and then repeat that again. Don't run no more than 20 miles.

And I remember being like, so I got to run 26.2 miles, but I don't run no longer than 20? And them being like, yes. And my response was that it didn't make sense. That doesn't make sense because when I trained for this 5k, I did a 5k at home at least three times before I even ran a race. Same thing with the 10k. I at least did that distance three or four times, and then I ran the race. Half marathon, same thing. Ran the distance at least three or four times at home and then I ran the race.

And then they're telling me don't run no longer than 20 miles. And I'm thinking to myself that it doesn't make sense. I've got to at least know I can finish this, I can do this. And they're like, "No, Martinus, this is not what you want to do."

And throughout the whole process I just followed that rule of I'm going to increase one mile every week for the long run. Every three or four weeks I'm going to back up. And then I'm going to increase some more and slowly do that. And that was my "training plan" from like January all the way up until like October.

Jill: Oh my gosh.

Martinus: And then one of the other things that I found out late in the season was people run races as training runs. What? I remember a friend telling me, "Oh yeah, I'm going to go run this half marathon in New York City, and I'm going to run that for my training run for this marathon I'm training for." And me being like, "You can do that?"

Jill: I love it.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: You can do that? It's like, yes, that's what we do. I'm like, shit, I'm doing this all wrong. I'm just at home trying to find routes in my neighborhood. Doing it all the hard way because nobody would share it with me, like the gems. Every new bit of information was like a piece of candy, like a piece of church candy that I never received because it's like I did not know I could do that.

Oh, the first time somebody told me about Body Glide.

Jill: Oh my God.

Martinus: Game changer.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: So I just learned and did a lot of things the hard way. And I ended up running a marathon in October of 2013. And that was a trip in itself.

Jill: Yeah. What was that like? I mean, because you had been training – So you had been running for less than two years at the point in time that you ran the marathon.

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: And you also, if I remember correctly, it's not like you were losing weight. So you were literally 300 pounds and running for this marathon, which I think is so fucking badass, right? It's amazing. But what was race day like? Because this is your first significant, I mean, I think a half marathon is a big distance. But the marathon is sort of that next level.

So what was it like for you showing up at the start line? What was it like running the race? What did it feel like crossing the finish line?

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: Yeah. So running, or just starting there and knowing what I know, so Detroit, Michigan was my hometown. That's where I was born and raised. So it just felt familiar to like, oh, I know where to park. I know what I need to do to get there. My mother and my girlfriend, who's now my wife, came. My mom was like, "You're going to go run 26.2 miles, I need to be there. What if you pass out? I need to give them your health information." I was like they have people there.

Jill: Medical professionals.

Martinus: Exactly. I was like, "They have people there." She was like, "No, I need to make sure I'm there because what if something happens to you? You pass out, you stroke out or something." Okay. So I remember getting to the starting line and just being overly nervous because the thing that kept running through my mind is that the farthest I've ever ran was 20 miles. I did that once.

And thinking in my head, "Hey, look, I've only run 20 miles once. There's no way that I'm going to be able to finish this race." And just all of those thoughts going through my head. Like, dang, I should have ran more. Maybe I should have done that second 20 miler. Maybe I should have tried to run the whole race. Just all these things were just going through my head.

And then the gun went off and I think just the sheer excitement and joy of everybody else around you. When you're surrounded by around 20, 30,000 people, you can't really think your thoughts because there's so much going on. You've got crowds going back and forth. You got people doing weird stretches in the middle of this crowd. I'm like, "Hey, guy, we're all bundled in, but you still want to do monster walks and high knees and kicks in this small area. What are you doing?"

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

So then the gun goes off for my crowd and I just start running. And then you have like this wave of people who's coming behind you and you're like, "Oh, crap, maybe I should be running faster. I'm not running fast enough." And then eventually, about, I don't know 10k in, I finally started to get my stride. Okay, the wave or just the stuff has started to spread out. Like there's not people behind me running that makes me want to run faster as well because it's like why are they running fast and all this other stuff.

So I'm able to finally get my stride and things are going along until I get to mile 19. So from like 10k to like mile 19 it's pretty much a blur. Smooth sailing. Life was good. I enjoyed the race. Then mile 19 happens. Mile 19 I ran into this guy and he just started slowing down and started walking. So during this point I've got comfortable enough to just talk to random strangers and be like, hey, how are you doing? Keep it up, blah, blah, blah.

But this guy started walking so I was like, "Hey, man, you got this. Keep going, I'll run with you." And he's like, "I understand what you're trying to do. But I'm done." So he then waves down, there's a white van, he gets in the van and he goes on. So I then continue to start running and then his white van comes back again. And the guy is still in the van. And the driver was like, "Hey, big man, you want to get in the car? I'll take you to the finish line like your buddy over here."

And I never thought nothing of it. I was like, "No, I'm okay. I'm good. I'm still going." And then next thing I know mile after mile after mile, mile 20, "Hey, big man." Mile 21, "Hey, big man." Mile 23, "Hey, big man." And then that started to sow seeds of doubt in my head. So when you're running these distances, you start to have like this inner dialogue in your head.

So you start talking to yourself, you start daydreaming, you just start doing all types of stuff. And as this guy is sowing seeds of doubt like, hey, I'll take you to the finish line. Next thing you know, I got this inner voice that's like, "Hey man, you need to get in their car." So now I'm having this internal

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

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

conversation and battle with myself because I'm like, my feet hurt, my jaw hurts from clenching and running through the race.

Places that I never thought I'd be in pain from running were hurting. I never thought my teeth would hurt. My teeth were hurting. I'm doing all this running and now my teeth hurt.

Jill: Like that's not fair.

Martinus: So mile after mile, "Hey, big man." So now this internal voice is like, "If you get in the car, get in that van, all the pain that you're going through will go away." And it's like, well shit. You want the pain to go away? It's like, yes, but I also want to finish this race. It's like, well, you got to make a decision. What hurts more?

So I continue to go and I'm having this conversation with myself and we get to like mile 25 and at this point I've had enough. This guy is like, "Hey, big man, I'll take you there." And I remember just going off on him like, "Yo, I'm less than a mile away. Why do you keep asking me this? Why are you bothering me?" And then him being like, "I can't help that you're fat and slow. Just trying to help your fat ass out." Are you fucking kidding me?

Jill: I can't even. Dude in the car?

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: Dude in the car calling you out.

Martinus: The dude in the car, yes.

Jill: Okay, I have many, many opinions about that. But anyway, continue.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: So I then yelled, go you off on him, tell him to leave me the fuck alone, like all these other things. I'm in a full out meltdown, I'm just going off on him. And then he just leaves and I continue to run and then I finish the race. And I remember my wife and my mom there, they're both cheering, they're crying, I'm crying, everybody's happy and taking pictures. I finished the race.

And I remember my wife was like, "I got your carrot cake. You know you love carrot cake. I've got some carrot cake." And then I remember being like, "Oh, but I need to get these pictures." I prepaid for a finisher picture professionally made.

And I remember going through all the little race stations and being like, "Hey, where's the guy for the photos? I paid for the finisher pictures." And they were like, "He's gone, he left like 20 minutes ago." I'm like, what the fuck? What? And then I saw the little sag vehicle guy. He then pulls in getting people off in the heat. We had this stare down and then my wife was like, "Well, let's go." And she's like, "Who is that?" And I was like, "Nobody. Nobody important."

Went home, had carrot cake and I fell asleep in an ice bath. That was my marathon experience.

Jill: I mean, I think it's a really powerful story to hear. And that's how marathons go. That's how races go in general, like even a 5k. Like on a little micro scale you're like, "Yay, this is fun. Oh my god, where's the fucking finish line?" Right?

Martinus: Yeah.

Jill: But that internal battle that I think many of us think, oh, well, if my brain is telling me that I need to get on the van, then we just think, well, I'm just

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

going to listen. And you're kind of like standing up to that. You call it the inner critic, and you're like standing up to him like, no, that's not what we're going to do.

Martinus: Right.

Jill: And it takes a lot of mental strength. Because I think, and you said this in your book, I totally agree that running is 90% mental. It's like 10% of it is the physical because the body goes where the brain tells it to go. And so if your mind is strong enough, and yours, I think you have a really powerful way of talking to yourself. Like if the mind is strong enough, then the body is just like, all right. The body is like the dumb little kid brother that's just like, "I'll just go where you're going." Right? The mind is like, "Let's go."

Martinus: Exactly. Exactly, and that's why the first chapter is about mindset. How I explain running is you versus your mind versus everybody else.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: Because that's literally what it is. It's you versus the thoughts in your head, versus the thoughts of other people about you, versus you thinking about the thoughts of other people about you.

Jill: It just goes on. And then thinking, should I be thinking about the thoughts of other people? It just keeps going. Yeah, I love to say just stay out of other people's heads. It's like you do not belong in other people's heads, right? But it's hard when you've got somebody like that sag wagon guy right in your face calling you big guy. I would have been like, I'm going to slash your tires and you're going to be stuck here. And I'm going to finish the race before you, jackass. Oh my gosh.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

But yeah, so I love that in your book you really start out the instructional part of the book with, okay, we're going to get your mind right before we go anywhere else. And you talk a lot about reframing. You have some beautiful affirmations that helped you get through your training and so forth. Would you be willing to share some of that with us? Like how you reframe and how you kind of motivate yourself?

Martinus: Absolutely.

Jill: If you want to sing any of it, you know, very wink wink, hint hint.

Martinus: Absolutely. So first things first, yes, one of the things that I do is I name my inner critic. So I named him Otis. I gave him a persona. He's an old man with a raspy voice. Think of the uncle who's smoked a lot of cigarettes and he's got that raspy voice and he's always like, "Ah, gotcha." Everybody's got that uncle. He's like, "Come here, come here, come here."

Jill: You're painting a picture, yeah.

Martinus: So that's one of the things that I did, was help personify that inner critic, because one of the things that I learned is that whatever you think and whatever you feel don't necessarily have to be true. So your thoughts are just thoughts. Your feelings are just feelings. Me and Jill are having a great conversation, but I can say something and then both of us would be angry and this podcast would be over, right?

So our thoughts and our feelings are, I don't want to say not real, but one of the things that we need to do is be able to separate those things from who we truly are. So as you're having this conversation in your head, oh, I need to quit or you'll feel better if you get in this van, it's like, no. No, Otis. I understand what you're trying to do. You're trying to save me. But I don't need to be saved. And what you're telling me is not being useful.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

So you've almost got to parent yourself. So that's one of the main things that I help people do, right? So that's the first thing, give a persona to your inner critic.

Another thing that I like to do is, I'm a big Michael Jordan fan. And if you know anything about Jordan, he has this revenge list. Think Ariana Stark, but for basketball.

Jill: This makes me want to watch that documentary about him. I've heard such good things, but now I'm like, oh, it's going to be Game of Thrones style? I'm in. I'm all in.

Martinus: But he had this phrase, like I took offense to that. I took offense to what he said, or blah, blah, blah, I'm going to go put up 50 points on him. So that's one of the things that I would do myself, is that as I'm ruminating because the thoughts that people are saying about me are still floating off in my head. And I think that one of the things that we could do is either take that information and get sad about it. Or we can take that information and get mad about it and do something about it, right?

And I think about any tough time that I've been through, or just tough times that I'm like, "Damn, I can't do this." If I can just sit and just ruminate on people telling me I'm too fat, too slow, lose weight, get faster, all this other stuff, like you're going to lose weight or die, all this other stuff. I'll tune into that feeling of what I felt and then that will push me through.

And then the next thing you know, you hear me mumbling to myself. I'm cussing and all this because I'm going all through it again. I'm cussing myself out, I'm cussing out whoever because I'm like, "Man, fuck this shit. Fuck everybody. I'm going to do this shit. I'm going to prove you wrong." Yada, yada, yada, right? So those are some of the things that I did.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

And then, of course, some affirmations that we can go. One of the big things that really influenced me growing up was this gospel song that my mom used to always play. And it's called Send Me, I'll Go by the Canton Spirituals. You mind if I sing a little bit?

Jill: I would be delighted. I would be delighted.

Martinus: So this song is a catchy song. I've heard it all throughout the years of my life. And it goes, "I'll go if I have to go, by myself. I'll go if I have to go, by myself. If my mother don't go, my father don't go, my sister don't go, or my brother don't go. I'll go if I have to go, by myself." So I've taken that song and when I start to run, like I remember, like I said, when you're running you do all types of weird stuff.

So, as I'm running this melody will just be in my head. And I'll be like, "I'll run if I have to run, by myself. I'll run if I have to run, by myself. If my mother don't run, my father don't run, my sister don't run, nor my brother don't run, I'll run if I have to run, by myself." And for me that became the mantra of everything when it came to running because I ran by myself a lot.

And it just became that mindset and that mantra of like, this is my journey and I'm taking my own destiny in my hands, regardless if friends, family, whoever wouldn't run with me, or in most cases don't run with me. This was the mantra and the journey to let me know I'm doing this because of me.

And one of the things I really learned through all of this, Jill, is that by going out there by yourself and doing this by yourself, you then build this mental toughness about yourself because you're like, well, shit, I've ran 10 miles by myself. What's another five? What's another two? What's another three? What's another whatever, whatever?

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Because, yes, initially it's scary. It's scary to be out there by yourself. You're like, what if I fall? What if a dog chases me and things of that sort. But you start to do it more yourself, you start to really understand that you have the power to do what you have to do to leave and get home.

Jill: I got chills listening to that. Because when you create the power within yourself to do it, you no longer need to rely on anyone else to get you through. And it just, like it's not even just running, it spreads throughout your whole life. You're like, wow, I am so much more powerful and so much stronger than I ever thought I could be.

I feel like that's what running teaches us when we run by ourselves. And I think that mantra, "I'll go if I have to run by myself," I feel like everybody listening to this podcast should just take that thought right now, write it on 92 Post-it notes and put them everywhere. Because that's it, right? That's it. When you're committed, you're like, I'll just go. If I have to do it myself, I'm going to do it, but I'm going to do it.

Martinus: Right. Right.

Jill: Yeah. And that's led you across eight marathon finish lines.

Martinus: Absolutely. Eight marathons and 100 other different races. Because most of the time I did run by myself.

Jill: Yeah. And I think that's it, like when you're a back of the pack runner, like we are, you are by yourself for the vast majority. You're there, there's a lot of people around you at that start line. And then usually, at least in my experience, by mile two or three I'm just like a party of one, right?

Martinus: Yeah.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Jill: And that's when you need the skill of being able to motivate yourself and run by yourself and have those conversations with Otis or whatever your inner critic is named.

Martinus: Right, right.

Jill: That's so powerful. Have you shared with your mom that you've kind of rewritten her favorite song?

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: Yeah, what did she think of that? I'm curious.

Martinus: She just thinks it's the bee's knees.

Jill: I love that.

Martinus: Because growing up in a household, like my mother is from Alabama.

Jill: Okay.

Martinus: And she also had me later in life, so she had me when she was 40. So her being a southern Black woman and her influence being gospel and I remember just trying to turn her away from it. Like I don't want to listen to this gospel stuff. Why are you doing this? Why am I being tortured to listen to gospel? I want to listen to Tupac. I want to listen to Biggie. But it's something that resonated with her because the melody is just so damn catchy because you're like, yeah, fuck this shit, I'll go if I have to by myself.

Jill: Yeah.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: And next thing you know, it's like damn, that song again.

Jill: I love that so much. And there's one thing that you talk about in your book, this concept of delusional self-belief. And so I kind of want to segue into that. Can you explain what you mean by delusional self-belief and how that has helped you as a runner?

Martinus: Absolutely. So delusional self-belief, everything is unrealistic until it's not. And that's the same thing with delusional self-belief. Delusional self-belief is just that, believing in yourself no matter what because you know deep down it can be true.

So you think about all of this modern technology that we all take for granted, cell phones, internet, lights, all this other stuff. There had to have been somebody out there that was like, hey, I'm tired of these candles. I would love to plug in something, flip a switch and then, boom, I got candles everywhere. Somebody had to think of that, right?

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: And they had to go tell their friends like, hey man, I've been thinking about this idea where I can just flip a switch and then like, boom, all the candles come on. And somebody would be like, man, don't be going around with that stuff. You better light that one candle and be about your business.

The same thing with telephones, right? Somebody had to be like, you know what? I wish I could talk to somebody. I'm tired of sending the telegram, pigeon, or whatever they did back in the day. I wish I could just talk to them right now and tell them what I need to say. And then somebody was like, man, what the hell are you talking about? What drugs are you on? What do

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

you mean you want to talk to somebody who ain't here? You don't go on about that stuff and send that telegram.

So that's the same thing about delusional self-belief. When you think about it in your own sense, like you know what? I'm going to be a runner. I'm going to run a marathon. And the doctor is like, if you run a marathon you'll die. Like, man, I'm going to run a marathon. Man, if you're going to go somewhere, go walk around the lab, walk around a track, do four laps around the track. You're talking about you're going to run a marathon.

But it's those things that people don't see it, but you've got to see it for yourself first and you've got to see it for yourself so much that everybody else, they think you're delusional.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: And you know what? It's okay to be delusional about your goals and your dreams, because that's one of the ways that you can will yourself to make that thing come into fruition.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: So for me, it's the same thing. I want to run this marathon. Doctor is telling me I'm dumb and I'm going to die. But I'm telling everybody I know, hey, I'm going to run a marathon. I'm going to be a marathoner. And people would be like, how long is the marathon? 26.2 miles. Ooh, that's from here to the next town over. You sure you'll be able to do that? Yes, I'm going to do a marathon. I'm going to do it.

And you just keep working towards it and then next thing you know it's like, dang, you ran that marathon and you didn't die. And then you're like, you

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

know what? I'm going to do it again. It's like, what? You're going to do it again? Yeah. So that's practicing delusional self-belief.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: So if all of us just took our goals or things that we want to do and just be delusional about it, like, yo, this will happen, I'm going to do it. And put in the work and continue to be delusional about what you're going to do. You can get after your dreams.

Jill: I love this. I think this is probably one of the most life changing concepts in your book. There's all the running instruction and, yeah, there's so much detail about how to become a runner. And not just how to become a runner, but how to be fat and be a runner. How to be slow and be a runner and be successful at it.

But that one nugget of delusional self-belief is like, if you take nothing else away from the book and our conversation here today, delusional self-belief will change your fucking life. It changed yours.

Martinus: Yeah.

Jill: It changed yours. Okay, so there's a quote in your book that I want to read because it spoke to me. I believed in it wholeheartedly, but I think it's going to speak to pretty much everybody listening. So it's on page 17, "I've finished last during races. I've been pulled off courses for being too slow. I'm here to tell you that nobody died. The world didn't end. And I was able to continue running races. This stuff doesn't make you any less of an athlete. In fact, it makes you more of an athlete because you didn't quit."

And again, I got chills when I read that. So can you speak a little bit about why you included that in the book and what are your thoughts about folks

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

who are worried about coming in last or being slow or getting pulled off the course?

Martinus: Absolutely. So you and me coaching individuals, one of the things that a lot of people are like, "Well what if I don't finish it? What happens? What if they pull me off the course? Aren't you just devastated?" And I just wanted to give those people a reminder, like it's okay. This stuff happens. And the world is not going to open up and nobody's going to be pointing at you and being like, "Haha, na-na, na-na, boo-boo, you came in last night or you didn't finish the race." You tried, and that's good enough.

And that's just something, the love letter that I just wanted to give to everybody that I ever trained as well as to myself, like Martinus in 2012. I wish somebody would have told me this because, like I said, I didn't necessarily try to run a race until I ran it at home two to three times before I even signed up for a race because I thought I didn't have the right or the earnest to participate in a race until I was able to do it multiple times because I thought that's what everybody else did.

And as you're training individuals and I'm training individuals it's like, well, you can work your way up to a certain point and then you'll finish the race. And it's like, but what if I don't? And this was the message I wanted to give them. Hey, I've been last before, I've been pulled off courses, nobody died. This is not brain surgery. It's going to be okay.

Guess what? If you don't finish this race, guess what you can do. You can sign up for another one. If you don't finish that one, guess what you can do? You can sign up for another one. And guess what? You can sign up for another one.

So that's one of the things I just wanted to tell people, don't take yourself so seriously when it comes to this. Because if you live in your head about what if and should have, could have, would have, you're not going to be able to

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

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

really live out your fullest potential to become that athlete or to become anything you want because you're on this, "Well, what if this happens?"

And my question is, but what if the outcome you want actually comes true? Then what?

Jill: Yeah. And if you don't show up, you don't get either outcome.

Martinus: Exactly.

Jill: Yeah. I just love that. I've been last, I've been pulled off the course, nobody died, doesn't make me any less of an athlete is powerful. Because I mean, I've been in the same place. You think ahead of time that it's going to be so devastating. And it's really just like, oh, all right, I'll just sign up for another race. Okay. It doesn't have to be the end of the world.

Martinus: So I'm going to give you an example, Jill. So I ran the Berlin Marathon. I trained very hard for this race. I trained 200 days for this race. I was trying to make it my PR. I trained hard, got a trainer, and did all these things. Got into the race to me, it's humid, it's one of the hottest races that particular year. It's humid for the first three miles. And then the sky opened up.

So torrential downpour. People dropping out, the elite athletes are leaving the race. I'm like I'm here to do this thing. I'm running, I get to the finish line, see the finish line. Go past like the Brandenburg Gate. I get all the way there and then like there's a gate. They had put together a gate to stop people from running across the finish line. So I'm trying to tell them, no, I need to get to this finish line. I'm still running, like showing them the bib. And they're like, "No race is over, race is over." There's just a lot of things that are just happening, right?

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Like I'm lost in translation, I'm tired and exhausted. I'm trying to get to this fucking finish line so can I get my medal. And he's like, "No, you've got to go the other way." So I go a mile around the race to go through the finishers exit to try to get to this finish line because I'm like, I've got to get there. I finally get there and everybody's gone. The clock is off, they pulled up the mats, all this other stuff. I cried like a baby.

Somebody gave me, I think, an inline skating medal. Like, oh, you ran the race and you didn't get a medal? Here's a medal. I look at it this, I'm like, "It's a fucking inline skating medal What the fuck is this?"

Jill: What even is that? Like a rollerblading medal?

Martinus: Yes. Yes. So I got this inline skating medal. And then I'm like, no, I need to get this race medal. So I finally talked to the booth people. They're like, "Yeah, we're sorry, the race is over. But here's your medal." I cried like a baby. And I went through that experience. I did it on Instagram, I think it had been through all of my stories and people are like, "Oh, I'll never run this race," blah, blah, blah, things of that sort. And, for me, it hurt. In that moment it hurt. I was like, why? Why do I deserve this? Yada, yada, yada.

But eventually I got over it because I had another race set up the next week. So I got back to the states and I ran a half marathon and it was the fastest half marathon I ever ran.

Jill: I love this.

Martinus: The fastest half marathon I ever ran.

Jill: I fucking love this.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: Fastest PR ever. And that's the same thing about that sentence, is that there will be times you came in last. There are going to be times that you trained your damndest for this PR for this particular race. Like I had my sights set for this race. Like I'm going to PR at Berlin. People break records here, I'm going to do it. Well, the fucking sky opened up.

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: I couldn't do anything about that. I ran in the rain the whole race when elite athletes quit. It's like, "Oh, we're done." But I'm still out there and then this happened to me, this is a very shitty experience, something that's going to be with me for my whole life. But then I'm like, well, I have another race next week. I'm not going to stop running. I've already paid my money for this race. And then run the next race, and then boom, fastest half marathon I ever ran because the training doesn't go anywhere. The training is still there.

Jill: Yeah. Right, your body doesn't know that you didn't cross the exact finish line.

Martinus: Exactly.

Jill: Your body is like, oh, we did the training, check. Yeah, and I think that's how running is, too. That's why running is so amazing and also so heartbreaking, you can do everything right and just have a terrible day, or have the rain.

Like when I trained for my first marathon, I trained so hard. And then we woke up that morning, it was 32 degrees, there was sleet everywhere. I was just like, I did not train to run in this. Did the absolute best I could, but it just was not my day to cross that finish line. And people were just like, oh,

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

you must be so devastated. I'm like, no, there's always another race. I'm like, I'm bummed, yes. I'm disappointed. But I didn't die.

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: I did have some very, very uncomfortable chafing and blisters, but nobody died and I learned a lot. And I think that we kind of lose that perspective. We make the goal so important that we lose all of the amazing wisdom and growth and experience that we get in training for and working towards the goal.

So I cannot believe we've been talking nonstop for quite a while. And there's a couple more things that I want to talk about before we close out. And one of them is like, you are a fat runner, but you're also a Black man. And I would love to hear your experience being a Black man in the running world, which is typically very white and not super friendly to people that are not the thin, white ideal.

So what's your experience been like? And if you're willing to comment on how people can be allies for Black runners, instead of just kind of pretending it's a problem that doesn't exist.

Martinus: Yeah. So hello, my name is Martinus Evans, I'm a Black man. A 300 pound Black man. Six foot three and 300 pound, big Black man at that. Being a Black man, being a fat Black man, my stature itself can just be intimidating just in general. But then you add my skin color and then it makes it this whole other thing that it doesn't need, right?

But by doing that, one of the things that I have to do throughout my life is try to make myself less intimidating so that people don't see me as a danger, so then they won't call the police or try to harm me because they think I'm a danger.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

So there's things that I've done, like run with my 10 pound poodle for certain runs in certain neighborhoods, because it's like he's a big Black man, but he's got this small itty bitty dog. Of course he can't be threatening, right? Can't be so threatening with a cute dog running with him.

Jill: Do you put your dog in outfits?

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: Of course.

Martinus: Of course I do.

Jill: Wait, wait. And this is a very important discussion, but I want to know if the dog has Slow As Fuck Run Club gear?

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: Okay. All right, thank you. That makes me very happy.

Martinus: Mabel has some Slow AF gear as well. But that's one of the reasons why when I came up with the Slow AF Run Club, making the mascot and the turtle as cute and as non-threatening as possible. That's the reason why it's bright colors, because it's like a big Black man wearing smiling turtles on his shirt, right? He can't be intimidating, right?

But that's just one of those things of having to make myself smaller in this sport or in this space, because of everybody else who's around, right? Because they may feel I am a threat, whatever, whatever. And I think those are some of the things that I had to experience as a Black man.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

And I think when the death of Ahmaud Arbery happened, that's one of the things that broke me and I almost quit running just because of that. To have him go through this, get killed and have to fight for his life, like literally fight for his life just because he was on a run. And in the book, one of the things that I did or one of the things that just came to my mind was like, well, how can you become an ally for Black runners when shit is hitting?

So the first thing is that when shit is hitting the fan, use your whiteness as a shield. Like as a protection. Whether that's physically or whether that's metaphysically. So like using your whiteness to say, hey, he's okay, he's a runner, leave him alone yadda, yadda, yadda. Or physically putting yourself in between the person that's going through something and the actual people who are trying to do something, right? So that's one thing.

The other thing I have is I say, don't be a Karen and don't be a dick. Don't call the police when somebody's just living their life. I think these are simple things. Like if you see a man running and he has on running gear, let him live.

Jill: Yeah. Pretty sure he's just training for a marathon.

Martinus: Exactly.

Jill: Like, he's crazy. Let him be crazy in his own way, right? He's a runner, he's already, right? Because I feel like as runners we all are, I don't know, we have this delusional self-belief, right? And we're all just a little bit nuts.

So if you see somebody out running, let them continue on with their delusional self-belief. Don't step in, just let it happen. It should be common sense, right? It's like when I see somebody out running, I'm like, oh, they're doing their thing. I'm not going to interfere with them. I'm going to step out of their way on the sidewalk so I don't break their stride.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: Exactly.

Jill: I feel like that's just a common belief. But yeah, I think that the country that we live in, that seems to have gotten lost.

Martinus: It's crazy. There have been times where I've literally had on full running gear and I'm running, living my Black ass life and then the police drive by and then they'll make a U-turn because they see me running and then make the U-turn, turn on the lights and be like, "Hey, what are you doing? Is everything all right? What's going on?"

Jill: What the fuck do you think I'm doing?

Martinus: Oh, just training a 20 miler. Like shit, man, what do you want?

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: And most of the time it catches you off guard because you got music going, you're on your own jam, you're living in your own world. And the next thing you know, you pull out your earphones and you've got somebody yelling at you like, what are you doing? Like, what? What are you doing? You're like, running. I'm running. I'm just running. I'm just living life.

Jill: You're like, that's it.

Martinus: And I think that's the thing, is that those are some of the things that I've done, or some ways that you can become an advocate. I think for myself, things that I've done to help make things a little bit, I want to say easier. But I carry my ID or some type of road ID. I let my friends and family know, hey, I'm going this way. Or I'm going on this route.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

I think the other thing is that I turn on the GPS tracking so my wife can follow me. There's no if ands or buts, like hey, if I can't get in touch with him, I can just look at the GPS and see where he's at. Things of that sort, right? Those are one of the reasons why I wear bright clothes. That is one of the reasons that I just wear bright clothes and just try to make it – You can't assume somebody's doing crime or doing something illegal when they got on bright ass green turtle clothes.

Jill: Yeah. Yeah, I do feel like that's an excellent tactic because you look very non-threatening right now in your turtle shirt.

Martinus: But like it's a criminal's worst nightmare. Like what was he wearing? He was wearing a paisley and turtle green shirt.

Jill: He was extremely identifiable.

Martinus: And on the front of the shirt it says Slow AF Run Club in cursive. It's a criminal's worst nightmare, right?

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: It sucks that I have to do this, but it's one of the things that I have to do.

Jill: It does suck. I have no words to offer because it does suck. And I kind of just implore everybody who has, again, who has white skin to use your whiteness as a shield. Like you said, to use your whiteness as an ally instead of to just be like, oh, that's none of my business. I'm just going to walk away and not get involved, right?

Martinus: Yeah. I live in New York City now. And I think for a lot of people in New York, like New Yorkers are just like, "Leave me alone, I'm just going

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

to do my own thing,” right? And it's a gift, but it's also a curse because you can witness some stuff on the subway or on the bus or wherever. And it's like, people are just living life and people you can actually see are in physical danger. And it's like, yo, why aren't you helping them?

Jill: Yeah.

Martinus: And I feel like this is just a notion, just being a common and a decent human being. We're all just trying to come home. We're all just trying to leave and come back home to the people who love us.

Jill: Yeah. Right, that's such a great point because that really is pretty much everybody's goal, is just to get home safe. And the more people we can help get home safe, the better. And sometimes that means stepping out of your comfort zone and doing something that, you know.

I mean, for me as a woman, if I see something on the subway or whatever I'm always kind of like, all right, is it safe for me to get involved? What can I do? How can I help? And I, fortunately, have never actually had to step in. But I'm always thinking that when I'm in a public place. I'm like, okay, if I need to step in, how am I going to do it? What am I going to say?

And I just try to be mentally prepared at any point in time if something goes down and I need to be an ally or just kind of like get my courage ready because I don't want to be the person that watches somebody get thrown to the ground and put in handcuffs because they were out on a fucking run. I don't want to be a witness to that, so I know I'd be prepared to step in.

But it's like I think you have to think about it ahead of time. Just speaking as a white person, you've got to think it through ahead of time and really think like, how do I want to show up in a situation like that? And maybe take

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

some self-defense classes and learn some moves so if you need to block somebody or whatever.

Be prepared because I think that is how we change things, we don't just wait for it to happen and then say, oh, I'm going to react. We think ahead like I'm going to show the fuck up if I'm in a situation where I need to protect somebody or help somebody. How am I going to do that? What are the things I'm going to do? And what are the things I'm going to say? And I think if you spend time planning that out ahead of time, then when it actually happens, you're going to be like, oh, I know exactly what to do.

Martinus: Right.

Jill: I don't know. White people, do better. That's what I have to say. All right, are you ready for our lightning round?

Martinus: Yeah, what you got for me?

Jill: I have not prepared you for any of this. But I'm just going to ask you some questions and I just want quick answers. This is like getting to know the real Martinus. All right, lightning round. Treadmill, roads or trails?

Martinus: Trails.

Jill: Okay. Carb loading, yes or no?

Martinus: Yes.

Jill: Morning or evening runs?

Martinus: Morning.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Jill: Favorite distance?

Martinus: Half marathon.

Jill: Favorite race of all time?

Martinus: Big Sur marathon.

Jill: Ooh, that sounds like a fun one. Wave to other runners or mind your business?

Martinus: Wave to all the runners and try to give them high fives.

Jill: Awesome. Favorite post-race meal?

Martinus: Carrot cake.

Jill: Love it. East Coast or West Coast?

Martinus: Ooh, West Coast.

Jill: Oh, right in the heart. Oh my God. Running watch or no tech?

Martinus: Running watch.

Jill: Okay. Music, podcast or dead silence?

Martinus: Podcast.

Jill: Okay. And the final and most important question: Game of Thrones or Lord of the Rings?

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Martinus: Game of Thrones.

Jill: Yes, all right. You did very well, sir. Very well.

Martinus: Thank you. Thank you, I didn't study.

Jill: Excellent. Way to go. Way to go. All right. So thank you so much for joining me here today. Where can everybody find you? Tell us all the places, how can they get on the Slow As Fuck – Slow AF Run Club? I'm so sorry, Disney, I'm trying. Slow AF Run Club, where can they find you?

Martinus: Yeah, so you can find me on all things on the internet at 300 pounds and running. That's 300, spell out pounds and running. You can also find us on the internet at slowafrunclub.com. We also have an app on iOS and Android called Slow AF Run Club as well. You can join there, you can join it for free and come join our 10,000 plus members there.

And then we have this book, *Slow AF Run Club: The Ultimate Guide For Anybody Who Wants To Run*, which should be in all of your stores on June 6th.

Jill: Oh my gosh. All right, I think we're dropping this one at the end of April. So go get your ass to Amazon and pre-order that shit now.

Martinus: Absolutely, go to Amazon, pre-order. Also I partnered with a bookstore in Pennsylvania called Pocket Books. They will be the only book store where you can pre-order a book and you will get it autographed.

Jill: Okay, get your ass over to Pocket Books and pre-order that shit today.

Martinus: Yes.

Ep #303: Running Slow AF with Martinus Evans

Jill: I love it all. Well, thank you so much for joining me again. I looked it up, it's been about five years since you've been on the show. So thanks for coming back. You've been a busy boy in the past five years and I'm so excited for all the things that you have coming up. And everybody, go get this book and start running.

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 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.