

Ep #314: When You Change Your Mind About a Goal with Jen Lamplough



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Jill Angie

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

Jill: Hey runners, so I'm here this week with the one and only coach Jen Lamplough. She's one of the Run Your Best Life coaches and you've heard from her many, many times on the podcast. And last time, maybe a couple of times ago that you were on the show we talked about your marathon goal. And so this week we're going to do a little update on some discussion of what's going on with that.

So, Jen, thank you for joining me.

Jen: Thank you for having me. This is always my favorite thing to do, you know that.

Jill I know, I know.

Jen: Better if we were together in person.

Jill: I know, one of us needs to move. I think that's the issue here.

Jen: I just moved so I'm not moving again. You're going to have to pry my cold, dead body out of this house.

Jill: Yeah, I know, but I just moved too. But I think we literally each moved into our houses within a couple weeks of each other too, so funny.

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Jen: We totally did, yeah.

Jill: We did. We bought our new houses, had our houses painted, moved into the new houses all around the same time.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: But that is not what we are here to talk about today, so I'm going to turn this over to you and can you talk to us about the marathon goal that we talked about a few episodes ago on the podcast, and then where are you now with it?

Jen: Sure. So 2017, that was five years ago, six years ago I did the Chicago Marathon and I did the podcast about it forever ago. I think it was one of your first, I think, actually.

Jill: Yeah, it was episode eight.

Jen: Gosh, so long ago. What are you at now, 300?

Jill: Something like that, yeah.

Jen: Something like that. And I told the story of the marathon and it was hard, right? And I talked about my training and I talked about the race and the day of. And I had a hard time. When I first talked about the marathon in 2016, when I started training for it, you always had me visualize what's the thing that's going to get you through? And it was always crossing that finish line, like the famous Chicago Marathon finish line.

And I didn't get to cross it. I had to cross off to the side and I still got a medal, but I didn't sort of achieve that vision that I had because I had a

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rough go of it and it took me like an hour longer than I anticipated for a variety of reasons, listen to episode eight. And so then I always kind of thought I'd want to do a do over.

And so life happens and time goes by fast.

Jill: Covid pandemics happen.

Jen: Covid pandemics happen, divorces happen, moving houses happen, getting promoted to a pretty big job happen. And guess what? So does fricking menopause. All this stuff happens, but I was like, oh, I'm going to be 50. 50, that's a milestone year and I wanted to run it. So the food bank that I work for, we have a marathon team. So I was like, oh, I'll run it for the food bank, I'll raise \$5,000 for my 50th year. And so I had this great plan.

This was two years ago, or no, a year ago that I started this plan but I wanted to give myself two years. And so I was going to get back to running this year because I had kind of fallen off, just with life. And I had Covid twice, but I had it bad. Like it was bad.

And since then I also got diagnosed with sleep apnea, which I think was caused by the second time I had Covid because it sort of kicked in after that happened. I don't know if that's true or not, but it sort of feels that way. The timing feels that way.

So I was like, okay, when I turn 50 I'm going to have my marathon redo. And over the last, I don't know, six months or so since I declared that I've been working towards just figuring my life out and figuring out my fitness goals and when am I going to run and what races I want to run and my heart is just not in it.

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And I really tried to assess, like why isn't my heart in it? Is it because I'm not doing it like I want? Or do I really not want to do this? And so I really looked back at when I trained for the marathon the first time and I was like, what was my motivation? What really motivated me? Because training for a marathon is like a job, it's at least a part time job, if not like a three quarter time job. I mean, it's a big commitment.

Jill: Right, because it's not just the time that you're running.

Jen: Right.

Jill: That's the least of it.

Jen: That's the least of it, right. It's the planning, it's the recovery. It's the planning and the recovery and the actual doing of the run and, I mean, it really takes up a ton of time. And it's funny because my son was little at the time, he was two. But I was in a marriage that I wasn't happy in.

And after a lot of thought downloads and a lot of analysis around it about where I was at that point, I was escaping my life. Not my son so much, but my marriage and sort of the life we were living at that moment. And so that was my motivation. That got me out the door.

And I'm really, really happy right now and I love my life right now and the thought of sacrificing all that time to train feels not right for me. I want to spend my time doing other things. And I don't know what all those things are. I know what some of them are because some of them involve dating and having fun and taking up painting again, which I haven't painted for a really long time, since I was little, in fact. And painting with watercolors is like a great, great joy of mine and I've kind of taken that back up.

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And I miss strength training, like heavy lifting and that sort of thing. That's always a very big draw in my heart. And I was like, I don't freaking want to do the marathon. I just don't want to do it. I think I said it on a coaching call with our group, with Run Your Best Life. I was like, it's okay to change your goals. It's okay.

We talk about James Clear a lot in the group, who wrote the book Atomic Habits, and I just saw him speak at a conference. And one of the points of his book is, you don't rise to the level of your goals, you fall to the level of your systems. And it's not about the goal, it's about the habit building and becoming the thing you want to become. The goal is just part of it.

And that really resonates with me. And I was relistening to his book leading up to this conference and it just, like that was like a gong in my head. I'm like, I'm using this goal to try to create something that I don't really want.

Jill: Yeah. Wow. So that's like, I think that's a big realization because so often we set these big goals because of how we think we're going to feel when we achieve them, right? Like, if I run this marathon I can feel proud, or I can feel worthy, or I can feel like a real runner, whatever it is, right? And the goal itself, we're using the goal to help us feel a certain way, instead of kind of like working on our mindset and our thinking to help us feel the way we want to feel.

If you change your mind about a goal like this, especially when you've been public, like we did a whole podcast about it and you're like, okay, it's a two year goal. The first year I'm going to do the half marathon, second year I'm going to do the marathon. So right now, according to your plan, you'd be kind of wrapping up your half marathon training and being ready to run in October.

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So I think that it gets, you know, there's a lot of emotions with realizing, oh, I actually don't want to do this, or I thought that this goal would give me X, but I'm realizing it's not, right? It's not the thing that I want. And so we have a lot of emotions when we change our mind.

And so can you walk through what you've been feeling about this shift that you're making?

Jen: Yeah, I've been feeling a lot of like, why am I doing this? Like, why am I making the shift? Because, for me, it's easy to think that, oh, I'm just doing it because I'm lazy. Or I'm just doing it because I'm not doing it well. Or I'm not doing it because for whatever reason. And it's easy to sort of have a kind of moral judgment on myself, because I've done that myself my whole life.

And so it took me a lot of work to get to the point where I was like, it's okay. It's okay to not want to do this, whatever your reason is, right? I mean, I don't want it to be like an easy out, like, oh, I just don't feel like doing it. I set a goal and I am a person who achieves goals quite often.

Jill: Yes.

Jen: And so even though I have all this evidence that I'm a person that achieves goals, saying I'm going to do something and not doing it, automatically I start beating myself up.

And I didn't want to go down a path, a shame spiral because when I have done something like that before where I have decided not to try to achieve something, I would go into that shame spiral and then I would just sort of disappear. I would ghost life and I would stop responding to people and I would stop participating and all these things and yeah.

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And I'm like, am I doing that again? And so I really had to spend a lot of evaluation time, is this what's happening? And I feel very strongly in my gut that it's not.

Jill: Yeah. I don't think it is either, right? But can you talk about the process you used to think through your reasons for wanting to say, no, I'm not going to do this marathon?

Jen: Yeah. I mean, a lot of it's just self-evaluation. And we have a process in our group where we do the thought work. And we write down a thought download and we sort of get everything out on paper, and then evaluate it around what's the thought that's leading me to this? And working on those thoughts.

And so I really tried to dial into what thoughts am I thinking about this? And what was I thinking the first time, and what was my motivation the first time? And part of it was achievement. I'm an achiever, I like to achieve.

But also the work that I've been doing over these years of working with you is that I've realized that my achiever self was trying to create self-worth, as opposed to just feeling worthy for existing. And so I have an MBA and I have a high swanky job, and I'm a published author, and I've run a marathon and blah, blah, blah. It's like adding to the list of the things that I thought were giving me worth.

And they do. Those things do give me worth and those are all worthy things, but I've gotten to the point where I've finally understood about myself and believe about myself that I don't need any of that to be worthy. It's great, it makes me feel happy to achieve those things. And I love the work that I do and I love being part of this group. And I love writing my

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books. And I love all of those things, but I'm not worthy because of those things, I'm worthy because I exist.

And for me to get to that point, it took a long time. And I'm there and I'm like, I don't need the marathon to prove that to myself. I don't need to prove that I can run a marathon at 50. I don't want to. I want to do other things. I still want to raise money for the food bank, I still want to raise \$5,000 for the food bank, but I bet I can find some other really cool ways to do that.

Jill: Yeah. Well, and I think, first of all, you know what it takes. The first time you did it, you didn't know what you were signing up for.

Jen: Right.

Jill: I mean, you kind of knew, but then shit jumped.

Jen: But I didn't.

Jill: Training for a marathon is like every week.

Jen: Yeah, you think you know, but then you start doing it and you're like, what the eff?

Jill: Oh, wow, that's a lot harder than I thought it was going to be. But I think that there are moments throughout the training that you do feel really good. Like I remember finishing my first 20 mile run and actually thinking, wow, I am so badass. I can't believe I did that. And there were moments during those 20 miles where I felt really great. There were other moments where I felt terrible. Like, it was definitely a lot of ups and downs.

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But I think once we're past the process, right, like so you ran, you did the training, you ran the marathon. And then when we think back to it, we kind of romanticize it. We're like, oh, I remember those days when I did those long runs and I felt so good afterwards.

Jen: Yeah, your mind and your body forgets. That's why people keep having children.

Jill: Exactly.

Jen: You forget the pain and you forget the difficulty because you do, it becomes a memory and memories are what you make them to be.

Jill: Yeah. So I think when you're looking back, and I don't know if this is how it worked for you or not. But I know, for me every year I'm like, okay, this year I'm going to do this because I'm thinking about the highlights and I'm forgetting about all the other struggles.

And then I'll start working on it and I'll remember like, oh yeah, that's right, I don't like giving up my entire weekend for this. Or I don't like feeling sore for the whole 24 hours after my long run. And then I'm just like, maybe I actually don't want to do this right now, right?

So I think there's a lot of reasons that we set big goals. And it's because we think that it's going to give us something that's going to make us feel worthy, or it's going to give us street cred or whatever, or we romanticize it, or we don't know what the fuck we're signing up for or whatever. And then we find out, right? We fuck around and find out.

Jen: Exactly.

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Jill: And then you get to a point where you're like, oh shit, I really don't want to do this thing anymore, but I said I was going to do it. And I think there's a certain personality type, and I think you have that personality type where you're like, well, I said I was going to do it. So I have to do it.

And so there's that point where you're like, how much longer do I just torture myself? When do I get to let myself off the hook and say like, hey, you have autonomy and authority over your decision. Just because you said you were going to chase this goal does not mean you have to follow through.

So what do you think is the point, I mean, for you? Like was there a certain milestone in your training when you were like, no, I'm done?

Jen: No, it was more around like, am I feeling joy doing this? And I always say this, it doesn't have to be a ticker tape parade every time. It's hard and it sucks and it hurts, but when I trained the first time I had that same thing where I felt so much joy, not in the moment, but after. Like my 17 mile run was one of those runs.

I didn't have a lot of those moments, but I remember just being like, oh. Like I felt so much joy in completing that task, going out to breakfast afterwards, soaking in my Epsom salt bath, doing my stretches, my legs up the wall stretch, and having Ikey pounce on me when he was two while I was doing it. And it was this joyful thing.

And even as hard as the marathon was for me and the sort of mental struggle I had afterwards, I still look back at that with like, oh, there was a sense of joy around it. This time, it feels like a prison sentence. And I was like, I don't want to feel like this. Because when I feel like that, it starts to seep into other areas of my life and I start to have this feeling of dread.

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And I don't want to feel like that. I don't want to do something because I said I was going to do it and dread it the whole time. Life is way too fricking short. And I'm having so much fun and I'm having so much joy in every other aspect of my life, I'm like, why would I torture myself?

Jill: Yeah, I love this because you're just admitting to yourself like my life circumstances have changed. My reasons for doing the thing have changed, so it doesn't make sense anymore. But I know that there's going to be people out there listening who are just like, you're just giving up, you're just quitting.

And I guess, because I know I've done podcasts in the past about how to stop quitting and so forth. But also, I think that there's a difference between that sort of quiet quitting where you just stop showing up for yourself and then you're like, oh, well, now I can't run it because I'm not trained, versus a decisive action to say this is not a thing I want to pursue anymore. And I have my reasons and this is my choice.

But I think, like before we got on this podcast I was kind of thinking about, like, I think there are times where it makes sense to change your goal. And then there's other times where you might want to think about why you're not wanting to do this anymore. So I'm going to throw them out at you and you tell me what you think.

Okay, so I think when you're injured or when you know if I keep training I will develop an injury that's going to prevent me from finishing the race, I think that's legit. Or you're ill, right? For example I had to miss a month of training because I had Covid or something like that and it really alters the trajectory of your training.

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Other physical changes, like menopause hits you hard, right? Perimenopause hits you hard and you're like, okay, well, I used to be able to sleep through the night and that's not a thing anymore. And training is actually interfering with my sleep. So I think whenever something with your body changes, whether it's an injury that's as a result of the training or something else that's happening, that's a time.

And there are people that are like, no, I said I was going to do it, so I have to do it. And I'm just like, actually, I feel like we should always be evaluating. Like when our circumstances change, be like does this really make sense? And just because I said I was going to do it, is it going to be in some way harmful to me to continue pursuing this goal? Then maybe I don't want to do it anymore.

Jen: Yeah, those all for sure resonate. I mean, part of me is like the only thing that matters is whether you want to do it or not. You know what I mean?

Jill: For sure. I mean, and this is not to say that there's a right and wrong reason.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: So it's always, always, always okay to say fuck it, I'm changing my mind.

Jen: Yep.

Jill: But I feel like there are times when it's very clear, like, girl, you need to think this through because this might not be the best thing. And then there's other times where it might be like, hey, let's kind of examine this a little bit.

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Jen: Totally. And I did that, I went through that process. I'm like, why are you feeling this way? All the thought work I did and the sort of evaluating my feelings and really understanding that. And I did, I did all that.

Jill: Yeah, this isn't me saying you didn't do it.

Jen: No, I know.

Jill: I wanted to give some examples for people listening of when it might make sense for you to kind of – So like when your life circumstances change, and I think in your situation all of your life circumstances have changed.

Jen: Totally.

Jill: And it's kind of interesting because I remember when you moved, and you said, okay, now we're going to be in this new neighborhood and my mom is going to be living with me and I actually have more time to run.

And then you also found out, oh, that means I also actually have time to do all these other things that I haven't been able to do. And so, from my vantage point, kind of watching your life unfold I'm like, oh, there's a lot that you've been putting on hold until this moment. So I feel like let's just go and do all of it.

Jen: Yeah. And this doesn't mean I'm never going to do it again, I'm never going to want to run a marathon again. I just right now it doesn't feel like the right thing for me.

Jill: And that's a great point, too. I think you can always say, not right now.

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Jen: Yep.

Jill: Not this time.

Jen: Yep.

Jill: Because if somebody invites you out to the movies and you're busy, you don't say, well, that's it, I can never go to the movies again. You're just like, oh, no, I can't do it that night but maybe another time.

Jen: Exactly. I know, we love to catastrophize everything, right?

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: It's like well, I said I was going to do it when I'm 50. So if I don't do it, then, I'll never do it again.

Jill: That's it, it doesn't count if I do it when I'm 57.

Jen: It doesn't count if I do it when I'm 52, you know what I mean?

Jill: Exactly.

Jen: For sure, so that's also totally okay too. It doesn't have to be, you know, we love to start on a Monday, or do it on an odd day, or put it on a big year. None of that matters.

Jill: None of that matters, exactly.

Jen: None of it matters, it's all self-imposed parameters.

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Jill: I'd much rather have you run it when the time is right, than run it when you think all the planets have lined up appropriately or it's an even number of your age.

I also think when your reasons for training have changed, you know, if the reason that you're training or running, and again, a lot of this really fits the bill for you. Like, you were training more as an escape from your life and so yeah, a 20 mile run, sign me up, right?

Jen: Yeah, I'm all in.

Jill: I have no problem, I'll be gone for eight hours, right?

Jen: Yep.

Jill: And now your reasons for training are more just – Well tell me now why you run and you strength train.

Jen: For me right now it's like it's about anti-aging. And it's not anti-aging in a vain way. I don't know what happened when I turned 48, but perimenopause or whatever the hell it is, has hit me like a ton of bricks. And I have joint pain and I have neuropathy in my hands when I do certain things and my knees hurt.

I have pain that I never even, I can't even believe I have. I'm like, what is happening? And my sleep has changed. And I was always the person who was always cold, I hated air conditioning, all that. Now I'm sweating my ass off all the time. Just all of these things. I have brain fog. I have sleep apnea, which I actually think was caused by Covid the second time, but I don't know. Who knows?

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I have all this stuff and I'm like, I'm only 48. I can't live like this for 45 more years, you know what I mean? Like I can't. And I know you don't live in menopause the whole time, but this is the start of aging for me and it hit me like a ton of bricks, that realization of like, oh, I can't just do whatever the hell I want anymore.

And I've really had to change the way I eat, not to eat to lose weight but certain foods just make me feel like crap and they make the joint pain worse. And I always knew that was a thing because I remember you talking about it and other people and my sisters. But you can't really have empathy about it unless you really can feel it, right? And so, like, I have emotional empathy, but I don't have physical empathy until you get it. And boy.

And so I'm like, okay, so what physical things can I do to help with anti-aging? So I actually have an appointment with my doctor in a couple of weeks and I'm going to be like, all right, I started taking this probiotic that's supposed to help a little bit. And it's helping a little, I think, I haven't been taking it long enough, maybe, to notice. But I'm like, what can I do?

Because I've talked to some people where menopause has lasted for 10 years. I'm like, I can't, I can't do this. I have to do something that's going to make me feel at least a little bit better. And so that's my goal now. And for me, my body, I know this and I believe that anybody can run in the body that they have. I have proven that, you've proven that, thousands of women we have worked with have proven that. But I am made for strength training. That is what my body is made for and it makes me feel so good.

And so I really want to focus, like just now when you and I were talking you were moving your arms and I saw your bicep and I was like, that's the thing that I want, that physical strength. Because I know from the research, I

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know from experience, I know from seeing my sister and you. Strength training, to me, really truly is the key to anti-aging.

And again, it's not a vanity thing. I don't want to be in pain all the time. And so a little soreness from strength training is different than chronic pain from whatever it is that happens to you, for me, at least when I turned 48.

Jill: Yeah, I mean it is, perimenopause is no joke. And I do think that I have found that my body reacts to long distance training differently now than it did even five years ago. Yeah, it just takes a little bit longer to recover and so forth. And so, right. So I think if you're training, your reasons for training have changed, then if the reason for running long distances is no longer there and you want to change your priorities then, obviously, you're going to change your goal.

Jen: Yeah, and I want to run for cardio health. That's what I want. I remember when you and I first met I was like, I just want to be a runner. Like, I don't want to run marathons, I don't want to do this. And I'm going back to that. That was really my first reason for coming to you and I got swooped up in the running vortex, which I often refer to as like, well, now I got to do a 10k, now I got to do this. And I got swept up in that.

And that's totally fine. The running vortex is a blast. And when you're in running vortex mode, give me all the races. I want to do it all. I love it all. But I want to use running as my cardio health and I want to just go out for a quick run if I want to and not have it be a thing.

Jill: Yeah, I love that. And I think that is a good point, like the running vortex. Because a lot of runners feel this obligation to do longer distances and set bigger and bigger goals because they think that's just what a

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runner does. And for sure that's what some runners do, but it doesn't make you any less of a runner to say that's not for me.

And so for anybody who's listening to this who is like, I need to run a marathon or I need to run a half marathon because that's what runners do. No, you don't. You actually just get to say I am not interested in that and I still get to be a runner if I run once a week for 20 minutes. Still a runner, right?

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: However it makes sense for you.

Jen: Yeah, totally. And the other thing for me is, to the point about the running vortex, so often when I'm on coaching calls with the people that we work with, they'll be like, well, I need to get faster. And I always ask the question, why do you need to get faster? You know what I mean? Because it's that compulsion to be like, you know, it's like the competitiveness like I need to get faster, I need to do longer distance. And it's like, that doesn't define you. And it's like, no you don't.

And so whenever I ask that question I'm like, what's your why for that? Because if you don't have a good why for it, then it's always going to be a prison sentence.

Jill: And even if you do get faster, it's not going to be meaningful because you're going to be like, well, now I need to hit this next milestone and so forth.

And I think also, I think I've hit that point and you might be hitting that point as well, where you've sort of peaked in the output of running, right?

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Probably my fastest days are probably behind me. Who knows, maybe I'll do a marathon in the future, maybe not. I'm like you, I'm just kind of like, we'll just see.

But every runner hits a peak in their life that there's going to be the time where you run the fastest you've ever run and the farthest you've ever run, and it doesn't mean that that's over.

Jen: Right.

Jill: It's just like, okay, well, now what else? Are you just going to stop because like, oh, that's it. And so they're always chasing that next goal or whatever and there doesn't have to be one. You get to just be a runner.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: Okay, so let's kind of look at the flip side. What are some times that you think, you know, if you're like, oh, I don't want to do this goal anymore, where you might want to be like, okay, but really is that what you want? Because I'm thinking like if you are starting to have a lot of negative thoughts like, oh, what if I can't finish? Or what if I come in last? And you're still training and everything but you're thinking, well, I should just quit before I fail.

Jen: Yeah, I mean, I think that's where you have to think about, again, evaluating your reasons. Are you doing it because you're afraid of what people are going to say? Are you quitting because you're not doing it perfectly and so if you can't do it perfectly, you're not going to do it at all? So many of us fall into that trap. I always call it shoulding yourself to death, right? Like, well, I should be doing it this way and I should be doing it this way. And it's a fine line, right? Because your brain can trick you.

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And so brains are tricky. And so it really takes a lot of thought work and really being honest with yourself. And I literally call it a gut check because I literally can feel it in my gut. And I know that feeling if I'm bullshitting myself or if it's like I feel solid in my decision. I can literally physically feel it in my gut.

And yeah, so I mean, it really takes a lot of work to be able to trust that, you know what I mean? Because sometimes it's anxiety, sometimes it's whatever. And it's so it takes some work and it's not a snap decision. But Glennon Doyle, she refers to this in the book she wrote. What's the cheetah book? I can't think of it right now. Untamed.

Jill: Oh yeah. Oh, that was a good one.

Jen: And she has this story about she went and sat in her closet and she just sat and she like went deep in herself. And like you can go deep and you can feel those things. And it's like and then you learn to trust your gut.

And through the work that I've done with you I've learned to do that, to sit in the dark and go deep. I don't physically sit in my closet in the dark, it's more of like getting it out on paper and shining a light on the little, you know, what feels like a giant monster in the corner of my brain when it's really just a little gremlin and getting it out and unearthing it and taking away its power and really understanding what the real thing is.

And I now know what it feels like in my gut when it's right. And I know what it feels like in my gut when I'm bullshitting myself.

Jill: Yeah, yeah. What is the difference? Like what does it feel like when you're right and what does it feel like when you're bullshitting yourself?

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Jen: I have like a tug in my stomach. It's like in the middle of my stomach, kind of maybe behind my – I don't even know if it's in my stomach. It's like right in the center. It's like, right behind my belly button there's this ping that I feel when I'm bullshitting myself. And when I'm not, it feels very calm and settled and not that.

And I know that tug, and that tug is like, okay Jen, you say that it's this, but you really know the truth. And that tug is shame. And then the shame starts the shame spiral of the destructive behaviors. Yeah.

Jill: Right. And so if you are quitting on your goal because you think you're going to be avoiding shame, like, okay, I'm not going to finish my training because I'm afraid I'm going to be too slow and I'm going to come in last and I don't want to feel ashamed. You're often trading the shame of failure for the shame of quitting.

And there are no wrong answers. I'm never going to tell somebody if you really don't want to do it, but you're doing it because you're afraid you're going to fail, you have to do it. No, you still get to decide, you're still a human. But I think it's important to kind of like get both sides out there and be like, am I telling myself the truth about changing my mind about this goal?

Because I think sometimes we're like, oh, well, the training is just really inconvenient and I'd rather be doing other things. And I get that, but also, if that's literally the only reason, then, okay, are you going to regret saying no to this when all your friends are crossing the finish line?

I remember, so there's been a couple of times in my life where I've given up on a goal. And the one is the very first half marathon I ever signed up for and I didn't really train for it. It was 2012, I didn't really train for it. And I

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don't know, like a month before I said, fuck it, I'm not going to do this. I just stopped pretending I was training and I just stopped.

And I told people, I was like, I'm going to have to walk most of it and that's not the experience I signed up for. I know it can walk 13 miles. I didn't actually, in fact, know that. But I was like, I know I could walk 13 miles if I needed to, I signed up to be a runner, blah, blah, blah. I felt like a little pang of disappointment. But on race day I woke up and I knew everybody else was running this race and I felt so ashamed of myself.

I was embarrassed and ashamed. And I thought, girl, you really gave up on yourself because you were afraid of not being able to do it. And so then the next year I did the race, it went great, blah, blah, blah. Fast forward to this year, and earlier this year I signed up for the Philadelphia half marathon, coincidentally the exact same race that I had the first time where I felt shame.

And over the summer we bought a house, we moved, I was in Alaska for two weeks. And just like there's been a couple times this summer where I haven't felt too good and I just was like, I don't want to do this anymore. It was like a totally different feeling. I was like, I know what the training is like, I don't want to go through it. It's fucking hot in the city. I just don't want to do this anymore.

And I'm like, all right, so I'm not going to. And it was fascinating because there was like zero drama about that decision. And I think that might be part of it, is when you have a lot of drama then you know you've got some unresolved thinking. And when you don't have drama you're like, oh yeah, this is the right thing to do. I don't want to do that anymore. I'm done, right? I changed my mind. It feels totally different.

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So I think that key is when you're feeling that shame and that drama over the decision, that to me is the time where you need to sit down and have a real honest conversation with yourself and not worry about like, well, what are people going to think if I don't do it? What are people going to think if I do it and I fail? Fuck everybody else, what do you want to do and why?

Jen: Yep.

Jill: And then make your decision from there.

Jen: Yes, and declaring that I wanted to do this when I was 50, it was me proving something to myself.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: And I don't feel the need to prove anything to myself anymore. I just don't. And that's not a good enough reason for me to up-end my life to spend a year training for a marathon. I know what it takes now and I don't need it. And it's zero drama. It's that same thing, it's that physical feeling, that pull behind my belly button that tells me I'm bullshitting myself is drama, right?

And the feeling that I feel when I know that it's right, is no drama. It's calm. My tummy feels fine. My brain isn't going a million miles a minute. Like, it's you're right. It's like if you start to get dramatic about it, that's when you have to look and say, am I making this decision for the right reason?

Jill: Yeah, whatever the decision is, yeah.

Jen: Whatever the decision is.

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Jill: I love that. Well, thank you so much for joining me today and talking this through, because I think this is for sure something that everyone struggles with at one point or another in their life. We've all signed up for something, whether it's a marathon or something not running related, that we're just like, oh, that was a mistake, I don't want to do that anymore. Or it was a great idea when I did it, but things have changed and I can't do it anymore.

And I feel like it's important to give ourselves permission, always give yourself permission to decide not to do it. But then take a hot minute to be like, is this really the choice that I want to make? And check in with your gut.

Jen: Yeah, don't be a flip-flopper, don't be willy-nilly about it, right? If you decided to make that decision, like if you made that decision, you made that decision in the moment for a reason. So go back to that reason and is that reason still important to you? And does it still matter to you? And is it your why? Is it your reason that you want to do it?

If it's not, then it's okay. I mean, it's always okay. But that's even like, you're going to experience that lack of drama if that's the case.

Jill: Yeah. And, yes, you might have to explain to people why you changed your mind. And there may be people who have opinions about that, and that's okay because their opinions are not more important than your safety, your comfort, your sanity, your peace of mind, all of it. So, yeah, thank you.

Jen: Yes, agreed.

Jill: So are you going to be at that finish line cheering people on do you think?

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Jen: I'm sure I will, because we have a team of people running the marathon, always. So I will always be there to support those folks. And, like I said, I'm going to figure out something to do because I still want to raise money for the food bank and I still want to set a goal and this sort of anti-aging, like I want to go into 50 feeling really great. I went into 49 feeling very not great physically. So I want to go into 50 feeling really great.

Jill: I love that.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: So good.

Jen: Yeah.

Jill: All right. Well, thank you again for joining me, it's so fun.

Jen: Thanks for having me. This felt really vulnerable because it's hard.

Jill: Yeah.

Jen: So for those of you out there who are grappling with this, I feel you. So hopefully this helped you and that you can know that you can go on a, I don't know, like millions of people listen to your podcast, you're at millions of downloads. And you don't have to go that far, but it's okay. You're okay.

Jill: Yeah, love that. All right, thanks so much.

Jen: Thank you.

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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.