

Jenny Evans: We're designed to have a physical reaction to stress. And when we do that, that's what hits the reset button. But now, we just have these stressors that just keep going and going and going. We don't get the physical activity to restore our chemistry.

(Intro Music)

Robert Glazer: Welcome to Elevate, a podcast about achievement, personal growth and pushing limits in leadership and life. I'm Robert Glazer, and I chat with world class performers who have committed to elevating their own life, pushing the limits of their capacity, and helping others do the same.

Lenox Powell: This episode was previously recorded and published as part of the Outperform Podcast

Robert Glazer: I'm Bob Glazer, Acceleration Partners Founder and Managing Director. And the quote of the day is from Coach Chuck Pagano and that is, "If you don't have your health, you don't have anything." I'm very excited for our guest today, Jenny Evans. Jenny in her words is obsessed with health and human performance. She's a captivating speaker, an expert on resiliency, stress and confidence and the founder and CEO of PowerHouse Performance, and author of the award winning book, The Resiliency rEvolution: Your Stress Solution for Life, 60 Seconds at a Time. Jenny Evans, welcome. It's great to have you on Outperform.

Jenny Evans: Thanks for having me, Bob, I'm really excited for today.

Robert Glazer: So on this podcast, we talk about all levels and angles of performance. One of the things that almost all high performers have in common is their focus on health. Be it mental, physical, spiritual or emotional health. You keep each of these in peak condition. I know this is something you've written and spoken a lot about. So what got you into the business of helping people elevate their performance?

Jenny Evans: It's funny because when I was young I was the opposite of having any physical talent whatsoever. And so I really discounted it a lot. And in fact, when I was five, my mom made me sign up for dance class because that's how unbelievably uncoordinated I was. But in college, I decided that I was going to sign up to be a group fitness instructor because for me, it was an extension of that dance background that I had. But what happened was having to get even the most basic understanding of anatomy and physiology was a game changer for me. Because when you really understand how the human body and brain work, you can expose it to different stimuli and get it to adapt and change in some of the most amazing ways.

And so, just on a personal level, I started this journey of man, how do I want to change my body? How do I want to change my brain? How do I want to change my performance? What I got out of that was so life changing. I just couldn't wait

to start sharing it with other people because I knew, wow, if this has affected me and I had these challenges and questions, I'm assuming it probably applies to a lot of other people as well. And so, it's funny to me that this is what I've ended up doing based on how I started. It's what I've been really passionate and curious about for an incredibly long time. It's also a field where we are still learning so much about the body and brain and how it works and how to optimize it. So, I'm always continuing to learn.

Robert Glazer: Can you explain for everyone what exactly you and PowerHouse Performance do?

Jenny Evans: Yes. I love being in front of an audience and sharing information that has the potential to change their lives in some way and really kind of seeing that aha light bulb moment for people when they realize, oh, this isn't going to be as hard as I thought it was going to be, or wow, nobody's ever explained that to me before. So, I travel and speak to a lot of Fortune 500 companies on how their employees can improve their resiliency, their performance, energy, engagement, confidence and as a side effect, their health. Because as you said in the bio, I'm obsessed with human performance. And what organizations really care about is optimizing performance. But approaching performance from a physiological perspective has the great added benefit that people are also improving their health in the process which is just even more beneficial for the business and the bottom line.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, there's two themes that you talked about there that are connected to my second book which I'm finishing right now. One is on the concept of working on people holistically. They're the same across their personal self and how they come to work. One of the themes that I'm also digging is on health and wellness and how it's really a foundation to performance and our ability to build that capacity, I just don't see a lot of high performers who aren't working on that and in some way.

So, is that a little bit of what you've seen or how do you, when you're talking to these companies, is it really about hey, we need to think about this person holistically? Not trying to get better energy at work but they need better energy across all aspects of their lives or they won't perform at work or elsewhere?

Jenny Evans: For sure. You know, one of the things that really sets my work apart on resiliency is that I approach the whole concept of the issue of stress, which is a, it's a huge obstacle for anyone. And most often, the approach is dealing with it psychologically. They'll just give you some stress management techniques. But the reality is that stress is a chemistry problem. It radically changes your chemistry and your physiology. And those chemical changes affect what parts of the brain you have access to. It also affects the structure and composition of your brain. It affects your sleep, your decision making.

And so, getting people to understand, you know what, let's approach things from the aspect of let's optimize people's chemistry and physiology, which then

means you don't have those negative side effects of stress that most people deal with in their work lives and their personal lives. It's a big paradigm shift for companies to understand, wow, this does all distill down to how do you optimize the chemistry of somebody's body and brain for them to fully access the array of talents and skills that we've invested in as a company, that are essential with all of the change and risk and stress that people are having to deal with, and to make these decisions very quick and to be nimble and agile.

Robert Glazer: Have you ever seen someone who's domain specific, who's really stressed out, whether it be financial or otherwise at home and then walks into the work environment and just turns that off and is a different person?

Jenny Evans: I have yet to see it. I mean, for sure, there is no firewall between your personal stress and your professional stress. Because like I said, it changes the chemistry of your body and brain. One of those hormones, cortisol, when that's secreted, that lasts in your body and brain for multiple hours after it's been secreted. So, let's say you have a bad morning before you leave for work. And on the way to work, you try to reset yourself psychologically. But honestly, when you're showing up to work, you're still suffering those effects of those stress hormones. And then the same thing, when you get home for work, as much as you're trying to change the channel psychologically, if those stress hormones are still circulating through your body, it is changing how you're showing up emotionally, mentally, spiritually, physically.

Robert Glazer: So if you get cut off in traffic and you flick someone off and you're screaming, you're probably not going to walk into work and be your calmest version of yourself?

Jenny Evans: Most likely not. But that's where I come into play of like, well, how do you then quickly correct that chemistry because we do need to bounce back from all these events that happened throughout the course of the day.

Robert Glazer: We'll dive into the day a little bit because I think the day starts with the morning and that's where really there's been a lot of focus in performance and that how you start your day really sets the tone. But I'd love to just get two definitions from you because I think everyone looks at it a little bit differently. I think it helps to define what we're talking about. So how do you define in your world both resiliency and stress?

Jenny Evans: Great questions. So stress, I like to just use the really simple definition. It's anything that pushes your body or brain out of balance. So that means we have good stress in our lives, we have bad stress, but it pushes us out of balance. And the way I define resiliency is first of all, I take a physiological approach to building resiliency. And so what this means is I define it in two ways. Number one, there is a way to train your body and your brain to recover from stress more quickly and efficiently so that you are back on your feet for that next kick in the face, that next stressor that I promise you is coming.

And then number two, resiliency is also about how can you train to raise your body and brain's threshold for stress so that you can successfully handle a lot more before that stress response is triggered.

Robert Glazer: I'm curious whether you agree with this or not. One thing that I read recently about resilience was, and probably how it ties to stress is that for us to be resilient, we really need to care about something and want to work through it. We choose what to be resilient about and what not and there are some battles where you need to just, you walk away because it's not important to you and then there's some other ones where you have to see it all the way through. So you need to figure out how to how to manage your stress and how to be resilient.

Jenny Evans: Yeah. What I share with audiences that is really unique is once I give them some tools for being resilient, actually applying those and creating a successful change strategy is very different. Most change strategies are all about, okay, let's just educate people on the right behaviors and then let's inspire them. Let's just tell them to start acting differently.

Well, we know how well that typically works. It doesn't. And so one of the things is, we still have a very primitive part of our brain that exists that actually hates change because change requires a lot of energy, there's the unknown. The primitive brain wants comfort, safety, security of habit and routine. So part of what I teach people is there are ways to create an environment, because our environments unconsciously influence our behaviors. Create an environment that it's unconsciously nudging you into the right behaviors without you having to use any self discipline or any willpower because we know self discipline and willpower are very limited resources. The more you use it, the less you have.

With that being said, having a clear sense of purpose, values and beliefs are kind of an extra battery pack for self discipline and willpower. You know, for sure, we do have a higher rate of success when the behavior changes that we're attempting are connected to something more meaningful and important than whatever. I want to lose weight or I want to get a promotion. Like, those are not long term motivators that overcome the stress and the demands of the daily grind. It's got to be something way more emotionally driven than just intellectually driven.

Robert Glazer: That's an interesting point. Well, Tony Robbins says he jumps in an ice bath in the morning because if he shocks the system enough, then the rest of the day can't possibly be a shock compared to that but I don't think most of us are ready for that. I'd love to come back to what you just talked about because I think that's a key anchoring principle in knowing what you want and where you're going and keeping things in perspective. But if we're going to bring it way back for a second, talk a little bit about, what does a productive day look like in terms of starting your morning off eating, managing your energy and stress? Is the morning, does it set the tone, is this where we go right or we go wrong or can you recover from a bad morning?

Jenny Evans:

For sure. From a physiological perspective, think about what sort of a state your body and brain is in. So, you haven't fueled your body since the night before. And so, when we wake up in the morning, all of us, our blood glucose levels are below optimal. Blood glucose is a great form of energy. And so ideally, within an hour of waking up, we need to put some sort of fuel, some food into the system to get our blood glucose levels into the ideal range because glucose is your brain's primary fuel source. And so, if you're not putting any fuel in for your brain, it's going to be extremely difficult to hit the ground running, being focused, being prepared, being engaged.

I will also say like sleep is really important, even before you start your day. I think a lot of us are very quick to start sacrificing sleep for getting more work done, or maybe at night at the end of a long day, you just want to veg out. So, you'll start watching something on TV and pretty soon you won't go to bed until the show's over or just one more show, not paying attention to when your body is really tired. So there's a lot of things that you can do to optimize your sleep so that when you wake up in the morning you are more rested, you're ready to go.

Caffeine. It can be an ergogenic aid, meaning it's performance enhancing. Although, the stress hormone cortisol is naturally at its highest level in our bodies in the mornings when we wake up. Large amounts of caffeine also increase cortisol. I hate to tell people this, but like, lots of coffee first thing in the morning is actually not really that great. Now, I've shared with you, I don't ask anybody to do anything I'm not willing to do myself. I love my coffee. I love the way it smells, I love the way it tastes, but I just kind of try to keep it to a minimum. Really getting your body and brain into an optimum state is one of the best things you can do to create a strong foundation to launch into a long busy day.

Robert Glazer:

Can I impact something you said there because let's say a wake up, I have some breakfast, I have my coffee and my cortisol is very high. There're short and long term implications there. If I'm about to dive into something that I really want to do, that could probably be very helpful to me in terms of the stress [inaudible 00:16:14] and sort of fight or flight and using that. If I'm about to dive into something I don't want to do or a sense of having too much to do, I actually could see the same thing then becoming a negative. So it might even depends on the context of that day and what it is that you need to do. I know Daniel Pink has a new bestseller out right now called When, in terms of being really thoughtful about when we do certain things within our lives. I can think of the days where I'm hopped up and that's helpful and when I'm hopped up in it's really hurtful.

Jenny Evans:

Totally. I mean, there's so many layers to this. You just have like those natural peaks and valleys in your energy levels. Regardless, when that stress response is triggered, when there's too much cortisol in the body, what that does is it actually decreases your access to the advanced portion of your brain, which is logic reasoning, making decisions that have consequences out into the future. And we're primarily functioning on that primitive brain, which is all about sort

of, how am I feeling right now. It's about instant gratification. That's why we become, we just do stupid things that are pretty short sighted, they're not good for the long term. And that primitive brain is also highly reactive and it's really emotional, and it's emotional from the perspective of it's hardwired to be defensive and to assume the worst.

And so, when we're operating with that primitive caveman brain and charge which is anytime that stress response is triggered, even though we might want to be making great decisions, we honestly don't have access to that part of our brain.

Robert Glazer: Didn't you have a name for that? Was it Primitive Pete or something like that?

Jenny Evans: Yeah, I call our primitive brain Sneaky Pete. I call them sneaky because primitive brain, it's all about our survival and our protection. There are things that our primitive brain does that's good for us. But our primitive hardwiring has changed very little in the last hundreds of thousands of years. So, there are parts of us that are cavemen that are now living in this crazy advanced society. And the hardwiring of how we're designed to function best, there's a huge disconnect between the environments that we're working and living in now, which kind of creates some problems, which is why I said, one of the change strategies I talk about is your environment matters. And so how can we optimize our environments to then optimize our behaviors.

Robert Glazer: Can you give some examples of that and on the two brains when, how you bring back one and when you need one or the other. Play that a little more and I think it's really helpful.

Jenny Evans: Yeah. So there's a few things that you can do to keep Sneaky Pete out of the driver's seat, that primitive caveman brain. So, anytime the stress response is triggered, stress hormones come pouring out into the body and brain. And that puts Sneaky Pete in charge, caveman brain. Well, what changes our chemistry is a short burst of intense physical activity which mimics fighting or fleeing, because the stress response is also called the fight or flight response. And when we get a really short burst of intense physical activity, it actually burns off the stress hormones and releases another set of hormones that counteract the negative side effects of stress. And they put that advanced brain back online.

And also then, you know, Sneaky Pete got to do his job. Theoretically, he got to fight or flee. And he's lazy. So once he's done his job, he's like, all right, I'm taking a backseat. I'm going to let advanced brain take over. So, 30 to 60 seconds of a short burst of intense physical activity puts your advanced brain back online. So something like, you know, you just left a really stressful meeting. Instead of taking the elevator up three floors, go to the stairwell and sprint up those flight of stairs and you've just optimized your chemistry back into an ideal state.

From a nutrition perspective, when we go too long without eating, blood glucose levels drop and that triggers the stress response. And now we've got Sneaky Pete in charge, which explains why when we get hungry we just become negative and emotional and reactive. So, by eating about every three to four hours so that you've got consistent levels of ideal blood glucose keeps primitive brain from taking over.

There's all different kinds of things that you can do from the environment perspective of creating what I call optimal defaults. So, primitive caveman brain wants the easiest default option. Well, we've created a world of disastrous defaults, where ...

Robert Glazer: Little red notification signals that grab your attention and pull you away.

Jenny Evans: What do you mean?

Robert Glazer: All the real time stimuli, right? You're looking on your phone and everything is beeping, all the notification icons are beeping and all that stuff, I assume that that brings you right into that sort of stress mode.

Jenny Evans: Yeah. But I'm even talking about bigger things like how workplaces are designed. How communities are designed. For instance, we're hardwired to move as little as possible and to eat as much as we can while we can. So now think about the environments we've created from a movement perspective. How did you get to work this morning, Bob?

Robert Glazer: I walked downstairs.

Jenny Evans: Oh, you did? Okay. I think you're in the minority.

Robert Glazer: Probably a bad example. But most people drive or taking public-

Jenny Evans: Have to drive because work's too far away. So the default option is you have to use transportation of some sort. So, when most people get to work, what's the default activity they do with their bodies?

Robert Glazer: Sitting at their desk.

Jenny Evans: They sit in the desk. And then when it's time to come home from work, the default is to sit again. And then when we get home from work, after we make dinner, what's the default thing that a lot of us do with our bodies?

Robert Glazer: Sit on the couch and watch TV?

Jenny Evans: Totally. So, we're hardwired to move as little as possible. But now we've created environments that require very little movement. So now we wonder why is it so hard for us to get regular exercise? Why is it so hard for us to not sit for long

periods of time? We're hardwired to eat as much as we can while we can. Think about serving sizes. They're enormous. And so, we're supposed to just like not eat all that food. That's not how we're hardwired.

Robert Glazer: And just to be clear, because I think, this is probably more intuitive to you but as you said it, we're hardwired because this comes from the time of scarcity and no place to live, right? So this is not, this is not something that, was hardwired from a place of scarcity and now we're really more in a place of abundance.

Jenny Evans: Completely. You got it. And that's why the book is called The Resiliency rEvolution. And revolution is actually spelled little r big E. So it's all about how we're evolutionarily designed and hardwired. You know, where are the fallbacks with that? But when we understand those fallbacks, we can actually turn those things around and use them to our advantage.

Robert Glazer: We have a mutual friend, Heidi Hanna and what Heidi described to me once I think very similar to what you're talking about is that we're operating in fight or flight 10 times, it's probably meant to use 5% of the time. And I think a lot of us as our default are probably operating there 89% of time and our body's just not designed for that, right? And all that cortisol is making us sick and stressed. For a lot of things that people wouldn't in other countries or cultures would not consider stressful, right? There are some people out there I'd say that are legitimately stressed about dealing with their four houses that they have to manage today. They're getting the same physiological reaction even though someone in some other part of the world would not consider that a very stressful activity.

Jenny Evans: Right. And what's really short circuiting this whole stress response is that we're designed to have a physical reaction to stress. When we do that, that's what hits the reset button. But now, you live in an environment where, you know, it's stressful at work while you're trapped in that meeting or you're on that long conference call or you're in rush hour traffic. There's no physical response to stress typically. And so that cortisol just continues to just constantly be circulating in your body which then kills cells in your brain related to memory and learning. Cortisol makes you want to pig out on those high fat, high sugar comfort foods. Cortisol keeps you up at night. It interferes with your sleep. It leads to anxiety and depression. It's really a lack of movement that's short circuiting this evolutionary hardwiring.

Robert Glazer: I'm a little slow, and you just said it twice for it to click in my head. I just want to make sure I repeat for everyone else. The fight or flight is designed for you to fight or flight, right? Both of those are exercise or activities that then get rid of the cortisol. But we're walking into situations where we're triggering the action and then we have no outlet to make it go away.

Jenny Evans: Absolutely. Yeah. The end result of the stress response for our ancestors was it was fast and it was furious and it was physical. And either it was over with or they were over with. And it happened very quickly. Now, like, we just have

these stressors that just keep going and going and going and we don't get the physical activity to restore our chemistry. We're just walking around just stewing in these stress hormones that are just leading to major issues, both psychological as well as physiological.

Robert Glazer: So the best thing that you can be, the worst thing you can be as passive aggressive. If we're walking into a meeting and we're sitting there and we're stewing on something, we might as well have it out with the people that we're with and burn off some of that cortisol.

Jenny Evans: Yeah, like lock the door, ring the bell, WWE SmackDown. We're going to settle this, we're going correct this right now. No, you don't want to do that. It's not so much about, you know, you could say, you know what, let's talk this out. But the problem is, the fact that you got stressed out about it changed your chemistry and your physiology. You secreted cortisol. And cortisol is now going to be in your system for hours after that. So, even though maybe you kissed and made up, your chemistry still has not been corrected.

And so, I always tell people, like you're not going to be able to get a short burst of physical activity right in the moment when you have experienced stress. But as soon as you can, find a way to just get some movement in your body that will then flush out those stress hormones, and then signal, the release of endorphins, endocannabinoids, human growth hormone. Just like this pharmacy that we have for stress that puts our brains and bodies back into an ideal state.

Robert Glazer: There's some misperceptions I think about exercise that I've heard you talk about in terms of where we get our max benefit in terms of longer versus high intensity and when we should do each. Can you talk a little bit about that because I think that a lot of people might not be exercising in the way that actually has the most benefit or helps with stress or relieves some of the cortisol stuff that you were talking about.

Jenny Evans: Yeah. I think one of the biggest issues people have with getting regular exercise is they don't have the time. The good news is is that long workouts really don't produce better results. And in fact, there's a way to actually shorten your workout dramatically and get much better results. So, for quite some time, as exercise physiologists, we've known that high intensity interval training is the number one way to elevate your fitness and it's also more efficient and effective because you can actually get twice the results in the same amount of time as a long like slow, steady workout. Or, what you can do then is cut your workout in half and do high intensity interval training and get the same amount of benefit as a longer moderate workout.

And so, with this high intensity interval training, it very quickly starts changing the chemistry and physiology of your body from a fitness perspective, but it's also the number one way to build your resiliency to stress. Because think about this, okay, when you're exposed to a stressful event, heart rate goes up and then when the stressful event is over, heart rate drops. So, how quickly your

heart rate drops and recovers from stress indicates how resilient you are. So, when you exercise, heart rate goes up and then when the stress of exercise is over, the heart rate drops. How we measure somebody's level of fitness is how quickly their heart rate drops and recovers after the stress of exercise is over.

Robert Glazer: So you're saying that that mimics you. The hit training mimics what you're trying to train your body to do in terms of recovering from stress.

Jenny Evans: Exactly. There is a direct connection between getting your body to recover from stress and getting your brain to recover from stress. It's the same. And research shows that people who are more physically fit have a higher capacity for stress and they recover from stress more quickly and more efficiently. Going back to our evolutionary hardwiring, the stress response for our ancestors didn't go on for 60 minutes at a moderate intensity. It was a short burst. It was quick, it was fast, it was furious and then they recovered.

And so, these high intensity interval exercise sessions are really sort of mimicking that fight or flight response. And so, I actually sort of poured over the research journals and I was like, okay, how much physical activity do you need to do and at what intensity to actually change your chemistry and your physiology. What research shows is 30 to 60 seconds of intense physical activity stimulates the release of endorphins, which then restore balance after the stress response.

So this means a couple of things. You just get off the phone, you had a really stressful call with a client. Shut your office door and do 30 to 60 seconds of burpees or squat jumps or push ups or jump rope without the rope in your hands. You've now just corrected your chemistry. But if you want to build your resiliency, if you set aside a few minutes to do some exercise and just say, you know what, I'm going to do some short burst of physical activity followed by recovery and I'll repeat that a handful of times, that's what's actually going to build your fitness and your resiliency to stress.

Robert Glazer: When you do it makes it either a painkiller or a vitamin? Is that sort of what I'm hearing. If you do it when you're not stressed, then you're building up your bank to deal with stress. But then it's also using it when you have that rush or that cortisol in your system to let it out. Am I interpreting that correctly?

Jenny Evans: You got it. You know, you've got two options. You can just do it really quick to just correct your chemistry. Hit the reset button on stress. Or you can do a series of short bursts, which then makes you more resilient to stress in the future. So there's the now and the future.

Robert Glazer: What's interesting I've noticed with the latest iOS watch update is that they have a thing in the heart rate section that actually shows you your recovery heart rate. We have access more this information watching within a half an hour

or hour, how quickly did you come down from your peak. I assume that's all part of interval training, right?

Jenny Evans: Absolutely. Yeah.

Robert Glazer: Can you give people some specifics here? How quickly should you come down from your max? Or what should the delta be? Or if anyone has Apple Watch is really trying to look at the efficacy of this, what should they be looking for?

Jenny Evans: Well, all of us are different. And so, we can't really compare apples to apples because my resting heart rate is going to be different than yours, Bob, which is going to be different than our listeners.

Robert Glazer: Probably a lot lower than mine.

Jenny Evans: Maybe. You know, so your max heart rate is going to be based off of that. Here's just a great way is to look at what's my current baseline. Just where am I at now, no judgment. But this is just my starting point. And now start paying attention to how long does it take me to get my heart rate to come back down. What you should be noticing over time if you're exercising consistently is that it takes less time for you to recover from that stress of exercise. You're increasing your fitness and your resiliency.

So, another thing that you should notice is that you will actually have to work harder to get your heart rate to get as high as it was in the past, because now what you've done is you've raised your threshold to be able to handle stress. So now your heart rate might not get as high. So the two things just so simply you should be looking for is that just your heart rate starts to recover more quickly than your baseline. And that also you're going to have to work a lot harder to get your heart rate as high as it used to go.

Science is great. For some people, they love to track all of that. And for some people, that's a huge stressor.

Robert Glazer: Yeah, I mean, what creates stress is really, really different from each person. Can you go back a little bit to what you started with? I wanted to sort of start from the five or 10 feet. But, you really dove into something that's important, kind of bring this all full circle about kind of like like what's your north star and kind of keeping things in perspective around your values and where you're going and how that helps you manage stress on a day to day level.

Jenny Evans: For me, one of my strongest beliefs is that, I believe that we are all given a set of talents and gifts and that it is our responsibility to try to fully develop those as much as we possibly can while we're here and then to put them out into the world and make a difference in some way, shape or form. That operating belief for me gives me confidence and courage to really put myself out there and to put myself into stressful situations that are really going to stretch me as a

person. It's those things that really challenge us the most that teach us the most.

I mean, from a physiological perspective, how we grow muscle is that we have to expose our muscles to stress. That's how they adapt and grow and get stronger. I've actually spent a lot of time getting clarity on my core beliefs. I have five core beliefs that are really, really strong. Those beliefs really guide my behavior on a daily level. They're applicable to the right here right now. These five core beliefs help me to make decisions professionally, personally, physically. They are great like buffers against stress because they helped me to really embrace stress and see it as a tool for growth. As long as we get recovery though. If you don't get recovery from stress, that's when we actually instead of getting growth, that's when we start shriveling.

Robert Glazer: The recovery needs to be in the balance of a day or are you advocating recovery needs to be pretty quickly after the stress?

Jenny Evans: We need to be getting recovery periodically all day long. Because I mean, really, we're expending a lot of energy all day long. So it doesn't really make sense to only get energy recovery when you come home after a long day. That's not sustainable. I mean, athletes who are running a marathon, they break up that 26.2 miles into perhaps eight water bottle stations. What they're doing is they're saying, okay, I'm going to perform for a long period of time and I have to sustain my performance. So I actually have to plan in where am I going to get some energy recovery so that I can sustain speed, stamina and really perform to my best.

Robert Glazer: That's a good segue in a question I was going ask you directly. We've been talking a lot about performance and you are a sought after speaker, award winning author, but you're also a competitive athlete. So with all that you have going on, the demands on your plate, what are some of the tricks that you do to perform at a high level across all of these disciplines?

Jenny Evans: Yeah, great question. As I mentioned earlier, sleep. Bob, I am diabolical about getting enough sleep and protecting my sleep, because I will see it show up the next day in my workouts, in my energy, in my decision making. So, I am an old woman who does not think twice about, if it's nine o'clock and I'm tired, I'm going to go to bed. I need sleep.

Robert Glazer: What's your target number of hours?

Jenny Evans: You know, if I go to bed and then wake up on my own, it's about nine hours. I can get by on less than that but that's not my goal in life, I just want to get by. I want to be a high performer. So sleep is incredibly important for me. I also exercise at least five days a week, non negotiable. What I consider exercise means intensity. So I do almost 100% high intensity interval training because my workouts can be really, really short and really effective. I believe that if you have

your body and gravities turned on, you have everything that you need. I can get a great workout in my living room just using my own body weight. I can do it in my hotel. I don't have to pack stuff in my suitcase. I'm also really diligent about my nutrition. I almost never go longer than about three and a half hours without eating something.

But also, I love balance. Every evening, there's a gin and a diet tonic that happens. I have a little bit of junk food every afternoon. Life is also about balance. I think too, you know, being an entrepreneur, I love what I do and I get so much energy from that. Being able to do what I love, man, that's like, I get excited to wake up every day. I do have my coffee too. That excites me as well. I'm obsessed with how can I continue to learn, grow, expand my capacity, put myself out there, but do it in a way that's strategic. Nobody likes to cannonball into the deep end of fear. It's all about how can I just make myself a little bit uncomfortable. Okay, I did that. Now, I'm going to do something that's going to give me some recovery. Okay, now I'm going to do another thing that makes me a little uncomfortable and I'm going to follow that with recovery and that's growth.

Robert Glazer: Let me ask you one last question again related to resilience. What's the mistake in your business or career that you think you learned the most from?

Jenny Evans: Lifetime of examples. One that really jumps out to me, a professional mistake, and to be honest, this is going to sound weird, Bob. I don't view a lot of things in my life as mistakes. I view them as a learning opportunity.

Robert Glazer: Absolutely.

Jenny Evans: Like holy cow, what did I learn? So this resiliency training tool that I have, some people told me like, hey, that's a great fitness product, you should sell it on QVC and Shop NBC. I was like, okay. But in my gut, I was like, this is a rotten idea for QVC because with my my resiliency training tool, you actually have to work really hard. It's a hard workout. And that's not what most home shopping club shoppers are looking for. So, got on the QVC. The work that went into getting the product to get the right barcodes and shipping labels and get it into the system and shipping stuff out there. And the day before, the guy was like, this is going to make bank. This is going to go crazy. My gut, I'm like, I don't see it but I hope you're right.

Right before me, there was a guy selling the body blade. It was basically this like, think of a bow and arrow without the string on it. So you just hold this blade in the middle and you just stand there and you shake it back and forth. And then he even showed how you can do it while sitting down. I was like, oh, this is not going to be good. So I was on next. I think I sold like 35 units after all of that. It was a fricking epic failure. What I learned from that was A, I should have listened to my gut and I was like this is not the right fit. B, helped me to understand I don't want to be in the world of retail. I have zero passion for this.

But then C, I was like, you know what, I didn't take business classes in college. I'm just going to chop this up to a semester of business school.

Robert Glazer: But cheaper.

Jenny Evans: Yeah.

Robert Glazer: Well, Jenny, it's been great talking with you. We could probably go on for another hour. I know we just scratched the surface on this topic. So I'm going to encourage our listeners, if you want to dig deeper into the concept that Jenny talked about here for coaches and high end performers and business leaders, definitely get her book, the Resiliency rEvolution, and we'll be sure to include a link for that in the show notes. We'll also include links to Jenny's website and her captivating TED Talk on stress.

And speaking of captivating, if you found any of this or Outperform Podcast captivating, we'd really appreciate your rating and reviewing on iTunes. Until next time, thanks for listening and keep outperforming.