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## **"Motivation and Personal Success: The Mentors Speak" featuring guest Nadia Ruiz**

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Armando F Sanchez Production

## Motivation and Personal Success: The Mentors Speak

### Nadia Ruiz

Nadia Ruiz, M.Ed holds the youngest person to run 100 marathons in the Guinness World Book Record

Host: Armando F Sanchez

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Podcast: <http://www.blogtalkradio.com/latino-role-models-success/2015/03/02/nadia-ruiz-youngest-person-to-run-100-marathons>

*Nadia Ruiz began running during her freshman year in high school. She comes from a first-generation immigrant family from Ecuador. Her parents raised their children with the principles to work hard, dedicating yourself to one's education, and always aiming for one's highest personal integrity.*

*Since early childhood, Nadia aimed to excel in her academics, mathematics, and creative arts competitions; however, she wasn't seen as the athlete of the family.*

*Unfortunately in middle school, she fell victim to bullying possibly for her academic achievements and late development. Her mother enrolled her immediately in the community boxing and Nadia had the opportunity to discover there as an endurance bug within.*

*She learned immediately that there was something special that running brought to her life so she decided to register for her first marathon at the age of 14.*

*Sixteen years later, she has completed over 120 marathons (3:16 PR), 55 half marathons (1:26 PR), 11 ultras, and 4 Ironman triathlons (12:34 PR) frequently in the top of her age group or Top Overall women.*

*Nadia learned that the more she challenge herself at all distances and terrain, the more physical pain she can endure, and the more she learned about her true spirit.*

*Nadia graduated with her BS, M.Ed, and Teacher's Credential from UCLA at the age of 20. Nadia has been a HS Biology educator, coach, and marketing consultant for 10 years.*

*Nadia shares her passion for fitness, health, and education with her family and friends in hopes to continue to encourage others to seek their goals, especially young aspiring Latinos who dream of achieving their dreams.*

*Ms. Ruiz feels that the greatest achievement in life is living your passion daily and not saying "someday" but today.*

*I will live my life as I choose. I hope to continue to follow where my heart guides me exploring and challenging myself in new terrain as long as I can while encouraging others to do so as well.*

*Nadia states, "In order to reach others, I have created some profiles on social media where I share my struggles, triumphs, and challenges throughout my life to demonstrate to others that they may other overcome their struggles to reach their goals."*

Interview:

**Armando F Sanchez:** Ladies and gentlemen, thank you, it's a fantastic story. I want to thank Natalie Garcia for recommending our guest today. Outstanding background, this just floored me when I read it, and I want to share a little bit about the race. She's Latina, from a family from Ecuador. She's here in the Los Angeles area, and at the age of 14, Imagine that 14 Register for her first race. I mean, that's something, and at that time, she was still very, very young. She had run 120 marathons. 55 half marathons. 11 Ultras, and for Ironman triathlons. I mean, how does she do it? It's just a fantastic story. She talks about her background in middle school when she fell victim to bullying and her academic achievements and delayed development. Her mother enrolled her immediately in the community boxing. She had the opportunity to discover her strength as an endurance bug, which filtered through her.

She immediately learned something special about running that brought her to her life, so she decided to register for her first marathon at age 14. That just floored me. Sixteen years later, she has completed all these 120 marathons and the other ones that I mentioned, now being graduated with her bachelor's degree and master's degree in education, and has a teaching credential from UCLA at the age of 20. Ladies and gentlemen, I couldn't do it. I mean, I went through my Ph.D. Program at 27. I was exhausted. She'd accomplished most of this and half the time! I just don't know how she did it. She has been a high school biology educator and a Coach marketing consultant for ten years.

She shares her passion for fitness, health, and education with her family, friends, and obviously with a community, especially young Latina girls, here on our show today who inspires other Latinos and Latinas to look at their goals, to look at their ability to be able to accomplish success. No matter where they are- inner-city, Otter city, wherever they are, she continues her outreach to other individuals.

I would like to introduce this wonderful young lady. I have talked tonight about her being the youngest person, youngest Latina, the youngest person who has been recognized in the Guinness Book of World Records for running so many marathons. And the list goes on and on. It's just that this is just the tip of the iceberg. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome today, Nadia Ruiz, and let's get into her background.

Nadia. Thanks for being on the show today.

**Nadia Ruiz:** And thank you for having me. Good evening.

**Sanchez:** Let's begin with the law questions. Let me take you back to age 14. When there was a piece of paper in front of you that says, "Would you like to sign up to be a marathon runner" you said, "I'm going to fill this out, and I'm gonna go run." What were you thinking back then?

**Ruiz:** A sense of invincibility. Usually, you just think of them to your team that you can do outlandishly, and you just don't feel like you'll ever get hurt. You feel like it's a possibility that got planted when I started. I saw the world championship for the Ironman on TV featured in Kona and the Ironman where you swim 2.4 miles. You bike 112 miles, and then you run a marathon. And I was touched mainly by stories just seeing that meant so much to me.

I admire the professionals that do this for a living. But it was just the stories of seeing these mothers, fathers, people that were having full-time careers or people they're going through cancer, people that are going through a struggle, for having a whole life and still finding dedication to use this physical goal as an outlet to go through the struggle that never got in life and reaching this accomplishment. It touched me so much. I was in tears one day. I mean, I was probably 13 at the time. And I thought, one day, I want to do that. I did the research to learn a little bit about it, and I thought it took a little quite a bit of money to get started and get the bike and so forth. I said you know; maybe I will adjust my goal. I will say I will do an Ironman before I turn 27. Because, at that point, I had a kind of academic plan set out for me. And I said let's start baby steps. So, I said, "Start with a marathon." Like that's baby steps, at the time, I thought of it as baby steps. I was breaking apart, you know, the triathlon? And so I said, let's go ahead and try the marathon, and I think it was easy because it was easy for my head to think of that step. After all, when I started high school, my freshman on the cross country team, there was a senior there who signed up for the marathon. I mean, you don't.

This is now 16 years ago; you didn't hear very often that people that young doing the marathon, the marathon distance, it was more likely to be you're going to compete in cross country and track in high school if you have that talent. If he's doing it and he's only about four years older than I am, why can I? I'll try it. We were allowed to in our high school, or in our community, that we represented, and I was like, I want to do this, I'm going to try it in my mind.

I had just started running. Just everybody that year, just the first freshman year and cross country. I had a speed horse behind me. I had the season behind me. We would run anywhere between three to five miles a day. Nothing longer than six. And I just said, why not? I can do it. I can try it. So I signed up for my first, but it was a hard reality that it's very crucial to get that marathon training and if you have this targeted goal, and I've learned very early on that it's painful. I hit the wall at mile 12, crying, and I was like, I can't do this. I can't do it. But my dad had decided to run the marathon with me, our first one together. And he turned around and looked at me and said, he's like yes, you can. Remember I told you that you can do it when you put your mind to anything. Your mind is your most powerful tool in life. And at that point, I just had to swallow my tears and entered Okay—one foot in front of the other. And I didn't win, but it was one of the longest, from that point from mile 12 to the finish line—the things that went through my head, the pain that I felt. I felt like a whole world had opened up in my mind of the possibility of when you think you're at your darkest, but you can still reach that goal when you just are mentally committed to it. We crossed that finish line, that first one together! Holding hands, crying! My dad looked at me, and I felt in his eyes that he was proud of his daughter, and it was something that we got to share. And we've been sharing it ever since.

**Sanchez:** Now, just take me back a little bit-what would have been the correct amount of running that you should have done daily to be prepared for the first marathon?

**Ruiz:** Normally, when you are training for your first marathon, you want to give it a solid six months. This is if you're starting from no background; I mean, it is possible for anyone if they are very committed to just mentally, physically, and committing themselves to reach that goal of finishing a marathon. You can give yourself six months if you have a little more hectic schedule and give yourself a couple of extra months to train and be prepared for a time goal. The less time you give

yourself, the more committed you have to be to make sure you don't miss any workouts. So six months is usually the standard. But what I found is, more frequently, I just started developing a very, very large endurance base because of the marathons. So I can kind of jump into a marathon. I still have to work. I still have to train and do the speed work or anything depending on my time goal to reach a specific finish time. But usually, six months is standard.

**Sanchez:** Do you run every day?

**Ruiz:** No. For us, from learning from experience, learning from other people's experiences, and researching the data out there. Everyone has a different threshold for mileage. I mean, there are runners out there who can handle, you know, 120 miles a week, 130 miles a week. This is whether they're professional runners or just your age groupers aiming to be professional runners. Others are doing 80 miles a week, 70 miles a week. I'm producing the same amount of time finishing times as those people are. At the same time, I would average anywhere between 3 to 40 miles per week. So, it just depends on body type, depends on your genetics, depends on your physical history; you have to test it out. You'd have to find out what is your, your mileage thresholds that your body can take, and it's different for everyone. So just because one person does 100 miles a week doesn't necessarily mean it's okay for another body type to do it. There are just certain body types that are more prone to it. When it comes to reaching a specific physical goal at a certain distance, yes, you can. You have to allow your body to heal after you do a particular race or certain training period.

**Sanchez:** Yes. So, when you finish a marathon, you mention the idea of healing. Healing from being obviously exhausted, but what else?

**Ruiz:** It's a huge physical change going through your body. You have micro-tears in your muscles; there are impacts on your joints. Not to say that running is bad for you. It's not. It's very healthy. You have to have either high-impact or impact exercise to stimulate growth in your

body. But you need to allow your body to heal anytime you do something for the first time. People asked me like how are you still walking? And how many injuries have you suffered? In 16 years that I've been running, I've probably suffered maybe two or three overuse injuries - that's relatively very low. I've had, of course, other trauma injuries from either crashes or falls or just from other sports and activities that I do. But specifically from running, I've had probably about three overuse injuries.

It comes from listening to your body. You have to listen to any of the tweaks that you have. There's good pain and bad pain. And you have to learn to recognize what the terrible pain is. Runners can be one of the most stubborn people, and even though they have that wrong pain, they will keep running through it because that frustration becomes, you know, your outlet, your joy. You want to keep doing it every day or as often as possible. It's also learning to kind of pull back when you need to.

I started by only doing one marathon a year for seven years. I raise five to 10K half marathons, primarily like shorter distances; I left the marathon was still new for my body to adjust to, and I wasn't focused on training very hard, and my body was still ingesting, plus I was growing. I developed at these early stages, like 14, 15, and 16. My body's still going through some change. I didn't want to put so much onto it yet, but I competed in cross country and track. Once I finished grad school, that's when I went crazy. I started training a lot more. And I started racing a lot more, and I saw that the more I trained, the better I did. I prepared for it. The more I had to take care of my body with eating, sleeping, and diet. It just became almost a full-time job in itself to be able to compete and plan and do all that stuff, but it's rewarding because I enjoyed it. It was my passion. I would devote the time to it because I just said, "I love it." I love it, and I still do

**Sanchez:** Now it isn't effortless. I'm not a marathon runner, but I can imagine it's pretty tricky to balance personal life, mental, psychological,



individual schedules, challenges of life internally of having to be constantly competing, halted to find information to balance all these things up.

**Ruiz:** Time management was just a skill I acquired early on. I grew up loving to readjust. It was something that I was exposed to very early on. And I found just a plethora of knowledge by reading different authors, different people, different experiences, different autobiographies, and just learning like that was just my biggest, most significant advantage. I saw that I had a hunger for learning, and I still do. I love to learn and go through books so quickly.

The biggest bookworm ever and maybe probably needed a permit. But I would ask my dad, “ Can you please buy me this book? Can you please send me this book? Please buy this book?” You know what parents say, like I'm not going to buy my child's book of course, I'm going to buy it like she was not asking for candy. I found you learn to learn best practices. You have to see what best practices are being practiced by successful ones. I would read it and observe I'm very, very, very observant as follows what it took, what skills it took to be successful to be, you know, very efficient in your time, time management, and learning to sacrifice and take out things that don't matter. That are just fillers in your life, and recognizing that, so I had a considerable self-awareness early on. And again, it came from reading, just reading. I was not a person that would watch TV.

Not very much when I was young. You could ask, that's probably why I wasn't very popular. Especially elementary school was picked on, and middle school was awful. I personally hated Middle School. I hated it. Because, you know, I thought, you're going to be the top student. You're going to be the one to help or the teacher that will get you going, but not socially, not with your peers. It didn't help that I developed very late. Puberty didn't hit me until high school, whereas I saw girls going to puberty; I don't know, 11th grade. Early on, I was just an outsider. So

my outlet was just reading and learning the excellent skills to be successful and learning how to manage and balance everything.

**Sanchez:** If you can quickly, a couple of books that you personally really enjoy? You know, the huge number that you probably read and two books that you can recommend that will be helpful to our listeners who are also interested in Marathon running?

**Ruiz:** Some book that I recently read I loved was Wild by Cheryl Strayed. I just recently saw a movie that was just released about it. She shared her journey of just pain, loss, and struggle as she shared how she wanted to go through her little spiritual therapy journey. When I'm hiking on the PCT, the Pacific Coast trail runs from the Mexican border to the Canadian border along the West coast. She hiked over 1000 miles long, and she did this for a few months, and it was amazing. And just to hear her journey and feel the connection with her. However, she struggled, and to just I've learned that I can tolerate much physical pain a lot. I just have a very, very high pain threshold. But one thing that I struggle with is emotional pain. I am happy I've learned to be a giving person. I love people wholeheartedly. When people hurt me, or I get hurt emotionally. I get very, very weak. It feels like that's my weakness. If there's emotional pain, I can't handle it, and so it's almost like I use the physical pain to help therapy just give me that therapy to cope with it because it hurts, and it's a very different type of pain. That was a great book to feel therapeutic reading it. Another book that I recently read too is a finding Ultra by ritual, which is also about your regular man who didn't have a super privileged life, didn't have, Olympic background or lipid parents or anything, and grew up with his struggles. He suffered from alcoholism. He was a swimmer in college or high school, college, and had certain struggles in his life. Even with divorce and money and people, losing his job. It's almost when you hit that rock bottom; it gives you a wake-up call. It's like, hey, you have many things going for you. And if you don't get your life put together, you're going to lose everything, and you need to get your act together. And he did that; he hit his rock bottom and ended up doing kind of not

having any triathlon history. He jumps into first traveling and does this ultra-man, which is like a huge extension of what an iron man is. It's just amazing, amazing to see his journey with that. And that's like going back and again. I connect with that because, in my life, you know people think now, and they hear about me, or they know me, or maybe they met me within the last couple years, even like the last three, four years. Before that, no one has realized what it takes to be here. You know, typically, you don't see or maybe people in their mid-20s, late 20s, or 30s doing what I'm doing unless they have a privileged background. or they come from a privileged background, and I don't come from an immigrant family. My parents absolutely loved everything and sacrificed everything to start from absolutely scratch. You know, I slept with my sister. My parents and I slept on one mattress for a few years and a corner of one of my dad's cousin's house in the living room. Like we were that poor. We were just struggling to eat. My mom went very often hungry because she would sacrifice her meals so that my siblings and I could eat. My dad struggled working two jobs, and Mom cooked meals and sold meals at the park to try to make money. She would clean houses. They still did so much for us, and those acts of kindness that someone can give like that are doing this for their children. The one thing they always told us was that my parents told my siblings and me that they were doing this so that we wouldn't have to. That just resonated so much with me. I know; it was huge. It was a huge act of kindness that comes from love. As a little girl, I learned that I see my parents in pain. I can't let them down. I have to make them proud. I asked to make my life worthwhile because they've given up theirs. That's why I worked as hard as I did early on. I had to sacrifice a lot early on in my early adulthood and 20s, You know, sleeping in my car, and even there were a couple of times in my life where I once hit my rock bottom, there was an absolute rock bottom where I felt like I was going to lose everything at that point. I was going to lose my job, maybe, lose my relationship. In that situation, I was in a marriage, and I lost absolutely everything because of some poor decisions that I made, and it's that reality check that you get, hey, you've got a lot going for you. Don't let something so insignificant or stupid; mess it up and get your

act together. And I mean, I had to get that reality check when I was 19 or 18, 19, 20, and I did. And I'm grateful for it. And it made me more driven to keep succeeding. It's just finding, I guess, connection and finding therapies, again through reading, and I found it recently. It was those two books. They were just great. It's Wild and Finding Ultra.

**Sanchez:** Do you recommend to other individuals in the marathon world that they could find helpful?

**Ruiz:** The books that I read in high school helped transform my mind, just my thinking and my Outlook without being forceful as fascination. It's a pretty well-known book. It's by Eric Schlosser, and it's basically about how the fast-food industry has changed our culture. I know that it's very, very, very farfetched, like outside of running and outside of this is when I was exploring what it takes to be the best that I could be. When I was in high school, I learned about running and realized I had a talent for it. I wanted to learn everything I could to make myself the best I could, and part of it had to be sports nutrition. I picked up this book; it was a huge eye-opener. I mean, it was just unreal to see. I enjoyed the book. I read it probably three or four times already, and then because it's great, it's a great revealing of the fascinating history of our culture, our Americanized culture, and our view and how we have just been enslaved by it. It takes away from you know the family as well. As having a home-cooked meal and sitting at the dinner table with your family enjoying the conversation and turning the TV off like it's okay maybe once in a while the eating in front of the TV and here and there, but also the value and the quality what it took to sit at a table on a weekday it's not a weekend. An Event on a weekday with your family and just having a conversation and talk changed my perspective. It also helped open my eyes and be more dedicated to my health. Because, you know, you become a little more dependent upon the fast-food industry and then become a little easier on preparing your meals and dedicate yourself to your health. It helps to focus on helping me eat well and just having a better relationship with food. I would look at it as comfort; it

was always like, Oh, it's a dessert, or I can't wait to have this, I can't wait to have that. Some people think, oh, she's so like anti burgers and anti pizza or anti-meat and like absolutely not! I also have a science background. I know what it's like a little bit more than people might anticipate, but it's about having a very positive relationship with food and realizing it's there to nourish you. And as some philosophers say, food can either be your medicine, or it can be your poison. Anything that you put in your mouth it's either going to help you or it's going to hurt you. You make that choice every time you fuel yourself with whatever you're drinking or eating. Of course, it's okay to have, you know, here and there your treat. But at the same time, you have to realize that overall, in the long run, you want to have a high quality of life. You have to nourish yourself the right way, and it's essential. So that book just helped me be very disciplined for some reasons. It was just very, very good.

**Sanchez:** We're going to go into some questions. We have some of our listeners in different parts of the nation submitted questions to you, and I'd like to pose this question to you before I move into those. I want to highlight something; you remind me very much of a story. Another individual that I interviewed was Olympian Derek Parra. He was in Riverside. He went into roller skating and then went into ice skating. It was quite a story, and he wrote a book, and again, I recommended Derek Bar. He is now training other future Olympians up in Utah. But he talks about the time when he had a very meager job. He was cooking in a fast-food place, and he was hungry. He didn't have enough money to buy food. That's why he worked to sustain himself and the sacrifices that individuals like yourself go through. When you ultimately reach the podium, people applaud, and we see medals being put around you. Sometimes we may think, wow, how lucky that person is. But in fact, the story is a huge, massive sacrifice on a personal, emotional, and social level that you go through to going down. I'd like to come back to that. But first, let me move on to the questions and present them to you and allow you to respond to them. The first one is from Natalie Garcia; we want to thank her for recommending you to me. She's also a marathon

runner. And her question is, who are your mentors in sports and your life?

**Ruiz:** My mentors? I would say early on; there's this friend from running. Her name is Diva Burns. She made me realize that being crazy in sports and having these crazy outlandish goals is possible. She was putting out Ironman after Ironman and Crunchyroll are paid and like, oh my goodness, how can you do this? She became like my mentor and my helper. She's a wonderful lady and has her job, full-time jobs, married, and she was just like, I see something new.

I see its existence, fire in your eyes. She's like, I'll help you on stage. Just ask me anything you want, and I will help guide you in this Iron Man journey. And I would talk to her about it and ask her like just tech suit and texture and like, what do I do or how do I like how do you cope with like, just where you were and all these things? And then she would direct me like books who send me books to read you, and you know and listen. It's just part of like having a mentor is listening. You have to learn to listen when others have more experience than us because, again, we sometimes get into a position where we're like, " Oh, I usually know everything. But learning, having the ability to use just our willingness to learn. And then, of course, mentors, I think, without even him knowing it, my biggest mental coach would be my dad. And I've learned about what mental training was later, just was through books. And I just realized like I didn't even know, but my dad was like my biggest mental trainer, and he would empower me with words and read me poems and just never give up learning, to never give up and accept the fact that you have to put your mind dedicated to something. Then my mom was my balance. She was just the heart and soul of the family and just touched the most selfless giving person; I could see it through acts of love that she was a mentor. You always need to remember where you came from and always be willing to help others because she always was; she's always helped. Friends come on, you know, it's okay to be selfish. Sometimes it's okay to take care of

yourself too. But you know, she was just a very wonderful given woman. So apparently, my parents.

**Sanchez:** Outstanding. We have a question from Teresa Nanda. She wanted to be on the show live, but she's doing report cards as we're doing the show. She sent us a question where do you teach now?

**Ruiz:** I teach in the inner city. Part of the program within UCLA is that they encouraged us to target communities that have the most needs. Because the inner-city school was LAUSD in district seven. I worked at the beginning and maybe a couple of years afterward. It's very, very, very hard to work in the inner-city. A couple of years after, I was considering moving into a more affluent area, but I couldn't identify with the students identify with the kids. And I saw their backgrounds, it was wonderful.

**Sanchez:** That's wonderful. And we have a question from the last customer in Ghana in Texas. What do you get out of using media about you're running a marathon?

**Ruiz:** Number one is to help reach out to a larger group. Because I found my inspiration, I learned different skills and learned from other people's practices. And that was reading and reading books and books, and the reality is that people don't read as often as they used to, especially with social media. It's easiest to reach out to a larger group through social media. And so it helps just kind of touch more people that way.

**Sanchez:** Absolutely. It's an electronic School Without Walls. And you can talk.

**Ruiz:** Yeah. Exactly. And then, because I have an educational background like part of it and some things, I want to help be a teachable moment. So you know, when I was juicing or when I was creating my smoothies and try to share as often as it I am eating like healthy like, this is what I'm doing like teaching guiding people to how I'm thinking or

how I'm eating or what I'm consuming so that you can see like I'm not putting just junk into my body to raise the frequency that I am racing.

**Sanchez:** Sure. And the final question is from Dr. Roshan; he's now retired and enjoying himself down in San Diego. What is in your mind for the future?

**Ruiz:** In the future is number one. I love fitness. I love the outdoors. I love pushing myself. My body is to its limits. And so, for me, I want to be a fitness enthusiast for the rest of my life. I want to be running, you know, however long it is, whether it be a marathon distance and ultra or maybe just a 10k five people, whatever it is, but I want to be able to do and enjoy the outdoors actively until the end of my life and to do that. I want to take care of it from the beginning. From this point, on and on, and even before and right now, I am working on writing my first book; I'd like to release a memoir in part, also sharing the top things that I want to teach and share with people in addition to communicating more detailed backgrounds, about my experience are? That's a major role in the future. Hopefully, it was in the next year.

**Sanchez:** Well, I want first dibs on this book deal. I want to make sure that I want to have you back on the show as soon as your book is ready. And you know, at other times as well, but definitely, I will make a special show just for that book for yourself. I think it's going to be an outstanding book. And I have a request for you. I'm very, very, very hopeful! And this is my recommendation. I'm very hopeful that she will go out and become a speaker, join the speaking circuit and share your story because I'm overwhelmed by how wonderful your background and how balanced you are. You challenge yourself. It's something so difficult. Please, I hope you become a speaker that we can all go to, you know in our local communities that you go nationally. Don't run there. Fly there. But the opportunity to share your story across the world because, you know, it's just an incredible story. That leads me to ask you, can we give contact information where our listeners can get a hold of you?



**Ruiz:** Yes, they can follow me on social media. I'm on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. It's all the same handle at Iron girl Nadia. They can also visit my blog where I've shared some more details of some aspects, Nadia so [runner.blogspot.com](http://runner.blogspot.com), and find more contact information there.

**Sanchez:** And soon you will be able to read her book. We were going to keep her to that. I know you'll complete it. There's no doubt about that. So let me come back to the issue was we're ready to close the show, but I do have to mention it, and I want our listeners to do it. I've been in places where somebody again is up on the podium getting metal and said I've heard people around me say how lucky they are looking at them. Getting a word so that, you know, it almost sounds like they didn't have like they perceive that the competitor didn't have to do very much to be out there. Do you get that sense sometimes from people that don't understand the sacrifices that go into doing what you're doing?

**Ruiz:** I do. I get it from either friends or strangers or from people who probably are just a little envious of my journey, and some do it out of being completely kind. They don't know if they all must be leery. You're so lucky. You're so lucky to be faster, you're so lucky to do all the things that you do, or how do you afford to do all these things, and I always say you can't know it was in one sentence exactly what it is, but I don't believe in luck. I don't, and there is no such thing as luck. I say that I read once that success is when preparation meets opportunity. When opportunities present themselves in your life, you're either going to be paired, or you're not going to be prepared. And so it's very important to prepare yourself as much as you can for these opportunities, so then you can be successful. And you have to realize that you're going to be successful, not always. Sometimes you're going to have to overcome you're going to come across failures; you're going to have to learn from

those failures and overcome them. But the key thing is also learning from other people's mistakes, other people's failures, so that you can avoid those in your life. I had to make a huge amount of sacrifice early on in my life. I didn't join a sorority because I had to let goals like that in college life, but I tasted it might be my first quarter at UCLA. But after that, I had to become a hermit. I went very, very, very full hard and, you know, finished everything in three years. And I was just very driven and focused on publishing. I mean, I wouldn't see friends. I wouldn't be if I weren't a relationship and an undergrad, and grad school is just something that I would focus on if I don't want to develop my professional life. I even didn't see my family as often. I only lived maybe 3040 miles away, but I was, no. I have to study like a woman, when kids are partying, are enjoying themselves like they shouldn't be, you know, in a balanced way. But I always went full-heartedly to sacrificing that even after grad school does it. There was a point where the first year of grad school, I moved in with four other girls in a small two-bedroom apartment, and all of them had boyfriends. I did it. And so this was part of this tiny dirty apartment that was filled with like ten people sometimes and sleeping over. It was horrible. I had to live there for a year, but at the same time, I was working two jobs, two full-time jobs. I was saving 60-70% of my paycheck, and even though I had to suffer horribly, my privacy. But it was great. And even before then, I just had to sleep in my car because I was going to save money for gas when I'd had to go for working from job to job. There are times I would go hungry and make other sacrifices that have been made in my life, and I've constantly reminded myself that it's going to pay off, and I wish I would come to my parents 'house and come home crying. I knew it was worth it. I was lonely. I have no pushing. I felt invisible, and I was 40 pounds and in college. It seems like we've had, and it will pay off. It's going to pay off one day. Just keep on your path. It's going to pay off and does. It will, and you can't just forget that you know that success does come from hard work. And it continues to be hard work.

**Sanchez:** Absolutely. Please, I want to ask you again to provide your contact information. And then we're going to close the show by asking

you for your closing statements. So once again, would you please provide our listeners with your contact information?

**Ruiz:** Yes, you can find me on social media. My site is Iron girl Nadia on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat; you can also visit my blog at Nadia The [runner.blogspot.com](http://runner.blogspot.com).

**Sanchez:** Outstanding, please, ladies and gentlemen, contact her. I know you're going to get tons of information from her experiences. And we're all sitting here on the border waiting for her book to come out because I know it will be sensational. I can already sense it. And now, please, closing statements.

**Ruiz:** I just want to encourage everyone. It doesn't matter how much you're struggling or maybe how much you have in your life. We always need to be thankful for where we are and never forget what your parents probably told you is that you can be anything you want to be. You can work for your happiness. You can go for that happiness. And don't let that go when you're an adult. We lose that drive, that special gift that we have, a fire that we have as a child. It's okay to believe that we are an adult to have that hope to have that drive to keep dreaming and dreaming career goals and dreaming big because that's the whole point of life: having a high quality of life. And reflecting and realizing that yes, I can. I can achieve my biggest dreams.

**Sanchez:** You asked the question when you were an undergraduate graduate. Was this worth it when you were in college? And I think you tentatively answered the question but let me close with it. Was it worth it?

**Ruiz:** Yes, definitely was.

**Sanchez:** Absolutely. I will have to talk about that issue some other day. We've been talking to Nadia Ruiz, who is a fantastic, fantastic runner. She does many marathons. But more importantly, she also dedicates time to speak like today where she takes time for her busy schedule, to share to motivate to tell us of inner-city that they can do it and best of all, I think there are very, very few Latina role models. So necessary. And Nadia brings her background, experience, knowledge, heart, and passion to the young ladies again; I cannot tell you enough. Hi, I'm very hopeful that you get on the speaker circuit. We have a little bit of time; I know you're very busy and that you continue taking your story into the community. It's very, very much from the bottom of your heart. I can feel it. I can sense it. And I've been deeply touched, and I'm sure that everyone that comes in contact with you will also feel the same way. I want to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Thank you for being on the show today.

**Ruiz:** Thank you so much for having me.

**Sanchez:** Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Again, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me. I'm Armando F Sanchez. I've been your host. You can contact me on Facebook and LinkedIn. Armando F Sanchez. I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, thoughts, or ideas, please contact Nadia to reset her site. And please also, if you have any questions or have trouble getting her, contact me, and I'll direct it back to her again. Very, very proud of Nadia Ruiz. We want to thank Natalie Garcia again for recommending her and thank you for being on the show today. I look forward to having you in future shows.