

A Lesson in Self Motivation and Inspiration from One of the World's Greatest Runners

LiveAwesome.com Interview with David Horton

Kevin Gianni: This is Kevin Gianni from Trailrunningsecrets.com. I would like to welcome everyone to this special interview series. Trailrunningsecrets.com is where five of the best trail runners on the planet reveal their dirty little secrets, tricks, and tips to running better, faster, longer, and injury-free. The best part is that all the interviews are absolutely free, so if you happen to get a hold of just today's interview, there are four more waiting for you at Trailrunningsecrets.com.

Today's interview is going to be absolutely awesome. I have David Horton on the line. David is as prolific as runners get. If you haven't heard of him, you spend way too much time in the woods and even if that was the case, he would probably pass you at one time or another. In his lifetime, he has run over 100 race starts and it is probably even more than that by now. His cumulative mileage exceeds 70,000 miles. He has served as a race director of the well-known Mountain Masochist 50 Mile Trail Race. In between all of that, he has received a doctorate in education. So, David, I want to welcome you aboard. This is a really special treat.

David Horton: Well, thank you, Kevin. I like to talk about running as you might well guess.

Kevin: [laughter] That's exactly what we are going to talk about. By the way I don't want to waste any more time so I want to get right into it. You've run from Mexico to Canada, from Georgia to Maine, from the Pacific to the Atlantic. What the heck makes you do it?

David: [laughter] That's a good question. Sometimes I wonder too. Just like everyone sometimes wonders why they do certain things. But it's a variety of reasons. I will try to give it to you as concise as possible but basically because I can, because I am relatively good at it. People like to do things that they can do good at. I found that I can do relatively well at very, very long things. So that's sort of a short answer. A little bit more about it is, I once read a book about a fictitious account of someone running across America.

Kevin: OK. What was the name of it?

David: It's called "Flannegan's Run."

Kevin: OK.

David: I read that in the early '80s, maybe '81, '82. Finally, ran across America in 1995 in a race and I thought it would be cool. It wasn't cool. It wasn't fun. It was

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extremely hard but I thought it would be cool to run from one coast to the other coast. It was to a certain extent. I just wanted to see it and then I did the Appalachian Trail and I did that because I wanted to see all of the trail. I was always running on the Trail and seeing these hikers. I thought I want to see it all.

Kevin: Sure.

David: And so I did the Trail and I set the record at the time. Then I did the Pacific Crest Trail in 2005. The reason why I did that was the same thing. I wanted to see all of the Trail and I thought well while I am at it I ought to try to set the record.

Kevin: Sure.

David: Basically, I love running long distances and I especially love running long distances in the mountains and on trails. I love seeing animals, vistas. You know it is just so special to be out there.

Kevin: Sure. Now I've read "2000 Leagues Under the Sea" and that doesn't make me want to go underneath the sea. [laugh] So how did it come from was it Flannigan's Wake?

David: Flannigan's Run.

Kevin: How did it develop from Flannigan's Run to running across the country. That's a pretty big step.

David: I know that's a pretty good leap from reading. Well, everything starts with a thought. Everything starts with an idea. You think about something and so that's the start. Then I thought well other people have done it. Well if other people can do it, I could do it.

Kevin: Right.

David: I know the first thing I did was the Appalachian Trail in 1991. I remember going to Springer Mountain thinking that day it was exciting until it got close and then that day going down there that was scary. I caught the train to Georgia at midnight. "Midnight Train to Georgia", that should be the song after that.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: And on the way to the train track there was a sign on the church that I passed by, my wife was driving and it said, "Do you know which way you are going?"

Kevin: [laughter]

David: And I thought ho, ho, ho, how profound that is. So as I am driving, riding to Georgia I am thinking what am I getting myself into? I remember signing in the

register on the top of Springer Mountain thinking, there is no way I can run from here to Maine, here to Keta in 2100 plus miles. This is stupid. This is idiotic.

Kevin: Right.

David: But, I told people I was going to so I had to at least start. So doing the AT for the first big thing and you never know you can do something until you do something.

Kevin: Right.

David: Thereafter I thought I if I did that I could run across America and then after that I can do the PCT. Even when I did the PCT in summer 2005 at the time, I thought, "Can I really do this? I am 55 now."

Kevin: Right.

David: When I did the other things I was 41 and 45. This is ten years later. Can I still do this? I thought well, maybe I can. So it is sort of, you open your mouth and state a goal and then you have to back it up.

Kevin: Right. Is it just starting? Is that your philosophy about it? Is that what gets you up every morning?

David: Yes, it is. Actually, you know people say how in the world do you have the discipline to get up every single day and never sleep in? I said well it really wasn't a discipline it was, I tell people sometime, it was like coming into the room and you turn on the light switch and the light comes on automatically. It doesn't think do I want to come on or do I not. do I feel like I need to stay off longer or should I come on. It is just automatic. My alarm goes off in the morning I automatically get up. I never overslept on the PCT. I overslept one day for a few minutes on the AT and overslept one day on the Transamerica race. It is not that I was disciplined; I was focused. You think about this. I think about the analogy of soldiers going to war. I think one of the most horrific things in world is going to war and waking up each morning and go fighting and shooting someone else. How in the world do you do that? You just do it. So a certain extent that's the way I was. It wasn't a choice. Once I got involved in it let's go.

Kevin: One of the neat things, we actually got a chance to see you run the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada in the movie "The Runner." Tell me a little but about being filmed while you were running. Was that extra motivation for you? Was that a surreal sort of experience? Tell us about it that. That was really cool.

David: JB Benna who was a film producer from Hollywood had contacted me. He was making a series of DVDs about the PCT and the trail and nature and stuff and he contacted me. He said I would like to include you in my project. Do you mind if I come to film you, and interview you. I said that's fine. Initially

throughout the time as I did it he was planning on me being a part of his bigger DVD and after I finished he said hey, I would like to make a DVD just about you and this.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: He said, "Would you like to do that?" I said "Sure." I would like for people to see me doing the trail as me in real life and he just did a marvelous job at producing the runner DVD. It's just outstanding of course all the interviews he had with my wife and my daughter and the people who crewed me, that was just really special and I watched that no tell how many times. I get chills every time I watch it. In terms of doing it he helped me in certain places with access and with supplies, but in terms of him filming me, yes, it was a little more accountability.

Kevin: Sure.

David: I was accountable to him and to the people see the DVD but I feel blessed that he documented me in a very good fashion.

Kevin: Yeah it was absolutely awesome. I am probably one of the only guys besides a bunch of the runners who chose to watch that on Saturday other than the Jets game.

David: That's funny.

Kevin: Now you are out on the trail all the time.

David: Yeah.

Kevin: In that film, there was a pretty hairy moment when you had to cross the river that was overflowing.

David: Yes, Evolution Creek.

Kevin: Evolution Creek. Was that one of the most thrilling and dangerous moments.

You have ever had or are there other ones?

David: Oh, yes. It was probably the closest that I have ever come to dying in my life.

Kevin: Yes.

David: We didn't know that the water was going to be so deep. We didn't know it was going to be so swift and I didn't know that 100 yards or so down the trail there was a horrific waterfall.

Kevin: Yes.

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David: It sort of knocked both of us off our feet for a few seconds and if we hadn't got back in touch with the bottom of the stream we would have both been washed down the stream, washed over the waterfall and died. In fact, there were six people who died in the summer of 2005 crossing that stream.

Kevin: No kidding.

David: I feel very fortunate that we made it across alive.

Kevin: Wow.

David: It was extremely hairy, extremely scary and just extremely difficult thing to do.

Kevin: Wow. Well, maybe on a lighter note, what are some of the best times you've had?

David: What were some of the best times I've had? Oh, the state of Oregon, the state of Washington, coming up on Crater Lake in Oregon, the deepest lake in America. There is no water that flows in. No water that flows out. There is a volcano that has erupted. You've got this big place over 1800 feet deep. Seeing the sunrise, seeing the blue water. That was a special time. There were so many beautiful places especially up in Washington going past Mount Hood and Adam, Bell Adams and Rainier Peak and Glacier Peak. Oh, it was spectacular and then of course seeing the post at the end of the trail knowing that you came from Mexico 2650 miles later you are here at the border with Canada. That was really, really special. I really enjoyed Oregon and Washington. California was tough, a tough state for me. A tough state is 1694 miles.

[laughter]

David: One state...

Kevin: Oh man. Let's move on to your running philosophy. I know you teach running.

David: Yes.

Kevin: Why don't you tell us a little bit about how you teach.

David: It's simple but complicated, stupid but nothing. How in the world do you teach that?

Basically, I try to teach the love of running.

Kevin: The love of running, not necessarily the fundamentals of it.

David: No, no. In fact in my class I've had students come to my races and other people will quiz them about: Did he teach you about formal training? Did he teach you about animal training? Did you do any of that? Did he teach you about pacing? No, we just ran all over the place. It was crazy. It was just fun. Basically with my running classes is to teach them love and joy of running. Then again the things that relate from running to life with respect to when you don't feel like it, when the weather is bad, when it snows and when you fall, when you get bloody, when you get good blood, that's just a part of it. That's part of life. I really try to teach the love and joy of running and my objectives is for them to become runners, not necessarily racers but runners for life. I tell them most of my running is fun. Most of the time I have fun. Some of the time I don't. Some of the time I hurt. Some of the time I suffer and I will continue to hurt and suffer but the enjoyment and reward of it, that's what I try to get across to them.

Kevin: I am a personal trainer in my own industry and when people come to me and say, "I hate to run." How can you take someone who says, "I hate to run" and teach them to make it enjoyable?

David: Again what I do, I always ask the students again in class why did you take this class? Why did you take this class? Why did you take this class? Sometimes they say for requirement or because I like running. But I would say a third of the people who take my class, the reason they take it is they say, "I want to learn to love and enjoy running and I heard your class is fun. I am just hoping I will learn to love and enjoy it" because if they don't do it, then they will never do it the rest of their life or stick with it. How do we do that? We run uphill, downhill, through briars. We have mud fights. We have water fights. We run through classrooms. We run, crawl through tunnels. We just go anywhere and everywhere and I go with them.

Kevin: [laughter] How far do you run?

David: We run anywhere from three to, [cough] excuse me, six or seven miles and occasionally I will have a night run.

Kevin: OK with headlamps and everything?

David: Yes with headlamps and climb mountains. We run on trails. That's the other thing too. We run on trails. So we walk, run, walk, run. I try to keep everyone together as much as possible and try to make it fun, try to make it enjoyable. If I notice a lot of the class walking around and saying I'm tired. I got to slow down. I got to walk some. I'm not tired. I don't need to walk but I consider the entire class and a lot of them become runners. Then some of them don't but it's amazing the turn around in lives. I tell my students when you take this running class you could possibly learn more from this class that apply to life than any class you will ever take possibly. Also this class could change your life. It could change your life if you become a runner. A runner is someone who does it on a regular basis. They don't necessarily race. They are not necessarily fast. They plan, and I hate to say this, to a certain extent they plan their life around running.

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Kevin: Yeah. That's fantastic.

David: Yeah.

Kevin: So if you are out there running with these students. Are you giving them tips or pointers or you do just?

David: Oh yes.

Kevin: What kind of tips and pointers?

David: I make them most student say when I say requirements for class, they say We have to do all this for one hour? I said yes we can make it three hour class and have to pay more get more or make it a one hour class you have to pay less but you get more. What do I make them do? I have a beginning running class and an advance running class. Beginning running class I have them do twenty articles about running clothes, shoes, gels, drinks, mental strategies, training. They have to do a book report. They have to run a race. They have to help with a race. They have to help a runner or a walker with their exercise program and then at the end of class they have to do a five-mile run on the track. With the advance class they have to do one day of trail work at the end of class a ten mile mountain run 2000 feet back up and turn around and come back down that mountain 2000 feet. They also have to do three book reports. Of course, the three book reports have to be on running.

Kevin: Which one is a good one or are you giving away the trade secrets?

David: There are lots of good ones. "Chasing the Hulk."

Kevin: Yep.

David: George Seehan's Dad. "Running Through the Wall. The book that Neal Jamison has is a great book. Jim Ryan's book "Quest for Gold" is a good book. Basically I have them approve it through me. There are some books out there that are good and some that are real good. Occasionally I will have them read "Into Thin Air" or something like that too.

Kevin: Yeah, that's Krakauer right?

David: Yes.

Kevin: Now do you make them read your book? No a lot of them do. I almost feel that is unethical to make them read my book I think it is a good book I think you will enjoy it especially from the stand point that here you will read about me. You will see what I went through. You will see that I suffered. No I don't make them read my book but probably half the class does.

Kevin: So you said there are some tips and tricks about shoes and gels what would you say are maybe the five most important, pressing things that every trail runner should know in terms of equipment or in terms of preparation?

David: OK. Well.

Kevin: That's a big question.

David: Yes it is. The key thing with regard to everything is consistency,

Kevin: OK.

David: Consistently training and consistently doing it on a regular basis. Associating yourself with people who do it on a regular basis, so you have accountability. So you have someone to run with. So you have more fun with it. Getting shoes that are big enough. Replacing shoes on a regular basis every 3, 4, 500 miles. Some people can wear it a little longer. Some people a little less but make sure they are big enough.

Kevin: How do you track how many miles you have on your shoes?

David: By the look and feel.

Kevin: OK.

David: If you ever notice any kind of ache or pain that is not common consider changing shoes.

Kevin: OK.

David: Look at the treadware, know what full treadware is and reduced whether it is. Seeing if it is pronating in excessively. Just by look and feel of the shoes. I don't keep exact track of the miles but my guess, I go through eight or nine pair a year. I run 32, 3300 miles a year I have been over 3000 miles a year. The last time I didn't break 3000 was 1979.

Kevin: Wow.

David: So it is consistency is so important. It is more important than anything else. Making it fun most of the time. Picking goals. Picking races that you are going to train for. Picking a race that you are going to travel to. A unique race. A unique race really is motivating. I just love running new places especially in mountains and seeing new trails. So thinking about picking goals and hanging out with people who are going to do things like that.

Kevin: Sure.

David: And finding a good running partner. Finding a good running partner is probably one of the most difficult things in the world.

Kevin: What are some of the qualities of a good running partner?

David: Someone with similar interests.

Kevin: Do you have to like them?

David: Yes.

Kevin: OK. [laughs]

David: You have to like them. Someone that you don't like, or irritates you - that just can't last a long time. You have to have similar interests, similar desires in terms of what races you're going to run, the distance you're going to run, how much training you're going to do, someone you can stay with, confidence.

Kevin: Sure.

David: Someone you can ask questions to, that if you're feeling bad they won't put you down, or vice versa. One of the major problems that people do or make is, that they run with people who are trying to prove something - I'm better than you, I'm going to make you hurt, or you're feeling bad? - OK, I'm going to run off and leave you.

Kevin: Gotcha.

David: This ego thing. There needs to be some hard work occasionally, but it needs to be comparable, needs to be understanding. I've had maybe six or seven real good training partners in my life, and you shouldn't ever take a good training partner for granted, because the accountability thing is huge and it's the sharing and the friendship is such a huge thing.

Kevin: Sure, sure. Why don't you tell us a little bit about prerace routine, or something that you do.

David: Prerace routine, basically the biggest statement would be, "try not to do anything major - majorly different." In other words, consistency, try to...

Kevin: Something you should know.

David: What?

Kevin: Something you should know.

David: Should know what?

Kevin: You should know how your body reacts to certain things.

David: Yeah. I tell people to try to make sure they get plenty of sleep the two or three nights before the race - two or three nights in a row.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: The night before the race I say, "Forget about it, you probably won't sleep very well." Try to have things in order in your life. If you want to do something big, something tough, you want to try not to be at odds with other people and have a lot of other things you're thinking about. You need to be concentrating on that event. You also, I think you need to, you can only really I think, get up really high, and race really well, maybe once or twice a year. So I think of a early spring-summer race, then a late fall race. You can run other events, but you can't race them. You can only race so much. You can only give your very, very best, only a few times. But prerace, I just try to eat normal, try not to eat too much. If you eat too much you can you know get stopped up, or you can have diarrhea.

Kevin: Sure.

David: Either one of those is bad. When race morning comes around I start trying to drink lots and lots of water to get as hydrated as I can before I start. I try not to get hung-up on a specific pair of socks, or shorts, or top...

Kevin: And why is that?

David: Well, that's just weakness - "Oh I don't have my purple sock, where's my purple socks, and I just don't have my purple socks there's no way I can run as well this morning."

Kevin: [laughs]

David: Or, "I just had 15 minutes to warm-up and normally I need 16 minutes. Oh, I'm going to do horrible today, because I had just one minute less than normal."

Kevin: Right.

David: You know that it's always going to be tough. Every race where you're racing is tough, whether it's a 5k or a 100-mile race, there's going to be periods of time when it's tough. What I tell people to do is, "Think about the fact that when you're suffering, or it's hard that I always think of this statement - there's two shell paths, sooner or later it will pass, sooner or later it will be over with."

Kevin: Yeah, wow. Now do you race now as well, or have you just kind of...

David: Oh, I race now. My last race was two weeks ago. I ran a JFK 50. They had a 1000 finishers and I finished 67th, out of 1000 finishers.

Kevin: Wow.

David: My age is 56 now - was I pleased with that? Yes and no. I ran as hard as I could, I did the very best I could, I'd like for a whole lot less than 66 people to beat me.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: But then again, I beat 932 people.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: But, oh yeah I still race. I almost have my schedule planned out for next year, in terms of what I'm going to do. That's the other thing - plan. Plan when you're going to train, plan when you're going to race, plan when you're going to have an active rest. I think it's very very important in terms of active rest. There needs to be a period of 4-8 weeks twice a year, where you just run, and you don't worry about your time, or distance, or pace, you just run, so you're getting a physical break, as well as a mental break.

Kevin: Gotcha. Now how about someone who wants to go from - say they're running 10 miles, and they want to go to a trail marathon, or someone who wants to go from even a trail marathon to a 50 miler. Is there a same type of protocol, or same type of running system they should go through, do you believe, or maybe the...

David: The most important training principle of all is, "specificity."

Kevin: OK.

David: Specificity - you want to train as you're going to race. You want to train on similar training as you're going to race. You want to incorporate as much as you can in training, out of the things that you're going to do in the race. So it's very important to - if you're going to be running on roads, train on roads. When I ran across America, for two months I didn't run on any trails, all I did was run on roads. I averaged 160 miles a week for two months.

Kevin: Wow!

David: Then once that was over with, I went back to trails. So if I'm going to be doing steep, steep trails, I'll train on steep, steep trails.

Kevin: Right.

David: If I'm training for a 50-mile race and under, I'll incorporate more speed, maybe a little less distance. If I'm training for a race 100 miles or longer, I'll train even now, I'll still train you know, 90 to 110 or 120 miles a week.

Kevin: OK.

David: But if I'm training for a 50 mile race and under, I'll train 70, 80, 90 miles a week.

Kevin: OK.

David: So train specifically for what you're going to do.

Kevin: So that's not much different from a 50 miler to 100 mile per week?

David: Nope, nope, nope, not that much difference, just longer training runs.

Kevin: OK, and what's the difference in the race? I mean it's double...

David: Monumental.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: A 100 mile versus 50 miles. In fact, of all the things I do, the hardest thing in a way to do are 100 mile races.

Kevin: OK.

David: 50-mile races are not too bad, and malty days are not too bad, unless you're doing PCTs bad.

Kevin: Sure.

David: But what's really bad is 100 mile races, because you have to eat and drink, and you're still going at a pretty good intensity, and again, the higher the intensity the greater reduction of blood flow of the stomach, the greater difficulty it is to absorb things, to eat things, to digest things. The slower you go, the easier it is, so 100-mile races are always so tough. It's twice the distance of a 50 mile race - in terms of difficulty, it's about 3-4 times as hard as a 50 mile race.

Kevin: Wow, and what can you eat at a 100-mile race?

David: Well, I eat a lot of Clif Shots, sometimes Ensure Plus, in terms of real solid food - not too much.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: Not too much - soup, a variety of types is really, really good to. You have to think about digestion, and that can be a real problem.

Kevin: Yeah, and what about a 50, do you eat during a 50?

David: 50, mainly again gels and replacement drinks, not much of anything else. Maybe a few potato chips just to get a little salt in, but nothing much else.

Kevin: Wow. So you completed your first alta in 1979, right?

David: Yes.

Kevin: OK, now tell me how the sport has developed since then, and how it's changed?

David: Oh, it's changed dramatically. The big difference is, in terms of respect.

Kevin: OK.

David: It used to be viewed as weird, idiotic, far far-out, and not a real sport.

Kevin: Right.

David: This is what you do when you get old, and you can't do anything else, you run altas. So the average age used to be you know in mid 40's, 42, 43, 44, people running altas. I don't know what the average age is now, but I guarantee it's much, much less. I know in one of our races that I directed this past spring - Holiday Lake, the average age of the top 10 runners that finished was 23 years of age.

Kevin: Really?

David: Of course maybe my running class had a little to do with that, but still overall, it's more and more younger runners are running now than they used to be, and it's a respected sport now compared to what it used to be. It used to be thought of as, "That's weird, that's strange." I'll never forget one year, many years ago, I ran my first 100-mile race, and there were horses in it, and I beat nearly all the horses, and they ran a front-page article in our newspaper - front page! I finished 10th and beat like I said most of the horses, big article, big picture, lots of information. The next year I went there and ran the race, and finished second, and called them and said, "Hey, I ran this race, I thought you might want to do a little report." "Oh, we did a report last year." Well in other words, it was unique and weird the first year, but the next year they put a little tiny paragraph when I finished second, the previous year I finished 10th. But that's changed now, there's still more respected ability with respect to doing altas now. It's an accepted thing, it's not such a weird thing for young runners to do it either.

Kevin: Right. I think one of the coolest things about it is that the numbers have grown.

David: Oh gosh, yes.

Kevin: I mean there are particularly more people, correct?

David: Yep, it sure has.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: It sure has, and it's going to continue to grow, especially the... The big, big change, when I was involved in ultras in the early 80's, it was nearly all road races, and just a few trail races.

Kevin: Right.

David: Now ultras, it's almost the exact opposite. Nearly all trail races and very few road races.

Kevin: Right, right. There was a bunch of guys that used run on the roads, Stu Mittleman, and a few other guys you'd see on the roads.

David: Yes.

Kevin: And its trail, trail, trail for the ultras.

David: Yes it is.

Kevin: It doesn't seem to be...

David: Well it's the runner against the mountains and the course. It's not the runner against the other runner. When you're on roads, it's the runner against the other runner. Plus you see the scenery better, and it's just more enjoyable and mentally it's more refreshing. Running across America we averaged 45 miles a day for 64 days.

Kevin: On pavement?

David: On pavement. It took me two years to recover from that. I did the AT and three months I won a hundred mile race.

Kevin: Wow.

David: Now the PCT it took me 13 months to recover from that. My knees were sore for that length of time. But now I feel completely recovered.

Kevin: What do you do for your knees?

David: Nothing.

Kevin: Nothing?

David: Nothing, it's just general localized soreness. I take glucosamine chondroitin, I'm not sure if that really helps. It just takes time. I do very little running on pavement. Pavement is so hard on your body; it's so much more difficult. You just take a pounding.

Kevin: Mm hmm. Wow. What do you suggest for someone who's listening to this call, and they want to be better, faster, or just enjoy it more. What's one or two things that you can just say to them right now?

David: Enjoy it more, do it for lifetime. It's sort of like an ultra, its not how fast you run at the start, it's how fast you run the second half. Running should be viewed as a lifelong - lifetime sport. I want to be running when I get to be old. Some people say, "Well you are old now!" I say, "Come on!"

Kevin: [laughter]

David: Someone once said, "Old is five or ten years older than your present age."

Kevin: Ah ha.

David: And I think that's probably true. But when I'm 70, when I'm 80, when I'm 90, if I live to be that long, then I want to be running! I want them to be saying, "You know, look at that old man there, that sucker can run, can still move!"

I think that's it. View it as a lifelong thing, so that means that you don't need to push, push, push all the time. You need to enjoy it as much as you can. It doesn't need to be this excruciating all the time. I think that's one of the worst problems with high school cross country running and college cross country running, is they run so hard, so much fast stuff and they achieve a lot that way.

Kevin: Sure.

David: And then they burn out. Don't burn out. Take a break, do something else. Cycle for a while, or run someplace different, run shorter. Just do it for a lifetime and try to enjoy it. I've never heard someone say, "I'm glad I stopped running."

Kevin: Yeah.

David: I've never heard someone say, "I'm glad that I don't exercise anymore."

Kevin: [laughter]

David: It's just unheard of statements. So how can you keep doing it? Well you got to take care of your body. You hear the old adage; take care of your body. Well if you're racing, sometimes you have to ignore what it says.

Kevin: OK.

David: But at what cost?

Kevin: That's pretty important right there.

David: At what costs do you ignore what your body is saying? You have to pay attention to it sometimes. I know that, and sometimes I know I'm a running addict, to a certain extent. I do it for my body, but for anything else I do it for my mine. I just don't feel right if I don't it. But you have to know when to back off and when

to run easy. I, a lot of times, don't like people to run with me unless they're one of my running buddies. The reason is they want to prove that they can run, they want to push me too fast, they want to run faster than I want to run.

Kevin: OK.

David: I run fast sometimes, but most of the times I just run recreationally.

Kevin: What do you think your pace is when you run for recreation?

David: Well I can't tell you because it is in the mountains.

Kevin: Yeah.

David: I say on an average training run in the mountains I average five miles an hour. That's a 12 minute mile. Well that can be impressive or not impressive.

Kevin: That's a nice pace... [laughter]...for me.

David: Well if it's really tough stuff, really, really tough stuff, I average four miles an hour.

Kevin: Sure.

David: 15-minute mile, you tell someone who's never run on trails they think, "Oh I can do that." Yeah you can do that on a flat treadmill, you won't do that in the mountains. It's sort of like Satchel Paige, he was a great black baseball pitcher. Then when they integrated the leagues he pitched in his 50's in the major leagues. He made a statement, he said "When I works, I works and when I plays, I plays." The gist of it - work hard, play hard. I work hard, I play hard, I love to laugh; I love to have fun. But I also pay my dues sometimes too.

Kevin: Absolutely. So you're a goal setter, so when you're 90 what are you going to do?

David: Well, I'd like to be the first 100 year old to run a marathon. But someone's going to beat me to it!

Kevin: [laughter]

David: OK, so I'd like to be the first 100 year old that will run a ultra, well someone's going to beat me to it!

Kevin: [laughter]

David: So what is my goal? Well this is what I tell my students all the time, and at first it's going to sound like such a weird goal, but this is a goal that every runner should have. On the day I die, I hope I had a good run that morning.

Kevin: All right.

David: If you had a good run that morning, whatever it was, you know maybe it's a 15 minute mile for three miles, if you had a good run that morning that means on the day you die you still have a good quality of life!

Kevin: [laughter]

David: That's what's important. It's not how long you live; it's the quality of life that you have for however long you live.

Kevin: Wow, this is more than a lesson in running. Let me tell you.

David: Yes. Let me tell you, at JFK I met two guys, one of them I knew there, he's the oldest finisher ever at JFK.

Kevin: How old?

David: When he finished it he was 80 years old.

Kevin: Wow!

David: And now he's 91. I said, "Hey how's your running going?" He said "I'm doing two or three miles a day on the towpath." He said, "I'm getting slow but I'm still doing it."

And then I met another guy that's ran the third most marathons, and I said, "How old are you" and I looked at him I thought, "Ah, he's about 60." He said 86. I said, "What! 86?" I said, "You're kidding, you're not 86!" He said, "Well I was born in 1920, and last weekend I had my 86th birthday" and I said, "I bet you've not done many lately." And he said "Since I've turned 80 I've don't 145 marathons."

Kevin: 145!

David: That's 24 a year!

Kevin: Wow!

David: That's almost one every other week since he turned 80! These should be types of people that are heroes to everyone else. People like that.

Kevin: Oh my.

David: People like that. So anyway, your goal should be to have a good run the day you die.

Kevin: Huh. Wow.

David: So that way you weren't in a rest home, you weren't in a nursing home; someone wasn't cleaning you up and feeding you.

Kevin: There you go.

David: The scariest thing I think for a runner is loss of quality of life. It's not loss of speed, which I have lost speed. I am not near as fast as I used to be. When I was younger I ran 50 miles in 5:44 on the road, whereas now I could probably do 6:44.

Kevin: Right.

David: An hour slower. But I can still move!

Kevin: Yeah [laughter] I'm still walking, still getting up!

David: Yes!

Kevin: So you have your book, "Quest for Adventure."

David: Yes.

Kevin: And that is about?

David: That's my story on the Appalachian Trail and my Transamerica run.

Kevin: Right. And where can someone find it?

David: You can find that on extremeultrarunnings.com.

Kevin: Extreme...

David: Its extremeultrarunnings.com.

Kevin: OK. The other is, "The Runner."

David: "The Runner," the DVD, you can find that on therunnermovie.com. They show a trailer on there, therunnermovie.com, you can find a trailer about the DVD about me doing the TCT.

Kevin: A testimonial for "The Runner," I mean, I watch this thing all the time.

[laughter]

I absolutely love it, its just such a fantastic snapshot of...

David: Yes.

Kevin: If you call it... It is a snapshot, it's only about an hour an a half, and it took you 62 days?

David: 66 days, seven hours and 16 minutes.

Kevin: Yeah, so...

David: Not that anyone's counting.

Kevin: [laughter] Not that anyone's counting. I just want to tell everyone who didn't get to hear before when I first called David, he actually told me I was about a minute and 17 seconds early, so definitely a guy who's always on the money when it comes to time...

David: Yes.

Kevin: ...and regiment. So OK, David this has just been awesome.

David: Well thank you, I've enjoyed it.

Kevin: You've just given us some fantastic information. I absolutely wish you the best, and I'm sure we'll be in touch.

That's it for today. But if you happen to be listening to this interview and just this one, and you haven't heard the other four, I want you to go on over to trailrunningsecrets.com and download the other four for free. Because these are just awesome interviews, I've got some of the best trail runners in the world talking about their dirty little secrets. So I want you to get on over there and use this information to go out and have that quality of life, and like as David said, and really get out there and enjoy what you're doing. I think that's the most important thing. So David Horton, thank you so much for being on the call.

David: Thank you Kevin.

Kevin: And we'll be in touch.

David: OK.

Kevin: Take care.

David: Thank you. Bye.