**Transcription Details**

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**Transcription Results**

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

So hey, my name is Latoya Shauntay Snell. I'm an ultra-runner, former culinarian, multi-sport athlete, baby powerlifter, writer, content creator, Mom, wife, friend, potty-mouth expert. Did I miss a role? Anyway, all these roles have something in common. Storytelling. And as a storyteller, that's what I've planned to do. My way, of course, welcome to the Running Fat Chef Podcast.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

The Running Fat Podcast is primarily powered by you. Yes, you. Consider buying us a cup of coffee, maybe some dope ingredients for my next creative meal, or show a girl some love by visiting ko-fi.com. That's k-fi.com/runningfatchef. Bonus for y'all. Are you a business owner, entrepreneur, or have a service that you like to promote? Well, honey, why not here? Sponsoring episodes here on the Running Fat Chef Podcast. Check out the show notes for more details.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

On the running fast chef podcast, I want to capture all voices. And this includes ordinary people doing extraordinary things because this platform is not just for people who are guruible if that's actually a real word. But this is for everyone. You know, we speak so much about inclusivity in this space, and only but a certain amount of people are actually shown. Sometimes we see people like me who happened to lock up or accidentally kind of get a little bit of fame for about five minutes. And then you think it's only five minutes, and it turns into like 15, 20, 25 minutes, or maybe a couple of years in this space, and you realize that you're being captured because you fit into a certain box, a neat box. You know, for me, I know that a huge part of my story of being captured is being plus size in this space, being black in this space, being queer, and speaking up in this space, being an athlete with disabilities in this space. But sometimes I feel like certain communities are looked over, I feel like certain conversations are not hurt until something happens until some type of spark or some type of demand or a call to action happens in this space. So, if you're an athlete, you're definitely putting in some extraordinary work. Why are we not capturing these stories? Why are we not getting the stories from the everyday person, the person who is mostly paying for these race entries and these fees? The people who are in the middle of the pack, in the back of the pack. The back of the pack are heavy hitters, and paying for these race day fees, trying to get into the race trying to put out their best performance ever. And it doesn't matter what discipline they take up, whether they're in running during cycling, whether they are swimmers or powerlifters, pole the dancers. We deserve to actually get some attention too. And it shouldn't take for a story like mine. Not calling myself out here. It shouldn't take for a story like mine, to get attention for you to be heckled at a marathon or tragically killed. And then having a community ask for you to speak up. And now you're being placed in front of a camera having shoved in your face and expected to perform. There's a lot of pressure. I can say that from a personal standpoint. And I know too many people who are able to say, me too. So, with that being said, through social media, we are fortunate enough to be connected now more than ever from across the globe at a rapid rate. I've been fortunate enough to know today's guests through a number of years through a previous ambassadorship that unfortunately, parted ways. So, Chicago native Darrietta Lee is a multi-sport African American Muslim athlete that can rock out the pavement mows just as much as she lives. She's an amazing mother and incredible and necessary force in the fitness space and she can rock out a makeup look like nobody's business. Now, her fashion is on point but baby if you have not heard a viewpoints I suggest you to go over to her Instagram page or Facebook page and really check it out. Her vibrant nature and unapologetic stances on the Black Lives Matter movement, being black and a Muslim woman in the fitness and wellness space is nothing short of powerful. Women like Darrietta make the world go round. And she's not going to be silenced and I don't think that she should be either. It's my absolute pleasure to introduce you Darrietta to the Running Fat Chef Podcast. Thank you so much, girl.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. So excited to be here.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Yes, girl. I have not seen you since Cleveland.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Right? 2019 Yeah. In Cleveland.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Damn, I feel like every guest that I've interviewed on this podcast, I think that if I've met them in person, everybody stop. It's 2019. It's just like, I haven't seen you since 2019. I'm like, yeah, the rest of the world ain't seen each other since 2019. Personally, I have... this is considered my passion project, creating this podcast. Because I feel like there are certain voices that are uplifted, and there's certain voices that's just like, okay, you got to take a backseat. And the further down that you are part of subsections of being a part of a marginalized community, the less that your voice is actually elevated. The less that people are like, I'm inclined to listen to this story. They're more or less like, I can't relate. So, I'm not sure if I actually want to hear or entertain the story. Oh, this story makes me uncomfortable, because this is not my reality. And oftentimes, we tend to wait until something happens, something pops off. Particularly last year COVID-19 happened, it shut down racists. Then a couple months later, we get stories like Ahmad Auberry. And it takes center attention. And we have to essentially bully magazines and publications to actually amplify this conversation to say, this is not the first time that this happened. This is just one of the national stories that's actually getting picked up. And oftentimes, we find brands, or we find mainstream media, picking up our stories, and as soon as they feel like it's convenient, it's tapered down. They don't give us any type of attention anymore. Exactly. Our communities that are oftentimes emulated, admire from afar, appropriated, and abandoned.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Those set of adjectives, absolutely. Exactly.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It's hard. You know, it's hard.

**Darrietta Lee:**

In that order.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Right. It's hard. In some ways, I think we've all been speaking about ally ship for the last year. That's the word of the day, the word of the year. Let's talk about ally ship. In ways, I feel like, we are all allies to someone. To some other community, we are allies. And I think about the fitness and wellness space, and I keep hearing fitness is fitness for everyone, running is for everyone, all you have to do is put on your shoes. And we're gonna call a spade a spade, it's bullshit. It's bullshit. They say that it's inclusive. It's not inclusive. If you can run into an area and not be guaranteed to go home. And then have your story weaponized and say, well, why was this person running through here without them actually mentioning race, but we know that it's being hinted. It's not inclusive? Historically, when we think about the fitness space, it didn't start embracing women in sports until a little bit over a half-century ago. They always talk about Kathrine. She broke into the Boston Marathon. And then you hear about the stories of ultra-running. Then you think about things later down the line, powerlifting. I mean, first thing that they would tell a women if you did any type of showcase of showing your muscles, you're trying to look like a man, you're trying to be like a man. Everything is about the male gaze. If we take that into consideration, and we include layers, like being part of marginalized communities like we are talking about now, it's even less time behind that.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Exactly.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It's not that we don't know that black people are in sports. I mean, hell we've seen boxing.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Right.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Your favorite boxers might be black, your favorite basketball players are most likely black. Your football players are most likely black. But the thing is, is that they're mostly male. Add on the layer of being a black woman. We have to worry about being celebrated and being shadow on the way that we do to Serena Williams. What? It's hard. It's hard. So, that kind of like takes me down a line of this first question essentially. Navigating through the running scene is hard. And you've been very vocal about these stances. What's your take on a pretty much a movement that sometimes is like, it sounds great, and then sometimes it gets a bad rap. And I'm talking about the body-positive community when it comes in regards to the running versus the powerlifting world. How do you feel about that community? Do you think there's anything that we can actually do better?

**Darrietta Lee:**

Well, for starters with the running community, they've recently began this thing where they're creating clothes for larger sizes; they're finally doing that. I guess they realize that nobody is go down to a size eight, or six, so they're like; okay, let's create that space. So, they do that, and then when Ibtihaj did what she did for the Olympics, suddenly they had to create a space, so-called for the Muslim woman with the athletic hijab. But in my opinion, this is my opinion; not an extreme amount... not enough of thought was put into the product itself, to really, truly think about how that will fit all Muslim some women, how we can do different sports in it. Because I've worn some of those before, some of those branded and... no. It just feels like whatever works as a trend to keep the stock market up, to keep the money coming in, they go with that trend. So, if being overweight is the thing then they do that. And now... oh, my God; it's been Muslim women athletes running, swimming, iron man's for the longest, and it took someone to be in the Olympics and then win the Olympics... you got to really bust your to be seen and then it's like, oh, okay. No-no, it's Muslim women out here doing whatever... she had to go back on. And it's just... what needs to happen in the running world? The marginalized need to be what's ordinary or average. I get you have your ultramarathon where people are just clocking down 100 miles a week; I get it, that's that school. But it's more of us and less of them so, therefore, the audience... when you log into their account, you should see everyday people like you. If this is about getting everybody to move, if this is an inclusive thing, then the everybody is us and when I log in I should see you, I should see myself, I should see all types of ordinary people in sports because everybody is not this superman, she-hulk, never failed type of athlete. Everybody's not an elite athlete, everybody's not. They actually are the minority over who we are and that needs to be more exposed and not [unintelligible: 14:00] not that we be put into those spaces that parades when there's a moment of trash. We got our little thing going on last summer off the backs of the death of [unintelligible: 14:17] and then when that wave ended like I said, here we are 2021; is anybody talking about him? No an article written to remind? Is there a [unintelligible: 14:30] anything? Something... hello! But why did it take me, little ole me to make this announcement; yo, his birthday is coming up, let's do this. It's just unfortunate that we're still in the space of, it's about profit over making sure that the ordinary people are being seen. Power lifting, that's a different type of world. It's either they accept you for who you are or they don't. I was talking to a friend, I was asking her a thing or two; should I go with this organization or with this organization? And actually one of them was like, they're open to religious accommodation. So, if you got to dress certain way or do something, you can reach out to them. I'm like, okay, see, that's what I'm talking about. That's a form of being aware that not everybody is the same and that I can get into the space because for the longest that slowed down my idea of even wanting to compete because I'm like; well, what am I gonna wear that's acceptable? What's the rules for that? How does this work if it's a gender meet? It's just, I shouldn't have to feel that way. It should just be that I cake the drug test, I'm not drugged, I have nothing on me, let me just do this. And it's crazy because it's just, you either have to jump through hoops... for me, I either have to jump through hoops for a religious point, or I have to jump through hoops because I'm black or both. All of that is just a lot. The ally ship and we're with black lives matter, we're with you all; it's over. They don't talk about it, it's nothing... end the story. I pay attention to that train that they follow and then they just fall off. And then we wonder why, oh, it's a small minority of black people that are into certain sports? Because you're not putting us out there as [unintelligible: 16:50] that it’s enough of us doing it. You do have my [unintelligible: 16:54] you do have [unintelligible: 16:56] it is a lot of us out there and it's like, they completely ignore unless you're like cocky, or if you're not doing a six-minute mile and let's not even go there were slow runners.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

There's only 10 slots and if you can't make it there, good luck.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Exactly, if you're over 11 minutes you're nobody. It's crazy, those things need to be fixed. Honestly, those things that need be fixed and it's frustrating because this has been an issue the 2000's, ever since I got into running since 2013. Here we are, 2021, this is ridiculous.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I can't agree enough. I've got to actually see that firsthand from your perspective of what it was like, and I sat back and I was astonished. I'm pretty sure you know which way I'm going with this. Now, when we did the Cleveland marathon, and you did the half and I did the fall, and at that point, we didn't split until about the 12-mile points. There were certain parts of the race where people... It was around where you stood, it's terrible that we actually normalize how people will interact with us as a black woman, a black woman of size. If you don't look like you're a size four or six, people kind of treat you a little different, they cheer on you a little bit different. But for me, it was to nuance, the small nuances that separated the way that they celebrated me, versus the way they celebrate you. Now, that particular day, I believe it was hot as hell

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Mile one or two I was already sweaty, I'm like, this is not good and I have 11 more miles to go, right.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It was really hot that day.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It was very humid that day.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Yeah, and people started interacting with you weird, where we instantly picked up; oh, we're about to get these stupid line of questions. I don't wanna say stupid, I'll say very ignorant and close-minded questions about you wearing a hijab while running. And I at that point, if there was ever a point that I didn't feel like; oh, okay, I can be an ally... that was a moment where I felt like, I just wanted to take you away from that space so bad and I knew that there was nothing that I can really do about it. But it frustrated me to watch it because I'm so used to being targeted and other people will say that to me, and I'm like, uh, you know, it's okay, I'm used to it. It was so different to be there and to hear some of the commentary like; oh, wow, you can actually work out in that? It makes me question. How much does that happen? How many times have these questions actually come up when you're in the fitness space?

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I get that a lot and I think two reasons why I get that is; first is the lack of just even understanding what is the Muslim woman, why don't we cover, what that's about, the benefits of it? So, you have the ignorance with that but then it also doesn't help that even in more so the Black Muslim community, it's less of who I am. It's not a lot of us that are Black Muslim women that are athletes out here, it's just not a lot. I can maybe think right now that are consistent like me on social media and it's like; how many 1000s of sisters out there? So it's like, when they see me it's taboo, I'm from another planet; how are you even able to do this? I was questioned like this when we were out Colorado.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I remember that.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Yeah, and even after you got there, it was: oh, my God, I can't believe you were able to whoever. There was a nun that did the Cleveland race. Do you remember that?

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Yes.

**Darrietta Lee:**

She was wearing her [unintelligible: 21:45] and everything... nobody says nothing to her. I was intrigued to see her because I just don't see those type of women out there. But I wasn't like; oh my god, is she hot? But for me, it's like; oh, my oh, the oppressed Muslim woman is out here finally doing something, her husband must have let her out. It's; I can't believe her doing this, you are able to? And it's like, yeah, I'm able to. We've been able to. If you study more about Muslim women in the history of Islam, you would know that we have these spaces that we can take up. It's annoying because it's like they treat the hijab as though it got like a superpower thing... I'm carrying a cape. I remember when we did a training run.... this wasn't 2013, we did an 11-mile training run with Jeff Galloway's team that came here. It's 11 miles that we did, It was in the summer, I remember that worm, we got through the [unintelligible: 23:07]. When we got back to Fleet Beat shoe store, this lady came up to me and was like; oh my god, I just want to say that you are my motivation, I think you really inspire me because for you to just be able to do the 11 miles and wear a hijab, it's just like so much strength. I didn't know how to take that, was it a compliment, was he throwing shots? I just didn't know what that was, but I get that a lot. It's just rather than just see me, quit making like; oh my god, she's... I'm no more hotter than you. I always tell people that I'm not hotter than you. If it's humid, it's humid, we all sweat and it's just get distracted with what I'm wearing, just pay attention to the person and just who I am. It's a weird space that I deal with and I even know like with the [unintelligible: 24:09] of the thing when I finally compete. Plus I'm older, I'm an older athletes so that's just, even more, weirder because nobody my age, I don't think we'll be doing this. So it's like; oh, ah, you know... it's more like what my daughters say; people looking at you like an artifact in a museum. You’re an object of like, whoa... circus show versus just humanizing me. It turns to a circus show.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

And this sucks. I do kind of question when will brands actually pick up that it is much more than just the limitations of where they decided to stop. Because it's not like, people stop talking about it, it's the limitations of where they actually stop and we can't just limit this to brands? I question mainstream media.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Yes.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Not being captured when these companies’ questions of well, it doesn't seem like black and brown people are interested in sports? I had that, that was something that came in my inbox and I looked at the inbox like three or four times because someone mentioned it to me when they saw me swimming. They was like; aren't you concerned about your hair because I hear black people always complain about their hair. I'm like, honey, we got more things to worry about than just out here. How about the safety? How about the lack of access to do things in our own communities, or not showing up and then worrying about being the only and then being targeted because we are the only? We have much larger conversations and mores beyond the superficial things like our hair sometimes. Don't get me wrong, they're valid. I worry, I mean, I'm a woman with locks and then people oftentimes will think; oh, my gosh, is her braids going to get wet? And then that starts to make me annoyed because I'm saying to you four or five times these locks, then I have to get further questions like is that your real here? Why is it any of your damn business? And then people just like to say; well, sports is for everyone. It doesn't feel like that when we are in 2021, we have to ask does represent representations still matter, or does it only matter when the conversation takes it there? And then we have to worry if we're going to be gas lit online, particularly in the online space of; well, that's not what I see. Well, guess what honey? My perspective is that this is all I can see, that when I show up in the space I cannot just be an athlete, I have to be an athlete with descriptors, with prefixes. I have to be a black athlete, I have to be a black fat athlete, I have to be a black queer athlete, I have to be a black athlete with disabilities, I have to be a black athlete that has to jump over hoops to get white people's approval. And that hurts because it's not just something that I have to get approval from... and the thing is not even just from white people, sometimes within the community, the conversations go there where think about 2019 in comparison to 2020. 2019, I remember really starting to get some type of coverage in this space. You and I have talked about it because you've seen me at my rock bottom in this space while I was being celebrated I was also being trampled on. I was being targeted, where my home address was put up, my telephone was put up and the same ref, as people would write the vicious commentary, they would tell me in the same breath; shut up, you're just making it up. And I'm like, look, you're the one who's weaponizing this at this moment. To turn around from 2019, I'm told; shut up, stop it, you're an embarrassment to the sport. And then to know that the insult to injury was that some of this feedback came from the same marginalized communities that I'm a part of. That, yes, I'm a plus-size woman and I was an embarrassment to some of these people. I'm a black woman and I was an embarrassment to the black community according to... and sorry to throw my guys in the bus but my black men threw me under the bus more than anybody else, and it hurt way more than any of the racist comments that I was accustomed to getting because I kind of normalized it in my head that; well, sometimes I'm going walk into a community, and people see my skin and they're going weaponize it. But to have people say that she's limited in her vocabulary because she uses curse words; fuck that. Because when you are a woman and you express yourself, they call you emotional, they call you fragile. They tell you that you don't have control, they gas lighted it on your menstrual cycle. When you are a black woman in this space, and someone calls you problematic, you're out of a job. You are going to be looked at as the troublemaker and it took for 2020 to kick in for me to embrace the term troublemaker. I was like like you know what they call they call it a couple of people in history good trouble. We lost a good person that we called could trouble but look what it took for people to embrace me as good trouble. The same people who were just writing me off because I was signed up for 40 events and I only completed 35. And I say only with air quotes because 35 is a hell of a damn number... I know that.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Exactly.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

But if I let the comments section or the people who were bold enough to say that in my face, these people make me feel less than and I just know that if I felt like that from a public perspective, I can only imagine what someone who may not have a following like me to be reminded every five minutes that you are a great dynamic athlete, fuck the haters. If I didn't have a large platform like that, what does the average person think of when they want to be brave enough to share their story when they want to be vulnerable to be able to talk about the good, bad, and ugly? I talked about being dead fucking last and I talked about being pulled off of courses. I talked about what it is to sign up for a race that has a cut-off of 3:30 and I make it to the end at four hours, and I'm just like; oh, shit, there's no crowd. Or knowing that I actually made it to cut-offs but the signs are already gone, the people are already gone, they've already packed my bags. They lost my bag at the Chicago Marathon.

**Darrietta Lee:**

[Unintelligible: 31:30] a couple of those incidents [unintelligible: 31:35]

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I got horror stories and it just makes it that much harder for the average person to be able to openly talk about that. I did a blog near the end of 2019, I signed up for the New York Road Runner 60k and I think I named it somewhere along the lines and it might have come off as clickbait to some people. It was somewhere along the lines of The Art of DNFing. For anyone who's listening to this podcast, and don't know what DNF is, I'm going to take consideration that some people just listen in, you're not an athlete, or you don't identify as an athlete or you like, I'm not a runner. DNF means did not finish, that was the title. People, I can tell instantly from the comments and they weren't brave enough to go on my page, at this point they knew I just wasn't with the shits. But it was hard, because some of the people who were talking about me, were people who were on my friend list, and [unintelligible: 32:45] for other friends to write me and say; hey, um, did you write a blog about not finishing your race at the 60k. And I was like, yeah actually I did. And it's like; well, here's a thread, I think they might be talking about you but they're not using your name. And it was just hurtful because I was like, hold up, I ran with this person. I remember when this person just started. I remember when this person was pouring their heart out to me at an event telling me the words; you're inspiring. And to have that same person, go out there and talk about you in the comment section, and then actually go as far as to make a post on their own page, even though we're friends and decided to be shady, it was like this is beyond shade to me. I'm like, you just made a mockery out of me talking about something that was not easy to talk about just because I wrote it down, 1500 to 2000 words about The Art of DNFing. I felt like it was a valuable conversation because this is not the thing that you can google search as [crosstalk: 34:00]

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Exactly.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

And there are plenty of elite athletes out there who DNF all of the time for their careers. Because if you do not place top 10 then that means that you might be out of a sponsorship. We don't give them a hard time when they drop out. Well, oh, you know, they dropped out at mile 17, they weren't going make it to the top 10 so we understand. But when you see someone like me part of a marginalized community, I'm black, fat, and queer, and I'm a loudmouth, and I'm unapologetic about being a loudmouth, and I [crosstalk: 34:36] about the art of DNF thing. Oh my gosh, what crime did she commit? How dare you talk about that in this space when all we can talk about success? Let's talk about our dynamic race times. Let's talk about the beer that we had at the end. If I talk about a sandwich on my feed, not so much these days, but if I talked about it in 2019, the first thing I will be met with is; why don't you pull back on your food? I'm like, how much would you like me to pull back? Should I embark on the eating disorder that I was on when I took that type of advice? It's problematic.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It is.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It's problematic and it's so painful.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Did you know that your girl is selling merch? Yep, you damn Skippy I am. If you're looking for a dope crop top, a hoodie that can dilute the salt from all of your haters, or a mug that will make you feel just as good as your morning group. Check out runningfatchef.com. That's right, runningfatchef.com. Don't whisper it, baby. One more time, runningfatchef.com. Rep your favorite fit-back athlete gear today.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

The last thing that I really want to touch on is how do we actually celebrate joy in his face as people of marginalized communities? I think the last year, 2020 it was like all people want to hear and I don't have a pretty term for this... all people wanted to hear were our slave stories. Oh, man... hey, I just became friends with a black person so now I need you to teach me your ways. Tell me about your oppression. Please tell me. Educate me about your oppressions. Tell me all of your books. Put me in [unintelligible: 36:26] Put me in all of your DEI courses, I only know how to spell it now I need you to break it down for me because you are clearly an educator because you live in that black skin. How do we celebrate black people joy right now, now more than ever? Because the crime has to stop and the media attention is starting to taper down. We had a little bit of attention for probably about five seconds. They started celebrating the idea of the sentencing of... what's that the asshole that murdered...

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Derek Chauvin

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

There we go. They started celebrating this but as a black woman, I'm just not moved. It's just like, okay thanks for one thing.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It's good for the accountability but unless something's in legislation, unless there's a bill passed unless there's actual wall put into place, then there is no justice. There's been other deaths right after this sentencing.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

It was not even two hours.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

The same day, Ohio.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Right.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Then right back in Minneapolis. Then right here in North Carolina. Those are just the ones that get your attention. I forgot I heard about [unintelligible: 38:04] Tennessee where a 17-year-old boy was murdered in a bathroom. I didn't even know.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Wow.

**Darrietta Lee:**

This happened on April 12. Google it. Nobody talked about that but that's like major and it's crazy.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

And that's the reason why I'm just like when you hear all of that devastation, you hear the hardships of being in the space, whether you are in the fitness space, in the wellness space, or just living your damn life... in particular with you, how do you actually celebrate yourself?

**Darrietta Lee:**

It's important for me right now to have a space where I'm like, I'm either with people that radiate that type of good vibes. I have to be around people, I have to center myself around people; it's almost obligatory now. I have to center myself around people that provide a positive energy; that's one. Two, a lot of time to myself. Getting away from social media as much because it's just too much and it's still a lot even on these platforms. People have expectations from you on platforms, that's annoying. It gets overwhelming, it's just too much. So, I believe that what's necessary or what I typically do, is I'm trying to balance a space where it's a lot of me-time. For example, I won't on [unintelligible: 39:46] never did this before and [crosstalk: 39:51-39:53] purchase a day, TLC, back massage, full body massage coming up, forget the cell phone. I got this going on, [unintelligible: 40:07] facial. I'm like, I need this because this country and the people that's in it will drive you literally insane. And it's like as women, black women, in particular, we have a lot of if we don't get this right now the older we get, it's like a path of dying young, like heart disease, stroke, heart attack. It's like knocking at the door with stress and it's like, we have to step back and have these moments where we can breathe and take care of ourselves. Your family needs to understand you need to have a long time. If you could travel somewhere, a hotel for two, three days, by yourself do that because it's just too much going on right now where you'll being hospital, it's just too much. And at my age, 44, I [unintelligible 41:07-41:14] kill me and it's just stressful from the outside world, in the athletic world. It's just so much misunderstanding, so much on purpose not want to understand and it's like you said; gas lighting situations, using situations just to profit, attention, and just for them to capitalize off of certain things. It's just exhausting. That's the word, it’s exhausting.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I think exhausting is definitely the word. That's been the word of the year. Some people are just like; oh, you know, you're always saying that you're exhausted. It is literally draining. It is draining your spirits, you know, to a place where you physically don't want to move. You emotionally do not want to compute. It's almost like if there is a way to block out your own body, this is the way to do it.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Right. I hadn't ran already because I was trying to train to do my first meet last year. Of course, that all get knocked out, that all got taken away from me all thanks to the pandemic. I don't know, I was just saying this funk that I just could not get out of. So, here I am. Now I'm getting back into this running thing because I forced myself to pay for an actual race that I have to do. I'm like, okay, now I have something to look towards too. But when I got out there day one, I was like; yo, I feel like I just started. I felt embarrassed. I just didn't realize how much 2020 took a way for me until I got outside and did that, just that first mile.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

I'm there right now.

**Darrietta Lee:**

[unintelligible: 43:08] minutes to do a mile and I'm like, this ain't good [unintelligible: 44:14] a runner because I read your post when you was talking about starting over and getting your mind of where you used to be and got to get back into it. It's a lot so that's where I'm at right now. It's okay to praise myself because I finally got into the 19 minutes per mile.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

We are doing better together because I shit you not when I did this run this morning I had so many mixed feelings about it because I was like; okay, great I started my day one yesterday and my day one was at 17-minute pace. And I was just like; alright, let's be kind, let's be kind here, think happy thoughts even though you are mad as hell think happy thoughts. And I was like; you know what? I can bump it up. I was like; this is day two. I'm gonna do much better, I'm gonna shave it down to was 16 at least.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

[Unintelligible: 44:45] shave a minute off.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Right, I was just like realistically girl you trippin, you know that that's not how this works. So, I get out there and today was 18 and a half and I was just like, all the pain kicked in, my body felt like it was betraying me and I'm just like; I'm just better off just walk in at this point. That's literally how the downward spiral kicks in because I was just like, how am I moving this slow? I got all these medals sitting here my house reminded me of what I've done and right now, this is as much as my body can do. I've literally had to struggle and damn near had to kidnap joy in so many ways with this that it doesn't stop me from showing up over and over, and over again. It's hard. The extra layer that I wear is that, no pressure... I know I got people that follow my Strava account, so they're going see those 18-minute miles. And then I have to take the negative feedback that comes from, oh, you get sponsored at that pace? People take you serious at that pace? You should do better, why don't you? Then that's when the food trolling, the things that people think that I'm eating kicks into play. Well, if you were healthier... I'm just like it hurts. So, to some degree, I'm just like, I have to protect myself. I have to be able to assert those boundaries more than usual and I'm going keep reminding people until it becomes something that like; okay, we know that we can't pull it over here, we got to keep our comments to ourselves otherwise you going to get the hose.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Yeah, I feel like at this point, the way things are, you have to like you say; steal the joy. You have to, you have to just take it because everything and everybody around you is just trying to take it away. It can be very mentally debilitating and even though it's not our personal lives that are being affected, they're all still tethered together, and it's like when these tragedies happen, we're all still affected... we're affected.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Definitely. I think that's a good note, to actually kind of leave off the podcast. I asked every guest, I go on a podcast and I asked him this one question and it's been hard for some, approachable for others. Some were just get back to me on that one, so I ask you to same thing. When you take away the role of being an athlete, and you take away your professional roles, who are you to you? Who is Darrietta Lee to you?

**Darrietta Lee:**

Wow. A survivor. I'm a mother of course. I'm a mother. I'm a friend, all of that, but to myself, I'm a survivor. I have a colorful past, I've been through a lot... been going through a lot even up to present so that's why I'm a survivor. I know how to get myself and pull myself out of certain situations and I always bounce back. If you had to describe me, that's just who I am. From a kid up I've been a survivor, and not a survivor in a way of; oh, I ran from my problems... I've avoided situations. No, I just always created a way where you're not going... that person, people, places, or things; I will refuse them to take away who I am, so I removed myself from that space, so I can elevate. I have to always put myself on this tear like, okay, if I'm here, this is the problem, this is what you're doing? I have to get myself out of this and that's something I had to learn from a child coming up that... well, being the only child, I've always had to put myself first, think about myself and that's where becoming a survivor has placed me. And it's not a defense mechanism like I'm just traumatizing I'm avoiding. It's just that's how I navigate to be able to propel. I'm a survivor.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Oh, girl, you are more than surviving to me. I think you are thriving. It's a day-to-day process and I think there's so many people can relate to you on that level, and I cannot thank you enough for being on this podcast because this is my baby. This is on like Erykah Badu says; I'm an artist... I'm sensitive about my shit. So, thank you so much for being on.

**Darrietta Lee:**

Thank you, it's an honor.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

Thank you.

**Latoya Shauntay Snell:**

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