

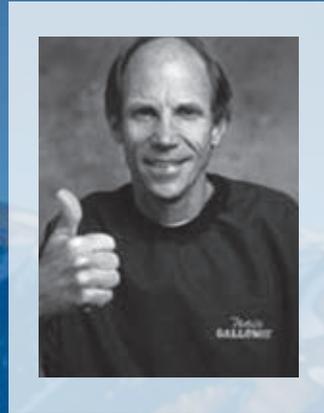
JEFF GALLOWAY

> TRAIL RUNNING



- > RUNNING ON ANY SURFACE
- > TRAINING PLANS FOR EVERY SITUATION
- > LESS EXHAUSTION, MORE FUN!

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Jeff Galloway, based in Atlanta, Georgia, was an average teenage runner who kept learning and working harder, until he became an Olympian.

He is the author of the best-selling running book in North America and a Runner's World columnist, as well as an inspirational speaker to over 200 running and fitness sessions each year.

Jeff Galloway has completed far more than 100 marathons, and he spends the time necessary to answer the questions of thousands of beginners, recreational runners, aspiring marathoners and time goal runners every year.



TRAIL RUNNING

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Jeff Galloway

Trail Running

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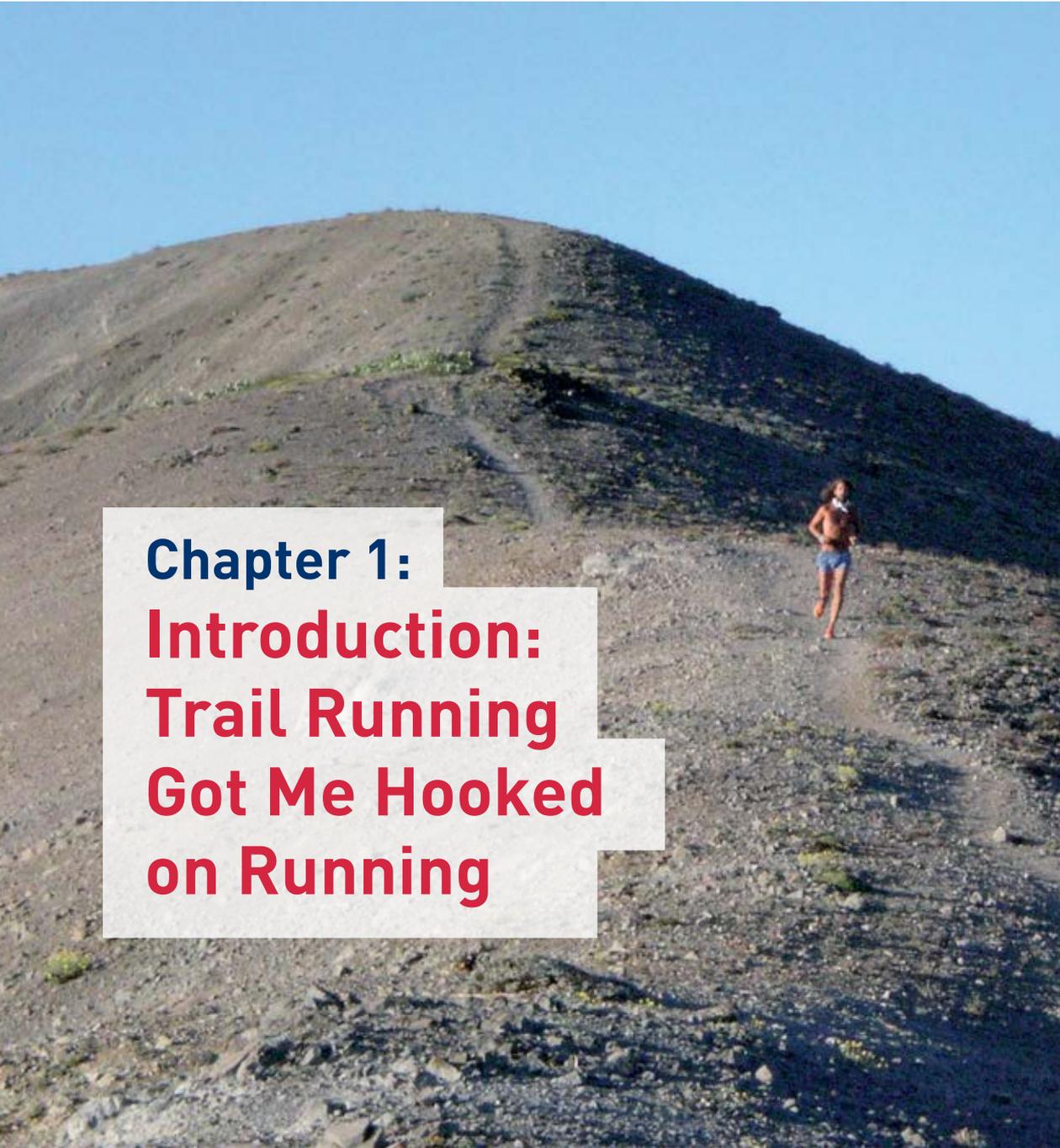


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A woman in athletic wear is running on a rocky, gravelly trail that winds up a hill. The hill is covered in sparse, low-lying vegetation and small rocks. The sky is clear and blue. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Chapter 1:
Introduction:
Trail Running
Got Me Hooked
on Running



© Jeff Galloway

My first few trail runs did not bring much joy. I was 13, lazy, overweight, and in poor physical shape. Due to my father’s Navy career, I had attended 13 schools by the time I finished the 7th grade and had not been involved with team sports or regular physical training of any type. At this point my father became a teacher, we moved to Atlanta, and my new school required each boy to work out with an athletic team after school every day. This was a major jolt to my lazy lifestyle, and I didn’t like it.

During the fall I tried football, which was a total disaster from my perspective, and even more so from the view of my coaches. Before choosing a sport for the next quarter, I asked several of the other lazy kids for their choices and was surprised to hear that many had chosen Winter Cross Country Conditioning. The consensus among the slackers was that the coach was the most lenient in the school. “Tell him you are running on the trails, and you only have to jog 200 yards to the woods and hide out.”

Trail Running

I did just that for two days. On the third day, an older athlete I liked came over to me and said, Galloway, you're running with us today. I quickly came up with my strategy: As we entered the woods, I planned to grab my hamstring, claiming a muscle pull. But the jokes started right away, and I kept going to hear the punch line. As we entered the trail system, they were exchanging gossip about the teachers—and I wanted to hear all of it. I didn't last long the first day, struggled to adjust to the surface, and walked most of the way back to the school.

The primitive satisfaction of running trails combined with honest friendships and social fun kept me coming back, day after day—but it was hard work. The biggest surprise was how good I felt after a run. The after-run attitude boost was better than I had experienced after any activity during my young life.

There was also something special about the trail experience. Every step was a challenge at first, and I suffered my share of ankle turns and stumbles. With the support of the group, I experienced a unique sense of empowerment from overcoming each challenge.

Week after week I felt my body adapt and improve. The stumbles and aches became fewer and less painful. I began to sense that my feet were making intuitive adjustments to new terrain. I was becoming a trail running animal, and I liked it.

My spirit is energized after every run—but trail running does it better. Touching the earth in a natural environment engages parts of the mind-body network that are not activated on other runs. I felt energized by every trail run during my first few weeks and looked forward to the next one.

Introduction: Trail Running Got Me Hooked on Running

The most wonderful aspect of being on the trails after school was the special sense of freedom that can be encountered only on a trail run. When running down the trail, stress melted away: the demanding academic program, conflicts with fellow students, pressure from teachers and parents. As I moved along through the forest and along the creek, I was the king of the trail.

While the causes of stress in my life are different over 50 years later, I enter the same type of enhanced mental restoration today. I love trails!

Chapter 2:

We Are Hard-Wired to Be Trail Animals

Anthropologists who specialize in ancient man tell me that our ancestors survived because they kept extending their ability to cover long distances on foot. Walking with some running became the mode of transportation. Before our ancient relatives developed strategies for hunting and later, farming, they roved through forests and plains.

We Are Hard-Wired to Be Trail Animals



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The more ground covered, the greater the chance of finding food. As our forebears pushed back the physical barriers, they developed physiological and mechanical adaptations to keep going...and going... and going.

During the period prior to one million years ago, our ancestors moved from quadruped to biped capabilities and had to solve many problems during the daily journey for food. Trail challenges stimulated brain development in the frontal lobe—the human brain.

Our mind–body organism responds to challenges: When encountering rocks, it is natural to pause, adjust the step, and make little, necessary adjustments. Running requires one to be at a high state of readiness to avoid tripping or stepping in a hole, while maintaining balance and looking ahead to the next challenge.

Scientists have noted that when we’re running, thought activity tends to be in the conscious brain, in the frontal lobe. Other animals don’t have this “executive brain” resource that allows us humans to be in the moment, to make decisions, and to plan strategically. Neuroscientists believe that during the period of time from 2 million BCE to 1 million BCE, our ancestors expanded their roaming range to find food. As they became endurance animals, they began to band together for survival, developing the human traits of cooperation, trust, and support—while expanding frontal lobe activity.

We return to our roots as we run down the trail.

Chapter 3: Benefits of Trail Running





As you move along a trail through forest, desert, or parkland, you enter a different state of mind. You're constantly interacting with the ground, vegetation, elevation change, and a variety of sounds and aromas. Mind-body activity is elevated to a higher level of awareness to be ready to react. You're living in the moment and interacting with life around you as you move forward.

The journey: Our ancestors programmed us to move from one point to another along the trail. Forward movement is positive and fulfilling. Intuitively, as we move forward, we can solve problems and enjoy the satisfaction of exertion in nature. There is a feeling of empowerment in finishing any run, but the sensation has almost always been better at the end of a trail workout.

Sharing: There's a special bonding that occurs when we run with one or more companions along a trail. We're connecting with millions of years of evolution. The extra trust and cooperation felt toward a trail running companion often extends after the run. Some runners communicate and bond better on trails—even when nothing is said. Trail companions are connected the same way our ancient relatives pulled one another along to get through tough times.