

Allyson Felix competes in the women's 400-meter relay at the world championships in London in August 2017. Felix recently spoke out in support of female athletes who weren't guaranteed salaries from Nike after pregnancy. (Kirsty Wigglesworth / Associated Press) # Her voice was always soft but sure, confident but not boisterous. A pastor's daughter, Allyson Felix was raised to be respectful and take no shortcuts in running or in life. Along the way, she learned to say what people wanted to hear and do what her coaches told her to do, and that wasn't a bad way to live. # It led the Los Angeles native to six Olympic gold medals and nine Olympic medals overall, tied for the most won by a female track and field athlete, and earned her universal admiration for competing cleanly in a sport where an unusual result triggers immediate suspicion of cheating. # Advertisement # Not until she gave birth to her daughter, Camryn, in November via Caesarian section and kept vigil at the neonatal intensive care unit for a month while her premature baby gained strength did Felix make a vital discovery: She had to speak her own truths, even if that means she can't be everything to everyone else. # " I'm a people-pleaser by nature. And so I want to make sure I have all the boxes ticked and everybody's happy. It's just, that's not realistic. It's just not. And that's all right, " said Felix, who resumed training on the track in March with a goal of competing at the U.S. championships in July and at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. # " For me, it's definitely been a journey to get