

# Why ditching the devices is proving the ultimate survival tool for business leaders.

Submitted by: Nick Owens T/A WTS MEDIA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

\*SIX-FOLD RISE IN BUSINESS LEADERS ATTENDING SURVIVAL TRAINING

\*EXECUTIVES TURN TO MILITARY STYLE TRAINING FOR BUSINESS RESET

\*REMOTELY OPERATING TEAMS ALSO "RECONNECTING" ON COURSES

WHY DITCHING THEIR DEVICES IS PROVING THE ULTIMATE SURVIVAL TOOL FOR BUSINESS LEADERS

For release: April 28, 2022.

SOARING numbers of business leaders are ditching their mobile phones and laptops and signing up for survival courses to improve performance at work.

Newly formed firm Spartan Survival say they've seen a six-fold third in bookings since the pandemic as business leaders seek a "reset in mindset".

Increasing numbers of teams, many now working from home, are also "reconnecting" on courses specially designed to address pandemic brain fatigue.

The rise is being recorded by Spartan Survival, who runs bushcraft and survival courses at sites in Cholmondeley, Cheshire.

They also oversee an elite course at a secret location in Scotland which offers similar challenges to those featured on survival TV programmes loved by millions of viewers.

In the space of a year, attendances on the Cheshire-course have risen from 10-a-month to 60-a-month.

Almost a third of those taking part are women and Spartan are now offering female-only courses. There has also been a spike in demand for elite training.

Business leaders attending courses are put through their paces by accomplished elite military veterans, serving as course instructors, who share their insight and skills to attendees imparting various military techniques and survival knowledge in the process.

Commenting, Ian Huntington, co-founder of Spartan Survival and its Chief Instructor, said those attending courses quickly find they can develop skills they can transfer back into their day-to-day working life.

He said: "Those running businesses often turn up to our courses with their minds crammed full of things they need to do and tasks they think they need to complete. But as soon as they arrive we make clear they need to press pause on all of that and instead encourage them to focus on just four things: shelter, fire, water and food. Many are a bit wary of handing in their mobile phones. And some look nervous as they head off to spend two or three days on their own in the wilderness, device-free, with the only task on their to-do list being survival. But by the end of the course they've gone through a total reset in their minds. Everyone who attends later reports how much it helps to improve their performance once back at work. Our courses are also proving really popular too for groups of co-workers who are no longer based in the same location. It's clear the pandemic has transformed the working environment and many companies now feel detached by work from home, even though it does have its plus points. But by attending a course, people find they can work together again, side-by-side in a challenging environment and it creates a stronger bond and team spirit."

The surge in the number of businessmen and women signing up for survival courses comes as experts warn UK business have yet to hit the heights of employee fatigue caused by the pandemic. According to researchers at Gartner one of the major consequences of the pandemic and shift to remote working has been the impact on employee mental health and wellbeing. Their research revealed that UK employees have been 62 per cent more likely to see an increase in their day and that 42 per cent feel now emotionally drained from their work. Employees are still struggling to recover from the burnout suffered because of the events of the past two years.

Sir Cary Cooper, Professor of Organisational Psychology & Health at the Manchester Business School, said the success of Spartan Survival underlines the importance of workers taking time out from office life.

He said: "We know in the UK that the leading cause of long term sickness absence is stress, anxiety and depression.

"It's not just in the UK but in most developed countries that's the leading cause of long term sickness absence. People are under more pressure than ever before, feeling more job insecurity, worried about the cost of living, and so on.

"Anything that helps people who feel this kind of pressure to have some time away from the constant bombardment of technology, like emails, Zoom meetings, will be very helpful. To get some reflective time away from the workplace can be very useful to get everything into perspective and to re-energise."

## Case studies

One person who has seen first hand the benefits of the course is Roy Shelton, the managing director of the leading UK tech firm, Connectus Group. Roy has taken part in one of Spartan's Elite Courses and says it has helped create a "transformational" change in his business performance.

He said: "I went on the course because I needed space from the day to day grind of business life and also day to day life more generally. I needed time to think about our next business steps, our next phases of growth and how all of the seven companies I am involved with could evolve and collaborate. Being at the coalface day in day out does not allow much time for strategic thinking and planning. I also needed time for myself. Lockdowns have been hard on everyone and adopting new ways of working and learning can be potentially harder for businesses, staff, founders and even families. The course gave me space to think and time to focus and it taught me the power of sequential logical thinking. It was transformational."

Jan Chillery, a partner at the Chester based law firm Aaron and Partners, said the course had also equipped her with key skills she could transfer back into her working life.

She said: "Putting away my phone was unexpectedly therapeutic and made me concentrate more on the moment. It's a great team-building experience, something colleagues would talk about for years to come. The skills you get from it aren't just about bushcraft, although learning those things is surprisingly satisfying. It's about problem solving, thinking through unusual challenges, improving communication and promoting positive attitudes."

Those comments were echoed by Chris Chapman, director of Hull-based Elite Stoves, who recently attended an Elite course with Spartan.

He said: "The way I felt mentally and physically when I finished was like nothing I have felt before, if I could bottle that feeling and sell it I would be a rich man. I'm a lot more relaxed, level headed and I know what direction I need to go in. A week on from being back from Scotland we have just signed a new lease on a shop in Hull that will double the size of our business, this is all due to the discussions and work Ian and his team did with us and the time spent thinking about my life, my family and my work. It truly has changed me for the better."

## ABOUT SPARTAN SURVIVAL

Spartan Survival provides authentic bushcraft, survival training courses and adventure experiences to families, schools and businesses. Attendees see the real benefits that come from relying on each other and the confidence that comes from discovering skills that you never knew you had.

Spartan Survival also utilises the expertise of accomplished elite military veterans. Serving as course instructors, they share their insight and skills to our course attendees imparting various military techniques and survival knowledge through course content.

Courses aim to educate, improve confidence and mental strength whilst enjoying the back-to-basics surroundings with friends, family or work colleagues.

Spartan Survival also helps provide support to former soldiers and military personnel suffering from PTSD and their courses are popular with parents keen to experience a different kind of weekend-away with their children.

Its two-day courses, which take place in Cholmondeley, Cheshire, involve cooking outdoors, learning to make a fire, building a shelter to stay safe from the elements, navigation, and other group exercises. Tried and tested military equipment comes included and qualified instructors work closely with everyone involved to make sure they gain the maximum benefit out of each exercise.

Teams come away from their outdoor bushcraft adventure having improved their decision-making and leadership skills, their mental toughness, and their ability to complement each other as a unit. And, with no mobile phones allowed, it's a chance to get back to nature, back to basics, to de-stress and create some unique shared memories.

Notes to Editors:

For press and media queries please contact Nick Owens at WTS MEDIA on [nick.owens@wtsmedia.co.uk](mailto:nick.owens@wtsmedia.co.uk)

Journalists wishing to attend the course should contact Nick Owens as this can potentially be accommodated.

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More information:

[www.spartansurvival.co.uk](http://www.spartansurvival.co.uk)

[www.facebook.com/SpartanSurvival.UK](https://www.facebook.com/SpartanSurvival.UK)

[www.instagram.com/spartansurvival\\_](https://www.instagram.com/spartansurvival_)

<https://twitter.com/SurvivalSpartan>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKBCtxJ5mcVi8Q23FXudO3w>

Attached Images:

Ian Huntington:

The Spartan Survival team is led by Ian Huntington (PICTURE ATTACHED). Ian is the Chief Course Instructor and an ex elite military operator in the British Army. Ian has a wealth of experience from his time in the forces, on top of spending 20 years as a private military contractor and bodyguard in some of the most hostile environments on the planet.

Attendees:

Roy Shelton, Jan Chillery and Chris Chapman