



Episode 21: Tom's Story Transcript

Bree: Hi there. Today's story is about running an ultramarathon. Hoy escucharemos una historia sobre correr una ultramaratón. Tom hablará de lo durísimo que fue intentar correr una ultramaratón de 60km por Wilson's Promontory, un parque nacional en el sureste de Australia lleno de paisajes increíbles.

Tom: and then you're just running into the darkness, not knowing where to go. Thinking to myself what the hell did I get myself into. This is gonna... I'm already battling in the first five kilometers and haven't even reached the top of this hill.

This story is a real adventure. Tom shares why he decided to sign up for the ultramarathon and how he trained hard to be able to run such an impressive distance. On race day, Tom speaks about some unexpected challenges, from bad weather to getting lost. Will he complete the race in time?

Antes de empezar, veamos algunas palabras y expresiones que escucharás durante la historia de Tom.

1. Firstly, to push yourself to do something. The word push here means to make a great effort, hacer un gran esfuerzo. For example you might say 'I need to push myself to stay awake until midnight' or 'I push myself to work harder'. To push yourself to do something.
2. Next, to clock or to clock up. This expression in British English means to reach or gain a particular number or amount of something. You'll hear Tom speak about clocking 60 to 70 kilometers per week - conseguir correr entre 60 y 70 kilómetros a la semana - as part of his training program. To clock up.
3. Next, take a toll. If something takes a toll or takes its toll, it means it has a bad or serious effect on someone or something, que pasar factura o se cobra su precio. For example, long hours and high pressure situations take a toll on the company's employees or you could say an intense training program takes its toll on your body. Take its toll.
4. A gut feeling. A gut feeling means to have an intuition or instinct towards something or someone. In today's story, Tom talks about the gut feeling that he relies on during the marathon.
5. And finally, a relief. If you hear someone saying 'that's a relief' or 'what a relief', they mean that they are able to relax and feel secure again after a stressful moment or a complicated situation. En español sería ¡Qué alivio! What a relief.

Aprovecha al máximo este episodio visitando acingles.com/podcast para bajarte la transcripción, la ficha de vocabulario, y un test de comprensión. Que por cierto, te irá muy bien si te estás preparando para un examen oficial de inglés. OK let's get into the story...

Tom: I am Thomas Zachariessen. I am living in Stockholm Sweden at the moment and I'm originally from Melbourne, Australia. Running is a... it's definitely not for everyone. I tell people, like when I do long distance running and that they think of me like, 'God I couldn't think of anything more boring to do, you know... I'm not a runner. How do you run all these kilometers? And you know enjoy it and continue to do it? I do run just to get my mind off things, separate myself from technology and yeah just to unclog my my my my mind and thoughts.

Bree: After having run other marathons, like the famous Great Ocean Road marathon on the south-eastern coast of Australia, Tom decides that he wants to sign himself up for a 60 km ultramarathon.



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Tom: The run is something that I, I push myself to do. It's a run that's in Wilson Promontory. It's a nature reserve, one of the largest and I think most beautiful preserved forests in Victoria. It's absolutely massive. I thought, what better way to see than do an ultramarathon. So an ultramarathon is anything that's longer than a marathon. It could be 60k, 80k, a hundred. A lot of people said... kind of reacted like here we go, another run that Tom wants to do. It was also because I wanted to raise funds for breast cancer and my mother was a sufferer of breast cancer so it was one way I wanted to give back to her. I think it was like 3 months out that I started the training for this.

Bree: To train for the ultramarathon, Tom had to run a lot! During his lunch hour at work, getting up early in morning...

Tom: You would have to probably clock about 75 to 80 kilometers. And you don't actually run 60 km in the training so you're in the building up your legs to be able to run that length on the, on the day. It is such a balance with life as well. There is running to keep your legs ticking, to clock your kilometers ahh it really takes its toll with like work, friends, your social life. You just have to think about the bigger picture.

Bree: Finally, after months of training, the day is here. Tom wakes up super early to get to the race on time. As he's driving to Wilsons Promontory national park he discovers that the weather conditions are terrible.

Tom: The race starts at 5:30 so we have to get up at 4:30. Of course it was just like thunderstorms and raining in the morning. It had to happen right. At one point when we were driving down to the starting line, it didn't, we actually had to stop because there was so much rain we couldn't actually see out the windscreen. We parked and I got out of the car and I just ran off into the darkness cuz there's no lights it's just, it's just a few cars. It's a guy on his clipboard with all these people geared up with their backpacks and headsets with torches and then you're just, you're just off. Just running into the darkness, not knowing where to go. Oh god, the hill at the beginning. That was an incline that just kept going and going and going. I mean that was nerves. Thinking to myself what the hell did I get myself into. This is gonna... I'm already battling in the first five kilometers and haven't even reached the top of this hill. I didn't do the right training for this.

Bree: At this point early in the race, Tom begins to have a lot of emotions about how unprepared he is. His training did not prepare him for this difficult terrain, este terreno muy abrupto.

Tom: The important thing with running is that you need a rhythm to be able to feel comfortable with your heart rate, your breathing patterns need to be consistent and if you break that pattern, your body just can't cope but the fact that the terrain was just never flat, you're running on sand, gravel, mud... At one point I was running through a river, your body just, you just can't pick up a rhythm. It was 7 hours of running so during that whole process, you are going through different mood swings. At the top, you know at one point after being so nervous and being thrown away by this weather in the first few kilometers, there were parts where I felt like I was the Mowgli, like the jungle boy, just like running freely, you know just loving life. And then you are going through emotions where you think you are lost. I didn't have a map on me. I didn't actually use technology at all during the race. I saw people who had maps and laminated them so they could last the whole run.



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So I just went off logic of you know running these paths, following other people as well which you build a great connection with people. So when you see someone running off in the distance or someone catches up with you, it's quite special because you're not alone. There were times when I felt like I was running for like 10 kilometres just by myself in this area I've never run before and then when you have people running with you or when you come across someone you're like ok that's my safeguard. I've got someone who's doing this race as well and I'll use him to get my motivation to get me through this race.

Bree: At some point in the middle of the race, Tom realises that he is no longer with other runners. In fact, he's completely alone. And then he discovers that he's not on the correct trail. Tom is lost.

Tom: I took a wrong turn and instead of running along the coast I went more inland. I realised when I hadn't seen anyone for like a good 40 minutes. I was just thinking to myself, what have I done this time... this doesn't.... I should be seeing water at this point around here but I haven't.

Bree: At this point in the story, without GPS or a map, Tom uses his gut feeling, su instinto, to try to find his way to the correct path.

Tom: Think logically. Where is the sun? Where is the sun? You know, you're running towards the east of the island if you are facing a certain direction, so I just had to go off logic really and go off my gut feeling to think ok... this is the way back. They talk to you about if you don't make it to the finish line, you know, you need to pack these aluminum bags to keep warm or something to keep warm during the night while the rescue team comes to get you. So there are things like that that play on your mind the whole time. Luckily enough, I did do a trial run and I did come across that same path that I ran. It was like I was thanking God at that point.

Bree: When he finally gets on the right path after a 5 km detour, Tom finds that he's the only runner left. Without another runner in sight, muscles aching, and exhausted, he runs the final 15 km of the race all alone.

Tom: By the end of it, it was quite funny actually, my friends are waiting really patiently. I came hours after my expected finishing time and they were just waiting and waiting and waiting. The finish line, I actually came from the back, I didn't actually finish the proper way and I'd literally walked up to my friends who had been facing and they were all looking curiously like where the hell is Tom? When is he going to finish this race? And I just walked up and literally being a meter away and said, 'Oh hey guys'. And they were like 'What the!?!'. They just got shocked and so they cheered and said aren't you meant to be coming that way and they were like I got lost on the way. Thanks for hanging around, you know. It was a massive relief and I think seeing them at the finish line really motivated me.

I was feeling pretty amazing. Being able to see Wilson's Prom and that type of beauty in that way, I was really appreciative of the beauty in that sense. Yeh, it is something that will always be a part of me running and I always appreciate it and I will keep it up. You do go through the pain but the experience of being that close to, being through that much pain, you do appreciate life that much more.



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Bree: In total, Tom raised 2000 dollars for cancer research from his ultramarathon campaign. In the days after the race, Tom spoke to us about the intense muscle pains - las agujetas - that he had in his legs and how he struggled to even walk down stairs. These days, Tom lives in Stockholm, Sweden where he continues running through the countryside.

Thank you for being here and listening to this story about running an ultramarathon. It's amazing what we can push ourselves to do when we have a clear goal in mind, un objetivo claro en mente. Si te gusta este podcast, suscribirte. Y si quieres decirnos qué te ha parecido esta historia déjanos un comentario siguiendo el link en la descripción del episodio. Ok that's all for today. Until next time we hope you have a good time, or at least, a good story to tell.