

Podcast #226 Transcription – Extreme Cold Weather Survival Hacks

Hey everyone. This is Jeff Anderson, editor for Modern Combat and Survival Magazine and executive director of the New World Patriot Alliance with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot.

Now, I really wanted some happy jolly Christmas broadcast to do this week, but about as close as I can get is that this is going to be about cold weather and about surviving in cold weather. And it really comes out of kind of an argument. I say an argument, it's with a very, very, very, very close friend of mine is helping me out with, next year in 2019 I'm planning on coming out with my first ... Well it's not really my first book, it's my first book on Amazon under my name for survival gear and some of the survival practices that I've been putting out there through the podcast and all sorts of other mediums that we have our show out there in.

One of the things we were talking about in just consolidating gear and the survival gear tips that I was going to be giving, we were talking about extreme cold weather because my friend is, he's no stranger to cold weather. Now, I'm not going to give his name. Let's just say that he is an older gentleman. He was a Vietnam infantryman. He has written a hefty number of [inaudible 00:01:17] when they were still in business. A lot of their books, did their DVDs, and he was a big fixture in that entire company and he is no stranger to ... I mean, he lives the survival lifestyle. He lives in the mountains of Colorado, hunts, fishes, has a gun range in his backyard. He lives that lifestyle. He's one of those people that walks the talk and he has tons and tons and tons of experience. What he doesn't have in experience, he has in exposure being a part of [inaudible 00:01:48] and all the other experts that they had there as well.

So as we were talking about survival gear that people would want to have and we were talking about specifically inside of your bug out bag, he had a strong objection to my philosophies on going ultra light. His reasoning was really focused around two main pieces of gear that somebody would need in order to survive if they are in a worst case scenario, bugging out on foot. You don't have your vehicle or any other sort of type of shelter to have with you of how you can stay alive in that climate and it really focused on two pieces of gear, having a tent and a sleeping bag.

At first I objected. I said, "I disagree. There's really no need for those things," and his response, I was kind of surprised, came back even stronger in that most of the people out there who are listening to your show, and I consider you if you've made it even this far in this broadcast that you have a mindset that 99% of people out there just don't have. You're out there seeking tips, you're out there seeking information about ways that you can protect yourself and your family, especially under extreme circumstances.

But I understand that, look, I know that most of you are not soldiers. I know we have a lot of soldiers. We have a lot of police, we have a lot of military contractors that listen to our show, but I know that most of you don't fall in those categories. Most of you probably are just, you have your day job or you might be retired, you have your family, you're not out there in extreme cold weather conditions being forced out there. However, you still need to understand these things and these principles and you're out there looking for that information.

So that's awesome, but I also recognize that most people are probably not in the type of shape that military contractors and soldiers are. I stay in very good shape as well and so for those reasons, my

friend was saying, "Most people are not going to have the skills to be able to build a shelter because knowledge is one thing, but actually putting them into practice is another. So they're not going to have necessarily the skills to build a shelter, to stay alive in that environment. And likewise, I mean, if all they have is their bug out bag and stuff there, they're not going to have the ... If they're even attempting any of that stuff, then they're going to be expanding calories and they're going to be losing more energy during that time when you really need to conserve energy."

And I agree with all of those things. I understand the realities of who might be listening to this show and most of you don't necessarily want to build a bunker in your backyard. You just want some tips that will help you get through and be more prepared than the 95% of people that are out there that are going to be trying to survive the same type of scenarios that you are.

Again, so back to the argument here. He really made about a two page long argument of his own, of why those things needed to be part of everybody's bug out bag for those worst case scenarios. Now I'm going to share with you kind of my response, but also I'm going to give you three hacks here, a three plus one bonus hack that is going to help you under these extreme conditions, and take advantage of new technology as well as my own experiences. Because in my final reply back to him, I said, "Look, here's the deal." The thing is he was coming off as kind of like, "Look, I have experience in these things. You need to listen to my advice."

What he didn't know was that I was one of the founding soldiers at 10th Mountain Division in Fort Drum when they reenacted the ... the 10th Mountain Division, when they reenacted that, we were one of the first soldiers to go in there and that division, and 10th Mountain Division is located in Fort Drum, New York. So it's close to the Great Lakes. It is in sometimes the coldest place in the United States. Yes. Even more so than Alaska sometimes. So it's arctic frigid weather there and that goes back to the history of the 10th Mountain Division.

Look, they did ski training, we did ski training, we did all kinds of a winter arctic training. We did survival training. We did a lot of different things for those environments just like they did in World War II. It was an elite fighting force during World War II. It is an elite fighting force now. And one of the things about being there and being one of the founding units that really opened up the 10th Mountain Division when it was reenacted, was that we were an experimental unit for the Pentagon. So any new equipment that was coming out, we were the first ones to test it before the Pentagon invested in it to go military wide.

So I remember us getting out there and when we got there, geez, it was coming right up in the winter time and we basically lived out in the snow for about three to four months. It was just, we had a lot to prove as a new unit. We had a lot to prove because we were a new form of unit. We were a light infantry. We pretty much just walked everywhere that we went. We were a hardcore elite unit and to step into those shoes, especially as hardcore as they were during World War II, there was a lot to prove. So there wasn't any canceling of field movers because of the cold weather. No. The whole point was to be out there to live in it, to survive in it, because when you're a soldier, you don't necessarily choose those times that you're going to be stuck in it, whether you're on a mission or whether you are off on your own, whatever.

Especially for me as being a forward observer and in long range reconnaissance, we were out there oftentimes without a unit. So we were off, it might be just us. You're typically not alone, we would have either a radio telephone operator with us or one other person that we were out there with in long range reconnaissance. But essentially we were out there by ourselves in hiding, behind enemy lines, taking in

intel, calling in artillery fire, calling in air support, all sorts of things, right? So we didn't have a lot of resources. A lot of times all we had to live on was what was in our backpack. All right?

So this is why bugging out and the realities of bugging out in a disaster scenario, yes, are near and dear to my heart and why it's one of the areas that I've chosen to really focus in on to help people understand the realities of what that is. So once he realized that I was in the 10th Mountain Division, he walked everything back. It was like, "Whoa, I didn't realize you were in 10th Mountain. The stuff you guys went through would have killed me ages ago."

So that's a lot coming from somebody who really has as much experience as my friend has here, but what I told him was, "Look, let's go back to the realities there that you're talking about. Most people are not going to be in amazing shape that they're going to be able to hump a rucksack for a hundred miles like we did." During the wintertime, sometimes our rucksack was over a hundred pounds. It would take two people to lift you off of the ground. Basically you had to put the backpack on the ground, you lay on top of it on your back, you put the straps on, you put the waist belt on, you cinch it all down, and then you need two people to come over and put their feet on your feet and then take you by the hand and then hoist you up just so you could get standing.

Now if you fell over, you were waddling around there like you were a turtle, right? That's why you needed somebody to help you up. It was so damn heavy. Now again, most people are not going to be in fit to fight shape like you are in a member of an elite fighting force. So weight is always, for me, it's always been the number one thing. In fact, all of the extreme cold weather gear that we got for the tents and well fortunately the sleeping bags went smaller, more compact than our other sleeping bags that we had prior to the new military stuff there. However, that tent only lasted one trip out to the field.

We told the Pentagon, not me, I didn't call up the Pentagon, but nonetheless, the feedback from our commanders was back like, "You know what? This is unnecessary weight. If we're going to be out there walking and we don't have the advantage of having a chopper or even a Humvee, something to take us to the next point, weight is the most critical issue." So in order to get to our destination, we are saying, forget this stuff. All we ever used was a poncho essentially and some bungee cords. Some of you may have seen some of the videos that I've done for all of that.

But essentially it was the weight that was the most important thing for us because there were alternative ways of staying dry and of staying warm even in those frigid temperatures that are out there. Okay? So what I wanted to share with you was what I shared with him, which is, "Look, even today, we have even better technology than we had when I was in the military."

Now my one story that I shared with him that I'll share with you in why you don't need a tent or a sleeping bag even to withstand arctic type temperatures, leads back to one ... I remember it was one mission that we had that was, we were out in the field. It was out at Fort Drum and it was truly arctic temperatures. We had a windchill, it was about 10 below zero and that was before the windchill. Essentially they had stopped all operations because they're not going to get cases of frostbite and people have to be medically discharged in the military.

So essentially everybody's set up, they had one ambulance that came out, a military ambulance, that had the heat on inside of it and they would just keep rotating soldiers through there and you would go

in for 10 minutes. You would basically sleep those 10 minutes, you would come out and then you'd freeze your ass off until your next shift came up, which was typically about an hour apart.

Now I tried it one time, going from the extreme heat inside of there and coming out into the frigid temperatures only made it worse. However, for that hour that we were out there, we just decided, me and one other guy, another infantryman just said, "You know what? This is bullshit. I'm not going back in there. I'm not waiting in line out there to get back into that ambulance. We got to figure something else out here." I am not ashamed to say, although a little embarrassed to say, that what we ended up doing just to be able to survive through that time was we stripped down to nothing but our skivvies. So it was just those brown, not tidy whites they were tidy brownies, I guess. The military underwear was brown, right?

So we stripped down basically to our socks and our underwear and put a poncho and a poncho liner around us and we huddled up like we were husband and wife. We snuggled on up there and got really, really close to use each other's body heat inside of the poncho liner and the poncho. I'm here to tell you that we stayed warm and we stayed dry. We said, "Please don't ever tell anybody that this is even happening." So here I am on a podcast telling tens of thousands of people out there. Sure, why not, right? But the point is you'll do what you need to in order to stay alive.

Now I'm telling you that you don't need to snuggle up and spoon with a grunt out there in order to stay alive during these temperatures, thanks to the technology. So what I wanted to share with you was three pieces of survival gear that are really relatively new, but are extremely, extremely helpful and will help you to survive even arctic type temperatures out there. Okay?

So item number one is the Tact Bivvy. Now this is one of those Mylar emergency blankets in the form of a sleeping bag. You've most likely seen me promote these through our newsletter. I've talked about these on stage when I speak at places like PrepperCon, or Self Reliance Expo, or any of the other shows that I might speak at. I've talked about this on stage in that really everybody needs to own one of these for every vehicle, have them in every bug out bag because they really are indispensable.

I have tested these things in winter temperatures. I've slept through the night with them. Basically whenever I've gone out with my son's scout troop, I don't bring a sleeping bag with me. I bring the Tact Bivvy with me, that is what I use and it keeps me warm. It'll keep you warm in even 20 below weather out there. It is an emergency blanket, but it's enclosed. So it's going to help you to trap in that heat rather than just reflecting back.

The space blankets, they're not enclosed so you're going to lose a lot of heat outside of all of that. They're helpful, but the Tech Bivvy sleeping bag is really the one that you need to have. Again, this is a must have item. Okay? A must have item. And by the way, in the resources for this podcast, you're going to be able to find all of the links over to these items as well. Okay? So item number one is the Tact Bivvy. Now all these are meant to kind of really to work together. Okay? So a Tact Bivvy is going to essentially act as your shelter or as your sleeping bag. All right?

Item number two is an electric hand warmer. Now this I've talked about, this has been out for about a year now. Essentially, it takes the place of those ... if you've ever seen at Bass Pro, or Cabela's or whatever, or even the sporting goods store at Walmart, the hand warmers. They're like those little gel

hand warmers. They don't last very long, but you just basically pop them and they'll give you good warmth for a little bit of time and then they're gone. They're basically dispensable.

Well the electric hand warmer is one that is rechargeable and it takes the place of those. So essentially it's an oval shaped thing. It's about the size of your hand, a little bit smaller, but once you turn it on, it emanates heat and it will continue to emanate heat and it is rechargeable so that you can plug it into a USB port somewhere with the cord that comes with it and you can recharge it and you kind of keep this thing going. Now it will hold a charge for quite a long time. So it helps to also have this along with your Tact Bivvy. I would get one for each vehicle that you have, put it inside of the glove compartment there. If you live in areas that it could actually get cold enough where you might need something. All right. So put it in there with that. But the electric hand warmer is really, really great.

Now, the downside of it is that when you're unable to charge it, you lose the heat. So in other words, it is dispensable if you can't charge it. It basically just ends up becoming a paper weight. So you need a way to be able to charge that ongoing time after time after time. So the latest thing that I've been using now is the Quad Pro solar charger. Now there have been really great technology advancements in portable solar chargers out there, and they're getting smaller and smaller. They're getting more powerful. The Quad Pro charger, basically the more cells that you're able to capture the sun with, the faster you're going to get resupply of energy, the recharge is going to come faster. You're going to be able to do more with it there.

The Quad Pro solar charger has four panels to it. What I also like about it is that you can hang it. Well one, it's super compact, so it's about the same size as the electric hand warmer that I'm talking to you about and the Quad Pro solar charger, basically it folds out into four separate solar panels with its own battery embedded in it. So when you roll it out, you have these four cell sections that capture a lot of sunlight. The other thing I like about it is that it's magnetic. So you can put it on the side of a vehicle, you can capture the sunlight that way. So you want to get it to where the sun is, right? So you can keep moving it around where you need to. That gives you a really great way to capture the sun that way.

Then with the Quad Pro solar charger, it has a USB port on it. So you can charge that up, actually you can charge it up as a battery itself. You don't necessarily need the sun. So if you do get to a power outlet, you can put it in someplace and charge it up that way, but you can again use the sun. Now that USB port will allow you to plug anything else into it that will use a USB for a charger and that includes something like the electric hand warmer. So I recommend also having this Quad Pro solar charger inside of the glove department as well as having one in your backpack as well.

So those three pieces of equipment work really well together because now if you have a Tact Bivvy out there and you need to get inside of it, for let's say that your vehicle got stranded, you're in the middle of nowhere. Or sometimes people have even been stranded, due to a winter storm they're stranded on the highway and first responders can't get to them, plows can't get through yet. It might be you trying just to survive through the night. So having that Tact Bivvy there, you pull it out, you can get inside of it to capture body heat, but you can also put in the electric hand warmer inside of there and that's going to essentially put heat inside of the sleeping bag.

You can turn it on, you can turn it off, you can keep it going. You can basically just set it up any way that you want or just turn ... I'm sorry, turn it on anytime that you want to get the right amount of heat in there, turn it off if you get too hot. So it comes in really, really handy that way. You can also use this if you were to use the Tact Bivvy as ... use it as a shelter in some way. So you could basically open it up,

pull it apart, use it as like a tent if you wanted to and then put the hand warmer in there, close off the ends of it and create basically a heater inside of your tent using the electric hand warmer. When it runs down low on energy, you're gonna be able to take the solar charger now and get it back going so that you can continue to use it, right?

Now, the fourth item that I will tell you about is something that I would put inside of the Tact Bivvy, which is a fleece liner because all of the solar ... I'm sorry. All of the space blanket, Mylar type sleeping bags and emergency blankets and things like that, basically they do reflect your heat back to you, but they don't absorb anything. So if you're in your clothes ... Well, even if you're not in your clothes, you're going to sweat inside of these things. If you have your clothes on, your clothes are going to get more damp and that's what you don't want because you don't want wet clothes. Because when you come out of that into the cold air, the evaporation effect is going to essentially make you colder and when that's gone, that's gone.

And the other thing is that your clothes will end up getting dirtier. They're going to get more grimy, they are going to not breathe as much as you want them to in order to stay warm in those temperatures. So one thing you can do is if you are going to be inside of there, take off your clothes and then use a fleece liner, which is essentially like, it's a cotton, very thin layer sleeping bag. People use them inside of sleeping bags to be able to, I guess keep the sleeping bag cleaner I guess. It's much easier to wash a fleece liner, throw it in the washing machine than it is to get a sleeping bag clean. You know?

The other time people use it is if they go to hotels, you might sleep inside of the fleece liner instead of in the sheets at the hotel, but nonetheless, it comes in really, really helpful for putting inside of the TAC Bivvy so that that will help to absorb the sweat without your clothes getting dirtier and becoming wet and things like that. Okay? So it allows you to get back into your clean dry clothes once you get out of the Tact Bivvy.

This fleece liner is really ultra compact also. I will go ahead and put another link inside of the resources there for you to check it out, but you go inside of that, then inside of the Tact Bivvy. Put the electric hand warmer in there in order to give yourself some extra warmth if you need it. We're talking like super sub zero temperatures, it will definitely take care of you there. Then to recharge it using the Quad Pro solar charger. All right?

So I know I'm probably not giving you this broadcast early enough for you to grab all of these items for Christmas gifts out there. However, you know you're going to get that ugly ass sweater anyway. So take it back. Use the resource links inside of the broadcast for this week's podcast and go grab these. Go put them inside of your bug out bag and the other areas that you carry your survival gear where you might need it. Your vehicles, things like that. And I hope you all, you and your loved ones have a very merry Christmas. All right? I'll talk to you in the new year. This is Jeff Anderson from Modern Combat and Survival saying, prepare, train, and survive.