

going the distance

Imagine racing across 250km of the Sahara Desert over the course of six gruelling days and nights. We speak to three everyday individuals who share a common love for running, challenges, charity – and yes, conquering the Sahara Race. **By Denise Lee**

THADDEUS LAWRENCE, 38, CORPORATE TRAINER SAHARA RACE: 2009

His firm belief in the power of “mental toughness” has seen him become one of only 87 people in the world who have completed the 4 Deserts races (Sahara, Atacama, Gobi and Antarctica).

“It’s about understanding yourself,” says Thaddeus, “then you listen and learn.” He says it’s the “heart part” of the race that gave him the extra willpower to keep going and upholding the “can do” spirit. His advice is simple: Be curious, but “know why you’re racing” so you can challenge yourself and “turn a hypothesis into a reality”. Thaddeus’ book *Runaway Success: Life Lessons from Ultra Endurance Racing* will be in stores soon.

PUSH FACTOR:
“How would I retell the experience?”

JANE PENG, 25, FUND MANAGER SAHARA RACE: 2010

Young, bubbly and driven. These potent qualities, coupled with a unique training method, saw Jane propel from novice racer in February 2010 (completing a mere 5km stint) to the youngest-ever completer of the Sahara Race. A firm believer of motivational thinking and visualisation, she says: “You have to keep adjusting your mindset and not let the panic set in. Or listen to music that motivates you!”

PUSH FACTOR:
“When the mind locks onto a target, there’s no excuse to stop and the momentum will carry me forward.”

LEOW KAH SHIN, 30, HEDGE FUND MANAGER SAHARA RACE: 2007

Having completed multiple ultra marathons including the gruelling 4 Deserts races, Kah Shin is a picture of calm and confidence. A self-confessed adrenalin junkie, he reminisces about what he calls “hell day” of the Sahara Race, when he ran 80 to 100km in that single day. Unimaginable pain was endured, but he came out of the race healthier and happier by relying on his mental strength.

PUSH FACTOR:
“Take it one step at a time.”

