

Reasons to Prepare Anyway

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What if The Schumer Doesn't Hit The Fan? - Reasons to Prepare Anyway

As long as I can remember, I have felt that someday the comforts of a modern American lifestyle would vanish, at least temporarily. So I have made small mental preparations for some time now; keeping my mind and body fit and strong, staying informed, dropping hints to the wife, etc. Recently, and mostly after reading Patriots, I have a renewed interest in preserving my life and protecting those I love.

After educating myself on the subject of survival, I felt, as I'm sure many others have, very vulnerable and even overwhelmed. I needed to take action, immediately. Many thoughts spring into one's mind during these moments. "What will I feed my children; oh man, water is essential; what about all those crazy people in the city, I need a gun, I need several guns; I need to move to North Dakota!" Sloooow down! These are daunting items. Once you quiet your mind and restore some sense of calm (it may take a couple days), you realize that you must be realistic. It's not feasible for most of us to pack up an arsenal and move to a remote retreat in the hills or forests of the upper Midwest. We have jobs and responsibilities, relatives and friends; lives that at least for the time being, limit our options. And there is also the feeling that hundreds or even thousands of dollars spent on preparations could be wasted if The Schumer doesn't ever Hit The Fan. (Doubtful, but it does cross one's mind) A sense of urgency is implied; however, a caution against panic is warranted. It's easy in this post 9/11 age to let fear control your life. Don't! Simply take comfort in the fact that doing something to prepare for various scenarios, however big or small, will most importantly increase your odds of survival in the worst of emergencies, but also increase your comfort in the less dire situations and even improve your life now.

You Don't Have to Move to Idaho--Survival Mindset for City Folk

I wanted to write an article for people like myself who are in the beginning stages of survival preparation. People on limited budgets, who may not live on farms, or maybe have never served in the military or had experience with guns. Those people who live in or near a city, particularly congested east coast cities. I write for those city dwellers and suburbanites in less than ideal regions; students, urban professionals, everyday people. However, it can apply to just about anyone who is not already well "squared away". I will attempt to provide ideas on where to begin, how to prioritize and how to prepare mentally and with limited monetary resources for a multitude of events. I will try to focus on things that can be useful now and for a lifetime. My intent is not to

instruct on what exactly is needed for every particular individual; there are more capable advisors for that. I aim to get people thinking and to provide a more general approach to surviving the times.

Get Your Mind Right

First and foremost is your mindset. Think about your values, your morals. What is most important in your life? Who is most important to you? How far are you willing to go to protect them? In the most serious situation, we would do anything, right? Why let it come to that? There's good reason to get motivated. Put yourself and your family in the best possible position for survival *now*, so you don't have to act out of desperation later. Also, think about what you spend your money on and where you spend it. Do you really need that big screen plasma television? What are you teaching your children about spirituality, health, money? Just as important, what are others teaching your children? You see where I'm going here. It's not all about beans, bullets and Band-Aids. It's about your mentality. Only the strongest-willed individuals will make it through tough times, be it [TEOTWAWKI](#), high school, or simply life as an adult in the 21st century.

Beginning Logistics

Now think about tangible items to have on hand. Make a list. Just jot down ideas, then categorize (based on cost or type) and prioritize later. Your location and climate will impact your list. Set up your inventory and storage on varying degrees of threat and length of time of crisis. For instance a blackout that lasts 30 days vs. a full scale economic collapse. Will you be staying put or escaping to a safer location? What criteria will you base your decision on? What would you miss most if something tragic happened? Put yourself in that situation. The obvious answers are food and more importantly, water. If you are human, you already eat and drink water, so this is nothing new. You just need to think about having more of it on hand. In turn, storage is needed. We find room for other items; we can find room for potentially life saving sustenance. Package enough easily transportable food for 30 days. A durable plastic tote should work well. Then store enough for much longer periods of time. Buy a little extra food with each grocery shopping trip and date it. Not extra chips or TV dinners, get extra items such as dried fruit or granola that will last for an extended period of time, without electricity. Buy in bulk and incorporate raw grains into your diet. Start a garden. Not only will you know how to prepare these foods now, you will be more accustomed to eating them later, not to mention the health benefits. Think about buying a food dehydrator. They are reasonably priced. Keep a few five gallon containers of water in your garage, basement or crawlspace. If you live in an apartment, do

you have a spare room or a patio? For long term situations, any amount of water that can be conveniently stored in most homes will be consumed surprisingly fast. Think about other sources and get a good water filter. Again, this is prudent to have anyway. A [compact] portable filter might come in handy also. With both food and water, as much as possible, use your storage as supplement, not a main source.

Little by little set aside money and acquire items you will need. Keep an extra supply of first aid items on hand. Don't forget some of the less apparent items like toilet paper, sanitation, batteries, tools, candles, medications and fuel. Keep some spare 5 gallon containers of stabilized gas in your shed. It's not wasteful as it can be used in your vehicles at any time. And with the rising gas prices it may prove to be a worthwhile investment. Don't forget to rotate [your stocks]. Consider buying a generator. In a full scale crisis, drawing attention to yourself and home with a loud, light-producing device is not going to be very smart, but when power goes out and the masses aren't yet rioting in the streets, a generator will be nice to have. Get a portable model. Study maps and plan different routes to and from your home. Keep an emergency kit in your car. This is by no means a complete list, it's designed to get you started. Yes, the preparations are abundant. Don't get overwhelmed into thinking you have to get it all at once. The key is minimization. Minimize the chances that you will be taken by surprise, wondering why you didn't do something earlier. Start small and with things you can use in everyday life. The wealth of available information on specifics is immense. This web page is a great resource. It's up to you to educate yourself and determine exactly what and how much you will need.

Help Others Help You

Working together will be to your advantage during crunch time. Find strength in numbers. Seek out others who share your values and have skills you lack. How can you help each other? Build relationships and share ideas. Educate others, but be careful as you can imagine the funny looks you might get if you start prophesying doomsday. And guess who's doorstep they'll be standing on come crunch time. I am a firm believer that the more people around you that are prepared, the better off all of us are. If your neighbors can take care of themselves, then it's more likely your preparations will be preserved in the event of crisis. In short, at least fewer of your neighbors will be knocking on your door the same day of an event.

Securing Your Castle

I'd like to take a moment to discuss security, specifically firearms. If you have studied survival even a little, then you are aware that arming yourself ranks

high on the list of recommendations. Perhaps some of you share my reluctance to build an armory in my home. I have children, and being married to someone who is strictly against guns makes security a particularly difficult element in my survival preparations. While I recognize security as an absolute must, I have reservations about keeping a device designed to kill in my home. Ironically the reasons not to own a gun are the very reasons why I feel I should own gun. The reasons are aged 2-11, not including the Mrs. In a volatile scenario that could spiral out of control; I would feel helpless without weapons to protect my family. All the stockpiling of food and water will be futile if some thug can easily take it from you (and maybe your lives with it). If you do decide to own a firearm (or firearms), don't flaunt it and please educate yourself and practice. Keep a chamber or trigger lock in place and store the ammunition in a different location if necessary. In addition, don't rule out other ways of defending yourself. Albeit, less formidable, they are less expensive. These include pepper spray, knives, batons, stun guns and martial arts. I don't think I need to remind people that these are mostly ineffective against attackers with guns, or even large groups of unarmed evil doers. However, they may prove useful in that they are very portable and can be used in less dire emergencies. Deterrence in the form of dogs, fencing, motion detection, alarm systems and location should also be considered. Protection from those who intend to harm is imperative and yet another item that is useful even today.

Back to Basics

Take an assessment of your skill sets. What knowledge do you possess that would be of value in a crisis situation? Don't worry, if needed, your survival instincts will take hold, but some basic skills can make you an asset and will help you survive. Develop and hone these skills now. Start simply; make your own bread, catch your own fish, grow your own vegetables, prepare healthier, less processed meals. I enjoy beer, I brew my own. It's rewarding and I've learned much from it. Learn basic plumbing, carpentry and electrical skills. You don't have to be a master mechanic, but any vehicle owner should know the basics; how to change the oil, filters and spark plugs. Having a skill can be just as valuable as having an inventory; you never leave home without it and could earn you a spot in a group if needed. Maybe you are a dog trainer or electronics engineer. Don't forget your kids. Teach your children to swim, hunt, split wood or sow a garden. It seems that all too often, in our frenzied lifestyles, we focus all our energy on skills that will get us fat paychecks and forget the simpler but more important things. Get back to basics. Slow down. Simplify. If something isn't adding positive value to your life, eliminate it. Many preparedness items can be fun and done as a family. Go camping, take

hikes, etc. If you have kids, consider home schooling them. Most importantly get to know your children; spend time with them.

It's Up to You

You can make self sufficiency a way of life without going "off the deep end," so to speak. Taking action will not only give you peace of mind, a sort of insurance policy, but also can improve your life in the meantime. Many corollary benefits will emerge. Here are some that come to mind: Less reliance on outside institutions, money saved, healthier eating habits, time spent with your family. Regardless of the future, you'll be teaching your children to be prepared, to think logically and independently and not to have a lazy, consumerist attitude of entitlement that dominates our culture today.

This writing isn't packed full of technical how-to information, but I sincerely hope it helps to serve those of you that may feel overwhelmed and don't know where to begin and to breathe hope into those who are obliged to retain their current lives without major upheaval. There are many who see the challenges involved with getting ready and are scared into doing nothing. For one reason or another they go back to sleep, their head comfortably lodged in the sand. Don't be one of those people. Enjoy the time and blessings you have, but be ready. An old proverb says "Trust in God, but tie up your camel." Just the same, pray for peace, but prepare for war.