

3 Mistakes That Will Get You Killed During a Crisis

In a survival scenario, you probably won't get a second chance.

When the power is down, when the streets are empty and when there's smoke forming at the horizon at an alarming rate, there are certain mistakes that will get you killed. Do them and you will end up on the statistics list just like the unprepared we keep talking about.

And every scenario that cuts access to communication or creates a hole in your supplies triggers a response in most people that, if followed, brings only disaster. In a crisis or emergency situation, the real ones and not the ones that people binge on Netflix and take as survival guidelines, you can either make the right call, or you can join the others in the statistics and not make it home to your loved ones.

This is the problem that bugs me more than I like to admit, the fact that most folks still think and believe that survival is about stockpiling food, gathering the gear advertised as being "the best" or prepping in a certain way that some experts swear is "the right way".

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I want to know the truth?

The difference between living and dying often comes down to what your brain dictates. The psychology behind your behavior and the instincts it triggers. And if you screw it up because you've seen it done, read about it, or heard it somewhere, you're done when the world goes sideways. There's no turning back from these mistakes.

So let's talk about the three most common mistakes that get people killed when everything falls apart. At least in my opinion, since I've seen them happening over and over again and I've noticed that humans seem to follow a certain pattern even if it's not the smartest or safest one. These are not hypothetical mistakes and these are not the "maybes". These are real, time-tested and battlefield-proven killers. They are mental traps that put people in danger and end lives, again and again, like clockwork. I believe that when the brown stuff hits the fan, if you make any of them, and you won't see tomorrow.

You just had to be the know it all guy

You heard something like a bang, maybe shouting, or perhaps a long silence after the screaming of your fellow humans stopped. You looked out your window and you weren't able to make something out of it. Then you did the stupid thing and you went to investigate, to find out what was going on and if there's still danger.

That's mistake number one: curiosity.

You might think this only happens to expandable characters in movies or soft civilians. It doesn't and that's why we have that old saying of how curiosity killed the cat. Even people with military experience or preppers with years of training

that believe they have it all figured out, make these mistakes. All because humans are curious creatures by nature and because we are somehow wired in these modern times to investigate threats. Sure it's in our DNA to be curious about things, but it seems that these modern times have made us dumb. More than ever, we want information, control, and clarity, and self-preservation comes second to all of that.

However, if you are curious, or too eager to find out what's causing all the trouble during a crisis, well you might as well sign your will. That instinct that keeps pushing you closer and closer to the "source" of the trouble, may very well become your executioner.

It happened in New Orleans in 2005

After Hurricane Katrina hit, we all saw that entire neighborhoods were submerged and cut off. Even more, we saw how it all became a lawless land in some parts and how "looters will be shot" signs kept popping up. In the Lower Ninth Ward, some residents were desperate to figure out what was happening and how long will their ordeal last. They wandered into flood zones on foot, trying to "check things out" and many were never seen again. Some were robbed, assaulted, or even killed after being mistaken for looters. Even emergency responders later admitted there were "no-go" zones where even they wouldn't enter because the human factor was too dangerous and some gangs had taken control.

Wanna know how fast curiosity gets you killed? Walk into someone else's territory when the s*it hits the fan and try to talk your way out when there are no more rules – when food's short and order is gone.

And if you think it's different in your town? You're wrong.

The Minneapolis Riots of 2020

During the riots, it was televised and the internet was full of shorts showing how multiple civilians walked toward burning buildings and ended up looting because everyone around them was doing the same. All after just wanting to “see for themselves” what was going out. They even filmed with their phones what they were doing. Some got surrounded by angry mobs and others were beaten, robbed, or shot. I remember seeing a man trying to defend a pawn or jewelry shop (I don’t remember exactly) with a sword, and he got jumped within minutes.

Curiosity isn’t the right card to play when the streets are boiling and I believe, it’s almost every time a death wish. Why leave the safety of your home to document everything? It’s not your job to do so.

And here’s the thing: in a real crisis, you don’t need more information and you most likely need to disappear or lay low. Stay under the radar and let the storm pass, and do the assessment when it’s safe to do so. There’s no prize for playing reporter when bullets are flying. Are the Facebook or TikTok likes worth losing your life over?

When you hear something weird or out of place, you need to stay low. Stay silent and let it go.

And don’t give me that line about wanting to help people. Not everyone can be saved and you should get rid of that Superman complex. You won’t be able to help anyone one when you’re bleeding out on concrete with your face smashed in.

You keep trusting strangers

You saw someone waving or perhaps crying and suddenly your instinct to give a helping gets triggered. Even if you were alone, the primal need to connect kicked in. So you approached and you said to yourself that, “Hey, maybe they know something and I can help them. Maybe we can work together and figure it

out.”

Then you get jumped for the fun of it (remember when young folks used to sucker punch strangers and post it on social media?). Perhaps you get robbed without getting hurt or perhaps you stood up for yourself and they leave you to die in a ditch.

Mistake number two: letting people get too close.

In every single survival, SHTF or crisis scenario, whether it's war, disaster, grid-down, or famine, some people will always survive by taking from others. They are predators who feast on the weak. And no, they don't always look like thugs coming your way. Sometimes the art of deceit is being used before brute force and they could be mothers, kids, or even priests.

It doesn't matter really and when desperation sets in, morals evaporate. No matter how well you think you know someone, your neighbors or perhaps your work “buddies”, people will kill you with a smile if it helps them survive or gets them one step closer to safety.

Let's look at Texas in 2017 during hurricane Harvey

I remember that when the floodwaters hit Houston, it wasn't just nature that turned hostile. People did too, and they turned on each other for various reasons. Looting crews coordinated through social media and moved through neighborhoods in boats and stolen vehicles, pretending to be volunteer rescuers. They'd call out for help or wave folks over like they were running legit operations.

However, once those folks got close, they turned on them and

robbed them at gunpoint. Some were beaten and others just vanished. Police later confirmed that armed robbery and home invasions spiked during the chaos, and in certain areas, civilians were warned not to answer their doors, even if the person on the other side claimed to be part of a rescue team.

Think about it, you are wet and tired from trying to save what little you have. You probably haven't eaten all day and your street looks like a swamp. There's no cell signal and you hear people screaming for help all around you. Then some guy comes up to your door and in the middle of it all, he suddenly looks like your guardian angel. He's got a vest on, maybe one that says FEMA and that's enough to gain your trust. You go with him and you're not to be seen again.

That's the danger of letting your guard down. In disasters, people don't always show up wearing warning signs. Sometimes that just wave friendly and put up a big smile. And if you're still running on normal-world rules, if you still think a friendly face means safety, chances are, you're gonna get played, hard.

The Houston Floods from 2017

I know from my brother that looting gangs drove around in boats pretending to rescue people. Once they got close to their targets, the victims were stripped of valuables or assaulted. One man was shot after refusing to give up his supplies. Others were found dead in homes that were supposedly "safe zones" set up by locals.

I keep telling people that proximity kills and I stand by my words. Let people get too close when the lights are off and the cops aren't coming and it won't end well for you and yours.

Look, I'm not saying become a sociopath or paranoid, but you need to understand that strangers are liabilities during a survival scenario and you don't have the luxury of making new

friends.

If you're within arm's reach of someone, you better be damn sure they're trustworthy. And if you're not sure if it's a friend or foe? Keep walking and keep your weapon in reach. Sleep with an eye open because a soft heart is a bullet magnet when everything's going to hell.

Your gut is your friend, so you better trust it.

That tightening in your chest you feel when something's not quite right. That chill at the base of your spine and that sudden rush in your body to leave, even though "nothing looks wrong." That's your gut or your animal brain (or call it instinct if you like). Ignore it because you want to be calm and rational and you might not have a chance to make this mistake again.

Your modern and logical brain told you to stay put and now you're bleeding and watching your loved ones get attacked or being dragged off.

All of this because you didn't listen to your gut.

Mistake number three: You silenced your instinct.

We all like to think we'd know danger when we see it, but the reality is quite different and your brain is too slow in a crisis.

That's not an insult or me trying to shame someone. It's just plain and simple biology that works as intended. Logical thinking is a second class citizen when survival is at stake and instincts are running the show. Your animal brain sees patterns, smells threats, hears silence where there shouldn't

be any. It doesn't waste time trying to explain what's going on and it acts or tries to (depending on everyone's personality).

California, 2018 – The Paradise Fire

I've read a lot about this and I found out that some survivors later reported they "felt" something was wrong before official alerts went out, just like some left during the covid-19 pandemic and isolated themselves before the authorities told them to do so. In this case, those who trusted that gut feeling packed and left early, to be ahead of the heard as they put it. Others waited and tried to figure out what was going on and started overthinking. Some of these rational folks died in their cars, trapped by flames even if they were, in some cases, minutes behind the ones who left.

Gut instincts aren't a make-believe but rather primitive pattern detection systems passed down through thousands of generations of humans who didn't get eaten because they ran before the sabretooth tiger showed up.

The Robb Elementary Shooting from Uvalde in 2022

As the media reported, some of the kids survived because they hid immediately after hearing noises that didn't "sound right." Others kids waited, thinking it was just another safety drill or fireworks being set off by pranksters. Some adults paused and didn't react when danger was close. That hesitation cost lives.

Your instinct doesn't care about what's normality and it most certainly doesn't care if it's embarrassing to run. Your brain just wants to live and it triggers various impulses to help you achieve just that, live. However if you ignore it because you don't want to look stupid you're making a grave mistake and you will end up looking dead rather than stupid.

Don't Die Stupid

The thing I've noticed over the years is that these mistakes are not rare. They're not exotic or complicated as some might want you to believe. They don't sneak up on you like something that seems out of place or a threat that it's obvious. elite tactical threat. No, they come wrapped in normalcy and that's what makes them dangerous. They're familiar to you and they feel right. I believe these are the main reasons that people keep making them, again and again, every time the world around them starts crumbling.

It's not that folks want to die. It's that they think they're being smarter than everyone else when really, they're just playing into the same traps that have killed thousands before them. They get curious and they follow the noise. They trust the wrong persons and they shake off that creeping gut feeling because nothing seems wrong on paper. That's when it happens, in that split second where everything flips.

Once you're in it, once the mistake is real, there's no pause button, no chance to rewind. That's when you learn the hard way that instincts don't shout. They whisper. And if you ignore them long enough, you miss the whisper... then you bleed out with your mouth open, wondering why.



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THE DARK AGES**

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You don't have to be some hardened war dog or gearhead hoarder. You don't have to spend your paycheck on tactical

gear or memorize bushcraft handbooks cover to cover. However, if you don't get your head straight and if you don't start thinking like a survivor instead of a spectator, you're not gonna last when things fall apart.

It's not about being the toughest. It's not about owning the right flashlight or knowing how to skin a rabbit. It's about how you think when everything turns sideways. It's almost always about letting go of comfort and choosing caution over curiosity, distance over trust, instinct over logic, when it counts.

And make no mistake, it will count. Maybe not today or maybe not next year, but at some point, when the grid goes down go out and the thin fabric of society gets ripped to pieces, you'll be standing there with a choice to make. Stay curious, get close, second-guess your gut, and you're done. Or walk the smarter path. The lonelier, colder, quieter one. The path that keeps you safe and breathing.

Contrary to what you see in movies or what experts write in books, survival isn't about playing hero. I believe it's about not dying stupid.

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