

Daily Survival Tips

Everyone in the prepping and survival community understands that self-defense is integral to survival. There are probably a few anti-gun people amongst our ranks, either because of their personal political beliefs or because they live in a country that doesn't allow private ownership of firearms. By and large, we are a conservative community that supports our Second Amendment rights.

I see a lot of preppers who have extensive gun collections and who have stockpiled sufficient ammunition to last for years in the event of a TEOTWAWKI event. While I'm sure that not every prepper that owns a gun owns 20 of them or has 10,000 rounds of assorted ammunition, I'm also sure that most preppers have more than one firearm and more ammo on hand than a hunter would consider necessary. Our bigger problem is probably not going to be having a gun to use but **deciding which gun to use in the case of a disaster.**

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But through the years, primarily through the last couple of years, as we've dealt with COVID, my understanding of survival has changed somewhat. We preppers and survivalists tend to think of significant disasters as something that suddenly comes upon us, forcing us to switch over to survival mode at a moment's notice. As we've all seen in the constant series of disasters that we've had to deal with since the beginning of 2020, that model doesn't always fit with reality.

In an authentic sense, **we've been living in a constant state of survival since COVID hit** early in 2020. People have joked about the disaster of the month, but the reality is that there

have been a lot of disasters in the last two years. They don't always feel like disasters because they don't hit everyone the same and because many of them come on slowly rather than suddenly.

The on-again, off-again supply shortages we've been dealing with are a perfect example of this. We've talked about the potential for food shortages in the prepping community for years. But when it finally happened, many didn't even recognize it as the disaster we've prepared for. Preppers were getting in line at the grocery store to buy toilet paper, milk, and eggs, rather than using what they had in their stockpile.

I wasn't ready for the shortages in the store. But there's a compelling reason for that. At the time, I was recently remarried and living in a small apartment. So my new wife and I hadn't yet built up a stockpile. That was one of the things my former wife got out of the divorce, even though she was supposed to split it with me. I watched, day by day, as the stores emptied until I suddenly realized that we were in a disaster and that I wasn't ready for it. I decided I'd better hurry to stock up before it was too late. So I guess I was one of the "hoarders" that people complained about, stocking up at the last minute. As it turned out, we did well and never ran out of anything.

The big thing that this did in me is that I've lived every day as if I was living amid a disaster since that day. Every day was and still is a day of survival. When I can stock up on supplies, I do, and when I can't, I use what I've got.

But the big difference is how I look at the world around me. In my mind, there is no longer a time or condition that I call "normal." Instead, **I see every day as a survival challenge** to be overcome. The challenges may be light on some days and hard on others, but it's all about surviving from one day to the next, while I try and make it easier to stay the next one, no

matter what it might bring.

That may sound like a subtle difference, but I assure you, it isn't. Adopting that mindset causes me to see things considerably differently, focusing on how that thing or situation I am looking at might threaten my family's survival. While most things aren't a threat, I don't assume they aren't. Instead, I look at it to decide whether or not the situation is a threat before determining if I can ignore it or need to deal with it somehow.

In a sense, we all do this to some extent, at least in the case of things we have a preconceived notion are a potential survival threat. All I've done is expand on that, ensuring I don't miss anything that might end up being a danger to my family. In doing so, I've been able to avert some minor problems, mostly seeing potential shortages and getting what I needed before the stores ran out.

Just the other day, I was in our small-town grocery store and noticed that the meat case was empty, except for a little chicken that one of the butchers was in the process of stocking in the case. My first reaction was to think that there was another meat shortage starting, so I'd better grab a few packages of that chicken. But it turned out all that was going on was that the refrigeration mechanism for the case had gone out the night before, causing them to empty it.

The next day I went back to the store to buy dog food. But there were only three or four bags of dog food on the shelves. This is a small store, but dog food typically takes up half an aisle, much more than what I saw. Asking one of the workers, I discovered that they were having trouble getting dog food shipments. So I went somewhere that I knew would have it and stocked up before the situation got any worse. Had I not been thinking about a potential supply problem, I probably would have just gotten what I could have and not bothered to stock up.

But there's much more to it than that. I'm not just looking to see what's about to run out in the grocery stores. That's only one of the problems that we all face. Another is **an increased crime**. Ever since George Floyd was killed, the crime rate across the country has been rising. That's a fundamental change, as it was trending downward for several years before 2020. We live in a world where we are much more likely to suffer at the hands of criminals than we were just a few short years ago.

Just last night, my wife was followed home by a couple of young toughs who drove their car right into our driveway after her. Being made uncomfortable by the situation, she called me, and I came out of the house to confront them. That wasn't what they wanted, as they suddenly decided that it was an excellent time to be somewhere else.

While a fairly small situation, there are several takeaways from it. I live in a small town, so such situations aren't as commonplace as they would be in the city. At the same time, we don't have a massive police force to call upon for protection. People here have to take care of themselves, but then, that's the way it should be anyway.

Had I walked out there unarmed and those two guys wanted to mix it up, I would have been in trouble. They had me outnumbered, and I'm considerably older than they are. But I didn't go out there unarmed. I carry concealed, and I have for years. So I had a pistol on my person, as well as a tactical knife. I also stopped to pick up a walking stick on my way out the door. That gave me a range of weapons available to me, should it become necessary.

But the most significant difference having those weapons did was to give me confidence. Please make no mistake about it; **confidence is essential when facing criminals**. They are astute observers of people and are accustomed to picking out those they can intimidate and those who will stand up to them. They

want to find the ones who will be intimidated to commit their crimes with impunity. Walking in confidence throws a wrench in their game plan, causing them to give up and go looking elsewhere for a victim.

By the way, this wasn't the only time I had this sort of encounter. We used to have a couple of neighbors who were pretty sure were drug dealers. These guys looked like they could have been football linemen and thought they owned the apartment building where my wife and I first lived. One night, they decided they would tell us how things were, so they pounded on our door. When my wife opened it, they started to harass her verbally, but their tone changed considerably when I pulled her aside and took her place.

Did their tone change because I was a man instead of a woman? Maybe, but I doubt it. They knew I was there. They didn't realize that I was confident in my ability to take them both out with the gun that was hanging on my belt. I've carried concealed for years, and I carry all the time, so even though I was in my home, I was ready to deal with the situation, even two bigger, tougher guys that wanted to put the fear of the devil in me.

This is not usually discussed, but there's a difference that carrying a weapon has upon us, imputing confidence in us to deal with dangerous situations. I didn't have to draw that gun to help me get through that situation because my knowledge that I could draw it if I had to was enough to give me the confidence I needed to stare down those two young toughs. Like the pair who followed my wife home, they saw my confidence, and it caused them to pause and back off.

Would that happen in an actual survival situation? That's something we're all going to have to wait to see. Each situation is unique, and we might very well find that it sometimes works while not working others. In either case, we are much more likely to survive any situation if we have the

right mental attitude, including having confidence that we can survive it.

Attitude is always an essential part of survival, whether we're talking about surviving an attack by a criminal or surviving getting caught by a natural disaster. Whatever we're facing, we need to have a positive mental attitude to face the problem and overcome it.

Our ancestors lived with a daily survival mentality, especially those living on the frontier. The loss of that attitude is something that modern society does to us. They make us dependent on infrastructure and supply chains, taking away our independence in the process. Then, when they can't meet those needs, we are the ones left holding the bag.

I don't care if today's survival situation is facing off against potential criminals, shortages in the grocery store, or getting stranded in a snowstorm. You've got to survive it.



That's not all that different than those ancestors living through drought, stampedes, and the other problems of the day. The big difference is that they knew that they had to make it on their own, while we have become all too used to being able to depend upon "the system."

Living every day as if it is a survival situation will help you in doing that, if for no other reason that you won't have to change over to "survival mode" when you hear there's a problem. When the news announces the next big issue everyone's facing, you'll be ready for it. For that matter, you'll

probably know about it before the news media makes it official. So you'll have a head-start on the problem.