

WHAT IF THEY HAD THE APOCALYPSE AND NOBODY CAME?

What to do if nothing bad ever happens.

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Survivalism is much like a religion, cause brother, you got to have faith. Without the firm conviction that all is going to Hell in a hand basket, preparations just don't make a lot of sense. Even the poorest amounts us spend a considerable percentage of our disposable income and a lot of our time worrying about and preparing for some kind of system crash. Even those who only have a few months of food in the pantry and a few extra cords of firewood set by, with perhaps a few extra boxes of ammo rather than getting all crazy about the whole thing and having five years worth of wheat berries and a proverbial arsenal with twenty thousand rounds set by and a rural retreat, even those opting for a minimalist approach must still go out of their way in time and money. In fact, those with minimal fears often have to work harder at the whole exercise since funds are limited. When your spouse does not support you but instead tolerates a certain expenditure of funds to amuse you and keep you out of her hair it is a lot harder to have a meaningful stockpile of post-apocalypse necessities. Not that it takes much. You can still buy surplus rifles under \$100 retail with their surplus ammo under \$5 a box, and wheat is still in the \$7-8 per fifty pound sack at the feed store. Mail order grain mills are \$25 after shipping costs from survivalNsurplus.com. LED lights are now sold quite cheaply at Wal-Mart and they are cheaper than kerosene lanterns after fuel costs are factored in. If you already own a firearm, just buying several sacks of white flour and a few LED's while making sure you have enough ammo might be enough and cost you nothing more than a few bucks each payday. Throw in a few extra canned goods every time you encounter a sale and pretty soon you have a serious pantry. It is more willpower and creativeness than purchasing power that you need.

Don't get me wrong, you will spend a considerable amount of cash. Once you convince yourself of the righteousness of preparing for disasters, even the most

careful and prudent minimalist approach will see you investing into a lot of different ideas. Solar panels are three hundred dollars each (emergency blackout power), four wheel drives trucks are usually twice the cost of other used cars so figure at least an extra thousand there (to get to a retreat or through a snow storm) and pellet stoves are much cheaper to operate in wood scarce areas but the cost initially at \$1200 and up are unreal (you see the cost of natural gas double this winter it might not be such a bad idea). And that is just a "normal" household that lacks an arsenal. If you buy into global warming you need to relocate (thousands of dollars) and take a pay cut (thousands per year). If you buy into Peak Oil by retrofitting the house to solar can run thousands. Buying and hoarding gold and silver coins is never a bad investment as if nothing else the metal content will protect you against inflation, but you will still spend thousands on them and it is cash that is tied up and can't be withdrawn without a penalty (5 to 10% buying and selling and taxes buying for a total of 25% loss for your greenbacks). Come time for barter you gain purchasing power as there will be a scarcity of precious metal out there but today just switching around back and forth to paper money you take a big loss. But how else do you combat inflation? Housing has shown itself to be a suckers game except for the lucky few who timed it just right.

You will also spend a lot of your time and effort. When you go out of your way to get healthy by eating better and exercising you benefit by feeling better, having more energy, etc. But if you are doing it to avoid doctors visits because of future disruptions and lack of care this counts as a "survivalist cost". As does researching for hours on the Internet about alternate medicines and herbal treatments. And learning new hobbies is both rewarding intellectually and financially but when you are directed by necessity rather than by desire (mechanics to do your own repairs, electrician work to wire your own 12v system, etc) it is another cost of self-sufficiency. And going to the shooting range, don't get me started. What a chore!! Okay, obviously we wouldn't be doing any of this if we didn't want to. We could chuck the whole thing and say Screw It. There is no one holding our feet to the fire. No one forcing us to invest most of our disposable income and a good part of our spare time into survivalists goods and activities. No, it is totally self inflicted. Why do we do this to ourselves? What makes us go out into the wilderness on a canoe trip with our buddies, the faint whisper of banjo music in the breeze,

freezing at night and getting eaten alive by mosquitoes? The copious amounts of beer at the end of each night are just for re-hydrating, not relaxing you understand. So why do it? Are we trying to connect to our true selves the hunter/gatherers? In mans' entire existence the majority of it was not spent in front of a machine or a plow but wandering around killing wild animals. Do we still contain a shared memory of our "natural" state of being? Is it considered a healthier environment than living alongside a pigpen? Did the human species give up freedom for security? Most likely, but since hunter/gatherers each needed dozens of square miles per person to survive off of natures bounty it seems silly to assume you or I would be here at all without the advancement of agriculture and the population explosion it allowed.

No, we do all this because a little knowledge is a very dangerous thing, and you can't put a Genie back into his bottle until he is ready. Once you learn about all the Bad People out there and the pain they wish to cause you, plus once you have learned that there are other folks out there that know how to prepare to survive calamities, it starts you down a one way road. Once you learn that our country went from a three week supply of grain in its stockpiles but sold that off and we are down to a few days supply, it makes it a little difficult to sleep soundly at night if your food cupboard is not well stocked (incidentally that example may or may not be true as I only read it from one source). Once you know that almost every nation outside the Middle East has seen a peak in its oil production (and there are rumors even they are flat on their output) and that there has been no major oil field discovery globally in 40 years and that new finds are less every year than usage, well then it is just a little harder to be content relying on non-renewable fuels to heat your winter abode. Once Katrina showed how little the FedGov cared about the welfare of its citizens it is hard to think they might be around to help in any disaster (at the same time as Katrina, a local Indian tribe had a wildfire destroy most of their towns homes and the stored up winters wood supply- no one was interested helping them out). Once you realize that the Federalies have resorted to inflation to pay their bills (remember our national debt is bigger than the value of all remaining oil in the Middle East or the value of the total amount of gold in the world) it makes it hard to keep all your assets in paper rather than tangible goods. When more money is spent in a few days in Afghanistan than in the whole year manning the border to Mexico it is hard not to

believe that Bad Weapons From Bad People will be smuggled in quite easily. When the only job growth is in the public sector or in those areas affected by a credit bubble, it can only mean our economy is doing a lot worse than we know and it is only prudent to stockpile food and ammo. When the ratio of Social Security beneficiaries to workers is only one to three and in five years time we will see a huge wave of Baby Boomers retire (followed by many more waves of helpless humanity) it is hard to believe our economy can take that kind of sudden expense. For all this, and many other reasons, it just seems impossible to believe that it will be business as usual at the ol' Uncle Sam ranch. The need to prepare for survival just seems quite natural. A foregone conclusion. Money in the bank.

But what if it isn't? Everything we have discussed here was a big deal in the 1970's. I even have an old copy of a passive solar book that talks about the coming peak in US oil production-written twelve years before the fact and what we are just now getting around to worrying about. Precious metals were jumping in price, gasoline prices went to historic highs, there was talk of truckers strikes stopping the shipment of food, inflation was the highest since the War Of Northern Aggression, there was the real possibility of nuclear destruction. We have been there and done that. This is all a repeat. Peak Oil globally has replaced domestic run down of supply. Dirty nukes have replaced Soviet ICBM's. China with either its military or its economy threatening us has replaced the threat of Soviet global dominance. Running out of oil has replaced OPEC refusing to sell us any. Invading the Middle East for oil using nukes was popular back then, now we use conventional forces. Ten percent inflation thirty years ago caused panic, now we just hide the real rate of ten percent and call it three and Wal-Mart backs up the fiction with cheaper goods from overseas. Reagan used scare tactics of Social Security insolvency to increase its withholding tax, now we invent fantasy birth rates or immigration rates to stretch out the time remaining before the next insolvency. The coming American Dictatorship was all the rage back when Tricky Dick ruled by intimidation and trickery and a five o'clock shadow gave his features the required demonic image. We complain about Arab unjust imprisonment now, back then the FBI were busy sending American Indian activists to jail for life using doctored evidence by planting M16's at crime scenes. Back then parents were literally being killed if they wished to home school their children, now they are set up and killed in "self defense"

in 3am raids in order to finance the War On Drugs through asset forfeiture. This is all old school. No one is rewriting any scenarios on civilization being flushed down the toilet. Even Y2K was merely a rewrite of an atmospheric EMP pulse wiping out the nations electronics. Nothing new, just reruns.

So, we pulled through the seventies. What is to say we can't do it again? I for one don't believe we can. All Empires collapse, all paper money becomes worthless, all throughout history and without any exceptions. But what if I am wrong? What if we muddle through yet once again? It is not really like any other country isn't worse off than we are. Even China relies on our consumption to continue its growth. Even Switzerland, that last bastion of conservatism, inflates its money. Why should we be worried about our funny money when everybody else is using Monopoly money also? If our whole economy is reliant of financial services, why be concerned with massive credit expansion and a derivatives market approaching fifty times our GNP? Is it really different this time? Again, I think we are in for a world of hurt. Looking long term there is no way we can continue milking our former global dominance (even our military strength is dependant on borrowing money from foreigners) to prop up our economy. But I am just stating the obvious here. Why else would you be reading this gloom and doom report if I didn't believe the sky is falling? But, I have been wrong before. Things haven't gone into Mad Max Mode. What if we are destined to continue to muddle through? There is still a lot of nationalizing the FedGov can do to prop up the economy. Still a lot of areas we can throw a credit bubble at. Still a lot of pork barrel projects we can try. We could go into hyperinflation mode to keep things going awhile. Lots of tricks up Uncle Sammie's sleeve.

Don't stop preparing, don't stop panicking. Don't allow your paranoia to dull. But just ask yourself the question, what if we never have a system collapse? What do you do with all your supplies, and have you wasted your time and money, or not? Before we get to the brass tacks here, allow me to wax philosophically. Life is a journey, and the journey is more important than the destination. Enjoy it. Take enjoyment from stimulating your mind to a knew challenge. Enjoy meeting that challenge, of thinking up new and brilliant ways of solving a problem. And then hope like Hell you never need any of your survival gear. I dread the day my investment pays off, don't you? I mean, I play a good game and brag on

wanting to be a king among men come the collapse of civilization. But I really don't mean that, per se. I joke around, but I really would like to see society remain intact all things considered. Survivalism is a hobby, not a death wish. What do you do with all your supplies if nothing happens? Easy, you give them to whatever child or family member seems interested in facing future threats better prepared. Wheat sealed in Mylar and tucked away in plastic buckets should remain edible forever baring extreme temperature fluctuations. Firearms kept oiled should last centuries, its ammo will degrade in time but sealed in cans has a good chance of lasting decades (and should be rotated with target practice anyway). A homestead in the country can be passed down generations. Nothing is going to go to waste unless your descendants sell, mutilate, neglect or use up your supplies. And unless you can visit them from the grave you have no control over that, so just consider who you pick for inheritance carefully and don't worry about it too much. So you won't waste your money, how about your time? As I said, the journey is the important part, not the destination. You did something useful by preparing. You gave yourself restful sleep by eliminating worry, you provided for your family and you gave yourself the means to avoid seeking charity from others which is a very neighborly thing to do. You were a good person. That should be enough to ease your mind. Survival supplies are an insurance policy, worthy enough in itself, but it also helps other people. Hell, lets face it, we are so freakin' pure of heart here we should be getting an instant pass to heaven here. Well, on second thought probably not. Actually, self sufficiency is most likely just one of those thing everybody is supposed to do and only a few of us do. So at the very least we are a great bunch of people. I knew there was a reason I loved myself so.

