



SURVIVAL MINDSET:
Keeping Your Calm and Assertiveness

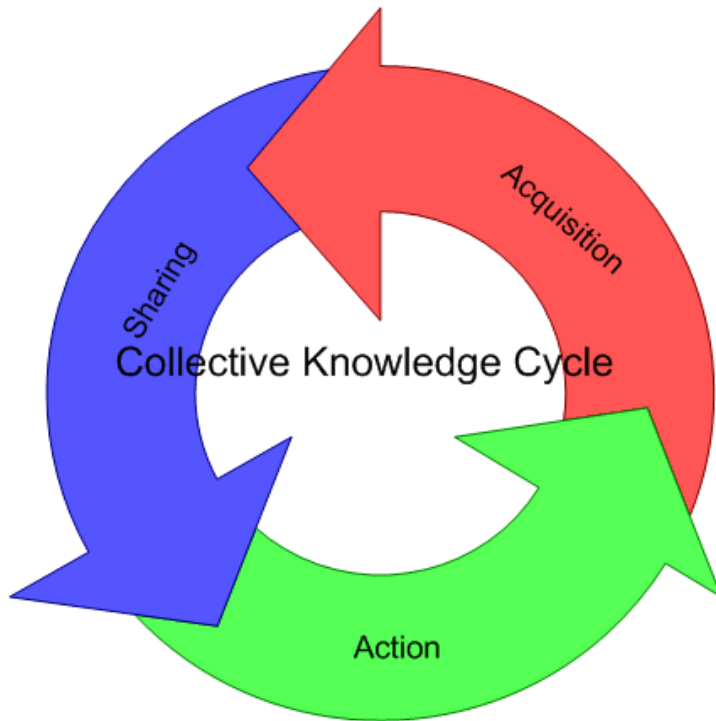
**AFTER
THE FALL**

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Why You Need to Prepare for an Emergency

An emergency can strike at any time and leave you struggling to put food on the table, pay the bills or even be happy. Emergencies do not always come in the form of terrorist attacks or natural disasters.



The goal is to be prepared in ANY emergency—big or small. Your emergency may be the result of losing a job, a family member becoming extremely ill, a natural disaster, military conflict or the economy crashing.

You never know what is around the corner, which is why you have to be prepared for anything.

You may be on the road traveling to grandma's house, headed out on a business trip or sitting at home when disaster strikes. You won't have much time in the moment, which is why preparing now is crucial.

This world offers no guarantees. There is always something happening and it is never pretty. You don't want to be one of the people thinking, "If only I had prepared for something like this."

You will be amazed by the feeling of calm that comes over you once you have done some prepping. You won't feel as anxious about what this violent world will throw at you, because you are ready and prepared.

Disaster preparedness is a hot topic after the last few years. People are learning the hard way there are no guarantees and help is NOT always right around the corner. You may be on your own for days or weeks.

Prepping isn't one of those things you do one day and leave until you need it. It is something that you are constantly doing. Your prepping will evolve over time as you get more familiar with the idea and begin to really understand the true scope of disaster preparedness.

This book is meant to help you get all the dirty details of an emergency and how it will have a ripple effect in your life. This is key. Disaster preparedness is like pulling a string and watching what happens. You need to know what to expect so you can prepare for any eventuality.

Surviving a disaster isn't always all about the physical aspect. It is a HUGE psychological game as well. Being psychologically prepared will help you make better decisions in the moment. **THIS COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!** Panic is one of leading causes of death in an emergency. Panic clouds your judgment and prevents you from making good, sound decisions.

A single thought can trigger a chain reaction. You panic and make a rash decision, which has undesirable consequences, which leads to more panic and more rash decisions. All of these quick decisions that are not thought out can lead to your demise or serious injury or heartache.



The key is to prepare NOW. Thinking about what you need, what you would do and having the supplies to follow through can truly mean the difference between life and death. This book isn't going to go into all the supplies you need to have on hand to survive. This book is going to cover the psychological preparedness aspect.

You will learn how to better manage one's thoughts, which will ultimately control your decisions as well as your overall feelings.

Understanding that some responses, emotions and feelings are normal will help you make calculated decisions on how to handle them without making your situation worse.

You will feel more confident and have more control over your situation. Knowledge is power and understanding the psychological responses that come with an emergency will give you what you need to persevere.

Survival Strategy

Your survival strategy will center on three crucial steps; anticipate, identify and manage. These three steps will help you psychologically prepare for any emergency. It is all about getting in the right mindset.

Anticipate

Accept the fact that you are going to be a little stressed and anxious during and following an emergency. It is a natural human response. Although these are natural reactions, they are not always healthy or helpful. You need to be prepared to tame the urge to panic and run screaming into the wind.

Identify

Learn the physical responses to the feelings we mentioned above. Recognize the symptoms that will continue to lead to more thoughts of panic and anxiousness.

Manage

Once you know what is happening with your mind and body, it is time to regain control. Try a few deep-breathing exercises and positive self-talk to tame your anxiety. You want to be calm, cool and collected so you can make good decisions.

Now that you are aware of the three main components of a survival strategy, let's break it down into a step-by-step process.

Step 1 Anticipate:

There are numerous disasters that come with plenty of warning. You may live in an area where there are sirens indicating tornadoes or hear news reports of an impending hurricane or snow storm. The warnings are typically accompanied by a list of instructions about what to do to prepare for the storm i.e. buying batteries for your flashlights, non-perishable food and so on.

Unfortunately, some of these dire warnings include horror stories with images of past devastation to really drive home the point. This can wreak havoc on a person's psychological state. These warnings can leave a person feeling more scared than they were in the beginning along with anxious and nervous.

Anticipating your responses will help you settle your nerves and give you an advantage. Expect the situation to be extremely tense and stressful. How are you under pressure? If you are cool as a cucumber, you are golden, if you freak out and have a panic attack, you need to start thinking about how you are going to control your responses to the stress.

Plan on how you will overcome your typical responses to stress so that you CAN make those life-changing decisions on the fly without letting your emotional response to the stress rule your choices.

Step 2 Identify:

Don't ignore the feelings and thoughts you experience when you hear those warning sirens or hear about a disaster headed your way. You need to recognize the “tells” and be ready to deal with them.

People generally have the same physical responses to extreme nerves.

- Rapid heart rate
- Difficulty breathing
- Upset stomach
- Shaking
- Sweating
- Tense muscles

The physical discomfort of these responses will trigger a string of thoughts that will pull you into the panic mode. You may start telling yourself;

- I can't do this.
- I won't make it.
- I don't know what to do.
- I am panicking.

From those thoughts, the physical symptoms are heightened and more thoughts enter your brain. It is a rather vicious cycle.

Learn to identify the thoughts that are causing the physical responses. You have to get a grip on your wayward thoughts.

- Identify the negative self-talk that is stressing you out.
- Quickly determine whether the thoughts in your head are helping or hurting the situation. The phrases above are not helpful and should be ignored.
- Don't be too hard on yourself. Those thoughts are typical, but not helpful. Identify and prepare to manage them.



Step 3 Manage:

There are two ways to manage those frightful thoughts that are sending you into a panic.

1-Adopt positive self-talk strategies.

2-Practice deep-breathing to control the onset of physical symptoms.

Controlling the fear with breathing and self-talk

It may sound incredibly simple, and it is, but it is also incredibly effective. Check out these tips to help use the breath you take to manage your stress while silently repeating positive phrases.

- Take a slow breath in through the nose, hold it for about three seconds and exhale through the mouth. Do this several times.
- While doing your deep breathing, in your head, say things like; I'm okay, I can do this, I am not panicking.
- Remind yourself that being calm and focusing on what you have to do is more important than the negative thoughts flitting through your brain.
- Remind yourself of what you have done to prepare for disaster. Fall back on any training or knowledge you have.
- It's okay to have the feelings that are common in a stressful situation, but it isn't okay to let them rule you. Accept your human nature and move on.



Helping Others Cope

You are going to need help with the survival business and need everyone around you to be ready and able. That means they too are going to need to manage their psychological responses. You can help.

- Don't judge others who are going through the emotional and psychological responses of a stressful situation. Offer your support.
- Encourage others to use the deep breathing techniques.
- Ask them to tell you what they are feeling so you can help them work through those feelings.
- Give them the positive encouragement they need to hear and tell them to keep saying it to themselves and others.
- Keep everybody busy. You don't want them sitting and dwelling on all the negatives.
- Assign them a task and empower them to get it done.



Dealing with the Fallout

There are some emotions and feelings that you are going to be faced with in an emergency situation that has you fighting to survive.

Cold and Heat

One of your biggest concerns in a survival situation is the ability to stay warm or to stay cool. Humans are typically 98.6 degrees. If they warm up a few degrees or drop a few degrees in temperature, things can get extremely difficult. Humans were designed to be at that one particular temperature and even the smallest deviation can cause serious problems.



You can increase your chances of surviving the cold by finding shelter, eating, staying busy and staying dry. It is crucial you are always prepared for the weather, especially when traveling. Dress appropriately for the climate you are in and headed towards just in case disaster strikes.

When the body becomes cold, you begin to feel numb. When the body becomes overheated, it becomes weak. Heat is something the body can slowly adjust to. It can take several days, but eventually, your heart rate, breathing and sweating are

all adjusted to match a hot climate. You are also more prone to dehydration in the heat.

Heat poses more problems than just being uncomfortable in general. In the desert or in plain areas, it is hot during the day and cold at night. These temperature fluctuations can wreak havoc on your mind and body. Knowing how and where to find shelter will help you avoid the temperature extremes.

The glaring sun can also cause serious problems. The eyes and skin will suffer when exposed to direct sun for any length of time. It is important to protect the eyes with sunglasses or improvised eye wear and to wear clothing that protects the skin. It doesn't matter if you already have a tan; the sun exposure will still cause burning, dehydration and pain.

Hot, dry winds are another source of discomfort you can expect to deal with. This is especially true if you are in a desert area and sand is everywhere. Cover your face with a cloth, leaving only enough room to see out of.

Yet another issue you will face with blowing winds in snow or sandy situations is disorientation from being unable to see. This creates a horrifying situation for anybody caught in the storm. Feeling lost and unable to identify landmarks that will guide them can be extremely stressful. Being prepared to hunker down in such situations is the best option.

Along with extreme disorientation, desert situations may present mirages. These are images that are not truly there, but the mind's eye sees them. It can lead to a person walking into a hole or off a steep incline because depth perception is completely off.

If you find yourself in a windy situation, it is important you keep your mouth closed—literally. Talking and breathing through the mouth will dry out the mucous membranes. This triggers a thirsty response that can trigger discomfort and stress as well as lead to rapid dehydration.

Pain/Injury

Pain is your body's way of telling you something isn't right. You have to listen to your body and the signals it sends. Although pain may be screaming at you, you must make an effort to ignore it and push on. If you were not in a survival situation, sure, you could sit down and spend some time babying the injury. If you have over-the-counter pain meds, pop a couple and keep going.



Pain itself isn't going to harm you, but it will make you uncomfortable. With adrenaline pumping through your system, you can push through the pain. People have managed to run miles on a broken ankle or climb rocks with a broken hand. It is all about using your brain to eliminate the pain. You CAN concentrate hard enough to minimize or completely dissolve the pain that is trying to slow you down.

Basically, acknowledge the pain and make up your mind to deal with it and it quickly becomes more tolerable. It is amazing how much a person set on surviving can cope with and overcome to reach their goal of living through whatever disaster has befallen them.

Dehydration



Dehydration is one of the most serious problems a survivor will face.

Although the human body can technically live 3 days without water, after the first few hours without water, the psychological impact of being thirsty will be extreme.

You can overcome this by remaining calm and focused on surviving.

Thirst is a tricky thing. It tells you the body is thirsty, but it doesn't say HOW thirsty. Do you

need a little water to wet your whistle or do you need a lot to keep your organs functioning?

You can still become dehydrated even if you are regularly drinking small amounts of water.

You can help combat the feeling of being thirsty and ultimately dehydrated by drinking as much water as you can when it is readily available. It is also important to drink water while you are eating.

If you are scared, sick or working hard, you will need more water to stay properly hydrated.

Even mild dehydration can cause symptoms that will hamper your ability to survive. Performance decreases and irrational behavior increases the more the body becomes dehydrated.

Fortunately, dehydration is a fairly easy fix—drink water. You can reverse the effects by getting fluids in your body as quickly as possible.

Hunger

Feeling hungry is not pleasant. Surprisingly, many survivors are unaware of the nourishment available to them in their surroundings. They don't see a cheeseburger and assume there is nothing to eat. Fasting for short periods of time may not be pleasant, but it is not going to result in anything terrible. You will live and you will not experience any real negative consequences.

Fortunately, with all there is to do in survival i.e. escaping, running and evasion, your hunger is completely forgotten about. In fact, plenty of folks who have survived disaster go for days without eating anything and they pull through without having any long-lasting problems. Of course, you want to avoid starvation by making sure you do have some food or a way to procure food.

If you don't eat, you are going to experience some psychological symptoms. You can stave off the hunger pains by drinking water, but you are still likely to experience depression and be a bit cranky. Relationships will be tried when one or more people are starving. Natural instinct will keep you on the hunt for food, which is great, as long as you are making good, sound choices in the hunt.

Food aversion in general may lead to starvation. Imagine the only food available was grubs. You may feel that starving is better than eating the bugs. However, if you are in a group and others choose to eat the grubs, you may be more inclined to follow suit. It's all about getting rid of old prejudices and open your mind to trying new things.

It is imperative you learn to control your hunger and accept the more primitive offerings available in a survival situation.

Fatigue

Fatigue is going to wear you down when you are hungry, thirsty and on the run. The stress alone will make you tired. A survivor is going to have to be vigilant in combating the effects of being tired that will decrease efficiency and effectiveness. Fatigue may be just one of many factors weighing down a survivor.

In the height of an emergency, a survivor will likely be forced to put forth considerable energy and exertion to do what must be done. You have to determine how much you can carry, how far you can walk and how hard you can work and be prepared to fall back on those emergency energy reserves you are likely carrying and unaware of.

Do not allow yourself to become completely exhausted. Exhaustion can cause psychological and physical problems. Yes, there are going to be times when you will have to work no matter if you are tired, but when possible, avoid complete exhaustion.



Rest is the only effective way to overcome exhaustion. You have to take a break otherwise you risk making the crash from the extreme exhaustion more severe. The more fatigued you are, the longer your recovery will be. Taking breaks and getting rest early on in the survival game will keep your muscles and your mind primed and ready to go.

Taking short breaks during extended periods of stress will improve your total efficiency. The regular rest periods will also keep up morale. You also won't have to worry about getting bored with some of the more tedious jobs when you can take a break during the work period.

If you are doing extremely strenuous work, plan on taking more rest breaks. This can be said for especially tedious or monotonous jobs as well. If you are doing a lot of thinking and planning, taking a break and getting a little exercise is what is needed.

Sometimes, breaks don't even have to include actually stopping working. Sometimes singing while working, chatting with a friend or even telling jokes can help relieve the tension and give the mental break that is needed.

When planning breaks, it is important to consider the impact on the actual survival. If you have to walk 30 miles in order to reach shelter, stopping and resting several times may not be the best idea. Survival needs must always be put first.

One of the best ways to make the workload manageable is by working SMARTER not HARDER. You don't have to run or speed walk if you have a long way to go. Slow and steady is smarter way. Balancing the pace and effort you are expending will help you work smarter and not harder. Find a rhythm and go with it without taxing yourself.

In order to reduce fatigue, it is essential to have the cooperation of the entire group and a strong leader who can lead and encourage others to stay focused on the tasks at hand without overdoing it. Fatigue will start to show itself psychologically as well as physically. Subtle changes in mood will show up as the body starts to slow down.

Avoid even the slightest bit of fatigue by instituting regular rest breaks early on. Survival doesn't have an expiration date. Plan for the long term and do what you can in the beginning to maintain your stamina. Sometimes, people will ignore the signs of fatigue, even when they don't have to, and push through. They will push themselves too far. You and the rest of the group need to be able to help others see the benefit to rest periods and not reaching complete exhaustion.

Isolation

Isolation is one of the most difficult psychological aspects of survival that a person will have to learn to overcome. While we all appreciate a little time to ourselves now and again, complete isolation will be difficult. In today's world, we don't realize how good we have it with our family, friends, co-workers and military colleagues always around us.



Long periods of time on your own can start to wear you down. However, you can resist the depression associated with isolation, by making a real effort to resist the feelings of loneliness. Embrace the solitude and accept it for what it is.

Sleep Deprivation

Losing sleep and experiencing sleep deprivation will look a lot like fatigue. Sleep deprivation can cause the following symptoms.

- Irritable
- Emotional
- Weary
- Inefficient/nonproductive

Some of the causes of sleep deprivation are as follows;

- Sleeping at odd times i.e. during the day, early hours of the morning
- Not getting the requisite amount of sleep needed, 6 to 8 hours
- Sleeping in unfamiliar places
- Restlessness

Every person will respond differently to the above factors. Some people may be able to sleep through anything, while others will struggle to sleep at all. A person who is in good shape can go 5 days before feeling the effects of sleep deprivation.

You can overcome sleep deprivation by trying some of the following tactics.

- Top physical shape
- Good mental state
- Access to food and water
- Plenty of opportunities to rest
- Company-companions

The key is to get as much sleep as possible whenever you can. If you are in a situation where you have to stay awake, moving or exercise, eating and good old conversation can help keep you going. Little catnaps will also help keep you alert.

When you stop moving, the sleepiness will likely come in waves. You may feel fine one moment and then dead tired the next. The breaks in between alert and sleepy will get shorter, the longer the sleep deprivation continues. A person who doesn't get sleep and continues on the sleep deprivation path

will eventually become reckless. The sleep deprivation will lead to careless decisions that could jeopardize their life.

Depression

Survival can throw you into a tailspin, straight into depression if you allow it.

It is by far one of the biggest psychological hurdles you will have to deal with in a disaster situation.

Some feelings that indicate depression are prolonged periods of;

- Grief
- Disappointment
- Loneliness
- Sadness



Fortunately, the depression is likely temporary and will not become a chronic issue. Some symptoms associated with depression are listed below.

- Fatigue
- Appetite loss
- Fear
- Guilt
- Lack of interest in anything
- A feeling of helplessness
- Physical pain
- Suicidal thoughts

Experts are convinced that a person who battles bouts of depression in today's world will be more prone to depression in a survival situation. Depression can be dangerous. It tends to ride the coattails of other feelings. If you are fatigued or sleep deprived for long periods of time, you may become depressed, which heightens the fatigue. It is a vicious cycle.

Depression is more common once a survivor has secured everything necessary for survival i.e. food, water, shelter and so on. Once the survivor is “done” working, they have too much time on their hands to dwell on all the bad stuff. One way to stay busy after all the hard work is done is to keep making improvements to what is already completed.

Low Self-Esteem



Your self-esteem comes from your own personal pride and self-respect. If you have been a captive for some time, you may begin to doubt yourself.

Captors take great joy in humiliating their captives, which will erode at your self-esteem. Humiliation chips away at your feelings of worth and makes you feel disgraceful or dishonorable.

The key is to hold on to your pride with all you have.

Anything a captor does is not in your control. They can do a lot to you, but they CANNOT take your pride. Survivors who have been captured and held prisoner may feel embarrassed or ashamed, but it is crucial those feelings are not allowed to rule your thinking and destroy your self-esteem.

Fear

Fear can be deadly. Fear in a survival situation may be brought on by a survivor's insecurity about what is happening and their ability to handle it or the presence of enemy forces nearby. The fear itself may be for a valid reason or a completely imagined one. No matter what the case is, fear can lead to panic. Survivors must learn to identify the symptoms of fear and work hard to get it under control.

There are some people who fall back on their training when put into a fearful situation and they do just fine. Military personnel are prime examples. Those who realize they can manage a situation will get a healthy boost of confidence and will not experience as much fear as someone who has little confidence.

On the flip-side, there are some people who panic in the face of fear and become paralyzed. They can't move their body or mind and do nothing, which is always going to end badly. The response to fear is going to depend on the person. You can't assume the big, burly guy is going to be the calm, cool, collected guy in a fearful situation.



Anybody who faces a life-threatening situation is going to know what fear is. Fear is a direct response to the recognition of a dangerous situation or an impending danger. Fear has a way of stirring

up other feelings like depression, unease, worry and a feeling of being uncomfortable. Every person's response to fear may be different. There may be some mild unease to full blown panic.

People fear many things. The fears may have been taught to a person at an early age or learned through personal experiences. Some kids tend to naturally fear the dark, certain animals and noises and even other adults. Through these fears, certain behaviors arise.

If a fear is allowed to spin out of control and create a fantasy disaster. This can lead a person to make choices that are reckless and will only further endanger them. The key to overcoming fear is by deciding it isn't there. The feeling isn't valid. Tamp down the fear and control the body and mind to make the best decisions possible.

Accept the fear for what it is and learn to overcome it. Training is one way to do this. Getting proper training in dealing with emergency and survival situations can give you the confidence needed to ignore fear and its tendency to make you irrational. The body will kick into autopilot so to speak and fall back on the training you have gone through when that fear is triggered.

The following tips will help you overcome and manage fear.

- Build up your confidence. Get the training you need and stay on top of your skills.
- Be prepared to deal with anything. Yes, it can happen to you. Always be ready with the right gear and clothing.
- Get informed and always be on the lookout to learn more about survival in different environments.
- Stay busy and keep on top of your duties of finding food, water and shelter.
- Worship and focus on your religion. Faith gives you something to believe in.
- Cooperate with a team. There is strength in numbers. Practice good teamwork and you will be better for it.
- Be disciplined and ensure your entire group practices good discipline.
- Keep a positive survival attitude. You and your entire group need to stay positive and fight off the feelings of depression and sadness that will bring you down. Expect to be slightly uncomfortable and accept it. You can't waste time and energy worrying about little things.
- Practice what you preach. Be the example for the rest of the group. Stay calm and your group will.

Hold on to what you believe in and never compromise your morals and values. People have been known to live through horrible events by embracing a feeling of calm when they rely on what is most important to them whether that be faith, morals or honor. You can overcome fear with training, knowledge and working together.

Panic

Panic can make a person act irrationally. A person who is panicking may not have any control over their actions. Some people are more prone to panic than others. An emergency situation is a common cause of panic.

The panic is triggered by overwhelming fear. Calming the fear will reduce the panic. Bolstering a person's confidence and setting a calm tone can combat the panic.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a common response to a change in a living situation or a person's safety being threatened. Anxiety and fear look a lot like. However, anxiety is a more mild form of fear. The feelings are not as intense. A person may feel anxious and not even know the cause.

Anxiety is caused by the feeling that something isn't right or something is going to happen. Some people describe anxiety as getting butterflies in their stomach. Worry, depression and uneasiness are also common symptoms.

Someone who has anxiety may feel;

- Indecisive
- Fear
- Depression
- Resentment
- Helplessness



You can overcome anxiety by choosing not to dwell on the problem or situation. Keep your body and mind busy on tasks that will help your situation.

Resentment

You may experience a feeling of resentment towards somebody that you blame for your situation. The resentment harbors feelings of indignation and displeasure and may have been caused by

a simple remark or an act. You may even resent somebody in your group if it appears they are doing better than you. You may resent a captor or a group that has inflicted the pain and suffering of survival upon you.

The key is to accepting that nothing ever goes according to plan. In a tense situation, there are sure to be some negative remarks or insults. Don't let them get to you. They are not hurting you or holding you back from doing what needs to be done to survive. Approach the situation with an ounce of humor and you can negate the feelings of resentment. A lack of self-confidence and extreme stress can play a role in the feeling of resentment as well.

Hate

Hate is a strong word and an even more powerful emotion. It can be a good thing or a bad thing. Hate is something that is built up based on knowledge or perception of a given situation. It doesn't matter if the information is true or not; hate can still be fostered.

Hate can be triggered by a person, object or beliefs. Hate has been used as a crutch in the past for prisoners of war who fed on the vengeful feelings that hate spawns. However, hate can also blind a person and they will make irrational decisions based on their desire for revenge.

To cope with hate, dig deep and identify where the feeling is coming from. Identify the reasons and then determine what you can do about it. Sometimes, there is truly nothing to be done and acceptance is the only recourse. Never allow hate to control you and your decisions.

Boredom

Boredom may look like fatigue, but they are not the same. A person who is bored will have a general lack of interest in anything. The feeling is typically accompanied by depression, anxiety or stress.

The feeling is exacerbated when there is no relief in sight. Relieving boredom must involve breaking up the uniformity and repetition of the situation.

By varying duties and methods to complete the duties, you can relieve boredom. Taking breaks is another option. Changing up the way things are



done or switching jobs with somebody else in the group can help relieve boredom. Allowing the brain to think of new jobs or more efficient ways of getting something done will also give a person a goal to work towards, which will keep boredom at bay.

Impatience

Impatience may seem like a personal problem, but it can quickly manifest and actually become a serious problem that jeopardizes your life in a survival situation. If you are on the run and grow impatient with the waiting and hiding, you could end up exposing yourself and getting captured.

Survivors must accept that the situation may result in pain, discomfort and irritation without making a fuss. Endurance is the key. Getting impatient and acting out on that impatience can be dangerous. Take a few deep breaths and remain calm.

Anger

Anger can be brought on by anything that you perceive as being wrong. It makes you unhappy. The anger may be the result of being unable to fulfill a desire. If the anger is allowed to fester, it can turn into outright hostility.



Whoever or whatever triggered the anger will be the subject of your ire and you will have an urge to hurt or destroy the culprit.

Anger can lead to impulsive behavior, which is dangerous in a survival situation where every move must be calculated. You can get rid of the anger by taking a walk, yelling, exercise or get away from the source. You must control your anger in order to stay in control of your decision making and avoid acting irrationally.

Hopelessness

Hopelessness is that horrible feeling you get when you assume living or completing a task is impossible. The feeling may stem from the assumption that things are only going to get worse and everything is completely out of your control. Hopelessness may creep when you get the idea things are never going to get better. Some other situations that you may experience a sense of hopelessness in are;

- Getting home alive
- Recovering from an injury
- Seeing a loved one again
- Ability to cope with the mental and physical strain of the situation

Hopelessness may be worse in situations where you are exposed to the elements and physical and mental exhaustion take hold. Hopelessness can be deadly. There are cases of people dying in captivity for no real cause except the fact they actually willed themselves to die because of sheer hopelessness.

People who give up assume there is no hope. They gave up and decided it was fate to die. People who are headed down this path will generally withdraw from a group, become lethargic, lie down and ultimately die.

You can treat hopelessness by getting plenty of rest, seeking comfort from others and participating in activities that will help boost morale. Another option is to get mad or make somebody mad who is feeling hopelessness. Anger will fuel the person on in their desire to get revenge. It gives them something to live for. Staying positive will combat hopelessness and is the most effective remedy.

There are some cases where the situation cannot be resolved to the survivor's liking. This is when it is time to compromise. Accepting a compromise can help alleviate the feeling of total hopelessness in the situation. Taking any little concession will give you hope.

Imagine if you were starving. You may compromise your previous prejudices and eat bugs or a snake. You may resort to stealing. It is all about survival and doing what is necessary to reach that goal.

Loneliness

Loneliness can cripple you if you let it. One trick many people have used to overcome the feeling is to become more self-sufficient and adapt new routines while surrounding themselves with protective persons.

This is a skill that needs to be worked on before a survival situation pops up. Learning and developing the skills necessary to survival is important.

The more confidence and competence a person develops, the more self-sufficient they will become.

When a person who is self-sufficient is thrust into a survival situation, they are prepared to plan and stay active to combat those feelings of loneliness that may crop up.



Dependence

Getting captured and becoming a prisoners is the prime environment for feeling dependent. Captors will intentionally foster this feeling by making the captive dependent on them for food, shelter and medical care.

The captor will make sure the captive is aware of their own need to take care of themselves. The captor will work hard to create a dependent relationship and then exploit it. It is important the captive recognizes this tactic and take steps to counter it.

Finding a way to take care of even one need is one way for a captive to take back even the smallest bit of control over their life. Holding on to anything they can will help them persevere.

Finding the Will to Survive

The will to survive means you are willing to do what it takes to survive despite the odds going against you. Participating in survival training, reading books and your own effort to hone your skills will play a huge role in your survival. There are plenty of cases that sheer will and determination were the deciding factors in keeping somebody alive. A person with all the training and knowledge in the world will perish if they do not have the will to survive.

Some examples of rare, but true cases of survival include one person eating their belt for nourishment. Another case involved eating human flesh and another boiled water in a boot and drank it as a nourishing broth. The will to survive will drive you to do things you normally wouldn't even consider.

Yet another shocking story of survival involves a man lost in the desert for 8 days without food or water. He lost about 25 percent of his total body weight. His blood had become so thick due to a lack of water, that when he cut himself during his travels, he couldn't bleed. It wasn't until he was rescued and re-hydrated that he began to bleed. His journey is a prime example of will and determination to survive no matter what obstacles were presented.

Sadly, the lack of the will to survive can have the exact opposite effect. Another story that didn't have such a happy ending involves a pilot who had to crash-land his plane. He did so and landed in one piece. He spotted shelter and a shoreline that would have provided food and water in the distance. He started out, but then turned back. He climbed back into his plane, enjoyed a cigar and then shot himself in the head. Within 24 hours, a rescue team arrived. He could have survived.

While it is difficult to try and reason away his decision, it is really just as difficult to think of reasons why somebody would eat a belt. It is all about the will to survive or the desire to give up.

Overcoming the Stress of Survival

We have talked a lot about using your mind to overcome the trials of survival. When things are at their worst, you have the power to overcome and conquer anything with sheer will. This will is what gives you the strength to keep going. Will is what mends the gap between the crisis and coping periods.



The Crisis Period

This is when realization about the situation dawns. There is no denying what is happening and it is time to figure out what to do. Shock is a common response as the mind struggles to acknowledge and accept what is happening. For those who have trained and prepared, the shock wears off quickly and springing into action is second nature.

For those who didn't prepare, shock will be intense. The body's response to the anxiety will leave the person with jumbled up thoughts and an inability to take action. A person in shock will need direction. A natural leader in the group will step up and start to direct those that are struggling. If the shock is allowed to rule, especially in a group setting, disorganization and chaos will quickly ensue. Judgment will be impaired and bad decisions will be made.

If a person is all alone when disaster strikes, it is important they gain control of the situation quickly and not let the shock rule. Prioritizing needs and taking action will need to happen sooner rather than later.

The Coping Period

This is when reality starts to sink in. This is when survivors make the decision to survive and fight. Coping with the pain, discomfort and poor situation will be necessary. Accepting the situation for what it is and doing what is necessary to keep going will all happen during this period. Coping requires a person to be in control and not allow panic and hopelessness to rule. Making good decisions that are conducive to survival depend on the control of the psychological responses to disaster.

Hunger won't kill you those first few days, but a lack of control of one's psychological responses will. Someone who survives will have to practice patience and be willing to stay put if that is what is necessary. When you are tired, hungry and uncomfortable, your first reaction may be to remedy those problems, but in doing so, you could be risking your life. This is why control of the emotional responses is crucial.

Positive Attitude

Keeping a positive attitude and committing oneself to surviving is essential. Nearly anything is possible if you set your mind to it, including survival. Often times, love for someone or something is what drives a person to that attitude of survival at all costs.



Love and hate are two very strong emotions that can give a person a great deal of strength and power they may not have known they had. The lack of the will to survive is just as powerful. A person who is unwilling to do what needs to be done or unwilling to take control of their emotions will suffer.

Possessing the will to survive is the key to surviving a situation. First and foremost, a person must fight the urge to panic and run. Taking a seat, getting control of your emotions and plotting out a course of action is necessary. Once a plan has been formulated, it is time to take action. Some people may be used to others doing this for them. In a survival situation, that is NOT an option.

Survivors have to be willing to control their emotions and formulate plans on their own. Choosing to do nothing and taking a wait and see approach could be devastating. It is a choice that could cost somebody their life. Flexibility will be necessary, even if you have come up with an awesome plan. Expect the unexpected.

Tolerance

Coping with being uncomfortable, hungry or in pain will be a part of survival. You will be forced to tolerate situations like being in the dark or crawling through mud. Environments that you are not comfortable will have to be tolerated in order to meet your goal of surviving.

Optimism

You can't give up and you cannot assume something can't be done. You have to remain optimistic and look for the silver lining in every situation. So you have to walk an extra five miles, look at the bright side, you are going to get to sleep in a shelter instead of sleeping out in the open. Pray or meditate if it helps you hold on to that positive outlook that will keep you going and give you the strength you will desperately need.

Conclusion

Many survivalists and preppers get caught up in the mindset that the food, water and ammunition they store will be what gets them through. Survival is a mental game.

You have to learn how to cope with everything that will be thrown at you and learn to control your emotional response to those things.

Keeping a healthy state of mind is more important than finding water. You have to remain in control and be able to make sound decisions that will help you and not hamper your survival.

Losing focus and losing control of your emotions could be devastating.

While you are prepping for a disaster, don't forget to practice psychological preparedness as well.

Learn how to meditate and learn those deep-breathing exercises that will help you control your physical response to the emotional stress that is sure to come your way.

You will panic if you do not recognize the symptoms of panic or anxiousness. You must be able to recognize the symptoms so you can quickly get them under control before they lead you to make hasty decisions that are based on fear and not logic.

Keeping a positive attitude and embracing a will to survive will carry you through a lot.

Focus on anticipating, identifying and managing the various emotions that will arise on an almost hourly basis as you go through the aftermath of disaster.

Don't let prepping consume you. You have just learned what anxiousness and fear looks like. Take time to enjoy your life today.

Your "normal" life will likely give you plenty of opportunities to practice the skills we just covered. The next time you hit your thumb with a hammer, see what you can do to manage the pain. Practice your mental muscles as well as your physical muscles.