

## Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Getting Along Today & Tomorrow

*"It goes without saying that when survival is threatened, struggles erupt between peoples, and unfortunate wars between nations result." Hideki Tojo*

Getting along with others is a necessity and it will become even more critical in a SHTF world or when choosing people to become a part of your preparedness group, as well as, for having a successful group - pre and post SHTF.



So I decided to do some research into this. I questioned family, friends, neighbors, church associates, went to the library and read some books; along with surfing the web. Boy is there a ton of stuff there on this subject! I next took all my notes and tried to make a list of key points and some specific points for us Preppers and Survivalists. Hope this helps.

### Getting Along FAQ's:

- Is tough enough in our everyday current world
- Tougher still when seeking others who prepare as we do
- Even tougher when you consider human nature
- At some point we need to trust not only our own "gut", but others too
- The same rules & tips apply before & after a crisis - with added caveats just for us "Preppers"

A fantastic article for us Preppers on personality dynamics called "*FRIENDS OR ALLIES*" can be found at:

<http://www.textfiles.com/survival/allies> To me this is a **must read** as it very simply explains how friendships and family relationships WILL be affected by the type of crisis planning we do.



Read the "*FRIENDS OR ALLIES*" article and then apply the tips listed below. Combined these will give you all the intellectual tools you need to not only with the people around you in harmony, but also how to recruit people into your group successfully.

### How to Get Along Tips

Acknowledge other people's field of expertise and	
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ask for their opinion and advice in that area	
Agree to Disagree	Recognize that there will be times that you will not agree with another person's views and opinions. Recognize, too, that disliking a person's opinion is different from disliking that person. Accept that his or her view is not yours, and move on.
Ask yourself how you would feel or react if you were in the other person's shoes.	
Avoid gossiping and spreading rumors	It may make you popular but people won't trust you. And you won't be in good terms with the person you talked about.
Avoid quarrels with others	They may be difficult to reconcile, thus putting the relationship in jeopardy.
Avoid trying to have control over other people's lives and wanting to show superiority	Respect the choices that they make. Everyone has her own goals and ways of doing things.
Be authentic	Let others see the real you.
Be careful of another's feelings	Wit and humor at the other person's expense are rarely worth it and may hurt when least expected.
Be cheerful	Smile. Don't burden or depress those around you by dwelling on your minor aches and pains and small disappointments. Remember, everyone is carrying baggage.
Be Consistent	Being consistent encompasses a wide variety of things. The most important ones, however, are being someone others can count on and keeping promises. To be someone others can count on, behave with integrity at all times. This means avoiding hypocrisy and conducting yourself in such a way that you always stay true to your sense of morality. Keeping promises is very important if you want to get along with others. Reneging on your word – even just one time – will cause people to doubt what you say in the future.
Be friendly to all	
Be generous	Think of ways in which you can help others.
Be humble	If you are rude and arrogant, people will not like you.
Be interested in others	Their pursuits, their work, their homes, and families. Make merry with those who rejoice; with those who weep, mourn. Let everyone you meet, however humble, feel that you regard him as a person of importance.
Be permissive	Not weak
Be Polite	Many people seem to feel that politeness and manners are archaic. They are not. Practicing good manners is just one way of letting people know that we care about them. That never goes out of style. Simple things like "Please" and "Thank you" go a long way.
Be punctual	Being habitually late is disrespectful of the time of others.
Be Supportive	Whenever possible, offer encouragement and support, kindness and praise. Praise people not only to their faces, but also to the people who are important to them. Give credit to others whenever it is due. If someone asks for your help, give it to him or her, steer him or her toward a more appropriate source, or explain why you cannot help. If someone seems to be struggling, ask if that person wants help. Accept that help

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	may not be wanted. Even when you know that the person is making a mistake, if that person does not want help, don't press it. Mistakes are inevitable in life.
Be Yourself	Recognize and accept your limitations. This is not a free pass to bad behavior. Crudeness, insults, and selfishness are not limitations – they are choices. If you choose them, be prepared that people will generally not like you.
Become a positive role model	You will attract others to be in harmonious terms with your goals if you exude a positive attitude towards life and people. You can become a positive influence.
Become an expert at implicit conversation	
Communicate assertively	Not dictatorial
Control your moods and temper. Manage your emotions.	Your moodiness can spread fast and spoils other people's day. It also shows that you are immature and sensitive.
Criticism Is Opportunity	Listen to and think about criticism that is given to you. Even in the rare circumstance when criticism is given with the intention of hurting, it is worth considering. Is there truth to what is said? Is it something you can change? Is it something you want to change? Look at criticism as an opportunity to grow and learn about yourself.
Cultivate your sense of humor	Laughter is the shortest distance between two people. Do not seek so much to be consoled, as to console; do not seek so much to be understood; as to understand; do not seek so much to be loved as to love.
Develop a friendly, courteous and polite behavior	Show that you are approachable and have a positive attitude towards life and people. Smile as often as you can.
Diffusing Conflict	It is obvious that human behavior can be influenced by the impressionable behavior of others. The attitudes and behavior you sow can diffuse conflict. Words are some of the most potent seeds that we can sow. If we sow gentle, peaceful words it will tend to disarm conflict, rather than to provoke trouble. If we are patient and persistent, our gentle expressions are far more likely to change hearts and opinions than anything else. Gentle, diplomatic words are as powerful and persuasive as harsh blows that break bones. The scripture says, "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself" (Ecclesiastes 10:12). "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop: but a good word maketh it glad" (Proverbs 12:25).
Discourage gossip and negative talk of others	
Discuss and negotiate	Opinions generally differ more often than not. If it is irresolvable – agree to disagree.
Display open body language	By leaning toward the other person, sitting or standing with an upright posture instead of hunching over, and uncrossing your arms.
Do not be too anxious about getting credit	Do your best, and be patient. Forget about yourself, and let others remember. Success is much sweeter that way.

**Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued**

	Just do your best and be patient. If someone criticizes you, see if there is any TRUTH to what he is saying; if so, make changes. If there is no truth to the criticism, ignore it and live so that no one will believe the negative remark.
Don't Gossip	Don't listen to gossip about others. Don't gossip about others. Don't worry about what is being said about you – let your actions speak for themselves.
Don't Take Things Personally	Often when someone has levied a hurtful comment or look at you, or has simply ignored you, it has nothing to do with you. The person may have other things on his or her mind and not be aware of how he or she is coming across to others. Give each person a second chance.
Don't whine or complain	If you can't help yourself play an active role in the solution.
Don't judge others as much as you don't want others to do that to you	At times people's behavior may astound you. Let people be what they are. There's more to a person than what you see on the surface. Get to know him/her and you may understand her motives.
Empathy	People have the gift of imagination. Seeing yourself in another person's life is a great way to use it. Imagine how you would feel in a situation similar to one someone is describing. Of course, you can't know precisely how another person feels, but empathy can get you close.
Figure Out Who Bothers You and Why	If someone bothers you, figure out what it is about that person that you don't like. If it is something he or she can't change (skin color, disability, gender, etc.), figure out a way to overcome your problem. If it is something that he or she can change, but chooses to not, decide whether or not you can overcome being bothered. If you decide you cannot, minimize your interactions with that person. Interactions with people who feed your negative energy are harmful. These interactions, and your negative responses to them, make it more difficult to have positive energy in your next interaction with anyone.
First give	Then think about getting.
Follow Dale Carnegie's advice	"Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language." Pay attention when someone tells you their name, remember it, and use it often when talking to them.
Follow Stephen Covey's advice	"seek first to understand, and then to be understood"
Follow up	When you meet someone don't just get their business card or e-mail address and then forget about it. Find a way to stay in touch.
Forget about counting to 10	Count to 1,000 before doing or saying anything that could make matters worse.
Guard your tongue.	Say less than you think. Before you say anything to anyone, ask yourself three things: 1.) Is it true? 2.) Is it kind? 3.) Is it necessary?
Have a forgiving view to people	Believe that most people are doing the best they can.
Have a good and clean sense of humor	People want to feel good and they will flock to those who can make them laugh and allow them to forget their sorrows.

**Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued**

Human Nature	Our understanding is greater when we deal with what we want as opposed to what others want. So the only way to influence others is to talk about what they want.
Humans are error prone	You are, just as everyone else, a human being who makes mistakes. There are thousands of ways to leave the other person with dignity and let him/her feel worthy and clever but, before you try to teach or correct someone, try to understand him/her and make a decision to understand, instead of correcting.
If people have troubles, help them	Don't Do for them, help them. Then, when you have troubles, they might help you, too.
If someone has done something for you	Send them a hand written thank you note; call or treat them for their assistance.
If you are wrong, admit it	Do not pretend to know everything
If you don't like someone, don't act and show your feelings in obvious ways	Remember that people are watching your attitude and action on how you treat others.
Introduce yourself	Look at his or her eyes and introduce yourself.
It is impossible to always agree with someone	Express your criticism as advice, always respecting a person's right to see the situation in another way. Never tell anyone they are wrong. Speak politely, saying something like: "from my understanding," or "maybe you are right and I am wrong, but I think." or just simply "I see this situation," or "I am not an expert in that particular field, but ....."
Keep an open mind	Discuss - but don't argue. It is a mark of a superior mind to be able to disagree without being disagreeable. Agree to disagree.
Keep skid chains on your tongue	Always say less than you think. Cultivate a low, persuasive voice. How you say it often counts more than what you say.
Keep the promises and the commitments you've made to others	Make them sparingly.
Let your virtues speak for themselves	Refuse to talk of another's vices. Discourage gossip. It is a waste of valuable time and can be extremely destructive.
Like yourself	When you know who you are, why you become the way you do and why you behave in a certain way, you can learn to like and accept others. When you are aware that you can change some of your attitudes while you may have to accept some others, you can relate to other people's behavior and personality.
Listen - Listen actively to what the other person is saying	Active listening is the most important thing anyone can do to get along with others. This means paying attention to the person speaking, and giving proper responses. Pay attention to, and remember, names of the people you talk to and one or two details about the conversations you have. Don't turn the conversation to yourself until you have talked about the other person's interests. That is, concentrate on them instead of mentally rehearsing in your head what you're going to say next.
Look others in the eye when you speak to them	
Make a first good impression	When you first meet someone it takes them about three seconds to form an impression about you, and first impressions are hard to reverse. They make this evaluation based on your

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	appearance, your body language, your demeanor, your mannerisms, your personal grooming, and how you're dressed.
Make others feel important and appreciated	
Make others laugh	Laughing with others is a bonding experience.
Make promises sparingly, and keep them faithfully	Always no matter what it costs.
Make sure that you use all three of the Albert Mehrabian channels in a way that will best get your message across to others.	Albert Mehrabian established that 55% of communication is in the body language, 38% in the quality of the voice, and 7% in the actual words spoken. Make sure that you use all three of these channels in a way that will best get your message across to others.
Mirror them	You can do it consciously to help build rapport by copying a number of aspects such as their basic posture, the position of their arms and legs, and the placement of their hands. Are they sitting forward, legs crossed? You can also mirror their breathing rates, the rhythm of their movements, and their energy level. Subtly match two or three things to enter into their world.
Never forget, people are struggling for a feeling of importance	Become interested in other people's lives; do not try to get other people interested in you.
Never let an opportunity pass to say a kind word, compliment or encouraging word to or about somebody	Praise good work, regardless of who did it. If criticism is needed, criticize helpfully, never spitefully.
No One Is More Important Than Anyone Else	This seems to be a hard concept for many people. We've all known someone who thought they were the most important person in the room, and we've all known someone who thought someone else (often a celebrity) was more important than anyone else in the room. The truth is, no one is more important than anyone else. Each person is unique and has something to contribute. Don't get carried away with your sense of importance or with the perceived importance of anyone else. This does not mean that some people are not more important in your life than others, only that, as people, no one is intrinsically more important than anyone else.
Offer sincere compliments	
Offer suggestions instead of criticizing	If someone criticized you, don't take it personally. Try to evaluate and do a personal evaluation. You may learn something about yourself, which you were unaware of. If you think that it was unfair, don't get into an argument to prove your point. It's not worth it.
Pace their speech rate	Some people speak quickly and use short pauses between ideas, while others speak slowly and use longer pauses. Try to use the same speech rate they're using.
Pace their volume	Someone who speaks softly will appreciate someone else who speaks softly. Likewise, someone who speaks loudly will often get along better with others who speak in a louder tone.
Paraphrase what the other person is saying to make sure that you've understood	Say something like the following: "I'm going to repeat in my own words what I think I heard you say to make sure that I've understood. Please correct me if you feel that I've misunderstood you."

**Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued**

Pay no attention to ill-natured remarks about you	Live so that nobody will believe them. Remember, the person who carried the message may not be the most accurate reporter in the world. Simply live so that nobody will believe them. Disordered nerves and bad digestion are a common cause of back-biting.
Positive Focus and positive attitude	In thought and conversation, focus on positive things. Rather than focusing on the things that bring you down, focus on things that make you feel good and that shine in a positive light. Cheerful conversation is much less draining than negative conversation.
Provide value	
Put a smile on your face and stay positive.	Even when talking on the phone you need to smile; your smile comes through your voice!
Respect Yourself and Others	Respect and encourage others to talk about themselves and accept them as they are, rather than as you wish them to be. Without exception, give everyone respect. Treat each person as the human being they are. This includes yourself. If you have no respect for yourself, you have no respect to give. You have hero worship, but not respect. Respecting a person does not mean you have to respect that person's choices or actions.
Seek Out Others	Remember that other people are as shy, nervous, and insecure as you are. Some are more so. If you see someone who is standing apart from the crowd, someone who looks lost or out of place, approach them. Introduce yourself and ask his or her name. Ask a friendly, open-ended question to stimulate conversation.
Share your interests	Let others get to know you.
Smile Always	That way people won't think you are serious and hard to get along with. A warm, inviting smile will help put others at ease. There's an old saying that says if you keep a smile on your face till ten o'clock, you'll smile all day. If you aren't in a good mood, or aren't ready to interact, simply wearing a smile can make it so you are. A smile is welcoming to others, and you become more approachable just by showing yours.
Start your conversation with a thorough preparation of your thoughts	
Take An Interest	Find out what's important to them, what their aspirations are, and what makes them tick. Don't listen to gossip about others. Don't gossip about others. Don't worry about what is being said about you – let your actions speak for themselves.
Take Time For Yourself	Everyone needs to recharge sometimes. Learn to recognize when you need to get away from people, and make time to do so. Whether curling up with a book and some hot cocoa, or going on a solitary jog, make sure you have "alone time" as often as you need it.
The difference between a good conversation and bad one depends on two words: " yes "and "no,"	Do not begin any conversation with subjects on which you differ. Start with things on which you agree. If in the first 5

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	minutes of conversation you say "no" more than twice, I can predict with good confidence that your conversation will end up in Nowhere City.
The Friendship Factor	You'd be amazed at how many people feel lonely and lack friends simply because they don't apply the law of sowing and reaping. People tend to react to whatever attitude is projected toward them, and the impression of coldness and unfriendliness is what causes others to keep their distance. Sociologists say that "friendliness and confidence" are the greatest factors in initiating friendships. (The Bible teaches, if you want friends, you must first sow your friendliness into others, and they will respond with friendship.)
The Golden Rule	A Catalyst of Human Behavior - Christians are taught to treat others in the way which they wish to be treated, themselves. When God created mankind, He established the law of "reciprocity," which gave man the ability to reap in accordance to what he would sow.
Think First	Think before speaking or acting. Will you hurt someone if you continue? Are you reacting out of hurt, fear, or anger? What will saying or doing what you're thinking accomplish? If nothing good will come of your words or actions, don't express them.
Try to find common experiences or interests	People have a tendency to like others who are like them.
Try your best and move on	
Welcome Diversity	Every person has had unique experiences that have helped shape who they are. Every culture shares similarities and differences. When meeting someone who seems different from you, keep an open mind. You probably aren't as different as you think. Accept the differences that you do discover. These are what keep life interesting and allow us to learn from one another.
When you're talking to someone give them your undivided attention.	

**Here are 5 Don'ts to help you get along with people:**

- Don't be so touchy - It doesn't really help you to be so sensitive. If you raise hell for the trivial things, then ask yourself, "Why am I offended by this? Why do I feel annoyed?" Introspection will show you that it's not really big a deal at all. People joke around and most of the time, these can be playful remarks with no intention to offend you. As long as it doesn't really hurt your pride and principles, just go along with the ride.
- Don't lose your temper - Quick to lose your temper? Try slow-counting one to ten. Breathe. Getting angry easily over trivial things will make people move away from you. If you constantly get angry (or even look it), you'll easily ward people off even if you don't mean to. You won't become approachable with such an angry demeanor. Besides, too much anger brings too much stress. And that's not good for you at all.
- Don't be annoying - There are several ways you can annoy people, even if you don't mean it. Never expect that every day's a great day for everyone. Not all of us have good days and bad days. If you sense other

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people having a bad day and wanting some space and time to themselves, give them that. If people tell you frankly that one of your habits annoy them, better start making some changes. Chances are, they're for the better.

- Don't gossip - No one likes people who talk behind their backs. You might be the life of the water cooler in the office but everyone will start to hate you with what you do. Your trust factor goes down every time you gossip.
- Don't be an arrogant jerk. Sheer arrogance has no room in this world. There's absolutely no reason to think lowly of other people. So don't carry a demeaning attitude. Everyone's got brains, and you don't know what other people are really capable of.

### Here are **5 Dos** to help you get along with people:

- Greet people - Smile. Greet people a good day (or whatever time of day it is). It doesn't do people harm. It also gives people the impression that you're open and approachable.
- Share - Be it some mint in your pocket or a bag of chips; ask people would want some if followed by a handing gesture.
- Lend a helping hand - Simple gestures like helping people carry a load or holding a door for them, go a long way.
- Smile - Perhaps the easiest way to introduce yourself, smiling is part of us being human. There's a great reason why it takes less muscles to smile than to frown. Nature just intended us to smile more.
- Respect others - The world's full of differences. However, prejudice is so last century. So learn to acknowledge people's uniqueness and respect them. It's the only way other people with tolerate your own unique person.



### Tips for Conflict Resolution

Sit Down to Discuss the Issue and Establish Ground Rules	Ground rules can include things such as the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each side will take turns speaking, and each one will get an equal amount of time to speak.</li><li>• When one person is talking they cannot be interrupted by the other. If the other person hears something that they want to respond to and it's not their turn to speak, they should write it down and wait until it's their turn to say it.</li><li>• Just try to resolve the issue at hand. If there are other issues that need to be discussed, set a later time to talk about them.</li><li>• Refrain from using phrases such as "You always . . .", or "You never . . ." People rarely "always" do something or</li></ul>
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	<p>“never” do something, and phrases like these just put the other person on the defensive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try not to blame the other person, speak for the other person, or speculate about their motives; accept that you do not know the other person’s intent.</li> <li>• Refrain from name-calling (this one should be obvious, but unfortunately it’s not).</li> <li>• Each side should strive to take responsibility for their contribution to the conflict. When you’re arguing with someone it’s tempting to think that the other person is completely at fault. However, it’s important that you examine how your actions have contributed to the problem, and that you ask yourself if there was a way in which you could have better handled the situation.</li> <li>• Both sides need to understand that resolving conflict is not about figuring out who’s right or assigning blame. Rather, it’s about moving forward and learning a new way to deal with each other in the future.</li> <li>• Treat each other with respect.</li> </ul>
Focus on Interests, Not Positions	<p>During any conversation in which you’re trying to resolve a disagreement, the aim should be to identify each side’s interests. In other words, instead of focusing on positions—where each side takes a firm stance as to exactly what it is that they’ve decided they want—each side should express the needs, concerns, desires, fears, and aspirations that underlie their position.</p>
Develop the Skill of Active Listening	<p>In the words of Stephen Covey: “If I were to summarize in one sentence the single most important principle I have learned in the field of interpersonal relations, it would be this: seek first to understand, then to be understood. This principle is the key to effective interpersonal communication.”</p> <p>In order to understand what another person is trying to communicate to you, you need to develop the skill of active listening.</p>
Practice Empathy	<p>Try to see the world from the perspective of the other person; put yourself in their shoes.</p> <p>“[W]hat may appear as the truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another person. But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appeared to be different truths are like the countless and apparently different leaves of the same tree.” — Ghandi</p>
Learn to Express Yourself	<p>In resolving any disagreement with another it’s important not only that you listen to the other person and try to understand where they’re coming from, but that you also express how you feel and let the other person know what you really want. Tell them what you’re experiencing, what your desires are, what’s important to you, and how you feel.</p>
Look for a Solution to the Conflict that is Favorable to Both Sides	<p>Once you’ve identified each side’s interests you can come up with creative ways to satisfy them. Stop looking for a single best answer— come up with as many solutions and alternatives as possible—and don’t assume that there’s a fixed pie.</p>

Humm, a lot of the conflict resolution stuff sounds just like the “how to get along” stuff - dah ;-}



### Human Relations Self-evaluation Test

Answer the following questions with a Yes or No.

1. Do you smile when you meet and talk with people?
2. Are you really interested in people and what they do?
3. Do you greet people as soon as you see them?
4. Do you call people by name?
5. Are you a friendly and helpful person?
6. Do you give the impression that you enjoy life?
7. Do you feel you have a good sense of humor?
8. Are you generous with praise?
9. Do you look for the good rather than the bad in people?
10. Do you reflect optimism rather than pessimism when facing problems?
11. Are you considerate about others' feelings?
12. Do you try to be positive rather than negative when expressing yourself?
13. Do you avoid criticizing people if possible?
14. Are you patient with people?

Count the number of your YES answers. A score of 12 or higher is outstanding, marking you as perceptive and knowledgeable on human relations. An average score is 10. A score of 8 or lower should tell you that you must be more people-oriented if you want to lead or have others to really like you.



### Tips on Recruiting Like Minded Persons & Being Successful

**One of the biggest challenges to survival will be to learn to live with others in closer quarters.** One source quoted a missionary as saying "*one of the biggest problems with retaining missionaries was not: funding, people, dedication, or training, but rather the lack of emotional maturity and the ability of the team members to live in isolation away from*

*modern familiar creature comforts and to just plain get along. This cost the missions lots of money and time when people deserted their post or demanded to be sent home because they couldn't bear another personality or presence."*



On top of this we Preppers, Survivalists, Homesteaders and Self-Reliant folks need to find people with some specific interests, skills, knowledge, life styles and goals. Due to human nature and diversity we know we cannot find individuals that are *exactly* like us. We also know that these differences can (and most likely will) cause conflicts from time to time, both now and during the actual crisis. We also tend to be a rather "private" group of people, which just adds to the difficulty of finding people like ourselves.

Knowing who to include and who to exclude, is critical to a team's success and the decisions will NOT be easy! Those we exclude (family and or friends) could very well die off in a long term SHTF disaster. Those we include could make us wish that we had died off. So, we need to select carefully and we need to do this NOW rather than later.



JWR of SurvivalBlog paints a very realistic "picture" when he stated: "... Among the easier things to do such as store ammo and properly bucket food, there are more dynamic pursuits such as putting together like minded individuals for support and growth. ... As the incident increases in magnitude, the less likely it is to occur compared to the more common, less long-term challenges. One of the biggest questions you have to ask yourself is, "Who's on my team?"..." (For the complete article see: <http://www.survivalblog.com/others.html> )

These are not easy decisions and cannot be considered lightly. We simply cannot invite one and all to our retreat or group, so these tough decisions will need to be made and made NOW.

With any group in a long-term situation where you will be living with people you are not super familiar with and may be in close quarters with, will require **a clear and concise set of rules**. These rules should be up front and part of the criteria when selecting your members and will apply to ALL your members equally - to the kids, as well as the adults, you as well as others.

*"It is precisely because neither individuals nor small groups can be fully self-sufficient that cooperation is necessary to human survival and flourishing." Tom G. Palmer*

#### **A Survival Groups critical "people traits" will need to include:**

**Clear leadership ability** and we will need more than one kind of leadership. What kinds? Over all Group Leadership that can and will delegate to other "leaders" of specific tasks and skills – *the Wise Leader*. For example: defense, medical, building, livestock, water, energy, food, water, communications, spiritual, teaching and the like.



No one person will be likely to have the knowledge and skill to be the ultimate leader for each and every task team. Now don't fall into the trap of a person that leads by over delegating. This type of "leader" rarely gets off their own butt to do anything, rather this person delegates instead and will quickly cause hard feelings between the rest of the group.

All great leaders in history have possessed an "air" of authority, skill and command and surrounding themselves with like people to lead each specific sub-team. Think of a football team, there is the Head Coach, Assistant Coach, Defense Coach and Offence Coach. Each with their own special skills to coach over their respective sub-teams.

**Conflict resolution skills**, for settling arguments between siblings, group members and the like. All members should possess some of this ability.

**Shares a similar faith or spiritualism - *Faith and Spiritualism are completely different than Religion*** and its denominations. An atheist's "faith" of no belief in a higher power, yet believes in the golden rule, is a person of "similar faith", just as a Catholic, Baptist or Hebrew are of the same spiritual level. Be sure all parties in your group can recognize this.

**A good mix of skills** – physicians/EMT's/paramedics/nurses, herbalist, mechanic, a machinist/welder, a farmer, a combat veteran, ammo reloader, furniture maker, builder, safety (fire, law, S&R), farming/ranching, alternative energy skills and so on.



**A good range of ages and life experiences** - An older person may no longer be physically capable of doing a particular skill but has years of experience and knowledge to pass on. The youth are tomorrow and the ones we need to pass these skills on to.



**Family dynamics**, units & children; parents, teenagers, infants, toddlers; multi-generations under one roof. One doesn't want one generation blaming the other for the SHTF world or complaining about not being to play their Xbox. Ideally you want family units with most of their extended family living outside of the state or even a few states away. Unless of course this extended family has skills or knowledge your group is lacking and similar life styles – in that case, plan accordingly on how to rendezvous.

**Consider personalities and plan accordingly** – Are there children from a previous marriage; ex-spouses that don't believe as you do (but will want to be included if the SHTF); previous run-ins with the law; “me-first, no one else matters” attitudes; the private person who may seem stand-offish and hard to approach; Pranksters and life-of-the-party types; Melancholy people; male & female flirts & Seducers; Whiners/complainers; Addicts and substance abusers (including chocolate/ sugar/food, drunks, dopers, gamblers, over eaters, and porn seekers.); blamers (the kind that need someone to be at fault, instead of being part of the solution); Procrastinators; Perfectionists; Controllers and Micro-managers; any ; responsibility and duty to parents or other extended family; never overlook any serious character flaws—especially when it's a matter of life and death.

**People who are willing to share** not only the work , skills and responsibilities, but the cost burdens too. The problem most survivalists face regarding their goal of self-reliance usually boils down to limited financial resources. When it comes down to purchasing the tools and supplies, few of us have cash enough to cover every scenario - or the space to store what we might acquire.

*"Emergency preparedness is a team sport." Eric Whitaker*

Right about now you are probably mumbling to yourself “look lady I know what type of person to look for, tell me something I don't know – HOW to find such people!” OoKay!!! After reviewing all the sources, this is what I have discovered.

**Consider recruiting regionally** for preparedness-minded people that have the same long-term relocation destination or at least people with the willingness to be flexible about where they relocate.

One survivalist stated: “...The best ounce of prevention in my mind is to gently encourage friends and family to make some preparations themselves. Use real life illustrations like [the earthquakes in] Haiti, Chile, and other current events which can occur here. It is evident that removing responsibility from people for their own well-being is a catastrophe. Take a look at our culture at large to verify this...”

**Think of the places and events you go to where you are most likely to come across people who *may* think like you** or are attempting to learn skills that will be needed in a SHTF world. Gun & shooting shows & demos; first aid/CPR classes; Search & Rescue events; colonial living history events; sporting goods & hunting stores; backpacking & camping stores and clubs; veteran clubs and hang outs; farm & ranch events (look for animal experts & veterinarians); alternative building and energy events; horsemanship shows (look for the blacksmiths); craft shows (look for needed skills); natural/organic gardening or community gardening clubs and the like. While there, ask the person behind the counter/booth if they may know of any local survival groups.

**Strike up a conversation with the people around you** that hit you as “one of us” and your “gut” says are safe to approach. Then in a laid back, non-specific or “in your face” way make a few comments that you know anyone who is even remotely thinking like you will respond to and gently steer the conversation towards your topic and specifics.

Like: "Wow, now there is a craft that is downright useful in this economy." Or "Did I miss something? How does he tell he's not trimming into the hoof's cuticle?"

**Wear some kind of cap, hat or T-shirt that subtly states you are what you are.** Many groups and blogs use the "76" *Battle of Bennington flag* as their symbol.

**Look for existing or similar groups in your area.** Hiking, fishing, backpacking, hunting clubs and such. Any Church of Latter Days Saints people, groups or events your area? Many times you need not be a member to participate. Never underestimate a Red Cross or Search & Rescue type group for like minded people.

**Look for a community bulletin board** that most sporting good stores and churches display. Ask an associate if you cannot locate one. Bulletin boards are usually near an entrance or near a customer service desk. **Prepare a flier ahead of time to post on bulletin boards** in places you trust, stating you want to form a local survival/preparedness/self-reliance group. Think ahead of time about your experience level, financial and time commitments you can afford before starting this group, as you will be looked to lead and organize it. **Do Not** include your full name, address or other personal contact information. Instead have a public meeting place/date/time on the flyer and then see who shows up. Use the "76" *Battle of Bennington flag* to mark your table.



**Look for any ads** posted by individuals that are seeking other people to practice or learn about survival skills.

**Visit various departments in stores that carry survival gear such as camping and firearms.** Try the section that carries water purifiers; freeze dried food or hunting knives. Ask the sales associates if they know of any local survival groups.

### Using the web or social services to find others like you

The internet and its various blogs and social groups are a good place to "feel" people out. Just be sure to utilize all the standard safety precautions with these sites.

**Visit [meetup.com](http://meetup.com) in the Internet**, or some other such site. Meetup.com is a website dedicated to helping individuals find groups of people who share common interests or hobbies and who meet on a regular basis.

Register for a free profile by clicking on "Sign Up" in the upper right hand corner of the page. As you fill out your profile, list your hobbies and interests pertaining to survival skills to help find groups later.

Perform a search by region, ZIP code or keyword to find survival groups. Try searching by keywords like "survival" "emergency preparedness" "search and rescue" and other terms related to survival situations.

Contact any group leaders or click "join" to join any groups you find. There will be a button to send a secure message to the group leader if you need to contact them. Once you join, you should receive an email with more information about the group.

Other web sites:

## Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued

- The Survivalist Groups ["Meet-up"] web page--a free service courtesy of the folks at SurvivalistBooks.com. BTW, if you use this service, then please give SurvivalistBooks.com some business. Buy a couple of books. They have a great selection.
- ChristianMingle.com (a paid matchmaking service--based on in-depth questionnaires)
- FarmersOnly.com is an online dating-type site that caters to: "Farmers, Ranchers, Ag Students and all of Agriculture, Horse, Livestock Owners and all Animal Lovers"

Remember to communicate with and ask questions about the experience levels of your new group or those that contact you to form a group. Clarify terms like "camping," "hiking," and "survival." To some camping, hiking or surviving may include only spending the night or walking up hill on pavement. The term "survival" may mean having access to modern conveniences during a stay away from home. Preparedness and self-reliance may mean different things to different people.

### Always Identify Yourself -- Discreetly

Remember most of us are rather private people, couple this with the safety needs whenever meeting new people in today's world and this becomes a must.

Many preparedness and survival groups like to use the **"76" Battle of Bennington flag** as a signal of their views and one of the more noted blogs (SurvivalBlog) uses this "signal" as well. Wearing this flag image on a hat or T-shirt, etc. when you are out and about can lead you to many other likeminded people.

Needless to say, **use discretion when using these services and sites**. For your safety and security, it is better to go through a long series of correspondence and to do some background and reference checking before revealing your home address or phone number. You might even want to set up a separate Hotmail or Gmail account, just for the purposes of making such contacts.

**Do not post the physical address of your residence or other personal contact information on any Internet sites or fliers.** If a website makes you display location information, then include a region or a general area or display a ZIP code only.

### What is the ideal "Prepared Survival" Community & how to find it?

Some people like to shoot for the stars and are looking for the perfect community filled with citizens that think like them. Well folks - perfection does not exist! That is not say these people are biting off more than they can chew. You should indeed look for communities with a "leaning" towards preparedness and self reliance.

Since there seems to be an exception to every rule, we can safely assume that there is bound to be one or more candidates for such a community in each state - somewhere.

According to the *Survival & Self-Reliance Institute* (<http://www.srsi.org/>) "a 10-15% influx of survivalists (to the current local population) should be enough to exert dominant political control, but as little as 2% influx could change things radically in the self-reliant survivalists' favor." So keep that little tidbit in mind.

Scan the following criteria and remember that **the perfect community will need to have the same criteria as a survival retreat with the added requirement that it be populated by people of the same mind set in this arena.**

If you already have a core group that are willing to relocate, then your current task is to find the right community to transplant yourselves to, recruit others to and gently guide the existing citizenry to this mindset.

If you have a good community but need more likeminded people, then review the tips for finding people like you and be sure they are willing to relocate.

**The community should have folks that are active in town politics and government - as a “whole town” approach for self-reliance on a day to day basis.** Note: The greater majority of self-reliant, Prepper types are kinda private and avoid notoriety or public displays, so what I speak of here is not “in your face” political activism. Rather I speak of those who study the candidates and assist in elections of candidates that meet their criteria and vote for laws that promote or facilitate self-reliance. Per the *Survival & Self-Reliance Institute* (<http://www.srsi.org/>) *“If you infiltrate/integrate with the business community, the medical, police, fire and emergency services communities, and vote as a concerted block at every opportunity, things may be directed satisfactorily.”*

As a side note: Most self-reliant people tend to fall into the moderate to conservative range when it comes to politics, so this is something to look for in a town.

**Here is a tip:** In my search to relocate I looked for what I call rural “*pocket communities*”. These are communities made up of several towns in a small area where close to half meet my self-reliant needs. One town in this area may have a dairy, the next a pig farm; one could have a blacksmith, the next a cabinet maker; one could have a lumber mill, the next a super crafts store; one could raise sheep and process wool, the next would have a fishery and the like.

Or if you are urban recruit to create a “*community within a community*”. Gently inquire and promote “preparedness” among your neighbors. Discuss how to protect your street should the SHTF. I know of one such urban block that has 7 households on the street that belong to this inner community. They are not exactly right next to each other, but if they all walked to the ends of their driveways they could wave to each other. These households share purchasing and storage duties. The wives often get together with other wives on the street that are “craft wise” so this core group can learn a new skill. All the while promoting block unity even when those outside the core group have no idea that these core households are “Preppers”.

Basically your new survival community group will independently develop your own emergency and catastrophic contingency plans. Then attempt to have these adopted by the powers that be, by say submitting the plans anonymously, if necessary to the community council.

*“To be prepared is to anticipate risk and to prudently act toward prevention.” Wes Fessler*

**No matter what - the basic criteria are:**

- **All the same properties and criteria for a “survival retreat” but in a whole community, rather than just individual homesteads.** (**A must read:** JWR’s “*Recommended Retreat Areas*” @ <http://www.survivalblog.com/retreatareas.html> ). This looks at all the natural and man-made risk maps; firearm & home schooling laws; growing seasons and population concentration.
- Rural location, at least 50-100 miles from MAJOR metropolitan area. In my book this is a 2-3 hours drive from a town of 5000+. I also prefer not being in view or direct access of a major national or state highway/interstate.
- Limited access capable of being monitored & controlled, or denied

### Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued

- Has sufficient quantities of water LOCALLY & local water treatment plant. This treatment plant can be something as simple as a filtering “pond” that cleans the water naturally. The size of the town will determine the technology behind this. Just remember that the more technology that is needed to operate one of these things, the greater risk you have of it NOT being functional in a SHTF world.
- Has local waste/sewer treatment facilities (bonus for bio-conversion plants). Plenty of individual septic systems and the businesses that install and maintain them. Ditto to above.
- Has independent power supply, or capability to generate power locally without outside materials. I look to good small scale alternative energy sources and businesses and an energy conscious community, along with state and local laws that support them without a lot of governmental costs added.
- Has a local modern hospital, ambulance service, dental offices, medical laboratories. Several of the areas I have visited didn't have a hospital, but did have an extremely well equipped clinic where minor surgeries and short “stays” were available along with a good medical staff. Again the more this type of thing relies on technology the greater risk you run of it being almost useless in a SHTF world.
- Has local fire and police departments & equipment - volunteer forces preferred, as these are less likely to be controlled or hampered by government. I made a point of meeting with the county sheriffs to the areas I looked in. Most of the towns I visited did not have local police forces but rather, county sheriff offices and sub-stations. A few had a local constable that had direct communication with county and state law enforcement when needed.
- Has local primary and secondary schools. I look at home schooling and rural schools. Some folks may think a bonus would be a local or community college is a plus, but to me this means more people and higher taxes, which are a BIG negative to me. I would prefer a local college within 2-4 hours or a days drive away.
- Has local library with technical (how to/how things work) and research sections [hardcopy]. Some of the areas did not have a library but did have used book stores and community volunteer run “book exchanges” which had loads of good books of all types in them. I also looked for public internet access being available in at least one establishment in town.
- Has local radio/television broadcast facilities capable of transmission and reception (inc. satellite). Ok, most of the communities I looked at had the closest facility of this nature in the larger town that was 3-4 hours drive away – which to me is perfect. Quite a few did have either a local paper (usually published weekly), radio or ham radio station with regular programs.
- Has a local economy sufficient to support survivalist influx. This criteria was listed by several sites but I looked for and found a local economy that had their own “barter dollars” that were good in multiple communities in area (remember those “pocket communities”?). Barter jobs of trading a skill for goods or another skill composed almost half of the areas “jobs”.
- Has a number of retail shops for food, clothing, household goods, sporting goods, building supplies. I looked for good old fashioned general stores, farmers markets, Tractor Supply and the like. Most rural communities will have at least one sporting goods type business or the general store will provide those kinds of items.
- Has firearms and ammunition shops. Ditto to above.

**Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued**

- Has arable land (for farming) and viable wildlife population (hunting & fishing). I add that you do NOT want this community *surrounded* by state or national forests or BLM land. This land can be nearby but should not surround the area where the *only* access roads to the town must go through them.
- Has active farmers/ranchers with stock & equipment . Look for Agway, Tractor Supply and John Deer type businesses. If you see these then the farms and ranches are in the area, even if you don't actually see them during your visit.
- Has active local building contractors with heavy equipment. Think of a group of towns forming a larger community or contractors and architects that actually live in your surrounding area but may work in the town of 5000+ that is 2-4 hours drive time away. The heavy equipment may be from the larger town. The more you add these types of businesses to your immediate community – the more people, more laws, more government oversight in the area.
- Has its own snow removal equipment, even if it is just one snow plow.
- Has local indoor & outdoor meeting places (for community voting/discussion/etc.) Community centers, Town Halls and churches are your best bets. Several towns I visited were soo small that these kinds of meetings were held in either the local saloon or school house.
- Has local entertainment facilities (essential for mental health). I do NOT mean that this must be movie theaters and video gaming places. I look for bowling alleys, Dart Leagues, Future Farmers, 4H, Little League, sewing and quilting circles, local theater groups or “film festivals” and the like. Rural communities tend to have entertainment of the home grown type, like festivals and fairs VS the more urban entertainment type of activities. For all the “modern” and “urban” entertainment, the larger town of 5000+ that is 2-4 hours away is good enough.
- Has relatively mild weather or emergency contingencies (safe buildings/areas) for known hazards. This was listed by several sources but I modify this to remove “mild weather” since the citizens and town of rural locations are more or less Prepper oriented just by the nature of their “ruralness” and already have safe buildings and contingencies for the weather incidents that usually occur in their area.
- Has little or no recurrent history of natural disaster. To me this means looking at **risk maps** for the various natural disasters that have occurred in the area. Very few locations on this planet have had “no recurrent” disasters, even if those are 100+ years apart.

**Risk Map Links:**

<p><b>The Disaster Center</b> (track live) follow for links to: NOAA -- Surface Analysis Loop ; Graphical Forecasts; National Forecast; National Radar; National Satellite; Satellite Environment Plot ; Real Time Water Data ; Warnings - Advisories ; Current Warnings ; NWS Active/Special Warnings ; NWS Offices and Centers</p>	<p><a href="http://www.disastercenter.com/">http://www.disastercenter.com/</a></p>
<p><b>Nature's Fury</b> - for Preparedness; research - Real Time Activity/Alerts</p>	<p><a href="http://naturesfury.net/">http://naturesfury.net/</a></p>
<p><b>Earth Observatory</b> NASA - For Risks on: Aerosol Optical Depth; Chlorophyll; Cloud Fraction; Land Surface Temperature; Net Radiation; Sea Surface Temperature; Snow Cover; Total Rainfall; Vegetation</p>	<p><a href="http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/GlobalMaps/">http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/GlobalMaps/</a></p>

Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued

<p><b>Threat Matrix</b> (global) Open Source Intelligence Dashboard Control / Fast Jump Menu Maps (Maps, Graphs, Charts, Predictions, Lists of Recent Incidents, and other items are all <b>updated automatically as new data is added</b> to our databases from which it draws.)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.globalincidentmap.com/threatmatrix.php">http://www.globalincidentmap.com/threatmatrix.php</a></p>
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- Has emergency contingencies (safe buildings/areas) for known recurrent hazards. Again, Very few locations on this planet have had “no recurrent” disasters, however ALL towns/communities should have emergency contingencies/plans.
- Not downstream of major/multiple dams and reservoirs (or, at least, not in the flood plain). Check out those risk maps again.
- Not directly in the path of concentrated fallout (ash - burning cities, volcanic, nuclear). Check out those risk maps again.
- Above catastrophic flood levels from hurricane, tsunami, meteor/asteroid/comet strike. Check out those risk maps again.
- Not a potential (or previous) target for hostile direct attack. Check out those risk maps again.
- No likely near-miss potential from a deliberate attack. Check out those risk maps again.
- Not situated in an obvious evacuation path (unless you are SURE access can be diverted/denied - and HELD)
- Bonus for local National Guard/Army Reserve Armory. This can be good and bad depending on the general mentality of the surrounding area. *The proximity of this in my book would be the town of 5000+ 2-4 hours drive away.*
- Bonus for grain silo's
- Bonus for local breweries/distilleries
- Bonus for operating cannery/bottler
- Bonus for local (small scale) manufacturing
- Bonus for mills/lumber yards
- Bonus for local quarry w/cement facilities
- Bonus for local highway department with road maintenance equipment. *Again outside of local snow plow and the like, this would be in the town 2-4 hours away.*
- Bonus for pre-existing large-scale alternative energy usage (wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, etc.) *Although several sites listed this, I personally don't want to see this right in my community – Where ever these large scale alternative energy production sites are you have corporate utility and government types constantly around.* This is not good in my book and should at least 2-4 hours drive away.

### Tips on selecting members for a successful Preparedness/Survival Group Continued

- Bonus for fly-in/out local airfield with aircraft parking & maintenance facilities. During my travels while property hunting I saw very few local airports, however each and every town I visited had at least one rancher which their own “airport” that was used for emergency life flight type operations when needed. These towns bragged about this type of community unity.
- Bonus for local mineral and petroleum sources (with equipment for recovery). Again to me no closer than 2-4 hours drive. Why have all those “regulator” and “EPA” types right in your backyard?
- Bonus for temporary/long term underground shelters/caves. This was an item listed by several sites. Most rural areas I visited had some kind of storm shelter or the residents themselves did. I would also seriously wonder about a community that supports (pays for) long term underground shelters – I mean do I really want to live here? What are these shelters for?

That's it folks, a summary of all the information I have collected over the years on this subject. Good luck!

*Keep On Preppin*

**TNT**

*A 50 Something, homesteading, Prepper :-}*