

Long Duration Crisis Considerations



When I was a consultant and traveled for a living, there were times I had 3-18 month contracts. I would pack accordingly, yet without fail I either forgot something or one thing or another would get worn out or break. No problem right – just go the store and replace it. Well in a long duration SHTF scenario that option is taken away from us.



We Preppers think about food, mainly because we eat and see food prices rising almost every day, but what about things like shoes, boots, gloves, coats, shirts, pants, jeans, T's, underwear, sheets, towels, pillow, bedding, furniture, kitchenware and the like? Then there are things like metal for tools, lumber, wiring, sockets, sheetrock and other building materials.



I have some friends that have been living the self-reliant life since the 70's, who are 100% utility independent and we have often discussed these pesky, yet very important considerations. They had some rather interesting ways to deal with some of these.



They each have a "junk" yard and barn on site. They accumulate all kinds of things others would throw away. In fact quite a bit of this "junk" was taken from dumps and such. This "junk" consists of: metals (all kinds),

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wire, fencing, insulation, pipes, PVC piping, sheet metal, corrugated steel, corrugated fiberglass sheeting, nuts, bolts, screws, wood, gates, electrical sockets, screening and even old junk vehicles (many of which were stripped of their more usable parts). Some of this stuff is out in the open so to speak and other items are stored in a series of container cars that are used to mark the “junk yard”. I thought it was kinda funny that although both of these friends live in different states about 1000 miles apart that they both utilized the same set-up.



They also had a storage or reserve barn strictly for items that know they will need in the future, so they purchase them whenever they can. This particular “barn” is very well organized and environmentally controlled. It house extra underwear, socks, sweats, coats, gloves, Wellington boots, bib-overalls, chambray shirts, bedding, towels, reels of various electrical wiring, high quality lumber, pumps, light bulbs, batteries (including vehicle), hinges, door knobs, solar panels, small motors and the like. Along with some stuff I was surprised to see like: petroleum jelly, baby oil, witch-hazel, rubbing alcohol, vinegar, baking soda and powder, borax, clothing material, sneakers, flip-flops, tenting material, bedding and linen material, pots, pans, flatware, dishes, glasses, cups, bowls, buckets, mop heads, sponges, lamp shades, hurricane lamps, wicks, lamp oil, thread, leather, needles and the like. Most of the fabric type stuff is sealed in vacuum sealed bags stored in locking lid plastic containers.



They also have storage areas for keeping used cans from canned goods, glass jars, certain types of plastic, used paper and cardboard. Both have workshops where they do blacksmithing, metal and welding work, kiln, smelter and other similar items for various projects. One even has an “auto pit” where they can drive a vehicle over it and work on the undercarriage.



These “junk yards” and “barns” are quite organized so that they know where to go for a particular type of item. I know I’ve visited them numerous times over the years and have watched these homesteads being expanded upon and their stockpiles accumulate.



When I asked what they used say the paper and cardboard for I was told old paper can be shredded, soaked and turned into more paper. The cardboard can also be reused for a number of things including insulation. The plastic can be melted down and turned into another plastic item – and yes they have done this and have molds for baskets and buckets. One even has a one-man lumber shop for cutting their own lumber from felled trees. This friend keeps the sawdust and makes fire starters, plus mixes it with melted plastic to make their own “board lumber” hybrid lumber.



They both also have a completely stocked tools shed, smokehouse, multiple root cellars and their own bio-fuel refinery for making biodiesel and kerosene. Not to mention their cold-frames, greenhouses, grain fields, orchard and vegetable gardens. They reload and one make their own bullets.



Nothing is thrown out. Food scraps are either composted or added to the bio-fuel refinery. Worn clothing is turned into patchwork quilts or rag rugs or just plain work rags. Paper and sawdust are turned into more paper, insulation, fire starters and woodstove pellets. Sheep and Llamas are sheared, their wool spun and woven or knitted into fabric or clothing. Animals past their prime or are a nuisance (but not sick) are slaughtered for meat. The innards are used in the compost, the skin for leather, the leather for other leather items or repairing other leather items. The bones are turned into other tools or ground up for compost. There is very little if any trash and what trash they do accumulate is burned and the ashes are put in an ash pit (after a few years this buried ash is great as a soil argment).



They leach lye from hardwoods and make their own soaps, detergents and shampoos. Leaf and similar yard waste is burned to form activated charcoal. Odd wood pieces and knuckles are burned into lump charcoal. They have olive trees (not eating olives) and make their own olive oil. They make their own lard, tallow, milk the cows, and make their own butter and cheese. They grow a number of grains for bread, pies and cakes.



Both grow flax that can not only be eaten, but the stalks are used to make a type of linen fiber and yes, the women both spin and weave.



All of them are very mechanically skilled, carpentry skills and home schooled their children. Some of those children have chosen to stay on the homestead to raise their families and have built their own homes there.

Both have extensive home libraries that contain educational, DIY, self-help, historical and entertainment type books, pamphlets and magazines they have collected over time. Several in each household play instruments like guitar, piano, harmonica, drums and even the flute.



Some of the items they stockpile make sense to me and others did not. Like why sweats and bib-overalls? I was told that as long as they could get to town several times a year they would continue to purchase shoes, clothing, linen and the like, but if they could not travel they needed a back-up. So if these everyday things wore out and they could not travel they have these items available to hold them over. Bib-overalls it was explained are almost one size fits all as pant legs can be rolled up. Sweats could fit just about anyone. Wellington boots can go over other shoes to make them fit, etc. Ok now it makes sense!



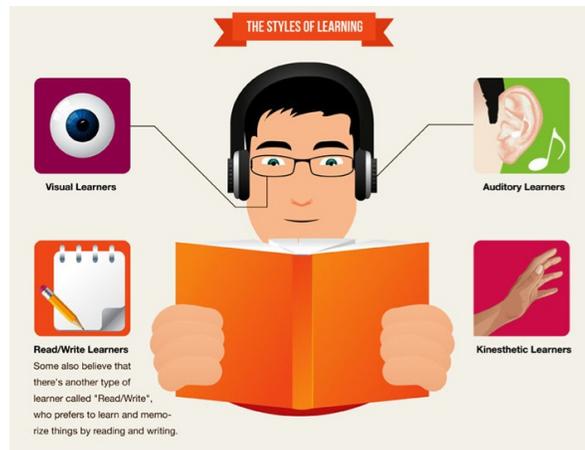
They don't live like colonists of yore. They have a well and plumbing, very extensive plumbing. They reuse grey water, they "pond" their black water or septic water. They capture and reuse run-off water. They are not techno-poor as they have satellite TV, radio, internet and phone service. They also have HAM and shortwave radio. They have electricity and nowadays they do not need to worry to, too much about how they use it. And yes they have power tools as well as the non-electric counterparts.



Both had grandparents and parents that were homesteaders and have three generations living on the homestead, which amounts to tons of knowledge, skill and experience. Yes, household members have left from time to time to gain training and then returned. Two are general practitioners, one is a former Army surgeon, three have paramedic training and experience from the “big city”, one is a mid-wife, two others are dentists and three are licensed herbaligists. These members of the household take care of and treat not only their own families, but neighboring homesteaders to earn their money. Others earn money from the products they make or from land they lease to neighboring large ranches or in one case the Christmas trees they sell. So they may seem poor to many folks because they don’t go to the movies, travel, watch a ton of TV or spend hours playing video games, but they are far, far from it.



Understand that these people are not Preppers, they are independent, self-reliance seekers, that live way out in the boonies and they have been at this for decades. It is because they are so rural and only travel to the nearest town (almost 50 miles away) about 5 times a year, that I posed these very important questions to them.



There is a lot we Preppers can learn from people like this, especially if we have any major long duration crisis that we are preparing for. Let's face it, for any long duration crisis, we will need to be as self-reliant as possible to survive.

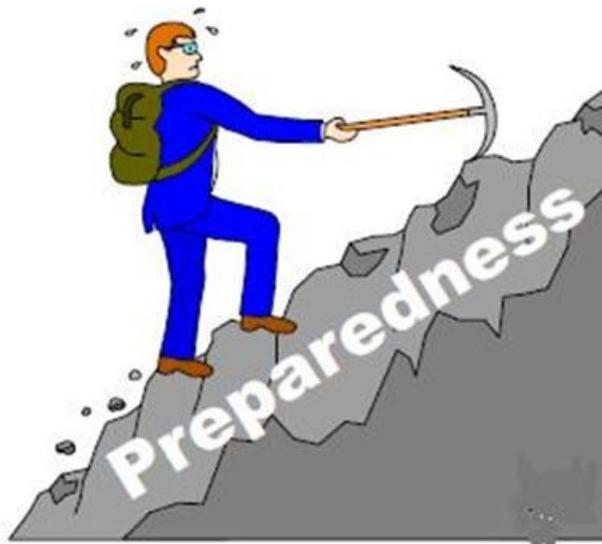
We may feel like we don't have 40+ years to reach this point, or enough land to have our own storage barns and junk yards, we may not be able to purchase what we feel we need, however **WE CAN START NOW** to learn and accumulate as much as possible. The sooner we start, the less there is to do, or get and the more prepared we are for the crises on our list, and ultimately the greater our survivability quotient will be. The absolute worst thing we can do is to never start in the first place.



Preparedness and survival under any circumstance takes time, persistence, a great deal of thinking, researching, a ton of tenaciousness and a plan.

TNT

“Today is the Tomorrow that you worried about Yesterday”



**Taking it one step
at a time.**

*"Defeat is not the worst of failures. Not to have
tried is the true failure."*

George Edward Woodberry