

# AMERICAN SURVIVOR

Survival Information For The Prepared Citizen

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**IN THIS ISSUE: Surviving The Cold, Movement Under High Threat Condition, The Survivors Club, The Self-Reliance Manifesto. SAVE THESE DATES!**

## SURVIVING THE COLD

The human body operates in a very narrow temperature range. If the core body temperature goes much above or below 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit the systems start to fail. Organs start to shutdown and irreversible conditions soon develop. Both too much heat (hyperthermia) and too little heat (hypothermia) can kill, but under some conditions hypothermia can happen faster and be harder to prevent. That condition is known as winter. Simply put, "In the winter Mother Nature is constantly trying to kill you". It's nothing personal, she just likes everything to be the same temperature and if you are at 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit and the environment is ten below ----. We have heated homes, heated vehicles and heated shopping malls so we seldom think about what would happen if it came down to just us against the environment. We are usually well fed and warm so we get bad habits. We waste body heat, and under dress because we know we will be well fed and warm soon.

Think of your body like a house. Your home has windows and doors, a roof, insulation and a furnace that burns fuel. Your body has a mouth and nose, hair, clothing and a metabolism that burns food. Now if you don't care about the cost you can heat your house without

insulation and with the windows open by running the furnace at full blast. Of course you would go broke and when the fuel was cut off you would freeze to death. The same principles apply to your body.



Live Free member practicing winter survival. Only field training and equipment testing can assure preparedness. Note the cold weather facemask.

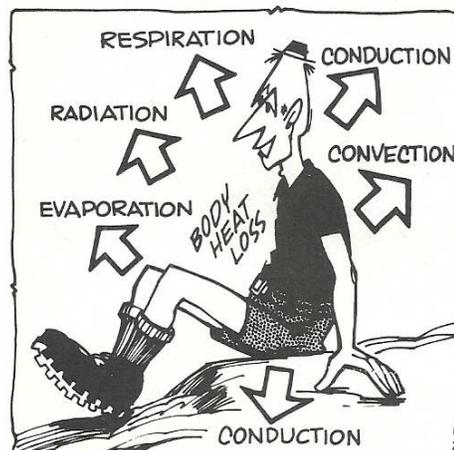
Energy conservation is the key. In a winter survival situation you have only the heat that your body generates from the metabolizing food and any outside heat you can get from a fire. Of these two sources internally generated heat is by far the most efficient and important. For your house the amount of heat you waste is a waste of fuel. For your body the amount of heat you waste is a waste of food/energy. Since it takes a while for food to be broken down to fuel you can

easily burn up the *available* fuel and freeze to death. Once the body gets below about 85 degrees the metabolism no longer can produce enough heat to recover. Therefore conservation of energy and heat, and continued supply of food/fuel are the keys to cold weather survival. Here are few important tips on staying warm under winter conditions.

1. Avoid wasting energy that could better be conserved to generate heat. Yes, it is possible that the energy used to keep a fire going and the drafts created by the fire may cause more heat loss than the fire replaces.
2. The best way to get heat from a fire into you is through drinking warm (preferably sweet) liquids.
3. Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf or a facemask even in moderate cold. You lose massive amounts of heat every time you breath. This is energy you may need later.
4. Eating lots of hot food is a must to fuel your internal furnace. Wasting energy and heat (same thing) is costing you food you may not have.
5. Not wearing a warm hat is like not insulating your attic. Heat goes up and the body gives priority to keeping the brain warm so your head does not feel cold until hypothermia is setting in. Once the brain starts to get cold thinking is impaired and fatal mistakes are made.
6. Running around in cold and/or wet weather with shorts and T-shirts may look tough, but it will require you to eat a lot more food (if you have it) and quickly leads to irreversible hypothermia in the outdoors.
7. Wearing wet cotton clothing (like jeans) is like being in cold water. You

are better off naked. Wool or silk are good insulators that hold heat even when wet. Have a change of clothing available

8. Wet cold feet can immobilize you and then you are unable to get to help, build shelters, etc. Frozen hands set you up for disaster. Always carry an extra pair of warm socks under your shirt. These can also be used to replace wet socks or lost gloves.
9. People do not die because they fell asleep in the cold. They die because they exhausted their energy and then fell asleep in the cold. If you cannot be sure of reaching warm shelter in a storm, the best thing to do is holdup in the best shelter available (snow wall, trees, etc) and conserves your energy. You will doze off and when your body gets cold you will wake and shiver. That will warm you and you will doze again. If you are dry, well clothed and well fed you can last a long time in this state.
10. Avoid contact with cold objects such as rocks, ice, metal equipment, etc. These will suck heat away from you.



11. Avoid getting wet from rain, melting snow or from sweating into your clothing or sleeping bag.
12. You can often freeze dry clothing and equipment by taking it off and letting it

thoroughly freeze, then beating and shaking the ice crystals out of it.

13. It is far better to get out of the wind and rain where you can than to get wet and cold trying to build a shelter and start a fire
14. Starting a fire by improvised means or with wet matches is extremely difficult in wet wind weather. Carry magnesium fire starter sticks in all of your jackets.
15. Avoid camping or sheltering in low places. Cold air is heavy and will settle in dips and gullies and at the base of hills. A few feet off the ground can be several degrees warmer. Of course you need to avoid hilltops where the wind will carry away heat.
16. Heat reflective Space Blankets™ are great for conserving heat and reflecting fire warmth, but don't wrap yourself in one. The body's moisture will gather inside and dampen your clothing. This will lead to greater heat loss.
17. Winterize your survival/evacuation pack. After September you can replace the bug spray and mosquito netting and other warm weather items with a heavier sleeping bag and extra winter clothing. Replace the hiking boots with insulated ones.

## Conclusion

Winter conditions put us in a threatening environment for from 4 to 6 months each year. The reliability of a heated environment, and adequate food supplies has made us all apathetic and vulnerable. Being constantly aware of the threat and being prepared to conserve body energy and prevent unnecessary heat loss can save life if we are deprived of shelter, food and fire heat for an extended period. Keep in mind that animals survive through winters without central heating, fire or hot

food. They depend on their insulation, and internally generated heat alone. So can you.

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## Movement Under High Threat Conditions

*"Men who had fought in several wars and many bloody battles told me that no horrors of a field of battle can be compared to the awful spectacle of the ceaseless exodus of a population"*

*Russian General Gourko*

## Introduction

Under most survival circumstances your best survival option is to stay home. Once on the road you are limited to the supplies you can carry while being exposed to weather, injury, and a variety of hostile situations. If you are unable to reach a safe and well supplies location or establish a safe camp where you can quickly access food, water and shelter within 5 to 10 days your survival chances are greatly diminished. Only when the hazards of staying put outweigh the hazards of becoming a refuge should you take to the road. If you are forced to take this last resort option, here are some recommendations.

## Routs

You must assume that if this is a true disaster, the main highways will be closed or at best very dangerous to travel. Even where secondary roads and trails are available they may not have bridges, and underpasses to cross rivers, expressways, rail lines and natural obstacles. Routs that go through towns may be clogged with refugees or blocked off by local residents. So your planned escaper routs and alternate routs must avoid main highways, have ways to cross obstacles, go around populated areas, provide safe places to camp and of course take you to a desirable location. Obviously you should plan routs in various

directions well before you need them. Scenic drives, hikes and Google Earth are all good ways to scout out routes. Bike paths, abandon rail lines, hiking trails should be considered, but be assured that these routes are already part of others plans as well. Avoid retail areas, medical facilities and government centers where mobs and looting may be occurring. Industrial areas may be less populated. You may have to consider crossing open fields and forested area. Items such as wire cutters, small rubber boats, rope, and even smoke bombs to screen crossings maybe be worth considering. Movement at night may be impossible in unknown and rough terrain, but having night vision equipment could make this an option for you that most others will not have.



Mixed family group lines up in double column preparatory to moving down a road. Such formations support alertness and facilitate response to emergencies

### Caught In A Mass Exodus

If you are really lucky, you may have anticipated the epidemic, nuclear attack, massive unrest or other event and quietly started your evacuation before everyone else. That would enable you to use your vehicle before the roads became jammed and to haul a much larger quantity of supplies to a secure location. However in many cases the event may strike without warning or develop before you can react. In this case you may find yourself caught

in a massive exodus with thousands of less prepared and panicked refugees. Here again, you may have to make a tactical decision. Is it more dangerous to hide and hold in place or put yourself into this mass of desperate and dangerous people. If you are caught in this situation you will need to protect your family from those around you and get out of this crowd as soon as possible.

If you are well equipped and armed it's going to be hard to avoid being noticed. Your level of preparedness and responsibility will identify you as a target for the desperate and the ruthless among the crowd. You must try to keep a safe zone around you. This may require moving off the road, picking a spot between the bunches of people and adopting a very aware and threatening attitude. Be constantly aware of those around you and be ready to act if they try to grab you or rush you. Once some one moves against you others may follow to grab your supplies and weapons. This is a very dangerous situation that you must get away from as soon as possible. Take side roads, railroad tracks, paths, anything to get free of the masses on the main roads. If necessary pull off into the woods and let the wave pass before proceeding

### Individual

If you are traveling alone you have two problems. First, you can't defend 360 degrees and second you can't stay awake 24/7. You can however move faster and hide easier. You *really* need to stay away from the crowd. Don't let anyone get close to you. Keep your weapon ready to fire. Take your own path and make sure you are not being followed. Look back ever few minutes and take a rest stop in a hidden location where you can spot anyone following your trail. When you need to rest you will need to pick a spot well away from any road or trail in a thick growth area where you will be hard to see

and hard to sneak up on. Always be ready to move away quickly. Avoid contact and combat at all costs.

### Small Family Movement

While there is safety in numbers, that depends on what the numbers (people) do. Young children need constant watching and are hard to keep quiet. They also are quick to wander off. They need to be kept in the middle of the group and watched. This is *not* a nature hike or trip to the mall! You do not walk along socializing and looking only ahead. If there are two of you, you should move in echelon about 8-feet apart. Close enough to support each other, but far enough not to be easily hit by the same attack. The front right person constantly watches the front and right while the rear left person is responsible for looking back frequently and covering the left area. If there are three you can form a triangle (wedge) formation. With four or more you can form a diamond or staggered column. When you stop to rest or converse everyone should be off the road, squatting or prone, facing out. Huddles are for football not survival. Even when out in the open, conversation should be in low tones or whispers. Shiny objects should be covered and nothing should rattle or clank. With two or more people you can establish a 360-degree observation plan and a 24/7-watch schedule. One can sleep, cook, etc. while the other is fully focused on watching for potential dangers.

### Large Group Movements

I have seen so-called survival training hikes where everyone straggled along like a bunch of tourists. Here a bunch talking to each other, there a couple holding hands, and then we have the stragglers daydreaming or looking at their feet. Ambush bait for even the most inept criminals. The same group moving quietly in good order can discourage

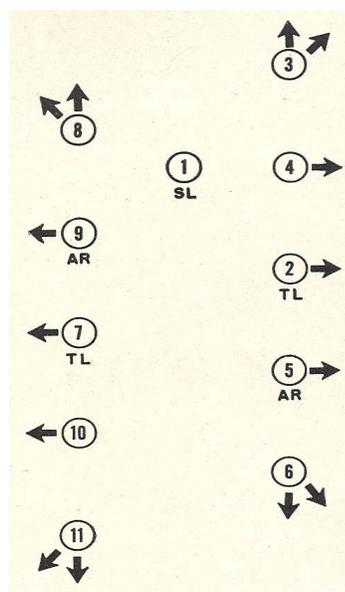
would-be attackers or respond to any kind of situation effectively. For the purposes of this dissertation we will consider any group of 6 or more to be a “large group” capable of a variety of advanced security techniques.

### Single Columns

On narrow trails you may need to move single file. In this case you need to space out 4 to 8 feet depending on the terrain and foliage. At night you may need to be closer. You must be able to see the person in front. The first person (after the point man) looks ahead and right. The next left, etc., and the last person looks back every minute or two.

### Double Columns

On roads or open trails a double column is more practical. With two rows, one guarding left and one guarding right. You still need the point man and rear guards. The two columns should be staggered so no one is next to anyone. In any kind of line, the children, disabled and less capable should be in the middle. Generally the medic and any critical supplies should be there also.



Basic double column formation with leader in the center. Arrows denote direction of responsibility

## Point Man

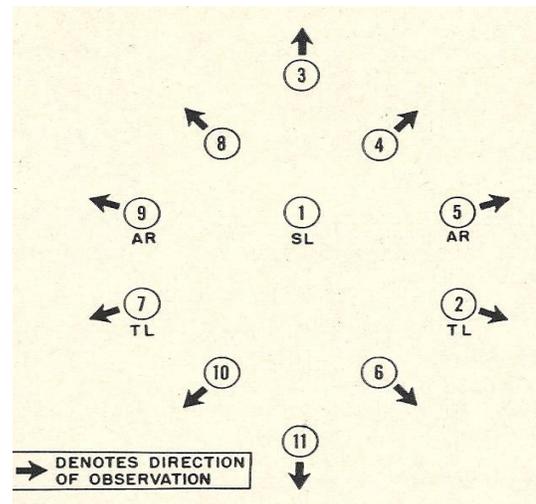
If you can have 4 or more people in the main group you can assign a “point man” to go well ahead of the group to spot hazards. He or she should stay well ahead but within sight of the main group. If someone up ahead spots him they still can’t see the group and if he needs to signal the group or get in trouble, he is visible. This job requires the most alert and experienced members. The need to constantly be scanning for threats from every bush, tree, building and rock while being alone is exhausting. Rotate this job every few hours if possible.

## Emergency Response Plan

At this level, the group should have an emergency response plan to extricate the group and any injured members from danger. The plan should include taking cover, escape routes, passwords, reassembly points to the rear that everyone can get to if the group is forced to scatter and retreat, and clear assignment of responsibilities.

## Crossing Open Ground

Crossing large areas of open ground should be avoided if possible. You are not a military unit and you do not have to “take” any ground. Stick to the best concealment and take safe routes. If you must cross open ground consider a diamond formation that would permit 360-degree defense or if there is no threat from the rear a wedge or skirmish-line formation that maximizes frontal defense.



Basic diamond formation provides for 360-degree defense and can change direction of movement without changing formation.

## Crossing Roads & Railroads

Even if you manage to stick to trails and paths you are probably going to need to cross major roads to get to your destination. There are two hazards in crossing roads. First there may be traffic. This could be masses of the refugees you are trying to avoid and/or hostile forces of any kind. You have several options here. You can wait in concealment for a gap to develop. This may be easier in hilly terrain where blind spots in the road can be used for a quick crossing. You can find and use a culvert or underpass. If you must get across and there are no other options you may need to use smoke (e.g. smoke bombs), fire and even armed intimidation to force through. Crossing an empty road or railroad track poses other hazards. If you cannot find a way under or over them, you must cross with extreme caution. The hazard here is that as you cross, you can be spotted or even shot at by anyone down the road. There is also the possibility that there are hostile people on the other side. Crossing at the center of a curve limits your exposure somewhat. There are two schools of thought about road and railroad crossings. The first is to send a few across first to secure the other side before

the rest of you cross. The second is to rush everyone across at once so that no one down the road or across the road has a chance to react. Your choice depends on the foliage and situation, but you *do not* want to spend any time exposed on that open space.



Skirmish line prepares to enter wooded area. Each person needs to maintain contact with those on each side. This is also a good formation for search and rescue.

## Conclusion

The very sight of a group moving in some level of order and formation will likely discourage all but the most aggressive intruders. Hopefully you and your family are never faced with becoming refugees, but if you are you need to do so in a way that will improve your chances of reaching a safe destination without further injury or deprivation. To survive this kind of journey requires an organized approach, a focus on security and constant vigilance by all involved.. Those who are unwilling to support this effort will put the entire group at high risk and should be abandoned to their own fate\*. They may or may not be lucky enough to survive. You and your family should be depending on skill and organization.

## The Survivors Club

By Ben Sherwood

Most “survival books” are devoted to the technical (how-to) aspects of survival such as shelter building, water purification, self-defense and fire starting. While knowing how to do all these things is important, having the psychological and emotional capacity to react and function effectively under the stress of life and death challenges is even more critical. I have recently reviewed several books devoted to this side of survival. The best ones are: *Deep Survival* by Lawrence Gonzales, and *The Unthinkable* by Amanda Ripley. These were reviewed in previous issues. *The Survivors Club* by Ben Sherwood is now in my top three. This book examines why people survived disasters when they should have died. Why did a woman survive falling from a plane at 33:000 feet without a parachute? How could a 145-pound grandmother lift a 3,450-pound automobile?

The author reduces survival to a binary math formula in which A=life and B=death. **He tells us that the best survivors understand that “normal” is just a fleeting state of mind, a brief intermission between chaos.** The true survivor can quickly let go of what was “normal” and embrace the new (ever changing) “normal of disaster. The theory of 10-80-10 is explained as: 10-percent of people handle a crisis by calm rational action, 80-percent will be stunned and bewildered and the last 10-percent will “freak out” panic and do all the wrong things. If you are the first 10-percent you can lead the other 80-percent, but you have to just avoid the last 10-percent. Statistics are used to show how some people are just prone to dying. Sigmund Freud is quoted as saying that “accidents are an expression of unconscious intent”. In other words failing to survive is often a psychological rather than a physical

failure. In my long experience in the industrial safety field I observed that 80-percent of the “accident” happened to 20-percent of the employees. Most people would do a job for 10, 20 or 30-years without injury while a few doing the same job would be injured every few years. Co incidents? Safety devices and training had little effect on this pattern. I could pretty much predict who would get hurt. I have also observed that the normal to new normal principle and the 10-80-10 principle apply the same to acute emergencies such as fires and storms and chronic disasters such as economic collapse and sociological disintegration.

The point of the book is that the would be survivor (and thrive) needs to examine and understand their own psyche and make adjustments as necessary. Not an easy task. Survivors are categorized as: The Fighter, The Realist, The Believer, The Connector, and the Thinker. Survival strengths or tools are listed as: Adaptability, Resilience, Hope, Purpose, Tenacity, Love, Empathy, Intelligence, Ingenuity, Flow and Instinct. The best part of the book is that it provides a way to do a survival self-analysis. Each book jacket contains a code number\* that you can use to log in to the Survivors Club website. Following the instruction in the book you can then take a rather complex but easy test that forces you to chose answers about how you think. At the end you will get a report listing (1) what kind of survivor you are (2) what your survival strengths are and (3) what you survival weaknesses are. This is very, very useful information. I took the test myself and there were no surprises. I am a realist. I highly recommend this book to the advances student of survival and self-reliance.

The Survivors Club, By Ben Sherwood, 368 pages, hardcover, \$15.99 from The Pigeon Press.

*•/ This number only works once so you need to buy the book. You cannot use someone's number*

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## The Self-Reliance Manifesto

By Len McDougall

The title is a bit audacious. A “manifesto” \* is a statement of a cause or movement that establishes a philosophy and justification. This is just another how-to book. If you have a whole library full of survival books, like I do, then you don't need this one. If you have only a few survival books then this would be a good addition to your library. The chapters are organized by the primary survival needs of food, water, shelter, medication, navigation, fire and protection. Specific hazards such as nuclear attack, biological attack, floods, tornadoes and winter storms are covered. Well illustrated sections cover fire building, fishing, edible plants, shelter building, hunting clothing, axe and knife use and water purification. There are detailed illustrated pages on building a variety of survival kits and packs. How to get a vehicle unstuck, make an improvised stretcher, drive a well, and use a kayak as a “survival boat” are a few of the more valuable techniques included. A combination of clear text, illustrations and color photographs assure that the reader understands the skills.

The Self-Reliance Manifesto, By Len McDougall. 303 pages, 9' x 7 ½', paperback, \$19.95. Skyhorse Publishing Inc., New York.

[www.skyhorsepublishing.com](http://www.skyhorsepublishing.com)

**\* By the way; my book “Life Freedom and Survival” which is downloadable from our website is closer to a manifesto**

# SAVE THESE DATES!

LIVE FREE, USA

## 44<sup>th</sup>\* ANNUAL MEETING

Open To Members, Families and Supporters  
Videos, Exhibits, Speakers, Presentations, Awards,  
Raffles, Elections and more

Day/Date: Sunday March 24th, 2012, 1:00 PM

Location: CABELA'S Sporting Goods Store  
7700 Cabela Drive, Hammond IN

Just South of I-80 at the Indianapolis Blvd. Exit

*\*To be honest, the exact year that "Live Free" started is difficult to establish. We evolved from an informal group of outdoors and self-reliance minded young people into a more formal organization in the late 1960's. The name "Live Free" and the preparedness and self-reliance mission was well established by 1969. Incorporation, the logo, the newsletter and recognition came later. We continue to evolve and respond to the ever-changing world. The next 40-years of Live Free will be in the hands of others.*

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## CAMP INDEPENDENCE

Safety Through Preparedness, Freedom Through Self-Reliance

**Saturday, May 5th 2012**

**Tippecanoe River State Park, Winamac Indiana**

Advanced Registration Before April 15<sup>th</sup>: Individual \$20.00, Family \$30.00, Add \$10.00 for a cabin. Come Friday night and stay over Saturday night for extra activities.

Registration after April 15<sup>th</sup> or at the site: Individual \$25.00, Family \$35.00, Add \$15.00 for a cabin Group Rates Available before April 1<sup>st</sup>. Bring the whole family. Stay overnight. Enjoy the park in spring. Become more self-reliant,

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