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My Thoughts On: **Prepping Myths** **By Jerry D Young**

Surviving alone:

Many people think they can go off to a remote retreat and live out their natural life. This is going to be next to impossible. They will be found and probably attacked, plus, a person or family alone simply cannot know and have the skills to do everything that will come up over the years. Now, in some scenarios, it will be necessary to hide out, isolated, for a time, but eventually everyone will need to have contact and interactions with other people.

1,200 calories per day per person is adequate for survival:

Many of the prepper food companies, and even more people are promoting and/or providing 1,200 calories per day per person food plans. With no up-front indications that this, while a start, is nowhere adequate to sustain an adult in a stressful situation, working hard outdoors, possibly in the winter. This situation could call for as much as 3,500 to 5,000 calories or more, depending on a few factors. Just look at modern weight loss diets. 1,200 calories are often the target level to lose weight quickly. Does anyone think that despite the fact that slightly less intake is needed as one loses weight, that things are suddenly going to turn around, and you will maintain your weight while working two or three times harder, two or three times longer, often in very cold condition, on that same 1,200 calories you once lost weight consuming?

Water purification vs water filtration vs water treatment:

Unfortunately, far too many people fail to understand the differences between purification, filtration, and treatment. And it could be a deadly mistake in some situations. Purification removes all biological contaminants for the most part,

including viruses. Filtration systems will not get out the deadliest viruses. Some treatments can get all the biologicals, but not all the common ones will.

Filtration will usually get out particulates, as well as the larger biologicals.

Purification usually includes filtration.

If you understand that if you might need to get rid of viruses from your water and get a purifier, then you do not necessarily have good potable water. The water could have things other than the biologicals and particulates. Taste, odors, and many types of chemicals can also be in the water that make it taste terrible at best, but could also be dangerous. So treating the water to remove these should be a part of overall purification and filtration systems. Some of the filtration systems on the market do this. Not many of the purifiers do.

So, when you are looking to make safe, potable water, consider everything you might need to remove from it. Biologicals, including viruses, sediment and particulates, tastes, odors, and chemicals. Many of the available systems and plans for DIY systems do not mention the things that they do not do, only those things that the device or system will do. You have to be the one to read the fine print, read between the lines, and consider what be being left out of the literature or documentation. Now, if you prefer a specific unit for one function that does not do everything needed, you can often add a stage to the system to get out the other items. Just be sure you are taking out everything necessary for good, healthy water.

Everyone will die anyway:

There are many misconceptions about several different disasters that could occur that would wipe out all life on earth. Human, animal, and plant. And there really are some that will. But two of the ones often included in that short list are large scale (sometimes even small scale) use of nuclear weapons. Too many people are spouting off that if even as few as half a dozen nuclear devices are detonated, that all life will end, and that there is absolutely no hope at all. Some do modify it a bit by saying that, yes, there will be survivors, but they will be so bad off they would wish they were dead. None of this is true. There will be tremendous loss of life. But many people will survive, in good health, in locations where they can carry on and prosper. Even some without preps. (Of course, if you are ground zero, you are not going to make it, no matter how many preps you have.)

Another disaster that creates this same myth, is if one of the large volcanic calderas were to have a massive eruption. Again, there could be tremendous loss of life. But it is not going to kill everyone by lava, poison gas, or ash. Some of the deaths, including some far down the road could be from colder weather in some places that result in loss of crop production and/or cold injuries.

Preppers are selfish hoarders:

This includes a couple of factors. One is that preppers take food out of people's mouths, and keep them from getting any. Another is that preppers are concerned only about themselves and will never share any of their 'hoarded' food. These thoughts are far from the truth. Though there is 'some' truth in one. There will be a few people that will not share at all. But that will be a minority. Many preppers have plans to share food and other supplies with people they feel both need and deserve their help. That does not mean they will give everything they have to anyone that demands it. But they will share some, at times, using their best judgement.

Another fact is that the overwhelming majority of preppers will already have the food they need, and will not be out during the panic trying to get food and supplies before non-preppers can get them. This, in fact, means that all the food and supplies normally available at any given time will be used by those without preps. Preppers, with their stored food supplies and ability to grow more, do, actually, increase an area's resource base.

Preppers want disasters to happen:

If this is true at all, it is by a tiny handful of preppers, and in no way represents the reality of prepping. People prep to survive terrible things. They have no wish to go through any of them, using their preps, because even with preps, a disaster is still a disaster, with terrible consequences.

Lower grade protein is as good as high grade protein:

It is still widely accepted that if a person has enough rice and beans, and eat them in combination, they will have adequate amounts of protein. Eating enough to get the amounts of protein that will actually be needed (another place where many think small amounts will do) will be unpalatable and will usually result in appetite fatigue. But there is also a difference in how the body uses lower grade protein sources vs high grade sources (meat). You will be healthier and happier getting significant amounts of the protein you require from meat, rather than rice/beans, peanut butter, and some of the other highly touted substitute protein sources.

Enough fats in the diet:

While not exactly a myth, there are quite a few preppers that simply are not aware of the high need for fats for a body to have balanced nutrition. With today's low fat food marketing, it is not immediately obvious that you really do need quite a bit of your caloric intake from high grade fats. That is not to say that you should fatten up your diet extra now, for most of us do get enough fats in our diet eating the way we do. Often too much. But when the foods currently available to us are no longer obtainable, then some source of edible fats will have to be part of a person's preps. Too many preppers forget to take this into account when gathering food for storage.

Living off the land:

This is a myth with so many things wrong with it that it boggles my mind how many people think that is how they will survive anything that results in a lack of food from current sources. First and foremost, all the best places that used to have enough quality wild plants and animals no longer do. People settled in those places because there was an abundance. There just are not enough edibles for more than a few people to live, and then for only a very short time on starvation rations.

Many of the people also think that they will not only live off the land, but that they will do so only picking plant foods, without any hunting or trapping. Some might do some fishing. Even in an area with plentiful plant foods, if you could find one, it simply takes too much of them to survive long term. You cannot get enough calories in total, much less fat calories and protein to keep going. Think about how many squirrels it would take to have the right amount of meat per day, every day, for years. Rabbits? Other, often less palatable small game. You get up to big game, then one animal can feed a person for a couple weeks or more. One person. What about a family of five? A group of four or five families? A group of expert hunters going out for days at a time might only bring home two or three large animals. Even without some of the legal restrictions on hunting now, getting enough wild meat, on a timely basis, without shorting the work needed done otherwise will be next to impossible for most people in most areas.

Then there will be the competition from others that plan to live off the land. What might actually support a couple of families will not, by any stretch of the imagination, feed five hundred families.

The only way that modern populations were able to survive after settling an area was to raise stock and crops. Even the early residents in America either farmed or were nomadic, going from fruitful area to fruitful area. They did not stay in one place year round. And wars often started if one tribe encroached on any of the areas that a tribe had staked out for their migration route.

Skills trump gear every time:

No, they do not. Not even most of the time. Some of the time they can and do. But no matter how skilled you are at building a house, if you do not have a hammer, you probably will not get very far. If you have great medical training, but do not have any bandages or something from which to make a bandage, the person bleeding out will probably continue to do so after you give out applying direct pressure to the wound. Yes, there are people that can go out, virtually naked, with only a good knife and survive. At least for a while. But those persons are few and far between. If you do not have the gear to go along with the skills to use it, you will not survive much longer than if you had the gear and no skills.

A person can know 50 ways to start a fire, but put him/her in the sand dunes of a desert, or the snow fields of the arctic, with no gear at all, and tell me how are they going to start a fire. No wood or other burnables. Definitely no tinder. Nothing with which to make a spark.

Extreme cases, yes. But blanket, absolute statements are almost never correct, but often give people the wrong ideas about some things, especially to people new to whatever it is. And when it comes to prepping, it could be deadly.

It takes knowledge to know what gear you need, and the knowledge to use that gear. But either one without the other is not very effective.

Preps guarantee survival:

This is a tough myth. Prepping will not guarantee anything. It greatly enhances the chances you will survive many different things. But no one can prepare for every last eventuality, we cannot even conceive of some of the things that could happen. If you lack one critical item, skill, piece of knowledge, or are simply at ground zero, then you are not going to make it. Plus, there are some things that are not survivable by anyone, no matter what they have. That is just simple truth.

You cannot eat gold or silver, so it is totally useless:

Actually, you can eat gold and silver. It can even be good for you in tiny doses. But that is not the point. The point is, that yes, there will be times when gold and silver will not be able to get you through some situations. But, looked at realistically, there are some scenarios where they could be a huge advantage to have. You simply cannot know which scenario you might find yourself in at any given time. Are you a prepper, or are you a person prepared for one specific situation?

It will be obvious when the balloon goes up:

(Or any other euphemism that means something bad has started to happen.)

Maybe. A very iffy maybe. Chances are you the situation will be well under way before you have even the first clue something is going on that is going to need prepping skills and equipment. Oh, there are some things that will be obvious. If you see a nuclear mushroom cloud, it is obvious that that ol' balloon just went up. But if you think about it, that nuke going off is well after the time when someone decided to wage war on that place.

There are a couple of things to think about when considering this. One, you better be prepared all the time, for as many things as you can. Two, you better have plans that take into account that things have started and you cannot use the plan that has you hunkered down in your bunker already, all buttoned up and ready to take on what comes with everything you have done to prepare the last few years. You have to have plans that incorporate needing to deal with things when you are not home, and do not have all your gear, and some of your family is not around, and that you have used up resources that you would have conserved tightly, if you had known things were happening already.

I will just put in a garden when times get tough and live off that:

A major myth. Unless you live in paradise, growing any garden can be a challenge, and growing a garden that produces enough nutrition from things your family will eat, can be a very hit or miss endeavor. Not only do good gardeners, with good garden plants occasionally have a failure, the weather is rather changeable, and you might have too little rain, too much rain, or just enough rain, but too much cold or too much sun.

Not only that, but if something happens around August or so, you probably will not have enough time to get in enough of the right kind of plants, that will grow to maturity fast enough to have any food for the winter coming on, you will not have enough to eat until the next fall, when a garden will come in. Maybe. So, counting on

a garden, even in good growing areas, still could require up to two years' worth of stored food to ensure adequate nutrition until you get food from the garden. And then, you still need meat, as described above.

I will not need preps, the government will take care of me:

This is so wrong on so many levels. The very basic one is: No, they will not. Not only have they said they will not, they have proven that time after time.

Corollary: The government WILL take care of ME because I am too important to them to not:

Yeah. Right. Sure you are. And so is your family. Everyone and anyone that is not dependent on you for something WILL consider you expendable. You might be a big fish in your small pond, but there is always a bigger pond out there, with much bigger and more powerful fish that will be taking care of themselves and theirs, and you are already one foot under the bus.

I am a prepper extraordinaire and have everything I need to survive:

While this is less a myth than some, it can still be a myth, above and beyond the other reasons already listed. If it has not become obvious yet, the only way humans are going to survive any major disastrous event of large scale is to be associated with a farm. If you are, and have planned well for the few other things that a farm cannot provide you, then you really are in excellent shape to survive long term and help civilization make a comeback, hopefully a better one than the current one. Except... If you cannot maintain control of that farm, you will be left out in the cold, probably literally, if you are not simply dead. That farm that is so important for survival must not only be productive, but defensible. You might still lose it to a vastly superior force of government or rouge military, but most places can be either defended from lesser threats, or retaken if lost, given proper planning. But without those defenses and plans, chances are extremely high that you will lose all that hard work, careful planning, and money spent on becoming an extraordinaire prepper.

I am so smart that I cannot fail to survive anything:

lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol lol

I know some people will disagree with me on some of my versions of myths. That is okay, since all this is:

Just my opinion.

Jerry D Young

Hope for the best, prepare for the worst, and always remember TANSTAAFL
("There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch" Manny, from *The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress* by Robert A Heinlein)