

AMERICAN SURVIVOR

SURVIVAL INFORMATION FOR THE NEW AMERICAN

November/December 2015 Non Members Price: \$3.00 PER ISSUE



Published by: Live Free, USA, www.americansurvivor.org, e-mail: lfinow@aol.com, or write: Live Free, P.O. Box 3295, Munster, IN 46321

IN THIS ISSUE: Home Safety, Mental Focus in Survival, Live Free USA at the National Preppers and Survivalists Expo, Lessons from The Martian, and more

Home Safety By James C. Jones, EMR/CHCM

It would be a sad situation to be fully prepared for Armageddon and then die because of a simple home hazard or unsafe habit.

As a Certified Hazard Control Manager with over 25-years of experience in industrial safety management, I have developed and implemented hundreds of safety programs and systems. At one time it was assumed that “accidents happen” and that from ten to thirty percent injury rates could be *normal* for some jobs. In fact, all accidents are preventable. I have been able to reduce injury rates to less than one percent. Employees work millions of hours year after year without a significant injury. The great majority of injuries and deaths today are not job related or caused by disasters or terrorists. Most unnecessary injuries and deaths happen in the home or on the streets. Obviously, basic home safety must come even before home emergency preparedness. It would be a sad situation to be fully prepared for Armageddon and then die because of a simple home hazard or unsafe habit. No one can keep you safe but you. In industry it has been found that engineering and safety programs can only

go so far in reducing injuries. As long as the employees believed that their safety was the responsibility of the company or “the safety guy” injuries continued to happen. Only when they accepted responsibility for their own safety and adopted safety principals into their daily routines did the great safety records become achievable. Even as we prepare for future disasters, we must first assure safety in our homes and in our daily lives. The individual and family can use the same principals and techniques as industry does to reduce risks. Let’s look at some of these methods as they would apply to personal safety.



What is an Accident?

There are many definitions of an accident but the most common one is “an unplanned and uncontrollable event that has negative consequences” By this definition there are very few true “accidents”. * We may not *plan* to have an accident but in most cases we had control of one or more of the causes. For Example: You roll through a Stop sign at an intersection that has little traffic but today you get broad sided by a truck. Was that an accident? Your house burns down because of a leaking gas-can in your basement. Was it an accidental fire? They were unplanned but they were not uncontrollable (by you) so they were not true accidents. They were the result of choices you made. You were in the habit of saving time by rolling through that Stop sign. You did not replace an old fuel can and you chose to store a flammable inside the house.

Hazard Recognition

It is very easy to overlook hazardous conditions and unsafe habits as we go about our daily lives. Our parents may have told us “don’t go looking for trouble” and our nature is to focus in what we are doing. We may not recognize a hazard because we cannot actually see it or because we lack the technical information needed, but the great majority of hazards and unsafe habits are visible and recognizable to anyone with common sense. Think! I cannot count the times that an injury victim said, “I knew that was going to happen”. Subconsciously they recognized to hazard but kept doing it until they got hurt. Look for hazards, Think about your actions, **listen to your safety consciousness.**

Near Miss Incidents

In theory there are 300 near misses and about 30 small injuries before a serious injury or death occur from any hazard or unsafe habit. Each (almost!) near miss incident is a warning and an opportunity to fix the problem or change the habit before it gets you. For example: You almost tripped on that lose carpet on the stairs, or you almost fell of that old rickety ladder. Do you keep going and forget the event or do you make sure to put correcting these hazards on the top your “to do list” **Never ignore a near miss incident or something that looks wrong. Fix it now or be sure to do it ASAP!**

Unsafe Acts vs. Unsafe Conditions

Unsafe conditions such as broken steps, or worn electrical cords are dangerous and must be corrected but **the great majority (90%) of all injuries and deaths are the result of unsafe acts of people.** A spill on the kitchen floor that is not cleaned up is *not* an “unsafe condition” it was the act of whoever spilled it and did not clean it up. The batteries taken out of the smoke detector was an act. Letting combustibles pile up near the furnace is an act. Unsafe driving is an act. Think! Examine your habits for potential risk taking.

Unsafe Habits

One of the most common sentences I hear from accident victims is “I’ve been doing it that way for years” We develop our habits based on the immediate rewards we get for our acts. If we do it and we get any kind of small and immediate reward we tend to continue doing it. The reward can be saving a few seconds, using less energy, or saving a few cents. The immediate reward has much more impact than any potential long-term dangers.

Cigarettes provide an immediate reward (good feeling) and become a habit in spite of the horrible long term dangers. The driver who roles through the Stop sign at the deserted intersections and is rewarded by getting to work early will keep doing it until --. Safety glasses and gloves are uncomfortable; reading the labels on insecticides takes time. Fire extinguishers cost money you could spend on DVDs. This is human nature that can get people hurt. **Get in the habit of thinking about the long-term results of your habits and correct those that are dangerous to your health and safety**

What If Analysis

Most accidents happen when several unsafe conditions (you didn't fix) and unsafe habits (you didn't change) come together. For Example: You are in the habit of wearing flip-flops on the stairs and you never fixed that worn carpeting there, or you are in the habit of walking to your car without looking around and today there is a mugger in the parking lot. **It is not paranoid to look through your daily actions and your environment (home, work, road, etc.) and ask "what if?"** What if there is a car-jacker at the corner? What if a train is coming? what if this gas can leaks?, what if my hand slips?, etc. This is called a "questioning attitude" and it can save your life.

Management of Change

Even in a fairly safe environment, changes can result in disaster. In fact many of history's greatest disasters were caused by unmanaged changes meeting unsafe acts or conditions. Icebergs are an unsafe condition, going too fast was an unsafe act; the Titanic had a changed rate of turn. You may be in the habit of backing out of your driveway without looking but the school

schedule has changed today and there are children running for the bus. **If you are correcting unsafe acts and conditions, you are 90% safe but watch out for changes.** Any kind of changes in weather, schedules, routs, people, the building, hobbies, etc. can bring new hazards. What was safe before may now have risk. Think!

Safety Inspections

After teaching the above safety principals I often sent a supervisor into the workplace to do a focused safety inspection. They usually return amazed at the number of unsafe conditions and unsafe acts they discovered. They may have thought they were "watching out" for safety but they actually had become used to seeing these conditions and acts without recognizing them. The same is true in the home and away from home. There are many safety checklist available but these are not as effective as developing your own. **The key is that you need to spend time focused on safety observation.**

Safety Rules (does and don'ts)

In your life you are not going to have a safety guy" standing around enforcing safety rules. You have to make your own and you (YOU) have to maintain them yourself. **Remember that most accidents are caused by unsafe acts that you control.** Having recognized your unsafe habits, make a list of does and don'ts. For example: Don't leave doors unlocked, Do turn on the lights before going in, Don't stand on chairs, Do remove fuses and check for current flow before working on electrical wires, Don't leave loaded firearms out. Etc. etc.

Root Causes

When you recognize a hazard, even if no injury occurred ask why three times.

Just fixing the immediate hazard may not be enough. There is probably a deeper cause for the unsafe condition or unsafe act that should be addressed. For example: You find your child playing with drain cleaner. Fortunately you get it away from him in time and place it on a high shelf. That takes care of the immediate danger but why was the drain cleaner available? The answer may be that you keep lots of chemicals under the sink. Why are chemicals under the sink? Maybe because you are not thinking about what a child could get into. Now you go about and find all kinds of poisons, matches, etc. that need to be locked up or removed. This “why? why? why? Can lead you to the root cause of many kinds of problems and provide an opportunity for real improvements. **The root cause of most unsafe acts and unsafe conditions usually lies in someone’s attitude.**

Unsafe Mental States

This casual factor in accidents and injuries only became a part of safety science in recent years.

- Example: John is the best truck driver in the company with an outstanding record. Today he backed his trailer into another one in the trailer yard. Why? Yesterday his wife was diagnosed with cancer.
- Example: Mary has run the same machine for many years without incident, but today she forgets to lock-out the drive before opening the guard. Why: She had a fight with her husband before coming to work. Sound familiar?

Unsafe mental states are the result of frustration, fatigue, heat, cold, pain, fear, and anger. These in turn cause you to be

in a hurry, take shortcuts, miss details, lose your temper and make poor decisions.

Being aware of the causes and effects of unsafe mental states can prevent bad situations from turning into disasters. You may chose not to perform a hazardous task or drive a vehicle until you feel in control. If you must do what you must do, being aware of an unsafe mental state can make you extra cautious and step-by-step double check what you are doing.

These kinds of accidents are of special importance to survivalists because any kind of emergency situation or disaster will automatically trigger unsafe mental states that can easily lead to further injuries and harm. You are already nervous, stressed, angry, fatigued, cold, hot, frustrated and in a rush, and now you are fueling a generator, using an ax, patching your roof, driving through traffic, etc.

Conclusion

Statistically, 80% of home and road accidents happen to 20% of the population. That is not “bad luck” it is lack of awareness and poor safety habits. Safety habits and survival capabilities are parallel human characteristics. Just like emergency preparedness, your safety is up to you. The above principals are used by safety professionals and (more importantly) safe workers to achieve outstanding safety records. They can do the same for you and your family. **Think about safety.**

** That said, I will use the term “accident” here for any kind of negative event.*

WATCH OUR NEXT ISSUE FOR THE HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

Mental Focus in Safety and Survival

In his book "Deep Survival" Lawrence Gonzales sites several cases where victims of outdoor disaster were experienced survival experts and yet made foolish decisions that lead to serious trouble. As a safety professional I have investigated scores of injury cases and near miss incidents that were not the result of real engineering failures or training flaws and yet the wrong thing was done. In my studies of military history I see great generals make errors* that in hindsight seem hard to understand. As Gonzales put it, "be here now!" In safety we talk about "mind on task, eyes on task" as being necessary to avoid injuries. When we are driving to our jobs, our minds may still be at home or already at work, focused on that jerk that just cut in front of you, or tunnel versioned on your lane. In a survival or combat situation you may be thinking about what others will think of you or how much better it would feel to be safe at home, etc. In long-range emergency preparedness, we may let pride; anger or other emotions misdirect our efforts and establish unproductive goals. This displacement of our efforts and resources can be defined as one of two types of mental displacement:

- **Strategic Displacement.** This is the establishment of goals and objectives based on negative and false values and motivations that are not supportive of your survival, self-reliance and freedom. A person who chooses to use drugs, join a criminal enterprise, spend excessively, adopt extreme and negative ideas, focus on luck rather

than effort, etc. would be practicing strategic displacement.

- **Tactical Displacement.** This is the more immediate action or reaction motivated by negative activators. Fear, anger, embarrassment, pride, jealousy, laziness are all negative activators that can put you and others in great danger when they affect your actions in a survival situation. In one case, one member of a climbing team seriously doubted the wisdom of taking a short route off the mountain back to the lodge, but didn't say anything because the longer safer route would not get them back to that nice warm lodge in time for dinner. He would have been the guy that kept them out in the cold so he kept quiet. People died because they were 'not there now". Mentally they were at the lodge by 7:00 PM. How often have you almost had an accident because you were still back at the job or already home, etc. instead of being there then?

Simply put: bad things happen when our mental and psychological focus does not match the needs of the situation. The range is between complete withdrawals from reality (curled up in a ball) to a total lack of perception of immediate reality, as in daydreaming. Many things require our minds to multi-task rapidly. In fact the ability to widen and narrow our mental focus is essential to most activities and especially to survival situations. The key is to (1) keep the focus within the time/place/subject area of effect and (2) prioritize your attentions on the areas of most immediate impact to your survival. For example: in combat you have to alternately focus on your weapon, your

body movement, your team members (if any), your environment and terrain (lighting, cover, footing), your immediate assailants, and other potential threats. You do not want your mind to start thinking about “Did I load this gun?” “Will this guy kill me?” “Why did I come here?” “Boy, this will be a great story!” All of these are outside the immediate range of effect and are tactical displacements based on negative (pride, fear, doubts, etc.) actuators. You also do not want to have tunnel vision just on the assailant, because this could cause you to trip, shoot one of your team, forget to take the safety off, etc. Obviously spending too much time focused away from the primary assailant can be disastrous as well. You multitask maybe 90% assailant 10% on the other factors. The military refers to this as “situation awareness”, putting yourself where it counts.

Think of your awareness range as a series of concentric circles.

1. In the very center are your hands, feet, head and fingers, etc. There are times when you damn well better know where those are! Yet there are cases after cases where people obviously did not know where they were putting themselves. Placing a hand, arm, finger or head in the wrong place can be disastrous.
2. Next are the things you have immediate contact with such as your tools, clothing, steering wheel, glasses, etc. Have you grabbed the tool in the wrong place? Left your coat open? There are potential hazards in not paying attention in this range. Obviously everything in

this range is a potential and immediate hazard.

3. A few feet out is what we often call “our personal space”. We generally feel a bit threatened if someone gets too close (well it depends on the someone), yet we can become so focused on something further away that we miss something important much closer. Looking for snipers and stepping on a mine. Watching a bear and stepping on a snake.
4. Next comes the immediate environment including a room or vehicle we are in or things out to about 50 feet that could impact our situation very quickly. This is the range usually excluded when fear or concern causes us to get “tunnel vision”. Projectiles from this range are a serious hazard. Medics often focus on the victim that needs their help without assessing the area for other victims and other hazards. Generally, you are justified in shooting an assailant within 20-feet of you because they can reach you with a knife, fist or club faster than you can react if they get that close.
5. After that comes the larger environment including incoming threats, weather, sounds, smells, etc. They are not likely to kill you this minute, but not being aware of changing temperatures or the faint smell of smoke certainly can mean trouble in the near future. Being aware at this outer range can help you prepare for or avoid a hazard.
6. Now we get to mental environment that includes where you were, where you want to be, where you don't want to be, what you want to

do, etc. Using a cell phone while driving is a perfect example of not being there now. Texting, reading, daydreaming are all fine if that is the only and most important task at hand. Driving, walking, and other tasks are potential survival hazards that must be given your full attention. So called “multi-tasking” is really mental switching back-and-forth. If everything stays safe you get away with it, but your chances of missing things and your reaction time is affected. This may result in your injury or death.

7. Finally there is the deeper instinctive and subconscious levels of awareness. That little voice that screams at you not to do something, but you do it anyway. The hairs stand up on the back of your neck or you get a chill, but your logical mind ignores it. These are senses

built up over millions of years and should not be ignored. Remember: we are the progenies of the people who herd the rustling in the bushes and ran like hell, not the ones who said “it’s probably nothing”.

The table below may help illustrate the matching of awareness ranges with some survival situations. I have shaded the area that would be the highest priority for awareness, but the other areas cannot be ignored and could demand higher attention. Your focus can be too wide or too narrow or it can linger too long in one range. Knowing this, it is possible to develop controlled awareness. You can say to yourself “Hey! I need to get focused back here” or “Oh oh! I am not thinking and acting in the critical areas here” Going into a situation you can mentally identify the priorities and boundaries for your awareness.

Activities Examples > Awareness V	Driving	Combat	Wilderness	Survival Planning
Body Parts Actions	Position	Position Movements	Injuries Temperature	Minimal hazard
Immediate Contacts	Seat Belt Steering wheel	Weapons	Clothing Temperatures	Minimal hazard
Personal Space	Interior Controls	Dangers?	Shelter Hazards	Minimal Hazard
Close Environment	Adjoining Vehicles	Dangers? Enemies? Friends?	Hazards Resources Others Involved	Factors to consider
General Environment	Traffic Conditions	Potential Dangers?	Weather Routes	Factors to consider
Mental Emotional Location	Calm and alert	Trained?	Self-reliant attitude	Consider hypothetical situations, times, places

Champion target shooters never ever are thinking about what the other guy is scoring, whether they are winning or losing or how great the victory will be. While they are shooting they are thinking about the shot they are taking or even the incremental step (e.g. grip, trigger pull, etc.) of that shot. I can guarantee that anyone who does not know how to control his or her focus (“be here now”) will not win or survive.

Being able to match your awareness range to your situation is critical to virtually every task in life and has special impact on safety and survival. Knowing this you should be able to consciously say to yourself “Am I where I belong mentally?” The ability to bring your awareness within the time and place you are at and apply your attitudes of resourcefulness and self-reliance means you are never lost and your chances for success are greatly improved..

In addition to the range of personal, internal issues that can cause you to misdirect your focus in life and in emergencies there are people and institutions that thrive on keeping you from focusing on what’s in your best interest. Politicians, salesman, conmen, lawyers, magicians, etc. are all experts at redirecting and misdirecting your focus in order to further their own causes and agendas. Others can also be adept at using your internal emotions (fears, anger, and pride, greed) to cause tactical and strategic displacement of your focus that can result in bad or even fatal decisions on you part. Recognition of this hazard and constantly matching your focus with what’s real is critical. Don’t let emotions, environments or other people choose how you focus and react to a situation? It’s

“mind over mind” and “think before you think”.

LIVE FREE USA EXHIBITS at the NATIONAL PREPPERS & SURVIVALISTS EXPOSITION

The NPS Expo is one of the largest preparedness expositions in the USA. These events draw hundreds of exhibitors, dozens of big name speakers and many thousands of participants. This year’s NPS Expo was in Louisville Kentucky on October 10th and 11th. This is right in the center of Live Free’s primary activities area and within reach of many of our members and chapters. The Kentucky Expo Center in Louisville is a huge place encompassing Churchill Downs, the state fairgrounds and at least 4 big exposition buildings. Hotels in the area were all rather costly and all were booked in advance. There was a charge for attendance* and parking was \$8.00. Booths are roughly twice as costly as for most regional preparedness expos.

The Live Free booth was swamped most of the time. We sold enough books to pay for the table with a little to spare. We also increased membership and our general mailing/e-mail list. Jim Jones presented his “Ten Principles of Survival” on Saturday to a very receptive crowd. There are prospects for starting several new chapters and reinforcing some of our existing groups as a result of our contacts there. There were some amazing new survival products sold at this expo and we will be testing and reviewing these in coming issues of American Survivor and on our website blogs. The next big NPS Expos are in Florida and North Carolina, a little outside our range, but if members are

interested in doing those shows we could sponsor** a booth.

Participation in this event significantly strengthened our organization and our capacity to go forward with other programs. Building contacts there can help us support our chapters and their activities. We enjoyed the event and want to thank all of the Live Free members from surrounding states that wore there Live Free gear and visited our booth.

The Martian

The Ultimate Survival Fiction

Book review by James C. Jones

After a while I get tired of the standard survival fiction stories with the ex-military, armed to the teeth superhero fighting of the mythical rogue military units, and roving biker gangs while traveling to their big retreat in the northwest mountains. Fun reading, but seldom much real survival thinking education there. I often find my best survival concepts in non-survival literature. I am not a big science fiction fan, but the concept of the Martian fascinated me. A man stranded alone abandoned on Mars. Mars: no breathable air, free water, edible anything, no other humans for millions of miles. Now that's a survival challenge. Of course our hero, Mark Watney does have some left behind food, water, shelter and oxygen, but not near enough for the hundreds of days he has to survive before there is any chance of rescue. What he does have most is knowledge, improvisation, determination and imagination. Of course there is some good luck, but plenty of bad luck to. He makes some nearly fatal mistakes. Nothing in the story relates to survival

techniques usable on earth, but everything in the story relates to survival thinking. How to think is much more important than basic information in survival and life. Watney follows every one of my "Ten Principles of Survival" outlined in my recent articles. To review;

1. **He anticipates** issues and problems and has solutions in mind
2. **He stays aware** of what's going on around him
3. **He focuses on being there** (on Mars!) now rather than dreaming about where he would like to be
4. **He stays calm.** Even after some huge disasters, he gets it together fast
5. **He evaluates** and reevaluates his situation, resources and options to make good decision
6. **He does the next right thing** instead of be overwhelmed by a seemingly hopeless situation.
7. **He definitely takes control** and owns his environment and situation. He is the Martian and ignores mission control to make his own decisions. He happens to Mars not the other way around.
8. **He has what he needs.** Well at least most of what he needs. He makes the rest
9. **He uses what he has.** Wow! This is probably the main issue of the book. He Improvises, repurposes and invents devices to make air, food, water and even rocket fuel.
10. **He does what is necessary** to survive including risks, pain, boredom, and an awesome journey across the barren deserts of Mars alone.

11. And of course my 11th principle of survival: **he never gives up.**

He also keeps his sense of humor with all sorts of comments in his log. When he has really screwed up or Mars is trying to kill him again, he says “Okay Watney, stop whining and get back to work”. That’s how we survive!

Okay: this book review gave me an excuse to restate the principles, but it’s a great read and can help you understand how these principles apply to almost every situation. A lot of the improvising is highly technical math, chemistry and computer science. The author is a software engineer with interests in orbital mechanics and

relativistic physics. Yes, a nerd. So if you want to skip that, you can wait for the movie, but the book is more fun.

The Martian by Andy Weir, 434 pages, paperback, from Broadway Books, \$9.99.

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SURVIVAL MEDICS COURSE REGISTRATION STARTED



Course Dates: Sundays January 10th & 31st, February 14th and 28th 2016
From Noon till 4:00 PM at the Hammond Indiana Cabela’s second floor conference center. Participants must attend all 4 classes to get a certificate
Live Free USA Member Rate \$40.00, Non-Member Rate \$50.00
Registration Deadline December 15th 2015.
Applications are available in the EVENTS section of the website or by contacting
survivorjj@aol.com

NORTHWEST CHICAGO AREA LIVE FREE REVIVAL

The leader of the Live Free Northwest Chicago Chapter moved away a while back and no one stepped forward to keep things going. We had lots of good members and activities going there and we have been working to restart activities. We look forward to this group joining with the Chicago Southtown and Southwest Chicago chapters in making Chicago a center for Live Free USA meetups, camps, expos and training in 2016. **The new coordinator for Live Free Northwest Chicago is Keith at: oldnamvet0@gmail.com or call: 815-814-0336.** Contact Keith and let him know you are interested in getting involved. Live Free USA will be providing lots of support and resources as this group reenergizes the northern Chicago area preparedness community.

INDIANA PREPARE TO SURVIVE EXPO 2016

The Preparedness Expo held at the Porter County Fair Grounds Expo Center in May 2015 was so successful that it will be returning bigger and better in 2016.

INDIANA PREPARE TO SURVIVE EXPO, JUNE 11th and 12th 2016


PORTER COUNTY INDIANA EXPO CENTER

South of Interstate 80 on US 49 a few miles past the US 30/ Valparaiso exit, MAIN BUILDING AND EXPO EAST BUILDING

9:00 AM till 400 PM

Prepare Today to Survive Tomorrow: A hands-on exploration into prepping, self-reliance, preparedness, and sustainable living techniques. Two stages with speakers, workshops and classes throughout both days.

Speakers and exhibitors should contact: natalie@healthylivingevents.com or go to www.surviveexpo.com




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Rantoul: Second Tuesday of month
The Linden, 224 Wheat Ave., Rantoul, IL 61866

Pontiac: First Tuesday of month.
Pontiac VFW Post 886, 531 W. Lincoln Ave., Pontiac, Illinois 61764

Effingham: First Thursday of the month.
Effingham Elk's Club, 2102 S. Banker Street, Effingham, IL 62401

Peoria: First Thursday of the month.
Knights of Columbus, 7403 North Radnor Road, Peoria, IL 61615

Visit our website if the regular monthly meeting date falls on a holiday to confirm time and date of the meeting. If you're interested in bringing a monthly Guns Save Life meeting to your community, contact us!

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION APPLICATION

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- Send information about joining or starting a Live Free Chapter in my area []
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SAVE THIS DATE!

**Saturday March 19th, 2016. LIVE FREE USA 48th Annual Meeting
Hammond Indiana Cabela's Conference Center. More in the next issue**

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