



YOUR ESCAPE PLAN

The 3-phase guide to regaining control over life through:
Emergency Preparedness, Resource Production, and Going Off Grid.

Dan Carpenter


 **THE DAILY PREP**

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THE CLUTCHES OF MODERN AMERICAN LIFE ARE CLOSING IN

Over the years, "The American Dream" has slowly morphed into an unsustainable pile of bureaucracies, greed, poor health, and overall enslavement.

Banks are a joke. Privacy is extinct. Food has become nutritionless.

Money is becoming worthless. Liberties are being ripped away from us.

The "education system" forces people to go to school and learn what they think is important.

Elected officials are more like talk show guests. Utility grids are increasingly fragile.

Media propaganda. Inflation. Oil dependency. "Just in time" grocery inventory. Riots. Taxes. Police corruption. 9-5 zombiehood. Water shortages. The health care system. Travel restrictions.

The list could continue with a million more things, but the bottom line is that everywhere we look, we are surrounded by fragile and unsustainable systems.



The thing is, these failing components are being propped up by a handful of greedy people who are thrilled about it.

The more they can control you with these systems, the more money they make. And the more money they make, the more they want to control you.

So like good opportunists, they sit like vultures, waiting for the right moment to swoop in. Another tax. Another legislative measure. Another line added to the “Terms and Conditions.” Another dirty handshake concluding a dirty deal. Another plastic smile from the evening news. The screws tighten.

Their tools?

Condescension. Scorn. War propaganda. A sensational news story. A scare. A crisis. The “public safety.” Divisiveness.

The bottom line is that they will use anything they can to get you to see their methods as more acceptable than your methods, their rules as more important than your rules, and their vision higher than your vision, so that they can continue to live in their comfortable world of 1st-class flights, bonuses, and praise.



But you don't have to play their game.

None of us do.

At every critical juncture, at every pinch point where it seems like people are being corralled into a slaughterhouse of bad options, there are still great alternatives.

You are free. Today is the day that you begin to take back control over your health, your money, your education, your faith, your goals, your MIND, and your happiness. Today is the day that you take back your life.



How do you do this?

How do you escape the clutches of Modern American Life? **It starts with a solid defense.** You minimize their “opportunist” moments, by preparing yourself for the “crises” that begat them. You build an emergency fund. Store water and food. Learn basic skills that can sustain you and your family in a pinch. You diversify your savings. You create a backup plan. You systematically develop “insurance” for the things in your life that could go wrong.

Basically, you make yourself less vulnerable.

But you don't stop there.

The next thing you do is proactively parlay your solid defense into things that are part of your everyday life. Now you're not just keeping them from gaining more control over you, you're gaining back ground that they've had for a long time.

You become a producer.

You create your own revenue streams. You begin producing your own energy. Your own food and water. Maybe not all

of it in the beginning, but some. You structure your own retirement accounts. You unplug from the "formal" education system, and decide instead to seek out learning about the things YOU are passionate about. You open your eyes to the reality that having residency or citizenship in more than 1 country is a good thing.

You're not just a backup plan anymore. You're actively incorporating more and more control into your everyday life. The momentum has shifted from them to you.

**"...AT EVERY PINCH POINT
WHERE IT SEEMS LIKE PEOPLE
ARE BEING CORRALLED INTO
A SLAUGHTERHOUSE OF BAD
OPTIONS, THERE ARE STILL
GREAT ALTERNATIVES."**

Your escape from modern American life involves work, but it is COMPLETELY possible.

And it doesn't matter who you are. Whether you are old, young, living in the city or out in the sticks, black, white, rich or poor, there are solutions within reach.

At the end of the day, **you have 2 options: Keep shuffling along as a drone in someone else's plan, or become the architect of your own.**

We are the people that choose #2.

Some of us have lots of experience, and others are just now realizing that we need to take back control of our lives, but for all of us, it starts the same—with that decision.

YOUR JOURNEY OF A 1,000 MILES

Even though the decision can be made in an instant, the journey to get there is a process. This guide is the Escape Plan to help you get there. It's broken down into 3 phases: **Backups, Production, and Independence.**

Within these 3 phases are the steps that lead you to greater self-sufficiency and control. They span a variety of topics, and aren't made to necessarily mimic or mirror any other advice that's out there (although references are made throughout the guide to additional resources that you can refer to for more detail.)

It's important to remember that even though there are lots of things that you can do, each component of self-sufficiency that you add is something to be celebrated. Don't be down on yourself for what you aren't able to do right now. This truly is a journey of a thousand miles, and can take a long time. And even if you only ever take 5 steps of that journey and then stop, you are still better off than not having started at all.

PHASE 1: BACKUPS

The first part of your escape plan is all about creating **backup systems**. Things for the emergencies of life. For “what ifs.” Parachutes.

These are the things you want to have in place for when it all goes wrong. This phase is all about “stopping the bleeding”, and mitigating potential damage from future catastrophes. Here are the steps:

GET IN THE WATER STORAGE GAME

Store 30 gallons of water per person in your family. A good rule of thumb is to budget 1 gallon of water per day per person. So 30 gallons of water is essentially 30 days. This takes into account not only drinking water, but also a little water for washing hands, washing dishes, etc.

Don't forget about your pets. If you have larger dogs, store a half gallon per day for each of them.

Store roughly half of your water in **smaller containers**, like 2 liter soda bottles, or gallon jugs.

The other half can be stored in larger containers, like 55-gallon drums. Keeping half of your water in smaller containers allows you to easily transport your water easily to other parts of the house, or even take some of it on the road with you, if you need to bug out.



A 2-LITER WATER STORAGE TREE IS A SMART WAY TO KEEP SMALL QUANTITIES OF WATER.



55 GALLON WATER BARRELS ARE INEXPENSIVE AND VERSATILE!

Additionally, a 5-gallon bucket is a really handy thing to have for transporting the water you pump from your 55-gallon drums. It's small enough to feasibly carry, yet holds enough to last for a little while.

There are a variety of purification methods you can use, and to be downright honest with you, I don't care which one you use. I'm more concerned that you get your 30 gallons of water per person put away.

For complete details on purifying water, how and where to store, and other helpful do's and don'ts, refer [here](#).

For now though, you're done. Congratulations, **for less than \$100, you are now more prepared than 90% of people.** Boom. Check it off the list (until we visit your water plan in more detail in the next section).

LAUNCH YOUR 30-DAY GROCERY STORE

Your food storage begins by establishing a 30-day grocery store in your house. This is so easy, it's not even funny. It doesn't involve you buying a bunch of expensive buckets from Mountain House, or space food that you're never going to eat. All you have to do is **buy 1 more of whatever you're already buying at the store.** If you're getting 2 cans of tomato sauce already, buy 3 and put one in the home grocery store. If you're buying 1 bag of dog food, buy 2. Turn 4 boxes of cereal into 5. That simple.

Now obviously, there are things that can't be stored like produce. Or if you don't have a stand-alone freezer, it could be tough to store more than 2 pot roasts.

That's fine. Don't do anything about these foods for right now. Once you have a 30-day supply of everything that you CAN store, make notes of where the holes are, and then see what substitutes you can come up with. Buy canned food substitutes in lieu of fresh/frozen offerings for everything possible.



FIGURE 1 A SOLID FOOD STORAGE PLAN IS ESSENTIAL TO YOUR FAMILY'S OVERALL FOOD SECURITY—NO 2 WAYS ABOUT IT.

There are PLENTY of produce and meats available in canned varieties. Dairy can be another tough one, but there are soy milks, and evaporated milks that can last months or even years on the shelf. There are also some pretty decent tasting powdered milks these days that will keep for a REALLY long time.

As a smaller sub-section of this, **you'll also want to keep a 30-day supply of some key non-food hygiene items as well.** Toilet paper, soap (dish soap, bath soap, etc.), feminine supplies, paper towels, trash bags, and Clorox wipes. These are things that just keep the house running (and become critically important in emergency situations).

For some of the most common questions and answers, refer to this [long term food storage guide](#).

CREATE A BUDGET (YES, THE DREADED “B” WORD)

Establish a “real-live”, working budget. What? Seriously? A budget? YEP. This is prep #2 for a reason, and is CRITICAL. Having a solid budget in place from month to month is a giant hinge that the rest of your “escape plan” swings on. So many of the world’s people are trapped in bad life situations, simply because of their finances.

Obviously some of this stems from things that people have no control over, but **the reality is that most of us DO have a lot of control over our financial situations.** Developing a monthly budget and a beginning a savings component assists you with buying preps, paying unforeseen medical expenses, job-loss scenarios, and a ton more.

It dramatically lessens the number of nights you lay awake stressing about keeping the bills paid and lights on. And above and beyond helping you make sure the necessities are covered, a budget helps you spend money on the things that you most want to spend money on (i.e. going out to lunch every day for a couple months vs. a cool weekend trip).

FIRE UP YOUR EMERGENCY SAVINGS ACCOUNT

“...THE REALITY IS THAT MOST OF US HAVE A LOT OF CONTROL OVER OUR FINANCIAL SITUATIONS.”

This is one you’ve already heard everybody else preach about since you were a little kid, so I won’t pound the pulpit too hard on it, but essentially, your emergency savings should be 2-3 months’ worth of living expenses. In a world that teaches us to spend more than we make, this can be really tough to build up. By far, **THE SINGLE BIGGEST help in getting there, is creating a usable, working**

budget (as also covered in Phase 1). Once you have a sturdy budget in place, you can make compromises and sacrifices until you get to the point where you are putting away at least some amount of money each month.

Maybe you can only afford \$100 right now. Maybe only \$20. Even if it is meager however, you should do it. Getting in the habit of socking away at least some money that you don’t touch is the habit that modern American life has trained most people out of.

You never know when your circumstances could materially change. You can receive inheritance money, you can change jobs or get a raise, or maybe an unexpected tax return puts you in a better financial situation. If you already have a working budget and have made the decision to be disciplined and put money away, it will be much easier to maintain what you’ve been doing and simply plug in bigger numbers.

Another thing to decide with your savings account, is when you're allowed to withdraw. Maybe it's medical emergencies. Maybe car emergencies. Maybe it's both of those and emergency home repairs. Maybe it's none of those, but whatever you decide, you should write down and stick to it. This helps to take the emotion out of the moment when you have something arise later—**ESPECIALLY if you are doing this with a partner, and you guys are divided.**

COMMIT TO EVERYDAY CARRY (EDC)



A WELL THOUGHT-OUT EVERYDAY CARRY COMES IN HANDY FREQUENTLY—NOT JUST FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.

Commit to carrying some kind of an EDC (EDC stands for “everyday carry”). You already have your keychain on you every day. Perhaps there are 1 or 2 EDC items that can be carried on there. A small knife is also a great idea. Many people choose to carry a firearms, where it is allowed. Others will carry a couple of backup items in a small Altoids tin.

Whatever you decide to carry in the beginning is fine, but the point is that you carry it EVERY SINGLE DAY. If you're looking for some ideas, [here is what I carry](#), and here are some [other awesome ideas](#).

We can visit this in more detail later on, but enough said on this one for now.

LOAD YOUR BACKUP DOCUMENTS ON AN ENCRYPTED THUMB DRIVE

Buy an encrypted thumb drive and store your important documents on it. This goes along with the EDC recommendation above. It’s actually a specific recommendation of 1 thing that should be PART of your EDC. This is a huge prep.

Having an encrypted hard drive ensures that if you are ever unable to get back home and access original copies of your documents, you always at least [have copies on your key chain](#).

Obviously there may be some concerns about putting this kind of information on a thumb drive and having it potentially lost or stolen. You



A THUMB DRIVE SERVES AS A BACKUP FILE FOR ALL OF YOUR MOST SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS.

can find password protected thumb drives with very good encryption that are very inexpensive. Not good enough for you? Then don't do it.

ASSEMBLE A BASELINE SURVIVAL KIT

Put together a basic survival kit for everybody in the family. These are also called bug out bags, 72-hour kits, and a hundred different names.

People have different ideas about what these are and should have in them, but what you really want is simple. You want 1 change of clothing, and food and water that you can keep you alive for a week. In addition to that, you also need a few very basic items.



MAKE SURE EVERYBODY IN YOUR FAMILY HAS THEIR OWN SURVIVAL KIT. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO SHARE WITH OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS.

People get EXTREMELY carried away with lots of fancy gadgets and gear, when realistically, **this bag should be less of a “backpacking-the-Andes-mountains” bag, and more of a “going-to-grandma’s-for-the-week” bag.** These bags should be done cheaply, and contrary to what some people say, **every person in your family NEEDS to have their own bag** (yes, even infants).

Why?

The reason for this is simple--it's important that nobody gets separated from their stuff.

There may be a situation where families need to divide and conquer, or a child needs to be handed off temporarily. When this happens, the bag goes with the family member. Pets also need to have a bag of their own, with food, water, poop bags, and other necessities.

ASSEMBLE A VEHICLE SURVIVAL KIT

Each of your vehicles needs to have its own survival kit as well. Your [car survival kit](#) is primarily full of objects for the car--jumper cables, extra fuses, basic tools, etc. Keep it in an inexpensive, slim-profile Rubbermaid tote, that can go under the seat or another container that you dedicate to the car.



DRIVING IS THE MOST DANGEROUS ACTIVITY THAT WE DO EVERY DAY. BE SURE THAT YOU HAVE A CAR KIT, WITH SUPPLIES FOR THE CAR AND THE HUMANS.

Day in and day out, the vast majority of us spend a couple of hours a day in the car, and in most cases, **it is the most dangerous thing that we do**. Being prepared with a car survival kit gives you at least some line of defense against things like flat tires, dead batteries, getting stuck, etc.

Down the road, it will be important that you store a "repeat" version of your personal survival kit in the car as well. Doing this ensures that if you are ever stuck or stranded because of a car problem, you will not only have the tools and supplies you need for your car, but to keep the humans going as well.

CREATE BACKUP ELECTRICITY WITH A CAR INVERTER

By FAR, the easiest and most cost effective solution for backup power is a car inverter. These are inexpensive and extremely effective.

In an emergency situation (particularly the short term emergencies that last a week or less), you can use a car inverter to power your home's lights, TV, and other electrical devices, simply from the gas that is in your car's tank.

Many people would like to get a gas or diesel powered generator, but simply can't afford it right now. The car inverter is the solution! There are stories of disaster victims that have used these to keep essential functions running until help arrives. Plain and simple, a car inverter is your most simple, cost-effective solution to a short term electrical grid failure.



EVEN IF YOU'RE AT HOME, A CAR INVERTER CAN POWER YOUR CRITICAL DEVICES FOR AS LONG AS YOU HAVE GAS.

DOWNLOAD A PASSWORD MANAGER

Initiate a digital password manager for all the logins you have. [Being careless with passwords is a good way to get hacked, get locked out of accounts, and reveal the sum total of your life to snoopers.](#)

[I have used LastPass since 2010](#), and absolutely love it. But whether you use LastPass or another password manager that's equally good, I don't care.

I am not a cyber-professional, so in good faith, I really can't coach you on the technical ins and outs of digital security, but I do know that just having a good password manager adds a significant layer of protection to your online activities. For the complete rundown on sound digital best practices, refer [here](#).

INCORPORATE A BACKUP HEAT SOURCE IN YOUR HOUSE

Get your mitts on at least 1 source of backup heat. If you have a wood burning fireplace, then you can check that off. If your primary heat is fueled by natural gas, then an electric space heater would be a good backup. If your house has electric heat, an indoor-safe propane heater (like those produced by [Mr. Heater](#)) would be a great choice.

The trump card for backup heat is [a wood burning stove](#). They are relatively inexpensive, wood can typically be found for free (or next to nothing), and it is super low tech, so there are very few fail points.



WOOD STOVES ARE LOW-TECH, INEXPENSIVE, AND BURN EXTREMELY HOT. IF YOU CAN INCORPORATE ONE WHERE YOU LIVE—DO IT!

If you rent your home, don't have the money, or live in an area where wood is extremely hard to get, a wood burning stove might not be feasible, but it really is the preferred source of backup heat.

COVER YOUR BASES WITH INSURANCE

Get and maintain at least some insurance on your car, house, health, and life. Yes, insurance as we know it today is a complete racket, but until you have greater resources and are further detached from the modern American life, **HAVING insurance is better than the alternative.**

Not having insurance (or enough of it) can land you in a world of hurt. Just ask the victims of Katrina, Sandy, Mt. St. Helens, the Southern California fires, or 100 other disasters if their insurance was worth it. Ask any hospital patient if [health insurance was a good investment](#). Feel me?

I recommend that your priorities be:

- Health Insurance
- Home Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Car Insurance

Obviously if you operate a business, there are business insurances that could be applicable to what you do. If this is the case, you are likely already leaps and bounds ahead of the pack in understanding the “lesser of two evils” that having insurance is.

ACQUIRE 1 FIREARM AND AMMUNITION

Acquire at least 1 firearm and 500 rounds of ammo for it. Here is where a lot of tough guy preppers go WAAAY overboard. You don't need to have an armory full of AR15s to protect yourself.

In fact, you don't have to necessarily have even one AR15 to be prepared for an emergency. Plenty of people defend themselves every day with handguns, shotguns, and all other kinds of firearms.



A RELIABLE FIREARM AND AMMUNITION ARE CRITICAL COMPONENTS IN THE “BACKUPS” PORTION OF YOUR ESCAPE PLAN.

But here’s the straight up reality--There are bad guys in the world. There may come a time when you need to take a life to protect yourself and your family, and you need to be prepared to do it when the time comes. Having a firearm and ammunition can help you do this.

As you escape further and further from modern American life, you will want to strategically acquire additional firearms and training, but the first step is to

get your first firearm. For my complete, straight-talk advice on getting your first firearm, refer [here](#).

GET A FIREPROOF SAFE FOR YOUR HOME

Get a fireproof home safe for important documents--This doesn’t need to be super fancy, and doesn’t have to double as a safe for valuables or firearms (although it can). It also doesn’t have to be a built-in home safe that’s bolted to the wall, or drilled into the foundation.

Its primary purpose is to protect your documents from natural disaster, and carelessness, in a centralized location. This should be the physical equivalent of the thumb drive that you put together with all the important

documents of your life--birth certificates, diplomas, degrees, insurances, title to house and car, passports, social security cards, credit card info, medical info, etc.

PUT TOGETHER A SIMPLE HOME FIRST AID KIT

Create a simple home first aid kit. Your home first aid kit should be in (or right next to) the “main bathroom” in your house. What should it have in it? Don't over complicate it; remember, this is just your starting point.

- Lots of different sized Band-Aids
- Lots of disinfectant
- Lots of sterile dressing
- Some basic “over the counter” medications-- NSAIDS and pain killers
- Pepto Bismal and other stomach meds
- Decongestant/expectorants
- Nyquil, etc.



YOUR HOME FIRST AID KIT NEED NOT BE FANCY, BUT IT SHOULD INCLUDE BASICS LIKE BAND-AIDS, DRESSING, AND DISINFECTANT.

It's also smart to hang on to prescription strength antibiotics and painkillers.

The goal of the home first aid kit is to be able to treat minor to medium injuries in a way that stabilizes the injured person until more medical attention can be had. It's about "stopping the bleeding" (quite literally).

SEEK OUT EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRAINING

Now that you have a first aid kit with some basic medical supplies, it's important to know how to use it when emergencies strike. There are numerous different kinds of medical emergencies, and it's impossible to prepare for them all, but you can start by receiving solid basic training.

CPR classes are widely offered (often at discounted rates), so you should be able to easily find one somewhere near you. If you have small children or infants, get the appropriate training for them. Above and beyond this, you should take some basic first aid classes that cover trauma, burns, bleeding, etc. Having control over your life, means that you know at least a little of what to do when emergencies arise.

One of the biggest considerations with emergency medical, is evaluating any specific medical conditions that you and your family deal with. If you or your child have a medical condition, you need to think through the possible emergencies that could arise. And this includes having extra supplies on hand for emergencies or downtimes in service as well (*my wife and I have had to take this one seriously!*).

COMPLETE A FAMILY THREAT ASSESSMENT

Complete a threat assessment with your family. This is the brainstorming session around the dinner table, with pen and paper. This is where you should talk as honestly as possible, to identify the most likely and serious threats to your family.

Start with the natural disasters that are likely in your region. Then talk about the things that are within the neighborhood and the immediate vicinity of your house. Is there a gas station or electrical next door? A storm canal down the street that could overflow? Do you live on a busy street? Think critically about what is right around your home and neighborhood.

“TALK AS HONESTLY AS POSSIBLE, TO IDENTIFY THE MOST LIKELY AND SERIOUS THREATS TO YOUR FAMILY.”

Finally, discuss the personal disasters that could potentially affect your family members. Are there special medical conditions? Fragile circumstances for an infant or elderly family member? Job or occupational hazards? Job loss?

DEVELOP A MEETUP PLAN

Look at your list of most likely disasters, and then think about where you spend your time.

Is dad usually at work? Is mom usually at work? Are kids at school? Where are extracurricular activities? Where is church? Where are friends' houses?

Your primary meetup location is your home, but if you can't get there, you need to [have a second and third meetup location as well](#). Your secondary meetup location should be outside of your home, but within your neighborhood. Your 3rd meetup location should be outside your neighborhood, and roughly the center average of where you spend the majority of your time--factoring in all the above.

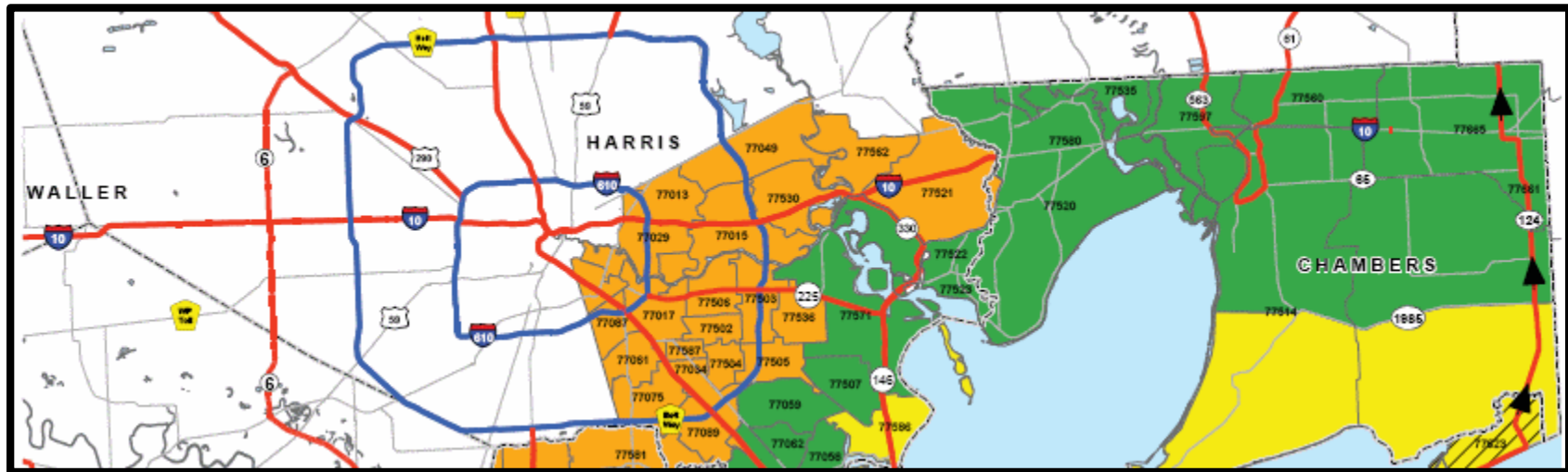
DECIDE UPON A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

How will communications take place in the event of a disaster? What is the hierarchy of communication methods? You should come up with a list of how you will try to reconnect with each other after a disaster. Something like:

1. Cell to cell phone call
2. Text
3. Facebook message
4. Email
5. Out of state contact
6. HAM radio(specific band)

What will be the protocol and overlap between your meetup and communications plans? If you can't communicate with each other, do you just proceed directly to the meetup spot?

CREATE A BUG OUT PLAN



YOUR FAMILY'S ESCAPE ROUTE(S) WILL HELP YOU TO LEAVE TOWN WITH A MINIMUM OF TIME AND CHAOS.

Although the 2 are commonly confused, **this is NOT the same thing as your meetup plan**. Not by a long shot.

Your meetup plan is about reuniting with your family and loved ones. Your bug out plan addresses the question “Where should we go if it’s no longer safe to stay at home?” This is another part of the preparedness that is frequently romanticized or blown out of proportion. Most of the time, movies and forum warriors depict “bugging out” as a trip up to some cave in the mountains, or a cabin a few hours away.

In reality, when you bug out, it will not be to either of those. You will bug out to go stay with your family that lives across town, to a nearby hotel, or to your friend’s house an hour or 2 away.

Accordingly, this is how you should plan. **Keep it real. Cut the crap about driving out to the mountains.** Identify 3 people that are strategically located that you can set up reciprocal bug out agreements with. The first of these people should be on the other side of town. The second should be between 1-2 hours away. And the third should be out of state, 4+ hours away.

“KEEP IT REAL. CUT THE CRAP ABOUT DRIVING TO THE MOUNTAINS.”

The key is to contact them ahead of time, and let them know that you're serious. Once you know if they are open to the idea, you can firm up the agreement, but you should revisit it yearly. Touch base with the people and make sure it's still ok.

The reality is, none of us knows what form a disaster may take, and it may work out that a reciprocal bug out contact may fall through, even if they have committed to you ahead of time. There could be circumstances that lie outside of their control. They would have a last minute change of heart. Who knows? Bug by setting them up ahead of time, and having multiple options, your chances are much better.

YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY

There you have it, Phase 1 of Escaping Modern American Life. These steps are not terribly complicated or expensive, but they are VERY real. Sadly, most people don't do any of them. Like I mentioned in the very first section about water (at the very beginning of this page), even storing a single barrel of water makes you more prepared than 90% of people.

Completing these steps will also help ensure that you aren't becoming a "hobbyist prepper", but rather somebody who actually sees the big picture, and is doing everything they can to be in control of it.

Take your time, and get these initial pieces locked down solidly. There will be plenty more to come.

Many of the components of the Backups Phase revolve around getting basic emergency preparedness and survival supplies. If you are looking for a more detailed list of recommendations on survival gear for your house, car, and bug out bag, refer [here](#).

PHASE 2: PRODUCTION

The second phase of your escape plan from modern American life is about transitioning from simply being well stocked, to **becoming an actual producer**. The word “transitioning” denotes that in this phase, you aren’t to the full-production stage, and you also aren’t completely out of the backups phase. As you begin to introduce elements of production into your life, you will need to build on and bolster the preps that you began to put into place in Phase 1.

As a producer, your escape plan begins to spill over more into your everyday life. This is because you’re starting to replace parts of the fragile systems around you with your own--even if you’re not being forced to.

In order to begin making the transition to a producer lifestyle, you will need to put yourself through “Producer school.” This is the school that you don’t get in school. From this point forth, you need to take back your mind, and responsibility for what goes in it.

This means seeking out REAL education.

What is "real" education?

Real education is identifying qualified mentors, meeting and interacting with them face to face, and soaking up everything you can from them. Specifically, mentors that can help you on your path to greater freedom. This could be a business coach. A tax attorney. A farmer. A CPR instructor.

Think about how you can make a commitment to REAL education. These are the experiences that propel your life forward in the direction that you want it to go. These experiences will likely cost some money and time away. Figure out how to make them a reality.

Keeping real education in mind as an overarching goal to begin incorporating during this phase, let's move on to some critical specifics that will help you transition from merely a lifestyle of preparation, to one of **production**.

CREATE A SIMPLE RAINWATER HARVESTING SYSTEM

This can be done extremely simply with a rainwater barrel that can be purchased online or at hardware stores. There are also a lot of great DIY solutions.

Harvesting rainwater is a really simple step that can actually save you several hundred gallons (or even thousands) of water a year in many climates.

In and of itself, harvesting rainwater is not your end all, be-all water security plan, but it is a REALLY simple way to get started.



WHEN IT COMES TO WATER SECURITY, A RAIN CATCHMENT SYSTEM IS SOME OF THE LOWEST HANGING FRUIT OUT THERE.

BEGIN A SOLAR PV ARRAY, AND BATTERY BACKUP SYSTEM

A simple solar-powered battery backup system can be created from deep-cycle marine batteries, strung together in series, along with a charge controller, inverter, and disconnects, to provide you with a re-supply able energy source. The nice thing about solar PV arrays is that you can add to them little by little, 1 solar panel and a battery at a time.



SOLAR SYSTEMS ARE GETTING LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE EFFICIENT ALL THE TIME.

This ensures that **if the power grid ever goes down, you will at least have SOME electricity**, to power your critical devices and appliances. Maybe this is a fridge. Maybe it's your laptop so that you can get some work done. It could be a phone, an oxygen respirator, a water pump, or 100 other things. Or it might even be something critical for a neighbor or a family member. You may not know exactly, but it's never a bad idea to have extra power laying around.

In the beginning you will not be able to power a rock concert with it, but it can at least be something to cycle power the fridge, or other necessities. This is your launch point into being a producer in the area of energy.

START GROWING FOOD

A location appropriate vegetable garden is a great way to dip a toe into the world of food production. Obviously, saying it is the easy part, and doing it is the hard part! If this is your first garden, DO NOT attempt to garden a large area. Create 1-3 small beds that you can grow some tasty edibles in. Look at things that grow well in your area. [Square foot gardening is a great way to get going](#). Planting a couple fruit or nut trees is also a great way to begin producing some food (and more permanent).

As you begin trying to produce food, you will quickly find that there are a million different little sub-groups of people trying different methods with different labels, which are essentially focused on the same goal:

- Urban farming
- Square foot gardening
- Mittleider gardening
- Organic gardening



FOOD PRODUCTION CAN HAPPEN ANYWHERE. DON'T YOUR LOCATION OR THE SIZE OF YOUR LAND STOP YOU FROM GROWING WHAT YOU CAN!

- Permaculture
- And many more!

It's not important what you call it, or exactly how you do it--**the most important thing right now is that in some form or fashion, you begin producing food.**

There are several awesome resources to help you get going on this journey, but one of the best is a video library called "Growing Your Own Groceries."

BEGIN YOUR FORAY INTO LIVESTOCK WITH 2-3 EGG-LAYING CHICKENS



EGG-LAYING HENS ARE THE PERFECT WAY TO DIP A TOE INTO THE WORLD OF LIVESTOCK.

Having a pair of good laying hens is an AWESOME way to ramp up your self-sufficiency. Chickens vary by the breed, but on the whole, they are low maintenance, and offer a long-lasting source of protein. Chickens give you multiple outputs--eggs, meat, and fertilizer. They're also good for pest control, and working your land.

As you get more into permaculture, you will find out that chickens are also a great agent for working the land. They eat bugs, fertilize, and cycle the existing vegetation to speed up the nutrient cycle, and increase soil production.

EXPAND YOUR FOOD STORAGE: 3-6 MONTHS.

Part of the “Transition to Production” phase involves lengthening out your stored food. In Phase 1, you began your own “grocery store”, by purchasing duplicates of the food you normally get for an additional 30 days.

Continue that same pattern until you have enough for 3-6 months. If you have already been in the system enough to build up 30 days’ worth of food, it should be relatively easy to keep doing this.

Once you have a 3-6 month supply of food, you should be replenishing your pantry with it. Then when you go to the store, you simply tally the missing food from your storage, and replenish that.

Remember, even as somebody that produces part of what they eat, [the importance of food storage still cannot be overstated](#). The reality is that no matter how much you produce, there will always be SOME gaps to be filled by stored food.

The tri-fecta of food self-sufficiency is equal parts:

- Learning to produce the things you like to eat



BUILDING UP YOUR SUPPLIES OF STORED FOOD IS AN ONGOING ACTIVITY. DO IT GRADUALLY, AND BE REAL ABOUT IT!

- Learning to like to eat the things you produce
- Taking some stress out of the production by building a significant reserve of stored food

CREATE YOUR OWN INCOME STREAM

This is an “800 Pound gorilla” topic, but the bottom line is that being completely dependent on your 9-5 job is being widely exposed to an incredibly fragile aspect of the modern American life.

“THE SECOND PHASE OF YOUR ESCAPE PLAN FROM MODERN AMERICAN LIFE IS ABOUT TRANSITIONING FROM SIMPLY BEING WELL STOCKED, TO BECOMING AN ACTUAL PRODUCER.”

Many people have already attempted to create their own income streams, so if this is you, you could have a great head start. If not, these are the best resources I’ve found for helping to get the wheels turning:

- Noah Kagan – [How To Make a \\$1000 a Month Business](#)
- Tim Ferriss – [The 4 Hour Workweek](#)
- Gary Vaynerchuk – [Crush It](#)
- Chris Guillebeau – [The Empire Building Kit](#)

CONSIDER A MORE STRATEGIC LOCATION FOR YOUR MAIN RESIDENCE

One of the biggest and most "defining moments" in your escape from modern American life comes when you relocate to a [residence for strategic self-sufficient upside](#).

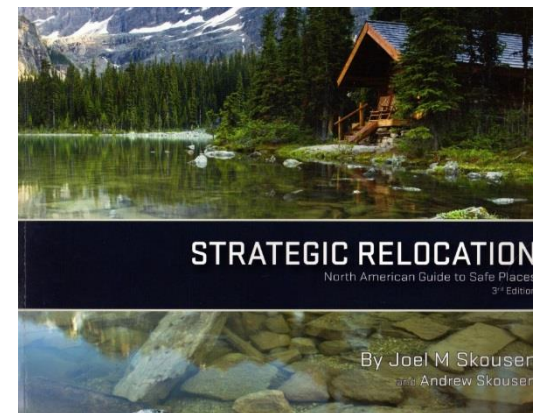
What does "strategic self-sufficient upside" mean? It means moving to a property that is bigger or has a better location (for growing, climate, security, politics, etc.). It means a property that allows you to produce more of your resources. It could mean a property in an area with more liberty minded people.

You may not have the resources or ability to do this right now, but you need to identify where you WOULD relocate if you did.

This might mean relocating to the other side of town. If you live in the United States, there are still several [differences that exist between the states](#). Or it could be to another country altogether.

BEGIN DEVELOPING YOUR TOOL LIBRARY

By and large, many developed societies have gotten away from tools. Blame it on specialization, white-collar jobs, and anything else you want to, but getting back to them is a solid building block of having more control over your life.



***"STRATEGIC RELOCATION", BY JOEL SKOUSEN, IS
A GREAT BOOK TO GET YOU THINKING ABOUT
WHERE YOUR IDEAL LOCATION IS.***



A WELL-ASSEMBLED TOOL COLLECTION, EVEN IF IT'S HUMBLE, CAN GO A LONG WAY TO HELPING YOU BECOME MORE SELF-SUFFICIENT.

As you begin to produce your own food, water, and energy, you need to begin a collection of serviceable tools. **Tools are a mark of someone who does things for himself.**

Someone who is strong. This isn't to say that everybody who has tools IS strong, but everybody who is strong has tools.

Start with hand tools and basic power tools. Wrenches, saws, a drill, and some basic landscaping tools will go a long way. Whenever possible, don't scrimp on quality. A tool should be an investment for life. An instrument of freedom.

CONNECT WITH OTHER LIBERTY-MINDED PEOPLE

Your journey to escape modern America can seem like a lonely one at times, but there are a lot of us escapees out there. Look for them at farmer's markets, shooting ranges, [meetup groups](#), and online.

The more you can connect with and help like-minded individuals, the more you will learn and progress in return (and more quickly!). Plus, it's just more enjoyable to be on the journey with other like-minded souls.

TAKE BACK THE REINS OF YOUR EDUCATION

One of the most despicable things about modern America is that as a people, we have relinquished control of our minds. Through the formal education system, the media, and 100 other ways, we have allowed ourselves to be told what is important to learn. What is important to think about. And we have allowed ourselves to be programmed that “education” is something that can only occur in a specific building.

What can you do about it?

- You can homeschool your kids.
- You can elect to enroll them in a charter school. In many cases, this allows you a middle ground between traditional public school, and homeschool.
- If they are in high school, you can explore options for them to take classes of their choosing at your local community college. In many cases, there are agreements in place that allow them to receive high school credit (and sometimes even discounted tuition). Or, if none of the above is a realistic option, you can keep them right where they are in public school, and still take back the “driver's seat.” Get to know the teacher(s). Ask questions. Speak up when you aren't ok with what's happening, or if you have ideas of something that would work better for your child.

**“TOOLS ARE A MARK OF
SOMEONE WHO DOES
THINGS FOR HIMSELF.”**

ESCAPE MODERN AMERICAN FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

Here's the reality: the financial institutions, markets, and currencies of the Western world are incredibly risky. They just are. They are backed by insurances, central banks, and governments, which are inflated, devalued, over-leveraged, and insolvent.

So, if you are holding assets in them, you are exposed to an enormous amount of risk. Especially if this is the ONLY place that you are holding your assets. Without warning, your portfolio could lose tremendous value, you could have your accounts frozen (a la Greece, Cyprus, Argentina, etc.), or become subjected to other similarly ill-fated ends.

It's time to give yourself a layer of protection from all this. There are better alternatives. There are more highly capitalized banks within more sound financial jurisdictions where you can keep your hard earned savings. You can invest in vehicles and markets that aren't controlled by a handful of central bankers and favor-trading politicians.

There are retirement accounts that exist outside of the financial mega corps that most people have retirement accounts through.

You can hold a portion of your savings in another currency, that doesn't face the same devaluation that the Dollar and Euro do.

The time to do this is now.

Start with getting a savings outside your country of residence, at a highly-capitalized, highly-liquid bank. With as little as a \$5,000 deposit and a couple forms, you can open an account in one of several sound banking jurisdictions. More information [here](#).



BANK RUNS AREN'T JUST SOMETHING THAT HAPPENS IN CYPRUS OR GREECE. WILL YOU HAVE FUNDS IN A BACKUP BANKING JURISDICTION WHEN IT HAPPENS IN YOUR COUNTRY?

BEGIN CREATING YOUR PLAN FOR ADDITIONAL RESIDENCY AND CITIZENSHIP IN ANOTHER COUNTRY

What? Yes. In much the same way that it makes sense to seek out alternative banking jurisdictions to protect yourself from undue financial exposure, part of escaping modern American life means that you have a geo-political backup plan as well.

Why?

Because.

Because you never know when it might be nice to have a second place to live and work. Because you never know when it might be nice to travel under a different passport. Because you never know when the political climate in your current country may change. Or when a sudden religious or military conflict could paint a target on your back. Or a hundred other reasons.

The bottom line is that **history is replete with examples of people that have fled their countries of residence** for one reason or another, desperately in search of a place they could exist in peace.

And if the time ever comes that you find your family in the same position, having a plan in place could mean the difference between life and death.

That's why.

So how exactly do you go about this?

That's a great question. Because it's not exactly a cocktail party conversation, it can be a little tough to figure out where to start. But there are resources out there. One of the easiest places to start, is to see what additional residencies you might already qualify for.



HAVING MORE THAN 1 CITIZENSHIP IS A GREAT LAYER OF PROTECTION AGAINST POWER-HUNGRY GOVERNMENTS.

The easiest kinds of residencies and citizenships to qualify for are through family ties (either ancestry or marriage). There are a variety of these on the books, and they are constantly changing. Ireland and Italy are a couple of the more well-known countries liberally issuing citizenship on the basis of ancestry/family ties.

“THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT HISTORY IS REPLETE WITH EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE THAT HAVE FLED THEIR COUNTRIES OF RESIDENCE FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER.”

Apart from acquiring citizenship through blood lines, your options for gaining citizenship can essentially be broken into 2 categories: **citizenship through naturalization, or citizenship through economic investment**. Each country has different laws regarding these opportunities. For a complete breakdown on 2nd citizenships, and countries that could make a good secondary location for you, refer [here](#).

CONSIDER A RESIDENCE CONSTRUCTED WITH INSULATED CONCRETE FORMS OR OTHER SMART TECHNOLOGIES

One of the most impressive building technologies that surprisingly few people are making use of today is [insulated concrete form \(ICF\) construction](#). In this method, the exterior walls of a house are built by vertically stacking hollow "Legos" made out of insulated styrofoam-esque material. After all the styrofoam walls have been erected, a concrete truck comes back through and fills the hollow walls with concrete. Boom. Insulated concrete walls.



AN INSULATED CONCRETE FORM (ICF) HOUSE IS CONSTRUCTED OF HOLLOW FOAM BLOCKS THAT SNAP TOGETHER LIKE LEGOS, AND THEN ARE FILLED WITH CONCRETE.

Houses built with insulated concrete form walls are:

- Stronger
- Quieter
- More energy efficient than traditional "stick-built" houses (traditional 2x4 and drywall construction)
- Easier to heat in the winter, and cool in the summer.
- More mold-resistant
- More air-tight

They hold up infinitely better in tornadoes, hurricanes, and other wind storms. They come in any shape or floor

plan you want, and can be covered in any exterior finishing you want. In other words, from looks alone, there's no way of telling if a house is constructed using insulated concrete forms or not. And **because their energy requirement is so much lower, they make off grid living via solar or other alternative energy a much more realistic possibility.**

At the end of the day, the home you live in is an intensely personal decision, which has to make sense for your lifestyle and location. It doesn't matter how cheaply you can build a house for, if you think it's ugly and hate it once it's built, it's not worth the savings.

Be real with yourself, but realize that there are some really smart options out there. As you think about your next home, make sure you don't have blinders on. This is a piece of the equation that could HUGELY impact the level of freedom and liberty that you have in your life.

SEEK OUT DEFENSIVE FIREARMS INSTRUCTION

In phase 1, you got a firearm. But a firearm does you no good (and can actually be a giant liability) without getting proper training.

Having real "hands-on" instruction with your firearm will give you confidence, and a critical understanding of how defensive shooting works. **When instants mean the difference of life and death, you don't want to have any question marks or uncertainty in your head.** You need to be able to act decisively, in defense of yourself and your loved ones.

A big component of firearms education is an understanding of what takes place AFTER you pull the trigger. The movies never show that part, so many people haven't ever really given it a second thought. The fact is though, how you handle the aftermath of a defensive shooting



FIREARMS TRAINING GIVES YOU THE SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE YOU NEED TO ACT QUICKLY IN A DEFENSIVE SHOOTING SITUATION.

incident, can greatly shape the coming months and years of your life. Many defensive firearms courses will touch on this, but if not, Massad Ayoob has some great instruction on exactly how to handle those critical few minutes.

Apply for concealed carry certification (if possible for where you live). Being able to carry a firearm concealed is a foundational building block in personal defense. In some areas, it may not be legal for you to get a concealed carry permit, but if it is, you should definitely take advantage of it. Even if it isn't something you begin to do immediately every single day, it's better to have the option and not need it, than need it and not have it.

LEARN TO WORK WITH MEDICINALS AND NATURAL REMEDIES

In Phase 1, you concentrated on putting together a first aid kit and getting basic first aid training. As part of becoming a producer however, we need to look further than just having supplies on a shelf, which are exclusively for emergencies.



The "producer" version of this is about becoming well-versed in natural remedies, herbs, and plants with medicinal properties. Things that you can produce. Medicinal plants and natural remedies are an interesting thing, because for so many years they were a lost and forgotten art. Over the last 20 years however, there has been a marked resurgence of interest in natural medicine, and accordingly a wealth of information that has sprung up around the topic.

Scores of books, websites, videos, magazines, and brick and mortar stores exist to provide people with the information and products to live a life of natural medicine. In the beginning, purchasing remedies and supplements is an ok place to start, but ideally, you can begin to produce many of these herbs yourself.

Keep in mind that because much of natural medicine is not "regulated" (at least in the United States), it's naturally a place where you will find some hucksters. It should go without saying that not every claim is true, and you should be discerning. This shouldn't deter you however, from all the good and beneficial things there are to gain within the space. And if you're somebody that's reading this, I probably don't have to convince you that there are also plenty of hucksters within "traditional" medicine.

YOUR TRANSITION TO PRODUCTION IS UNDERWAY

The steps in Phase 2 are huge. In contrast to the steps in Phase 1, **the steps in the second phase are much more of a way of life.** Things like homeschool, side businesses, and second citizenships, verses a car kit or a keychain flash drive. And they are a bigger deal financially as well. Everybody is on a budget, so these steps won't happen immediately. But, every single component of production is a big deal. So take pride in working towards these—they are difficult but rewarding.

PHASE 3: INDEPENDENCE

The 3rd phase of your escape plan marks your ability to ramp up your production, and substitute nearly all of your dependence on fragile modern American systems with sound, sustainable replacement systems, of which you are the architect.

You are no longer reliant on the fragile grid for food, water, education, money, health, fuel, corrupt governments, risky banking, or anything else.

In Phase 3, you take bigger steps and make bigger life changes, which dramatically increase your personal liberty.

This is the black belt of escaping.

MOVE TO YOUR STRATEGICALLY LOCATED HOMESTEAD

In the second phase of your escape plan, you evaluated properties that would make sense for your homestead. Now it is time to take action and move there. This could be in another state or another country. This is not your “bug out location”, but rather the place that offers you the best option for resiliency, while still fitting in with your life. In lots of cases, this means construction of your own home.

INCORPORATE A WATER WELL, SPRING, POND, OR OTHER PERMANENT SOURCES OF WATER SUPPLY



HAVING A WATER WELL IS THE ULTIMATE IN WATER SECURITY. WITH IT YOU CAN DRAW WATER FOR THE PEOPLE, THE ANIMALS, AND THE PLANTS ON YOUR PROPERTY.

As you well know by this point, [water is liquid life](#). The more you can have of it, the better. In phases 1 and 2 you worked to acquire water storage, and a way to at least resupply some of your water through rain water harvesting.

Now it's time to invest deeper into your water security by having a well or pond dug out (or both). If you have natural springs or streams on your property, [these can be developed to become more usable](#) water resources for you.

INCREASE THE PERMANENT FOOD SYSTEMS ON YOUR PROPERTY

As a food producer, in order to be able to come close to sustaining yourself, you need to slant your efforts towards incorporating trees and other permanent systems whenever possible. Perennial shrubs, vines, fruit and nut orchards, food forests, and other permanent elements increase in value and yield every season. With these systems, time is the biggest determining factor. The sooner you get them in place, the quicker you get bigger yields.



FRUIT AND NUT TREES PROVIDE A LAYER OF FOOD "PERMANENCE" THAT VEGETABLES AND OTHER ANNUALS DON'T. IN TERMS OF HARVEST SIZE, LIFESPAN, AND OVERALL RETURN ON THEIR REQUIRED RESOURCES, THEY ARE FAR SUPERIOR.

This is what permaculture is all about. **Figuring out how to design your land for maximum productivity** with minimal inputs. Or to use a business term, the highest ROI (return on investment).

With this in mind, you should invest in a permaculture design course (PDC), dedicated to teaching you how to do exactly this. PDCs are offered in many shapes and sizes, ranging from 10 day

on-site experiences, to internet webinar classes that can be taken from the comfort of your home and on your own time schedule.

There are some [great free videos](#) on YouTube and elsewhere on the internet that will give you a good basic understanding of what permaculture is.

If you are going to take a PDC, I would highly recommend going in person to a course in your area. There are some great courses available digitally, but **there is no substitute for getting your hands dirty, and getting some quality face time in with the instructor and the other attendees.** Many of the nuances and small talk that happen in a physical

setting are lost in the digital translation. And you can't come close to building the friendships that you would in person.

Lest anybody get the wrong idea, it's still a good idea to grow vegetables and other more traditional "annuals", but they will never come close to having near the ROI that permanent elements have, because by very definition, you have to re-establish them every year. Permanent elements are the "set it and forget it" of food production.

RAMP UP THE LIVESTOCK COMPONENT ON YOUR HOMESTEAD

Animals play a critical part in being truly self-sufficient, both for their outputs, and their ability to work the land. In addition to chickens, there are some great upsides to incorporating:



APART FROM FOOD SECURITY, KNOWING HOW YOUR FOOD WAS PRODUCED IS PRICELESS.

- Ducks
- Goats
- Rabbits
- Fish
- And cattle

Each has an accompanying cost/benefit analysis, and a space requirement. Rabbits or aquaponically-grown fish can be done in just a few square feet, whereas something like a goat would require greater area, ducks require pond(s), and cattle require even more space still.



GOATS ARE HANDY FOR THEIR EDIBLE OUTPUTS, AND FOR THEIR ABILITY TO ACCELERATE LAND TRANSFORMATION.

One animal that isn't usually considered livestock in the traditional sense, but is nevertheless still really important to incorporate on your property is **the honeybee**. Bees are tremendous pollinators, and will do a lot to help you get earlier production, more production, and just overall better plant health. In addition to the pollination benefits, you get the added benefit of having their honey and wax that you can use for a variety of products.

BOLSTER YOUR ENERGY PRODUCTION

In Phase 2, we talked about getting started with solar energy and a battery bank. Now it's time to ramp up your energy independence even further. If you live in an area where solar energy is a viable option, continue to ramp up your array. But look at other energy solutions as well.



WHILE STILL "LESSER KNOWN" TO PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE SELF-SUFFICIENCY MOVEMENT, GASIFIERS ARE AN INCREDIBLY EFFICIENT METHOD TO PRODUCE YOUR OWN ENERGY.

Apart from these sources, a gas or diesel-powered generator with stored fuel is an excellent component of an energy security plan. This is more of an item for your "storage" checklist, and not as much one of "production", but if you don't have one already, a generator is a good investment to make.

If you live in an area plentiful in biomass, wood gasification can be a really compelling option.

Wood gasifiers are becoming more stable and reliable, and offer a really low tech way to exchange locally sourced fuel (trees) for electricity.

On select property sites, wind, geothermal, and hydro-electric power can also be very real options to look into. These can be highly site specific however, and by and large are lesser used technologies.

With a generator, you can power your most critical electrical devices and components for as long as you have the fuel to power it. During Hurricane Katrina, some people had access to power for a good month after the grid went down because of their generators and fuel.

LEARN FOOD PRESERVATION METHODS (PARTICULARLY CANNING AND DEHYDRATING)

Ramp up production of food, water, and energy to cover a majority of your consumption. This is a difficult thing to put into practice, simply because we like to eat! By the time we're old enough to tie our shoes, we have developed palates that are acutely aware of all kinds of wonderful and far off foods, with special ingredients, processing (a whole separate topic), and high dependence on monoculture farming. Food independence is an exercise in both learning to produce more varieties of food, and eat fewer.

It also takes time to get food yields that will sustain you. A fruit and nut orchard isn't exactly something that you can flip the switch on. But by combining area-intensive permaculture practices, with intelligent site and home design, you really can get close.

One thing that you can do to close the loop between your food storage and the food you are producing on your property, is to learn some food production methods.

While there are a variety of ways to do this, **canning and dehydrating are 2 of the more easy and low tech ways to do this**. Learning to do these will allow you to preserve some of your own harvest till later in the year, when food wouldn't otherwise have been able to be grown.

Hot water bath canning will allow you to bottle up and preserve things with a high acid content, such as tomatoes, apricots, salsa, and many other fruits.

Pressure canning allows you to store meats, vegetables, and pretty much everything else (contingent upon how long the food itself will stay good for).

Dehydration of certain foods can be super low tech—like putting fruit on screens in the sun to naturally dry. You can also find a bunch of commercially available food dehydrators, which will give you greater control over the process and shorter dry times.



THE FINAL STEP IN THE FOOD SECURITY "TRI-FECTA" IS PRESERVATION.

BEGIN TRADING OR SELLING YOUR SURPLUS FOR WHAT YOU DON'T PRODUCE

One way to mitigate the above is by expanding your food variety by selling or trading what you have extra. **The best ways to do this are with neighbors, or at farmer's markets**. A word of caution: there are rules and regulations about

all this kind of stuff. I'm not recommending anything specifically for you and your locale. At the same time however, it's better to ask for forgiveness than permission. If you have a handful of neighbors or friends in the community that you know are producing food, start bartering with them.

MAKE THE JUMP TO FULL TIME SELF-EMPLOYMENT

This piece can obviously take some time, but **in order to truly escape modern American life, you need to be in control of all aspects of your finances**--including the earning. There are lots of examples of people that have been able to liberate themselves from their 9-5, and lots of resources to help you make the jump.

If you were able to begin producing at least a portion of your income in step 2, then making the jump to full time self-employment could be as simple as scaling what's working. If you are collecting retirement, this may be enough money to escape the 9-5.

The other thing to consider in making the jump to full time self-employment is your monthly cost of living. Are there some expenses that you can temporarily cut out while you are making the transition? Or if you can't cut them out altogether, are there less expensive alternatives that you can use to substitute for a time (i.e. Netflix instead of cable).

Nobody says this step has to happen in a certain time frame, and it could take a while. If it were easy, more people would already have done it. Nevertheless, finding a way to escape the 9-5 is an enormous pillar in the larger goal of escaping modern American life.

TRANSFER YOUR RETIREMENT ACCOUNT FROM A BROKERAGE TO ONE THAT IS "SELF-DIRECTED"

In Phase 2 we talked about some of the many vulnerabilities posed by Western markets and financial systems. Having a retirement account in a large brokerage puts you square in the middle of that risk. These brokerages are heavily invested in government bonds (a really bad investment class in this day and age), and are in bed with politicians and central bankers. If a new piece of legislation gets enacted that restricts the kind of investing you are able to do, or possibly even makes bonds investing mandatory, you can believe that the large brokerages won't hesitate to conform, and require the same of you.

"IN ORDER TO TRULY ESCAPE MODERN AMERICAN LIFE, YOU NEED TO BE IN CONTROL OF ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR FINANCES"

Even if something that drastic never were to happen, **having a traditional brokerage account still restricts the types of investments that you can make.** For instance, you could never buy a 20 acre ranch with your Charles Schwab IRA account, even if it's the best investment under the sun. Similarly, you can't go out and buy 100 ounces of physical silver. In many cases, there are foreign markets that you don't have access to with your brokerage account.

[Converting your brokerage account to one that is self-directed](#) allows you to have the ultimate flexibility. You can invest in REAL assets (like physical real estate, and physical precious metals). You can invest in virtually any market you want.

And as an added layer of protection, you can hold the assets in your retirement in other jurisdictions, where it would be next to impossible for your home government to seize, freeze, or otherwise control your hard-earned savings.

As you can imagine, this kind of investment vehicle takes some careful structuring. It's not something that you want to "wing it" on. Fixing sprinklers is a great DIY project, playing around with your life's savings is not. There are some very specific requirements that need to be followed in order to receive the maximum benefits (and avoid possible penalties!). Do yourself a favor, and [get expert legal help converting your retirement account](#) to one that is self-directed.

PULL YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN FROM PUBLIC EDUCATION, AND HOMESCHOOL IF POSSIBLE

The public education system (and much of formal education period) is a complete cesspool. It's a tax nightmare for everybody involved. And the bigger sin--it takes education out of your hand and puts other people in charge of it. Screw that. Education is too important. There is so much REAL education to be had in this life, and precious little of it is gained in the "education system."

ESTABLISH RESIDENCY IN ANOTHER COUNTRY

The benefits have been explained (see Phase 2). The research has been done. Phase 3 is about pulling the trigger on setting up residency on another piece of the globe, on your way to citizenship and travel documents. This is an

enormous step, which may take months or even years to successfully execute. But until you have a secondary geo-political option, you haven't truly escaped modern American life.

In fact, **if there were 1 single piece of "escaping modern American life" that could be selected as the defining moment above them all, this is it.**

Because in the most literal sense of the wording, this truly is escaping America.

If you reading this and aren't American, you're not off the hook. No matter where you live, you should still have a backup residency. America may be a more or less risky country then yours, but it doesn't change the fact that it's a good idea to not put all your geo-political "eggs" in 1 basket.



WHEN THE TIME COMES TO GET A RETREAT PROPERTY, MAKE SURE IT CAN DOUBLE AS A GOOD PLACE FOR VACATIONING.

PURCHASE A SECONDARY RETREAT /VACATION PROPERTY

Where it makes sense and is possible, this is the appropriate time to purchase a second property. A second property should be dual-purpose, and function as both a retreat ("Bug out shelter"), and a vacation property. **It does no good to have a fortress that only exists as a "last resort" place.** Instead, by selecting a property that can both be fun, and practical in emergencies, you maximize the value that you can get out of the house. This kind of dual thinking also bodes well for resale as well.

To maximize both of these aims, this property should ideally be located 1-4 hours from your primary residence, with multiple ways of accessing.

OUT OF THE HARBOR

Taking the steps in Phase 3 marks the ultimate in protection from disaster, control over your life, and freedom. Acquiring fallback supplies, becoming a true producer, and creating the systems of self-reliance described here are the fruits of someone who has truly “escaped.”

And while there is never truly an “end” to the layers of self-sufficiency and protection that you can add to your life, this is where the guide ends.

But before we part ways, let’s touch on a couple quick things...

WHAT’S NEXT?

One GIANT part of your life that this guide doesn’t touch on is your health. We all know that health is a precious thing, which can come and go throughout life.

We also know that in regards to our health, there are simultaneously:

- 1) Many things affecting us that lie beyond our ability to control
- 2) Lots of things that ARE within our ability to control

It's all about number 2. It always has been. And while I'm not here to be the judge of what exactly can or can't be controlled, number 2 is your chance to have more or less freedom over your life. It won't really matter how much "freedom" you have from modern American life, if you're not around to live it. Or if you're only living a shadow of it.

If you know in your heart of hearts that you have been putting off things related to your health, the time is NOW to get going.

(Soapbox dismounted, baton handed.)

ESCAPIST AND RESCUER

The last challenge I'll leave you in this guide about "escaping", is the challenge to be a rescuer. Yes, you heard me right. A rescuer. It's a complete paradigm shift, I know. But the truth is, escaping and rescuing can simultaneously occur.

What is being a rescuer? Someone who helps other people escape.

Someone who shares information. Inspiration. Ideas. Encouragement. Example. There are a thousand different ways that you can be a rescuer.

- **You can teach skills** (think back to the guide—medical, food production, alternative home construction and building methods, income generation).
- **You can invite other people to check out what you've done**—In the name of "operational security" (OPSEC), you don't want to be showing them your home safe and all the gold you have stored. But there are likely things

that you can showcase, without compromising yourself. Have you planted some productive plants or trees on your property? Perhaps a rainwater-harvesting system?

- **You can create content** for the web or offline world that people can read and refer to on their own journeys.
- **You can refer your friends to other people and resources that can help them.** There are lots of services, websites, teachers, products, and meetup groups out there that help people escape. But they aren't exactly getting coverage from the evening news, so spreading the word about these is hugely important.

You can share your journey to escape modern American life, in whatever way fits you best. AND, it's not like you have to be a pro at all this stuff to be able to help someone. As soon as you learn something, you can turn around and share it with others.

Let's talk about me for a minute—I still have a lot to learn, in order for me to feel like I've fully escaped modern American life. **But what I have learned, I've tried to share.** I've made hundreds of videos, written articles, sent out emails, spoken to a few crowds, and written a handful of guides like these. The point is—when and where you can, find ways to help other likeminded people.

After all, there have certainly been other people that have helped us on our journeys.

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AROUND TO LIVE IT.”**

THIRSTY FOR MORE?

Hopefully this guide has been the springboard for a few ideas that you can incorporate, but obviously this information is high level. There is no way that a little 3 paragraph section on food production is automatically transforming anyone into a farmer. Or that telling you to being a solar PV array is enough to get you up and running.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be. If you like what you've read here, you can find more in-depth information, resources, case studies, and guides like these over at TheDailyPrep.com.

Once you're there, you can subscribe via email (if, for some reason, you still aren't already), and find a host of other resources and recommendations on each subject, to help you truly escape modern American life.

I would love to hear from you as well. If you've read this far, shoot me a quick note at Dan@TheDailyPrep.com, and let me know a couple quick things:

- 1) **Biggest takeaway or idea to come from reading this guide**
- 2) **Where you are now in your escape (as specific or vague as you'd like to be).**

That's it for now! I look forward to hearing from you, and continuing our journey together to Escape Modern American Life.

Be in touch soon,

DAN CARPENTER