

Some Basic Steps to Prepare for a Terror Attack

- **Stay vigilant.**

Remember that violence can happen anytime, anywhere. At your local mall, open marketplace, train station, school functions, or your office building.

- **Look for things and people that are out of place**

For example, a suit case or brief case sitting in the middle of the food court at a shopping mall should set off alarm bells. While we are not ones to judge a person's character by the color of their skin or ethnicity, the fact is, that modern day extremism targeting the West, in the majority of cases, originates from Arab-born individuals. It is human nature to make initial judgments based on external features, so "profiling" is something that you probably already engage in on a regular basis. If you have flown in the last eight years, and you noticed a group of what seemed to be a Muslim men, chances are you already prejudged what they may or may not be. Don't feel bad about profiling, because the fact is, all humans do it. Profiling, combined with other observations, such as looking for typical features of someone under stress like sweating, shifting eyes, and anxious behaviors could act as a potential indicator for a developing threat.

- **Look for exits.**

While there is no need to panic when going into public places, as the probabilities are still low that you would be in a target area, identifying emergency exits routes as you enter an area is one of the first things to consider. Look for secondary and emergency exits. In an emergency, chances are that the majority of those in your immediate vicinity will default to their entry point as an exit. This means that a good 90% of people will be rushing the same exit. When seconds count, and a mass of people starts to panic, you would be better served taking an alternative exit.

- **Prepare an evacuation route.**

Similar to the point above, in the event of a city-wide or regional terrorist attack or other emergency, most people will evacuate via major highway arteries. Knowing these arteries and then avoiding them may save you precious minutes or hours as you evacuate an area that may have been hit by a chemical, biological or nuclear (tactical, suitcase, dirty) weapon.

Plan your evacuation routes now. It only takes a few minutes via online mapping technology. Either print your evacuation maps, or obtain traditional maps of your local area, region and state.

- **Prepare a Bug Out Bag**

Pack a 72 hour bag(s) that includes, but is not limited to, supplies like emergency food (MRE, Freeze Dried Pouches, Emergency Dietary Bars), Water filter/Purification Tablets, money, basic medical supplies, clothing, multi-tool, backup maps, address book/contact lists, tent and sleeping bags. A 72 hour emergency evacuation pack is the bare minimum. Be sure to consider all family members and dietary requirements when packing your bag(s). A 5000 cubic inch bag, generally used for trekking, could provide a 10 – 14 day buffer for a single individual if it is packed correctly.

- **Water**

Have at least 10 gallons of water (two of those large 5 gallon jugs) on hand at all times. In the event of an emergency, your water supply may be inoperable or contaminated, so having some on hand to throw into your bug-out vehicle could be a life saver.

- **Self Defense**

When millions of people hit the streets in an evacuation, there will undoubtedly be those who were not prepared and will take whatever measures they deem necessary to acquire food, water and a ride out of town. Be prepared to take defensive measures in the event you and your family come under threat. Remember, though, that your main goal is to evacuate, not to be involved in altercations, so use force to defend yourself only as a last resort.

- **When your gas tank is half-full, it's empty**

To ensure you never run out of gas, make it a habit to fill up anytime your gas gauge gets below 50%. Most vehicles will be able to get you at least 125 miles of continuous driving on a half tank of gas. If possible, having a reserve gas container (5 – 10 gallons) would also be a good idea.

- **Know where you're going**

If you have to evacuate, you should establish multiple bug-out locations outside your general area of residence. Contact family and friends and work out emergency shelter in the event of a catastrophe. If you do not have friends or family outside of your city, then consider adding hotels, motels or camp grounds, with phone numbers, addresses and directions to your evacuation planning.

- **Go with your gut**

The fight or flight response of humans has been honed over the last 200,000 years. Some call it intuition. Let it work in your favor. In emergencies, you will have a heightened sense of awareness, and coupled with your preparedness planning, your intuition may play an important roll. Listen and act accordingly.

- **Plan on Plan A not working**

Also plan on *Plan B* not working. It is impossible to predict when and how disaster will strike. Having a plan not only gets you prepared and provides you with a check list to execute in the event of an emergency, but also prepares your mind for the unexpected. While you may not know exactly what you're not expecting, the fact that you know there are unknowns going into it makes you that much more prepared.

Surviving an emergency, in many instances, will not come down to how good of a plan you put together. It will come down to how prepared your mind is to handle dynamic, fluid situations under stress. Stay optimistic and believe in your ability to continue moving forward no matter what difficulties come your way.