

Rooted and Rising: What We Can Do

Cleanwater Wellness life Tips for Surviving During Hard Times



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Letter from the author

Dear Fellow Traveler,

This 2-part guide is for anyone navigating the consolidation or collapse of systems where they live or work. The more systems that are contracting or collapsing, the more we need to rely on each other. These tips are listed without a lot of details as a starting point.

Whether you're living quietly or being actively pushed out, these tips are for real people to build real lives in real time. In August 2025, the window of new world opportunities has narrowed compared to 30 years ago when I first became aware of this impending collapse. As a "prepper" I focused on the type of collapse that required a lot of resources. What I learned is that survival may not look like how we planned for it. In fact, we may find ourselves needing to change strategies. Today, I learned the most critical key to surviving any change is a healthy community to lean on.

While there are no heroes or saviors coming - we are here to each other's everyday heroes. We are humans remembering how to live with the earth, with each other, and with the cosmos. The longer we cling to what's broken (nostalgia), the deeper the unraveling may go. The same forces breaking the old world are also opening space for something new. As systems fail, more of us are quietly building what's next. Intentional community-based models, spirit-led work, and life designs that don't depend on extraction and control. This is how we tip the path away from despair and toward renewal. Not by saving everything, but by building something steady enough for others to find.

Irmina (Queen Tuya Nu)

This guide was woven from lived experience, ancestral wisdom, online resources, and conversations between kindred spirits. It is offered freely, not for sale, and meant to be shared, adapted, and passed on in love. Created by Irmina (Queen Tuya Nu) as a starting point for sustainable and intentional life.

15 Ways Communities Can Start Rebuilding

Here are some things that you can start doing now.

When an empire fades, it doesn't send a notice. The water just stops running regularly. Some experience flooding more often. The stores close early. Bridges collapse and are not rebuilt. Electricity fails. The promises thin out. And suddenly, people realize the system wasn't built to last for the "99%", but they still need to live.

In case you are not aware, preppers have been prepping for many decades, some never stopped prepping since the 1970s. Some prep with a mindset of fear. We prefer to build from a place of abundance, love, joy, and community. Love for ourselves, each other, the land, and the cosmos. With divine guidance and sacred routines, we embrace a sustainable, well-lived, simple and humble life. The world will not end but wealth is shifting.

This article is not about warning signs and doomsday panic. It's about what people in the past did when the structures they depended on crumbled and how we can learn and take similar actions. No empire name is needed. We have breakdowns worldwide. You'll know if this is about you or where you live.

Here are 15 practical things communities have done, not to "thrive" in the Instagram "social media" sense, but to live fully, joyfully, and together, during challenging and transformative times.



1. Start a Garden You Don't Own Alone

After fresh air, water, and shelter, we need food. Historically during difficult times, people planted food in front yards, in church plots, at the edge of vacant lots. They shared tools and seeds. It wasn't perfect, weeds grew, some crops failed, but dinner included greens, and laughter came with it. We are being called to do the same.

Start small. Even one shared raised bed teaches you more than theory. In the end, you may not have a huge plot, but you can expand as time goes on.

Start smaller. If you don't have a community, start a balcony garden just for yourself and your family. Start with one plant. Then add another and so on.

2. Trade Skills in Workshops or Circles

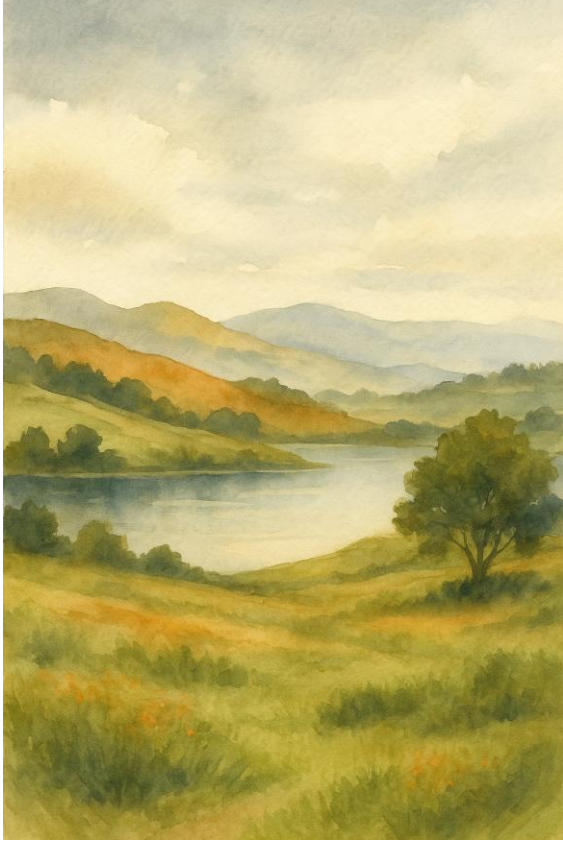
With schools closing or becoming unaffordable, in the old days (and in struggling communities), people taught each other: cooking, mending, fixing bikes, budgeting, even emotional regulation. Every neighborhood became its own learning center.

Start small: You don't have to wait for experts. Today we have access to Youtube and other free online classrooms and that may not last forever. Use them.

Start smaller: Many of us are overwhelmed and don't have time for one more project. Practice learning a new skill – like sewing, even if it's 10 minutes a day. You can also teach others your skills to keep yourself fresh and build community trust.

3. Build Near Water, Ritual, and Rhythm

Some moved closer to rivers or lakes. Others learned the local watershed. They watched the moon. They used seasonal gatherings as anchor points. They returned to rhythm, even if the world around them was chaotic.



Start small: Mark time not with clocks, but with stories, harvests, and shared songs. Learn how water moves in your area. Does your neighborhood have hidden water locations.

Start smaller: Learn what's available near you. You might be surprised how many communities have water resources that no one knows about.

4. Leave the Noise and Sit with People

People turned off the doom news. There's nothing more crippling than chronic bad news. Avoid it, not out of denial, but only need to hear it once, then act. Instead,

people meet face to face, not to solve everything, but to listen. Silence became powerful. So did honesty and truth. Conversations didn't trend; they mattered.

Start small: One real conversation can quiet ten hours of scrolling. Talk with people, real people.

Start smaller: If you are introverted and struggle with one-on-one or socializing, attend a guided meditation where you don't have to talk to anyone, but show up in a community. You'd be surprised how many people feel the same way as you.

5. Begin the Day With Small Sacred Acts

Lighting a candle. Give thanks. Making tea with intention. These weren't big ceremonies, just moments to root the soul before chaos knocked on the door.

Start small: Start your day like your life depends on it, because it does. This is not to make you scared, but to invite you to live every day as if it's your last day.

Start smaller: Practice giving gratitude for small things. The penny you see on the road, the child that smiled at you. The butterfly that greeted you today.

6. Let the News Fade. Let the Elders Speak.

People stopped tracking every crisis. When the world is shifting, not every crisis is your crisis. Start asking grandparents what it was like “before.” Then return to books, letters, walking. Not as escape, but guidance.

Start Small: Not all information is wisdom. Choose who you listen to.

Start Smaller: Remove one “excess” app from your phone and keep it off for 90 days.



7. Start One Corner of the World Over

They built free pantries on porches. Started lending libraries. Hosted song circles. Not for applause, but because they couldn't wait for “the system” to care. So, they became the system.

Start Small: Your street is waiting for you to begin something sacred. Offer a service to your community.

Start Smaller: Leave a positive note on a bench for a stranger to find.

8. Make Devotion Part of Daily Survival

They didn't separate spirit from the grind. They prayed while chopping onions. Sang while walking to work. Cried in gardens. Joy and pain were not separate; they were two sides of the same coin.

Start Small: Spiritual practice is a survival skill, not a luxury. Our ancestors knew this and embedded spirituality into every aspect of our being.

Start Smaller: Remind yourself to simply say "Thank you" the moment you wake up. Sometimes that is all we need to do.

9. Life Has Meaning, Live Intentionally

Instead of treating the world like a dead machine, people lived as if every moment mattered. They honored beauty. They honored the sun, the moon, the stars. They were kind without cause. They slowed down, even if no one told them to.

Start Small: Your actions are a vote for what kind of world this is. Don't do things your consciousness will regret later. Make every move you take intentional.

Start Smaller: Learn to pause at least twice a day. A simple 30-second pause can change the trajectory of our day by preventing us from acting out of fear or other negative emotions.

10. Stop Pretending Things Are Fine

They stopped faking it. They told the truth to friends. They made space to grieve and dream. They began to rebuild from reality, not from the script or what influencers told them to do.

Start Small: We can't build anything meaningful while pretending. No need to share openly with strangers, choose who to share your sacred information. Social media is not the place for divulging personal struggles.

Start Smaller: Use a recording device to record things you want to share online. At the end of seven days ask yourself what you learned.

11. Trust the Unseen That Keeps Showing Up

That quiet guidance that has helped you all your life (intuition). A feeling in the gut (instinct). A dream that returned (ancestral). Learn how you receive and process information. Learn to follow, not blindly, but attentively. Discernment is important too. It helped them stay steady when logic failed.

Start Small: Even if you don't name it, something in you knows the way.

Start Smaller: Sit and be still for 2 minutes a day. Reconnect with the wisdom within you.



12. Make Space for Ancestry

People reconnected with family lines, old songs, recipes, languages. They honored the ones who came before. It didn't fix everything. It gave them strength they didn't know they had.

Start Small: You are not the first and won't be the last to live through system collapses. You carry survivors' blood. More than likely your

ancestors went through situations you can't even imagine. You are the answer to their prayers. Your presence means they survived.

Start Smaller: Ask yourself what it is you cannot live without. Then ask why. Keep asking why until you get to the root of what you really need for survival.

13. Break the Pattern

They noticed: "We keep repeating this." They changed routines and behaviors that didn't serve them. They learn to let go of harmful habits. Spoke what hadn't been spoken. This is how they designed a different future.

Start Small: If you don't break a negative pattern, it becomes the future.

Start Smaller: Take one tiny positive change you know you can succeed today and make it happen. Choose something so small you might laugh at yourself later. Repeat often.



14. Use Joy as a Compass, Not a Distraction

Joy is not an escape. It is fuel. They danced. They told jokes. They raised kids with stories. Joy gave them the reason to stay human, especially when it was hard.

Start Small: Joy is not luxury. It is the fruit of the spirit. It can help you push through hard times. It renews you from the inside out. Embrace joyful moments daily.

Start Smaller: Declutter and bring joy to a small part of your life. Joy is a spiritual act. Keep your space flowing.

15. They Didn't Wait for Permission

Nobody gave them a rulebook. They started anyway. With shaky voices, unsure of the next steps, imperfect moves. But they started. That's what made the difference.

Start Small: We don't need permission. We need people, places, and courage.

Identify what you are missing from this list.

Collapse doesn't mean everything ends. It means what was fake burns off, and what's real begins to take center stage again. These 15 practices came from our ancestors. They built and embraced joyful living in challenging times and so can you.



15 Actions for the Excluded, Watched, or Displaced

What if you are excluded from access to land and other resources. What if your every movement is watched and your presence is criminalized. What if you are displaced and without close kin. What do you do then?

These are 15 actions you can take. They will require moving outside of your comfort zones. They will require you to learn to trust again, to engage when you'd rather be alone, to leave your apartment, your home, or shared space when you'd rather stay inside. Take baby steps and do what you can. The universe will meet you where you are.

1. Build Tight Local Circles

People stopped waiting for big movements and focused on who was already near or close by. One neighbor helped with groceries. A cousin watched the kids. A coworker showed up with extra batteries. Trust didn't come overnight, but it came. Start with one person. You don't need big moves, you just need to show up consistently. Small circles can bring joy and help to save lives.

2. Get Local Knowledge

They walked their blocks, learned which parks had clean water, which alleys weren't watched, which bus routes still ran when phones went down. They wrote it down, shared it quietly. Know your terrain like a living map. Get paper maps. It's more reliable than an app. Get unplugged.



3. Join or Create Mutual Aid – It takes a village (Quietly)

No websites. No flyers. Just a list of who had what. One person had diapers. Another had extra rice. Someone else had a car for emergencies. Build care networks that don't depend on attention or lists, just trust and repetition.



4. Document Your Gifts and Skills

They didn't wait for a job title or certifications. One knew herbal teas, another could fix a generator, someone else translated three languages. They made lists, laminated them, and passed them around. Write down what you can do. It's your survival résumé. Today many of these are free online. Pick up a new skill while its free and still accessible by anyone.

5. Learn Digital Safety

While our ancestors didn't have Bluetooth, they knew how to move quietly and unseen. Turn off Bluetooth. Stop tagging your locations, use encrypted apps, delete voice assistants, and backed up crucial contacts on paper. Digital privacy isn't paranoia, it's modern self-defense.



6. Find a Place of Refuge

For some, it was an elder's house in the country. For others, a room in a basement church or a friend's house. A few found nature, where no one followed them. Preppers called it their "bug out location." Others call it "the quiet place." Make a backup place. Even if it's just spiritual and prepare it in advance.

7. Speak Your Language, Teach Your History

They cooked ancestral meals, taught kids old proverbs, and played music from back home. Even as systems erased them, their

culture became stronger. What they couldn't say in public, they sang in the kitchen.

8. Learn Land Basics

They learned to identify wild greens (foraging), track weather shifts, plant by moonlight. Books became their teachers. Mistakes became lessons.

You don't need to be a farmer. Learn how to feed yourself without access to a store or money.

9. Strengthen Your Body Gently

They stretched each morning, walked often, drank broth, and rested when needed. No gym, no schedule, just care. Our bodies are incredible and with gentle care can help us through many challenges. It wasn't about looking strong or fit. It was about being able to carry water, carry wood, or carry babies.

10. Barter More, Buy Less

She sewed dresses in exchange for eggs. He taught math lessons for tomatoes. One family shared a car ride for cooked meals. When money stops stretching, mutual respect will do the rest. Learn to barter fairly and develop exchange systems that will grow as things change.

11. Create Quiet Gatherings

They lit candles, told stories, grieved together, and made plans. Nothing public. Just trusted hearts around kitchen tables. Community doesn't need a mic. Just warmth, intention, and safety.



12. Hide Some Things. Share Others.

They protected their rituals, stored sacred items in hidden places, and kept journals offline. But they shared extra tools, comfort, and songs. Survival can also mean knowing what to guard and what to give.

13. Learn the Rules Being Used Against You

They studied zoning maps, immigration changes, and surveillance tech. They spotted patterns before the news did. Knowledge of the system didn't save them, but it bought time, and time saved lives.

14. Teach Children Both Reality and Magic

Kids helped in the garden and made-up songs to our ancestors. They learned how to recognize friends and foes and how to whisper dreams to the wind. They weren't raised in fear, but in full sight of the world, with tools and spirit.

15. Refuse Erasure by Living Well

While it may be important to keep cultural identify secret and sacred, keep your ancestral connections close at home. Whenever possible, dressed in ancestral colors, pray aloud, dance in gravel roads, weep loudly, and love without apology.

The tips here offered practical and soulful steps for everyday people navigating the slow collapse of systems that they relied on. It offers 30 grounded practices: 15 for anyone seeking a joyful, rooted life, and 15 for those being excluded, watched, or displaced. You can build from lived wisdom; you don't have to reinvent the wheel.

The book reminds us that survival isn't just about strategy, it's about connection, culture, and showing up. No matter what falls apart, something sacred can still be built right where you are, with what you have, and who you know.

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