

THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BARTERING

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INTRODUCTION

It doesn't matter what the crisis is (a natural disaster; war; a terrorist attack; etc), the aftermath is always the same; people struggling to put back their lives and create a new "normal."

If you have the presence of mind to prepare now for a crisis in the future, you will have a big advantage over the vast majority of other folks. While everyone else is scrambling to find the necessary supplies and tools they need, you will be comfortably surviving with the supplies you had the forethought to stockpile, and skills you learned ahead of time.

Of course, being the person who knows how to survive (and with the tools, weapons and supplies to do it), could put your family in a certain amount of danger as those panicked by circumstances come to you for help. But, if you prepare for this situation too, you can put yourself in a good bargaining position to barter for what you may need, while giving others the opportunity to share in your knowledge and splendor.

Bartering was the only way to get what you wanted in needed before money became a way to buy and sell products. Of course, this wasn't always an easy ordeal (especially if the guy with the stuff you wanted didn't need what you had). This created a type of bartering commerce which used third parties to borrow, trade, and sell.

Although not used for survival much these days, bartering still exists in many parts of the world. Why, the odds are good that you have even bartered yourself from time to time in this modern world.

The good thing about bartering is that it can be revitalized at a moment notice. When all of the stores are closed (and looted free of merchandise), no one cares how much money you have in your pocket. They only care about what items you have to trade. This makes the person who has the necessities everyone is looking for very important –and very rich.

SO WHAT IS IT WORTH?

The first thing you have to realize that when it comes to bartering, value is a relative thing. Someone may have a diamond ring worth \$15,000, but if it food they need, that ring is useless. Things are only valuable because society says it is. So think about the things that will become most important to others during a crisis and stock up on them; it is having the necessities of life that will make you the richest.

During World War II and its aftermath many of the society most elite traded their most precious silver pieces for basic foodstuffs like cheese, bread and salami. In the wake of starvation, their antique silver teapots didn't hold much value. But to those who were able to trade food for these items, riches came later, when silver was worth something again. You can do the same if you are prepared.

PREPPING FOR A DISASTER

When preparing for a bartering time, the key is to have on hand the things that others will need –and want. Keep in mind though that what others want will likely also be what your family needs, so have extras on hand (never give away what you need even if you think it'll benefit you later).

Of course there are always items that people think they need that they really only want. Alcohol is one of those things. When faced with uncertainty and panic, many people turn to alcohol and cigarettes to ease their mind and their worries. As ridiculous as it sounds, some will even forgo bartering for food items at first to get their hands on a fifth of whisky. This will make alcohol more valuable.

SOME BASIC BARTERING SUPPLIES YOU SHOULD HAVE

Keeping I mind what we just talked about, here are some basic bartering supplies to have available should a crisis occur:

Cigarettes: people who are addicted to cigarettes will need them even more when under stress – and may be willing to trade the most precious items for a pack.

Alcohol (of any kind): research shows that alcohol sales spike in times of trouble. Imagine the power you will hold if you have a supply on hand to barter with.

Condoms: when faced with a crisis, people want to forget their troubles by immersing themselves with their partner. Of course this is also not the time to want to worry about a pregnancy, so condoms become a high demand item.

Personal Hygiene Items: In general we are a society obsessed with cleanliness. Showers are taken daily and people feel grimy without one. This will put standard hygiene items like

soaps, shampoos, tampons and toothpaste high end commodities.

Batteries: we depend on electrical items so much for daily survival that when the electric grid goes down many people will turn to battery operated devices to get by. This of course will make getting your hands on batteries very important.

Medical Supplies: depending on the emergency, getting medical help may be difficult (if not impossible). When this happens, being able to take care of a health emergency will be put onto individuals. This will make it vital to have standard medical supplies like gauze, medical tape, splints, antibiotic ointment, etc. on hand.

Toilet paper: few people have more than a roll or two tucked in their bathroom closet. If a big emergency happens and stores are closed for days or weeks finding basic supplies like toilet paper may become impossible.

Coffee: statistics show that there are more coffee addicts out there right now than alcoholics. That will make coffee a real commodity in the face of a crisis.

Matches: most people have no idea how to start a fire without matches, yet few actually have a stash of them lying around. From cooking to keeping warm, matches will become an instant necessity in the wake of a real disaster.

Sugar: a difficult item to store for long, if you have a decent supply that you can barter, you will become the most popular guy in town.

Fuel: if the electric grids go down, gasoline pumps aren't; going to work. That means generators will be useless and people will not be able to move their automobiles.

Duct Tape: considered one of the most versatile items known to man, duct tape can be used for hundreds of things. From making a splint, to pulling out a splinter, duct tape will become an essential survival item when faced with a disaster.

Tarps: a versatile item, tarps can be used to weatherize a damaged home, as well as other things. Having a few spare ones to barter may come in handy during an emergency.

Fishing Supplies: it takes time to grow a garden or raise an animal for food, but people who can fish have an immediate way to get food for their family.

THAT'S NOT ALL YOU CAN BARTER

Bartering items is only half the story. You can also barter your skills in times of trouble. Knowing how to do certain things during a time of crisis can be very marketable. There are two different kinds of skills people amass over a lifetime: work skills (things they learn through the work they do) and survival skills (skills that are used for survival purposes). In most cases, the two do not overlap much; if at all. Still, most people make the mistake of believing they will instantly know how to take care of themselves in a crisis, forgetting that survival depends on having honed certain skills.

Survival Skills

Most preppers understand the need to learn certain skills to survive in a crisis situation. Plus, they have the forethought to

stash the tools and supplies they will need to use those skills. Regular folks do not. Here are just some of the survival skills to study to ensure that you can handle yourself no matter how bad it gets. These are skills you will be able to teach other in troubled times. This will make you a valuable asset to the community:

Water Purification

Clean water is essential to survival. If you are smart enough to have a purifying system (and the knowledge to use it), you can barter clean water for other things, or you could work with others to do all the heavy hauling of water to your system for their own clean reserves.

First Aid/Medical Treatment

The average person knows little if anything about treating real injuries. Sure they understand the importance of keeping a cut clean, but do they know how to stop bleeding, splint an injured arm or leg or treat shock? Those who have these important skills will be sought after in a crisis.

Waste Disposal

Human waste can be deadly. One of the most dangerous things people have to deal with in the aftermath of a disaster is human waste. Those who know how to dispose of it can barter that knowledge for all kinds of other supplies.

Gardening

In the event of a cataclysmic disaster, it may be necessary to grow your own food for awhile. That may seem easy enough, but getting a patch of ground to grow viable vegetables isn't always easy. If you have the skills needed to grow food, you will become very popular in your area – and can barter your services for just about anything else you may need.

Fire Starting

Very few people actually know how to start a fire and keep it going. Yet, if the power goes out keeping warm and cooking food will require a quality fire. If you have the skills to start and maintain a good fire, you can help your neighbors do the same.

Alternative Cooking Methods

Solar ovens can mean the difference between eating hot food versus cold foods during a power outage. If you have a solar oven or some other type of alternative cooking source, you can barter it for all sorts of other valuables.

Making Alternative Fuels

This will be a very valuable skill as gasoline and propane reserves are used up.

Blade Sharpening

As people are forced to go back to the basics, using knives and saws once again they will need someone to sharpen their tools.

Animal Care

Taking care of livestock is not as simple as it may seem and when you must rely on those animals for your food supply, it will become important to know someone who can take care of your animals should they become sick or hurt.

WORK RELATED SKILLS

When disaster strikes, homes usually undergo some amount of damage. People who don't know how to fix a damaged roof or get their well working again will turn to people like you, who have such skills. Here are just some of the work-related skills that may become helpful in a disaster:

Carpentry

One of the most sought after skills after a natural disaster, carpentry skills are essential for those who want to fortify or fix their homes.

Plumbing

Water supplies are often cut off during a natural disaster, and having workable plumbing is the only way to ensure that it can be turned back on.

Auto Repair

The longer people are left to their own devices, the more trouble they will have with their cars. Assuming gas is available, your neighbors may find themselves in need of quick fixes to their automobiles, making it a barter able service.

Medical Skills

Hospitals and clinics are often overrun during emergencies. Having some medical experience and/or midwifery experience can be very useful in times of trouble.

Gunsmithing

Most preppers stockpile plenty of guns and ammo in case of disaster, but not all of them know how to fix those guns. Qualified gunsmiths will be needed in the event of a crisis.

SOME BASICS FOR SURVIVAL BARTERING

Bartering in a survival setting is very different than the typical everyday bartering you might be used to. No matter how good of a wheeler-dealer you are, when faced with a panicked and angry crowd, you have to be prepared.

When disaster strikes, people panic and that panic will make them unreasonable, or even dangerous. Put a group of these people together and you don't stand a chance, even if you are well armed. That's why it is vital that you don't let anyone know exactly what your stockpile holds. As a matter of fact, don't let anyone know you even have a stockpile. In a post crisis situation, everyone will have a few items to trade for the things they need, so just bring out one or two items; this won't alert anyone to the fact that you were well prepared for the disaster and can likely survive it comfortably.

If anyone suspects you have a large stockpile (or even a small one for that matter), they could get a group together and

come after it –and your family. It is always better to play it safe.

This leads to advice on where to barter. Unless you are bartering with friends neighbors, always do your business away from your home and be careful to watch for people following you afterward. It isn't just the guy you just traded with that could be dangerous, but anyone who saw the transaction.

Remember, these are desperate times we are talking about and people you never expected to become violent will. Depending on how dire the situation is, you may have to utilize counter surveillance methods when doing business in order to protect yourself and your family. This will include keeping yourself well armed at all times. You don't even have to let people know you are armed, but do so anyway.

The best bartering deals are those where both people feel like they got a good deal. It may be tempting to try and fleece people during this time. After all, you were the one with the forethought, right, so why shouldn't you make a profit right?

You may feel as if you are entitled to strike it big during this time, but remember that if you rip people off and they become desperate, they could take their frustrations out on you – or someone you love. It is always better to strike a fair deal and not have to worry about repercussions in the future.

For those who have not prepared for trouble bartering is going to become about survival. Not so for you. Instead you can barter for:

Things your family needs to survive: maybe you underestimated how fast your family would go through certain items and need to trade to replenish your stock

Items of value: while someone's diamond jewelry might not be worth much during a crisis, eventually life will get back to normal. It may be hard to determine what will have value in the future, but if you can then you can trade what you have now for what will be worth much more later.

Their strong backs: there's a lot of work to be done in the aftermath of an emergency. If you have goods you can always trade them for someone's strength and hard work.

Bartering is always best when you are not desperate and can think through the deal. Otherwise, someone is going to take advantage of you. Your goal is to be the one controlling the trade so that you can make out the best without taking the other guy for a ride.

Also consider a few small items that you have that could be used as deal makers., Maybe you have an extra box of chocolate that you'd be willing to throw in as part of the deal to get the root tiller you want. Know what you have in advance so you can throw in some extra item to seal a fading deal.

CONCLUSION

Negotiation is an art that will be crucial in survival situation where money is useless.

Remember to pack up things that are not necessarily useful to you, but to others as well.

Bartering with these items *could* mean the difference between life and death.

Once you packed up the basics for you and your family to live in a survival situation, don't stop there. Gather as many valuable resources as possible, such as matches, toilet paper and cooking oil. Even the ones you don't use are good for bartering, so the more you have on hand, the more you can trade for the things you do want and need.