Practical Emergency Preparedness With Mira Dessy Transcript

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Introduction to Emergency Preparedness

You know, the world has been experiencing a lot of emergencies as of late from floods to hurricanes to tornadoes to fires. We thought since this is Emergency Preparedness Month that this would be an ideal time to bring back Mira Desi to talk about emergency preparedness.

She is very passionate about this. she has lived through many emergencies and she's come up with a fantastic program that can ease anyone into resilience around upcoming potential emergencies.

Up next on the Everyday Ancestral Podcast, Mira Desi. Why is this a topic we should be discussing? I think that for so many people, emergency preparedness has a weird label.

You think of preppers and people doing all kinds of unusual things. And the truth of the matter is, For those of us who choose to eat in a particular way or who have concerns about the safety of their family, the ability to leave in an emergency if you have to, thinking about this is simply being responsible.

And especially over the last three months, we have seen such a devastating number of natural disasters happen and so being prepared for that. And then there's also some financial concerns.

Like if you are someone who's paying attention to what and how you eat and to how to prepare and make sure that you have supplies handy, in a financial situation, you might have a little bit more of a cushion because you've done that, I mean, a lot of times though, like, okay, if we even use the flood, the devastating flood that just happened, oh my gosh, yeah, that's just so deeply affected us emotionally, since we had kids at camp ourselves, nowhere in that danger, but still, I just can't even imagine what those parents were going through.

But the kind of devil's advocate would say, well, okay, the people that were directly affected by that flood, even if they had been prepared, it would have been all washed away.

You know what I mean? What about for those people who say like, when the shit really hits the fan, is anything going to really help? Great question. And I will share that I think having a bug out bag, having supplies ready to go if you need to, and also perhaps having other informational sources can be very useful.

For example, our family went through Hurricane Harvey. We were flooded. Our house, or daughter's house. It was pretty devastating, but we knew where we were going and we know what we're bringing with us.

Why Preparedness Matters

Now, we weren't able to leave exactly when we wanted to because of the nature of what was happening, but as soon as we were able, to we left. And our house did flood, our daughter's house.

Our daughter actually lost everything because her house flooded worse than ours did. So sometimes emergency preparedness is also knowing how to live. Then I will also share another aspect of preparedness.

I have a class that I teach called First Aid Preparedness. If you know how to deal with first aid situations in an emergency, you are not as reliant on first responders, because they're going to go where it's worst.

And I hope that's not you. But if you what to do and how take care of yourself and those you care about and around you, it is going help you be able to get through the situation a little bit better.

So it almost sounds like you're saying like, not only is it just an important individual service to be prepared for the worst. but also it's important as a community service potentially.

Yes. I firmly believe that if communities come together and support each other, you know, for example, there was a huge storm, I live in Texas. There was huge a storm in 2021 and a lot of trees came down and there a winter apocalypse, we called it the snow apocalypse.

The power grid went out for the entire state and neighborhoods were shut off. So people being able to come together. If you had supplies, if you have power because you've had a generator, or if had other things, you were able help the people around you.

So it wasn't like those apocalyptic movies where everyone's like hoarding and they're like, don't come to my house or I'll shoot you. No, no. And as a matter of fact, I have, so one of my mentors in this is a gentleman, Dr.

Mark Vorderbruggen, he goes by Merriweather. You know, and he talks about how during hurricane season, like he finds out who in his neighborhood has a chainsaw and who's able to go out and help with the cleanup.

He's always teaching people, this where you go, This is what you do. I take a lesson from that and part of the reason why I encourage people to learn these things and to begin to do this is because I feel like self-reliance and the ability to take care of yourself is something that we've really lost.

We need to reclaim that because things happen all the time. The best time to plan for an emergency is before there is one. It really is a great point.

I mean, I talk about resilience all the time just around, you know, modern day society of like, that it's not always just about being granular and being worried about what's going to touch your lips or your body, but more about, okay, can you be resilient if these things come into your orbit?

How does your immune system work through them? So I think that is really great We're not just talking about inner resilience, but we're also talking that emergency preparedness so that outside of your body that you are prepared, can support your community, support you family, hopefully support yourself.

So can you talk a little bit about what got you here? Was it because of the flood? Because when I met you, this is not what you talked about. Yeah, no, absolutely.

And I will share that Hurricane Harvey was sort of a tipping point for me where, as I began to share, people were like, you need to teach other people how to do this because I was, I started talking about some of what we were going through, but it actually began a long time ago when my husband and I were newlyweds and we went to Florida for his work and all of a sudden one day a neighbor came over and knocked on my door and said, hi, there's a hurricane coming, we have to go to the grocery store.

We went the the store, I probably bought a bunch of crappy things that I wouldn't buy now, but we also, she talked to me about water and batteries and things like that, and went through Hurricane Elena, And it brought a tree down, luckily not on the house we were living in, but when we opened the back door, the tree came in.

So it was really close. And then over the years, different places that we lived, we kept having different situations come up.

Lessons from Hurricanes and Community Response

Hurricanes, certainly. We had blizzards where we we're locked in and we had ice storms where it's really bad. times when we couldn't get out to get to the grocery store, and at this point I had kids in the house, so I was learning how to do this as I went along.

And then I also learned some of the safety things that we don't really think about, again, because nobody teaches us. For example, during winter storm Yuri, which is the snowpocalypse of 2021, A lot of people died because they didn't know that you can't bring a propane grill into your house to cook on it.

This is Texas. People are not used to thinking about that. You know, like I'm, I, um, laughing at the, you know sort of not because it's funny, but because uncomfortable.

Um, there are people who didn't know that. Sure. You can wear coats and hats and gloves and things, where you got to cover your head to you lose so much heat through your.

And then people not knowing how to deal with the grocery store being out of food. People also not knowing, like I share this regularly on social media.

I'm like, hey, you know, my gas tank's at half a tank, gotta fill up. And because you should never go below half of tank because if the power's out, guess what?

The gas station can have all the gas they want. They can't deliver it to you. You have to be able to get out of town if you need to, and at least a half the tank is gonna get you further than coasting in on fumes.

All right, so already there's three emergency preparedness things we have to be aware of. One, do not bring a propane-based barbecue pit into your house and think that you can cook inside there.

Two, fill your, make sure your gas tank is, it never goes below half a tank. And what was the third was, well, you talked about people going to grocery stores and having no food, but there was another Not not having a preparedness pantry like I believe you should have two kinds of pantries in your home The first one is your everyday pantry.

That's the one you cook out of that's one that you know You're making a meal or you're looking for a snack or whatever The one that you shop for most often, however, is your preparedness pantry.

That's the one where you have supplies ready, so that, you don't run out. Now, obviously, we can't do that very much with fresh food. So we do shop, for fresh, food a lot.

But how often are you buying perishable, or non-perishables, rather, that if you had it at the house, it would be fine. For example, maybe your family uses a lot of condiments and making sure you always have condements on hand.

Maybe your families eats certain products, pasta or whatever, to have that. Certainly having the staples, things like olive oil and salt and baking supplies and sugar and whatever.

Those things, you can store those in your home And you know, you've been a guest in my house. You've seen my preparedness pantry. It's not huge, but it's there.

And it is something that can support. My goal is I encourage people to have enough on hand in prepared food that you could feed your family for two to four weeks.

Okay. That was going to be my next question. So two-to-four weeks is what you're planning out. Yeah, because if it's more than that, you've probably got bigger problems and maybe you need to leave.

I'm not one of these people that and, and here's the thing, no, shade to anybody who's like, I have a whole year's worth of supplies or two years or whatever.

Great. If you have the room for that. And you can do that that's fabulous. Where I live, but I would have to give up so much of my house to be able to do.

It's not worth it. Okay. So you're already. convincing me more because of that exact point. When people talk about having like a year's worth of supplies, that's where they lose me.

I'm just like, we're never gonna use that, I don't know where to store it. And then of course, there's the turnover, because they'll be like well, but you also have to replace it every five years.

So not only are you putting all the finances into that but then you have track it all. That's were they loose me, it's like I have enough responsibility, i don' need to then track with the expiration dates For a year's worth of food or whatever, you know what I'm saying?

So I love that you're talking, your, condensing it. You're saying two to four weeks. And then what you are, what i'm also hearing is that, talking about foods that do regularly use.

So in a sense. You know, you're buying what, like let's use the posses as an example. So you go through, let us say one box a week. You're buy what four to six boxes?

Four boxes. And then when you use one, You replace it. So you're buying four boxes and then you just keep replacing them as you use it. Right, so I am a big fan of when you are shopping it's because you replacing what you need.

Building a Preparedness Pantry

I think that's really key is that this isn't like some kind of food that you don't normally eat that your just holding on to but you focused on the foods that would normally be eating that are maybe diet or specific to your health needs.

and you're just maintaining those. That is great. And then how do you, are you just going like, you know, first in goes to the back and are just rotating it like that?

Like, what's your process of rotation? So I encourage people to, let's say we'll use, I don't know, what's a common condiment, mayonnaise. Let's see, say mayonnaise, and your family uses about one jar of mayonnaise a month.

So you're always going to want to have an extra jar mayonnaise so that when you run out of mayonaise, you know there's another one in the pantry. When you go to use that jar of mayonnaise, your very next trip to the grocery store is to add mayonnaise.

don't need it for another month because you only use one jar a month. I mean, I don' want you to run it to the edge, but you've got it. Let's say it's something that you use a little bit more often, like let's can beans, maybe you eat beans twice a week.

And so you're using canned beans because I admit there's a convenience factor there. You have 10 cans of beans. If you buy more beans the new cans go behind the old cans.

So we don't shove them in the front. We always arrange it so that the new stuff goes in back and moves its way forward. How do you organize your pantry so everything is visible, so you can keep track of these numbers?

Great question. And I will share that I don't necessarily, I'm not able to see everything at once just because shelves are so deep. I do try to keep things lined up and then I also have a worksheet.

So I teach a class that is called the Preparedness Pantry Masterclass and there's worksheets in there and I encourage you twice a year to go through and organize your pantry and look at what's in And so when you're organizing it though, are you organizing that by what's the category?

Like, do you put all the beans together? Yes. So it's like, what is it? How many do I have? And what are the dates? Are there some that that date's getting a little tight?

I need to use it because maybe it got lost in the back. And I'll confess, even in my house that happens because I'm the one who's more finicky about that than maybe other people.

But really, if you go through it twice a year, you're never going to have anything that's seriously out of date. I will share, I have someone that I was just talking to recently, and she shared that she had been through a lot of stuff, a lots of things that happened in her life, she was all of a sudden cleaning everything out and realized that had a

whole bunch of expired food.

because it had sat at the bottom of her pantry where she wasn't paying attention to it and she didn't regularly go through it. I'm not going to lie, it's a pain in the butt to rip that thing apart.

It takes me a half a day. But I also know that A, I am planning meals around what I know I need to use up quickly, and B, that there's nothing in there that's seriously expired or not good to eat.

What about for the things that are not as easily quantifiable. So like water, for example, like how do you do water and what about the categories of the food?

Like, so for, there are perishables. Like let's say if I eat meat and I have a freezer, well, the electricity goes out, that meat's going to go bad. Should I be thinking about proteins differently for my emergency kit versus my everyday?

both really good points. So let's start with water and then we'll go to the proteins. Water. One thing that most people don't realize is you need a gallon of water per person, per day, and a pet counts as a person by the way, in terms of having good drinkable water.

And then you also, obviously we don' drink a gallons a day but then that gives you some for cooking and that sort of thing. it's really hard to store that much water.

I encourage people to try to story three to five days worth if you can. And I will share that the two and a half gallon containers that they sell at the grocery store don't work.

Because over time they split those seams give way. The way I know this is at one point I had stocked up a whole bunch of water and then one day I went into the closet and I noticed that carpet was wet.

So those seams don't hold up. So you need to have something that is a good, sturdy, water-safe container. I happen to be a fan of something called an aqua-tainer.

They look like gasoline containers, but they're blue, and you put water in that. Is it aluminum or what is it? No, it's plastic. It's food grade plastic, but here's the thing.

You know, you got to make a choice here. And so I know you're like me and typically we prefer glass and metal and all of that kind of stuff, Glass and water is really hard because if it slips, it's going to shatter and break and metal is going taint the water.

The plastic won't. Right. So, you know, we go with that. However, beyond that three to five days, that's where we look at what are our secondary options.

For example, You can get a life straw and I do have one for everybody in the house. What is this? A light straw is a device that allows you, you could basically drink swamp water through that thing and it kills or it cleans out 99.9999% of the bacteria and those kinds of things.

So that's an option if you have a water source nearby that you can potentially go get water from and bring it to your house. If you don't have that, are there other sources?

One of biggest ones I get all the time is people who are like, oh, I have the swimming pool. Well, that's great, but there's all kinds of chemicals in there that you should not be drinking.

So then you have to have some kind of a filter, whether it's a Berkey or one of those other brands that will filter out the things that are not going to be supportive for you.

But looking at what is your secondary plan. So having the three to five days and then having to live straw. One of the things I like about a life straw as well is those are great if you have to leave because you can tuck them in your

bug out bag and take them with you.

Because you don't know what the water situation is going to be where you're going. So that's the Water situation.

Water Storage and Filtration

I will also share that there are water-saving habits that you want to get into, and I do encourage families to, like, let's play blackout, you know? Oh, gee, water's out, power's, what are we going to do?

We're going have dinner by candlelight. We are going maybe cook differently. And then we're going to think about the water that we are using, for example, a bowl in the sink to wash your hands or, you know, how do we reduce our water usage so that were not using as much because we can't turn on the faucet today.

Gosh, see, this is just all stressing me out. My goal is not to stress you out with this because the other thing is, James, every single change that you make is one thing more that your doing to protect your family.

So even if all you do is change how you store food in your pantry and make sure that we're storing at least some water, that's great. You don't have to do more than that.

As you get comfortable with that, then you look at maybe doing more. Right. But the key is to not sit and wait, just to start with that one thing. Start with one that thing, and so can we talk about protein?

Yeah, let's do it. Because that's another one of my very favorite topics. I am a big fan of having a freezer. If the power goes out, the freezer needs to stay shut as long as possible.

If power starts staying out for an extended number of days, obviously things are going to start to thaw in there. So that's when you have to cook them, because that'll give you a little bit more time.

You know, if it goes bad while it's raw, then obviously there's not much you can do. But if you cook it, you get a few more days out of it. You also look at alternative ways to store protein.

Can you, for example, look a canned fish? That's a great protein source. And then another thing that I encourage people to look at is the concept of freeze-dried foods.

And they're very easy to get. They store, if you don't open the can, they are good for 25 years. I do encourage you to open can and learn how to use it though, because it is a little bit different.

You do have to hydrate it before you can use, but that's another way to make sure that you have protein available. Okay, that's great. And I think I was sharing one with you last I saw you, which is a great opportunity to plug the carnivore bar, because I don't know if they're up to 25 years in terms of preservation, but they are pretty high up there.

It's either 15, 12, something like that. And it's basically a pemmican bar, which is an ancestral way of preserving meat. It's a basically dried meat protein with fat or tallow in this case.

And typically about a 50-50 mix. They sometimes add salt, sometimes honey as well, and it is amazing. Like it has completely preserved and will last a long time.

Neither. Like if you're eating pemmican, it is a very satisfying, like it fills you up. Yes, It really does. It's true meal replacement and a little goes very far.

You keep mentioning this bug bag. What is that? Bug out bag, sometimes referred to as a go bag is a bag that you can grab and go in a hurry. And it's where you have a few supplies that are good to help you get out of town.

I encourage people to have things like a little bit of food, so a carnivore bar or something like that would be a great

choice in something, a life straw.

Maybe a little bottle of water, but you're not going to carry three days worth of the water on your back, you know, so that's a challenge. Change of clothes, maybe some first aid equipment.

You know there are things that you want to keep in there. Just in case you have to leave, You want make sure that have supplies that will help you get as far away as possible to get to someplace safe.

How do you account for the emotional change. So it's one thing to plan things in our current state because there's no emergency. It's like, oh, I'll tuck this here.

I put that there. Uh, keep my bag there when we're actually in an emergency though. A lot of times people panic and are great. Wait, wait, where is this?

Where is that? How do I do this so do you, how do prepare for that. I really encourage people to regularly go through their things. For example, if you have a bug out bag, where do you keep it?

If you a bin maybe that's got supplies, maybe you've got a been. I have class called Building a Bug Out Bag and in the class, one of the people that I interviewed was a pet wellness expert and she talked about what do you do for your pets?

Well, chances are, I mean, dogs, maybe you can put a little backpack on them, but most pets, you know, if it's fish, birds, cats, whatever, they're not gonna have a backpack.

So you're gonna to have been and hopefully be able to get it in your car and carry it. Presumably you are leaving by car at that point. But it is about going through your supplies and again, and I recommend every six months, pick a time that works for you Generally not December or January, because those are taken up with other things.

So maybe you look at, you know, whatever your birthday month is, unless it happens to be December, January and then six months after that. And those were the times when you're like, okay, this month, I'm going to go through my stuff.

The more you touch it and the more, pay attention to what's in it, do you have to replace things?

Protein, Bug-Out Bags, and Emergency Gear

For example, I recently went through our bug out bags and realized that some of the supplies that were in there, really don't need to have in their anymore because how we live our lives and some the choices that we're making are different.

And so I just change out the supply. It's same thing with kids. If you have kids and you've got, let's say you're going to put a couple sets of clothes in they're because you don' know, well, they grow.

So you got to replace those. Right. And I mean, imagine something like this would have been very handy, for example, with the Malibu or sorry, the fires, that LA fires.

Right? That just happened. A lot of those people lost everything. So now what do you do about things like the things that you're using every day that can't have replicas of like passports, wallets, What do you do?

Because a lot of times in an emergency, that's the thing that people might forget, and it may be very needed. And here's a thing. I don't believe it's possible to anticipate every single emergency.

Nor do I want to give that much emotional space to it. Where I live, hurricanes are a So that's what we're planning for, you know, and we also, we have a family plan.

We know if the If things are down, if the cell service is down or we can't communicate with each other, everybody knows where we're going. What's the meeting point?

What are we going to do? And hurricanes are our biggest thing. Someone else, it might be an earthquake, someone else it may be wildfires. Like you plan for what's in your area, you don't plan everything.

And yes, there may an offshoot and something might happen that's out of the ordinary for your are, but you do the best you can. And so if you have a bug out bag, one of the things that can be very useful is to have photocopies, at least, of all of your important documents.

Now, I do know for some people, depending on how much you or what needs to happen, you can also get like little fireproof boxes, and maybe that's one the the thing you grab.

You grab your bag. you Grab your box and you go. And you mentioned you didn't want to give certain things too much emotionally. Can you talk about why is that?

What do you mean by emotional weight? So by Emotional Weight, I mean getting so consumed by worrying about what might happen that you forget to enjoy life and forget do fun things or whatever.

It's okay to plan or to prepare for things, but not to the point where it becomes obsessive and every single situation is a danger, what could happen kind of thing.

And when I say the emotional weight of it, I know that, for example, like I said, we live in a hurricane zone. So it means during the summer, hurricanes are a possibility.

I don't sit there and obsessively check the weather. really being so overwhelmed by it that it takes up too much working space in my brain. I'm also not going to sit there and because I think there are times sometimes where it's possible to get so deep into that that you start going into things that either might never happen or are so remote for your area.

For example, yes, in Texas a couple of times we've had bad winter weather and yes it has been devastating and the grocery store can't resupply and roads are closed because they don't have, you know, clearing equipment.

But I don' t spend every winter sitting there going, okay, so now I have to have bags of ice and I to to all these equipment and all this stuff like that's challenging too because I also recognize, you know, I'm a real person like everybody else, there's only so much money that you have to spend.

So you spend what you can, as you Can, and you prepare for the things that, that are a possibility. If there's a reason why something needs to change, then you make adjustments, but I think it's very easy to get to a point where you're just constantly living on edge, and that's so bad for your nervous system that it would be really, really challenging.

What is the financial investment range that you see as a healthy barometer of like, okay, you're either this is for obsessive range. This is mid range, this low range like what's the best range?

That is so hard to answer. I think each person needs to figure out what it is for themselves and needs figure how much. For example, some of the people who have taken my class, they can go out and they spend a couple hundred dollars a month slowly buying supplies.

There are other people that are like, hey, I got five dollars per week, and I'm going to focus on food and add an extra five dollar a week. Great. You just start where you are.

And again, to me I see it as a progressive journey rather than an end destination. I don't know at what point you go, okay, I've got everything I need.

But I do know, for example, maybe you start with having two to four weeks worth of food and to make sure that you have a water plan. And then from there you started thinking about, how often have we had to leave?

If we had to leave, what would we bring with us? So here's a perfect example where we live. We did not originally have a generator and then the power started going out a lot and so we saved our money and we got a Generator.

So now we have generator if the Power goes out, but it wasn't something that was part of our plan before. It was just that we made an adjustment as we needed to and we got through it when it happened and then decided we didn't want to live that way, you know, moving forward because sometimes it goes out for, a few days.

Yeah. It almost sounds like you're talking about letting it evolve. sort of like and find the balance of natural involvement and slight conscientious involvement.

But I wonder though, how do you answer to people that are like, well, but am I manifesting an emergency when I, you know, like if I put so much effort towards this, Am I in a sense welcoming this?

And maybe I'm answering this myself, but that maybe there is no way, like if you're prepared, you are prepared. Like, it's not like you, It's, not this is ever going to hurt you.

Just going down this path is not going mean like, Oh, You're going regret it later. It just, better to have it and not need it than to not have and need.

And again, I'm talking about what I believe are realistic preparedness goals. Again, not talking having a year's worth of food in your basement, but having what you eat on a regular basis.

And if you're someone who has a special diet, by the way, having it becomes even more important because the grocery store might not have it. But enough that you learn how to utilize it in a good way.

Learning how, for example, what supplies do you have in your car so that if your care broke down what would you do? You know, would have a few things.

Do you a safety vest, high-biz, yellow safety vests, like that could be important. And so it's never that we're sitting there saying, oh, this is going to happen and I have to have all this or I will share one of the frustrations I have sometimes.

Planning for Family, Pets, and Communication

I wind up occasionally talking to people who are interested in the Preparedness Pantry Masterclass, and they go, I don't really care about hurricanes where I live, those don' happen.

Okay, great for you. But other things happen, every place we live. there is something, there's going to be something. And then I also know, for example, one of my favorite success stories is a woman who is in the master class who went out of the country and then there was a natural disaster that happened and she had someone staying at the house to take care of her house and her dog.

And they were communicating with each other by text. And this woman was like, oh my gosh, what am I going to do about this? And she's like oh, don't worry about it.

It's taking care of, this is where that is. This is, where this, is and she said, I felt so good knowing that this person who was staying in my house had everything they're possibly going need because I had already taken care that.

So that's a huge added plus is that a stressful situation for the person that prepared is not so stressful. Right, right. And again, you know, sure, maybe where you live, they don't have wildfires, but there are other things.

But it's not always natural disaster. Maybe there, for example, there have been supply chain interruptions. You

know what happened with the Suez Canal?

What happened when that bridge got hit on 95? Like those interrupt the supply There also could be, I had someone who took the class because she wanted to make sure that she and her husband had jobs that were sometimes very unreliable in terms of their employment level.

And so they wanted make that they had stuff so that if they lost their job or if had to take a pay cut, which did happen, they were not as devastated by that because they had supplies that would help them get through.

What about money? How does that fit into emergency preparedness? Like should you have cash, a certain amount of cash? What's your thought around that?

I do think it can be helpful to have cash. I will say that probably small bills are better only because if you start stocking hundreds and you go to buy something, you're like, I have no change.

That's not great. By the same token, it also can good to certain supplies. Maybe you have extras of certain things that are tradable. What's an example of tradables supplies?

Well, good tradeable supplies might be things like alcohol or first aid supplies or things that someone else might need or want. Food certainly is always trade-able.

But, you know, just to learn to think about things might have value. Not that you want to stock extra of those just trade them, but if you have them to those are potentially trade able.

What about medication? Because a lot of times you can't get more than what your prescription is. Great question. So I do have a class called First Aid Preparedness, and we do talk about that.

And as a matter of fact, one of the people that I interviewed for that was a medical expert. You can get what's called the vacation override for your medications.

And so for a lot of people, it can be useful to say, hey, I need a vacation, override, and then you've actually got two months worth instead of one, but you use them wisely so that you're always using the oldest one and what you are refilling is going into your supply.

Right. Okay. So people listening to this are inspired. What are the first steps? So the first step would be to go to the kitchen table. I can give you the link and sign up.

So here's the thing, I have the Preparedness Pantry Masterclass. That is everything. It's one big, you know, all the different things, All the workbooks, and all of the handouts.

And then you also get to come to a live call with me once a month and we go over a bunch of things. If you, if that's a little too much for you and you're not ready to do that, I have a class on how to build a bug out bag.

That's standalone class. I haven't first aid preparedness seminar. Or I had the real food in an emergency. So you could just start with one of those like maybe you you like that bug up back thing sounds pretty cool.

Maybe I need to that just get that class go through that. There's some great guest experts that I interviewed as well to talk about different things. One of them's a wilderness expert, you know, one of those a medical expert.

And like I said, Oneof them is a pet wellness expert so learning how to do that and then from there, if you want to Do more, do more. But it's not, like i said it is always about doing a little bit at a time.

Is there anything, you just mentioned the wilderness expert that made me think of, is there, anything you should be adding to your kits that are probably a little out of the ordinary, like a fire starter thing or you know, should you be thinking like that?

Like in case the entire facility, your entire house is no longer available and now you are in a tent or in the woods, Should you going that far? I think that there is nothing wrong with doing that.

I will also say, again, it's a matter of figuring out what your personal situation is and what will make you feel most comfortable to begin with. For most people, the two things that are the best place to start are either learning how to build a preparedness pantry and making sure that you have food available to feed yourself and your family, especially if you a special diet, and a bug out bag.

And then as you get those under control, then you look at doing other things. But I don't encourage anyone to try to do everything all at once. First of all, it's exhausting.

It's a lot. Because it is a lots of work and a a of effort and lot of money. And the other thing is, you always want to make sure that what you're doing is something that you feel comfortable with and that will help you to feel prepared, basically.

What about tools? I know when I took my emergency course, I was part of a Portland, they have a neighborhood emergency response team. And so I. Took that.

I went down that path. Um, and they had that tool, that plier tool that has the, the switchblade style, other tools on it. What's it called? It's called a leather man.

Leather man, so they, had they recommended that, um, They also recommended the gas shutoff tool. So what are the top three tools you recommend everyone can have?

So I think having a Leatherman is certainly great because there's so many different things that it can do. Like it has a lot of different items on it.

I thing having something that is going to help you start a fire can always be a good thing. And then I also think, like you said, having either a gas shut off or a water shutoff or whatever you need for your house.

So that probably comes to four tools, but really those are useful. If your water is go crazy because your pipe burst, you how to shut off water. And so again, this is where we, we practice.

We know where the water shutoff valve is and is it the one at the street that shuts off the entire line? Or is just the the house or, you know, what is.

Where is your gas shut-off and how do you use the tool? Cause these are not intuitive tools. They don't look like a wrench. There's slightly different.

So you have to know how. Hmm. And again, it's just a little bit at a time. My goal is for people to learn to feel comfortable thinking about the fact that it is always okay to be mindful of being more self-reliant.

Because that in turn means that when an emergency happens, you're going to less stressed. because you know you've done things. And like I said, have I done every single thing I can?

No, I'm still always doing little things here and there because that's what we do. Yeah, that is such a great point and I really like that as an emphasis for what emergency preparedness could look like.

I want to just touch base before we end about the plan. You mentioned a few times like having A few different plans, like not only where, where do we go?

Where do meet, but also how do leave the house? Like what do take? So having that plan, what are, can you, kind of delve into that a little bit more of like, What are maybe a few plans that we should be thinking about?

Mindset, Costs, and Practical Next Steps

Well, part of it is to look at who lives in your house and what are their needs. Because let's say, for example, you have someone who is a senior citizen living in their home who has limited mobility and possibly is on medication.

Well you're going to want to make sure that if you that they're taking care of. So how are you going to get them out? How are going make sure that whatever assistive devices they need are gonna fit, you know, whatever you're doing?

And again, having that emergency override gives you at least a little bit of a cushion when it comes to medications. If you are someone who has small children, well, obviously, your situations could be a bit different because you will need some sort of carry mechanism.

Really, it all comes down to thinking about your personal situation. Now, one of the things that I do offer is a consultation where I sit down with people and go over their personal situations and what their preparedness needs might be, and then I write them a very comprehensive report with links and everything.

I can't tell you, for example, what your situation exactly should be without actually discussing it with you because your situations is different than mine.

You have pets in the home, you have kids in home. you certain things that need to be taken care of. And the other question is, do you to leave? Like that's one of the first decisions, I guess, in an emergency situation.

Do you leave or can you stay? And if you say, Do have what you need? Yeah, so in a sense, you have to think through maybe a few different scenarios depending on your situation.

I really, yeah, I like that it's not a one-size-fits-all that you need to through it for your situations. You know, it occurred to me too that, when our kids are in schools, they go through all these emergency preparedness situations, whether it is for earthquakes or hurricanes or whatnot, fire drills.

And yet we never do that in our homes, like ever. We should. Yeah. I think it's a really good point. That we spend a lot of our time in her home and they can experience emergencies just like schools can, just places of business can.

So we need to think through what is our exit strategy here? What is the scenario and how would we potentially work through it? And I actually just thought of another piece of equipment that I think you should have.

I know how they have those little headlamp things with light. And a lot of people get them for working on things where they wanna work hands-free. Everybody in the family should one.

Because if it's dark, you need to be able to see and it'd be nice to hands free. So everybody gets a head lamp. That's good if you have to stay or if have you to leave.

Right. Headlamp is great and obviously you mentioned candles earlier or you're concerned about having open flames, like having some kind of battery candle that has refreshed batteries.

You're constantly checking the batteries and has backups, right? I would actually do LED camping lanterns instead, because those are going to put out more light and they're going the last longer than a regular battery.

Okay, so the LED lantern. What about gas versus electric car? Because that is a huge issue. I'm noticing we have a Tesla. And it's so interesting. When we were in Oregon, it was a non-issue.

It didn't come up ever about charging times, how long the battery would last, everything. But now that we're on the East Coast, It's serious. Like during the winter, when it is cold, the thing does not charge.

Now we are not using a supercharger because there is a story of that. Because of the house we rent, we don't have it set up. You know, during the winter, it's really hard to charge the car.

And then when it is hot, like extremely hot. It also doesn't charge properly. So you're in a scenario when the weather is extreme, these cars don't function properly, so for that reason, are you kind of like, I'm not for electric cars or like what's your position on that?

I think electric car can be great. Again, it comes down to, and the example I used is gas because I drive a car that is gasoline. But, you know, with your car, now I know there's like a proper window on an electric car.

You don't want it undercharged and you don't want it overcharged, but making sure that you're always checking it to make sure it's at whatever is the most that can have so that it can get as far as possible.

The goal is if there is an emergency situation to be able to get it as away as possibly and usually within two to three hundred miles chances are Not always, but a lot of times, the situation is different.

And if that's as far as you can get, then that is as much as that you get and then you go from there. But again, how often is that going to happen? And this is the emotional side of what I was talking about.

We think about what we can do and how far we get. but we don't sit there and worry about it. If you're taking the time to make sure that your car has maximum power or maximum allowable power, optimal power and that you have some supplies in the car and then you had bug out bags.

Load up everybody and go and you get as far as you got. But to spend a lot of time worrying about takes away from your enjoyment of everyday life and turns you into this very fearful person.

And that's not how we want to live our lives. Yeah. I think that is a really good point. Lastly, what about communication stuff? Because obviously cell phones, May not work if you're in a true emergency, particularly if it's a flood and they get wet.

It's like, it was probably not going to potentially work. So is there a communication device that you recommend to have on hand or is it more of like you know, you just deal with the cards you dealt?

My personal plan is, and what I encourage other people to do is to have a plan. If communication is out, everybody knows what the plan, is everybody, knows where we're going and where were supposed to meet.

And, you know, the goal is totally get there. Somehow we managed before cell phones. That's true. But we had landlines and land lines worked even during a power outage.

and that's, that is the big difference. Yes. And I know there are some people who put in a landline for that. For that matter, you know, they're like, okay, I'm putting a landline in because we want to make sure that we have it.

I know there are some people who make that everybody in their family has a walkie-talkie that is good for up to so many miles and that's presuming that they are all in the same house and they fairly close to each other.

But if they were separated, if there were away from home, then they would have. There are other people that are very into the idea of using a ham radio to stay in touch and to stay connected to what's going on at least am radio to find out the news but you know it again it's looking at your particular situation what you can do the most important part of that though is to have a plan to say if i can't stay in my house and i have to leave.

this is where I'm going. And you all who are part of my little bubble, whoever that is, adult children or neighbors or friends or whatever, you-all know that that's my plan.

If that your plan, then we will meet up there. But I think also, James, to not be afraid to talk about this stuff. Because there are going to be some people you talk to about and they're going be like, whoa, dude, that was kind of crazy.

Why are you talking about that? But really, I personally believe that it's about self-reliance and it is about doing the

best that you can. I don't claim to be the world's biggest, you know, can handle anything person, but I know there's a lot that I can do and I that there is a a I have done and my goal is to encourage other people to do that so that your not stuck.

You know, we got past the point of being stuck a number of years ago. Now, it doesn't mean that something won't come up that we're like, hmm, gotta figure this out.

But the other thing is learning how to have that preparedness mindset also helps you be more able, I think, to figure things out, right? The beginning of the emergency, you're like, whoa.

But then you are like no, wait a minute, we can work our way through this. We've thought about things, like we configure this out. It's good and I honestly think it's also great for kids too.

They don't have to worry that they don' know what to do or that the people who are in charge of them don"t know to what do, because it"s like got a plan.

Yeah. That's a really great point, Mira. I think if there's anything anyone leaves with, is to just start having the conversation and start. maybe even forming what that would look like.

And as you said, start taking little steps and that it's not about having an end result, because it is impossible to plan for everything, but to start the conversation, to starting taking steps so that you are more confident, more resilient, and more prepared when something does happen.

Yeah, absolutely. Well, I so appreciate you coming back to talk about this because we did not get to. I know you're very passionate about and that it's really important.

And I love I just love that. You know, you are a model for really. staying true to yourself because I've, I watched you in the short time I have known you evolve your messaging and evolve what matters to you.

And really that is what you're talking about. You're taking about as we learn something, let's now do better. Let's not pretend it's going to happen again.

But you know, it was that idea of like, dude, do good until you better and then do. And I think you're really modeling that. So thank you. Thank you for sharing with me.

Big goal also, I just wanna say is to be of service. I want to help other people not be scared or overwhelmed or stuff. Like sure, maybe you might get stuck, but maybe won't.

The more you know, the better you do. And if I can help be an educational conduit for that, and if can be a support person for, that just makes me very happy.

The more you know, the better you'll do. There you have it, everybody. Mira Desi. And we'll have all the notes for her programs and for every point she made in this talk in the show notes.

So appreciate you sharing your wisdom and your care and you're mission with us, Mira. And for all of you, thank you for tuning in to the Everyday Ancestral podcast.

Please stay curious and take care of each other. Thank you so much for joining me on Everyday ancestral. If you enjoyed this episode, hit subscribe so you don't miss the next one.

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