THE MENTAL PREPAREDNESS TRAINING
Why do I need to prepare?

Because you don’t want to be one of those people who end up saying: “We didn’t know what to do...we were not prepared” No! You want to be in control during ANY emergency situation.

It might be a job loss, a natural disaster, a death in the family, a military conflict or an economic downturn. It could be anything, and that’s the point. In a time where everything is a risk to the American people, we should be preparing for anything.

In every life, there are times when your normal luck runs out and you find yourself in real danger. Some survival situations will come in your hometown, others will come while you are traveling, but they will come. Get ready now, while you can.

Do you really think that all the dead people you see on the news thought it would be them next?

Like it or not, we live in a violent world, and even if we try to put that thought out of our minds, we still know that it is true. If we persist in ignoring it, we end up feeling vaguely vulnerable all our lives. As always, I’m here to help.

For me, the idea of emergency and disaster preparedness is a no-brainer—something we should already be doing and always looking to improve. I’ve developed this mentality many years ago and this gives me the self confidence that I need in order to look at the future with no fear.
Psychological preparedness will help you think clearly and rationally, which in turn will reduce or eliminate the risk of serious injury or even loss of life. I've studied this aspect thoroughly: how thoughts provoke action, how those actions provoke other thoughts and actions and the tendency for repeat actions to be taken based on the experience of a specific situation. It’s quite fascinating and the satisfaction I get from seeing people benefit from my preparedness plans is priceless.

Unlike other types of action and system-based disaster preparedness, psychological preparedness involves processes and capacities such as knowledge, concern, anticipation, recognition, arousal, thinking, feeling, intentions and decision making, and management of one's thoughts, feelings and actions.

A better understanding of one's own and other's psychological response in natural disaster warning situations helps people to feel more confident, more in control and better prepared, both psychologically and in terms of effective emergency planning.

**Specific knowledge and strategy**

There are three essential elements in psychologically preparing for an impending disaster:

Anticipate that you will be feeling worried or anxious and remember these are normal, although not always helpful, responses to a possibly life-threatening situation.

Identify what the specific physical feelings associated with anxiety and other emotions are and whether you are having any frightening thoughts that are adding to the fear.

Manage your responses using controlled breathing and self-talk so that you stay as calm as possible and can focus on the practical tasks that need attending to.
Step 1: Anticipate

In the lead up to most natural disasters like bushfires, cyclones, floods or severe storms there is usually a series of warnings on radio, television and in newspapers.

For example, there may be repeated reminders about buying batteries for torches and radios, having gas bottles filled, ensuring an adequate supply of emergency water and food, removing flammable material from around homes, or securing doors and windows.

Warnings and uncertainty in an emergency situation affect people psychologically. There are often repeated risk messages and frightening images and sounds to ensure people know about the risk. This can leave people feeling anxious, helpless or confused.

How to anticipate your reactions

To begin preparing yourself for the natural disaster that may be coming, try to anticipate what your likely response to the situation will be.

Expect that the situation will be highly stressful and think about how you usually react to stress. Although these reactions are very natural they can get in the way of other necessary preparations.

If you understand your usual reactions you can learn ways to be better prepared to manage them when they happen.

Step 2: Identify

It's important for people to tune into the specific feelings and thoughts they are having in response to a threatening natural disaster, as this will help them to find ways to manage them.
People usually become physically aroused in highly stressful situations. Common physical symptoms include:

- Racing heart and palpitations
- Shortness of breath and dizziness
- Tense muscles
- Fatigue or exhaustion
- Nausea
- Numbness or tingling
- Headaches.

When these physical reactions to stress begin, they usually trigger stressful thoughts such as:

- I can't cope
- I'm so afraid
- I'm panicking
- I don't know what to do.

**How to identify your own feelings and thoughts**

Notice what is happening to your body and the physical sensations that tell you that you’re feeling anxious.

Try to focus in on the frightening thoughts you may be having that are adding to the fear. What exactly are you saying to yourself? Are your thoughts helping you or making things harder? Check whether you are jumping to conclusions.
Remind yourself that strong bodily sensations and frightening thoughts are normal reactions to stress but they are not helping you to stay calm and clearheaded. Don't get too critical of yourself though!

**Step 3: Manage**

In stressful situations, people can feel more in control through two strategies:

- Slowing down breathing to help calm the physical arousal symptoms
- Replacing frightening thoughts with more helpful ones (‘self-talk’).
- Learning to breathe and think more calmly

To slow your breathing down, take smaller breaths and pause between breaths to space them out. When you have breathed out slowly, hold your breath for a count of three before inhaling your next breath. Sometimes people find it helps to breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth.

While concentrating on breathing out slowly, say to yourself ‘Relax', or ‘Stay calm', or ‘It's OK, I'm managing OK'. These are good words to use because they are associated with feeling relaxed and in control.

Remember you need to be able to draw on your own strengths and survival resources and your coping ability. It's important not to let unhelpful feelings and thoughts get in the way of careful and well planned actions.

Remind yourself that this is an emergency situation and that it's natural you are feeling anxious and stressed. You cannot directly control what's happening but you can manage your responses in this emergency and influence the impact on you and your family.

- Helping others to cope with their feelings
- Teach others the simple breathing exercises.
Be sensitive and supportive to them, rather than judging. They may be feeling scared, anxious or embarrassed if they are not coping as well as you.

- Encourage them to talk about how they are feeling with you.
- Assist them to find more helpful thoughts to say to themselves and others.
- Get people involved in occupying their time rather than worrying.
- Encourage them to take responsibility for a task that needs attending to.

**Common stresses and how to overcome them**

**Pain**

Pain, like fever, is a warning signal calling attention to an injury or damage to some part of the body. It is discomforting but is not, in itself, harmful or dangerous. Pain can be controlled, and in an extremely grave situation, survival must take priority over giving in to pain.

The biological function of pain is to protect an injured part by warning you to rest it or avoid using it. In a survival situation, normal pain warnings may have to be ignored in order to meet more critical needs.

People have been known to complete a fight with a fractured hand, to run on a fractured or sprained ankle, to land an aircraft despite severely burned hands, and to ignore pain during periods of intense concentration and determined effort. Concentration and intense effort can actually stop or reduce the feeling of pain.
You must understand that pain can be reduced if you identify its source and nature; recognizing it as a discomfort to be tolerated; concentrating on necessities, such as thinking, planning, and keeping busy; and developing confidence and self-respect. When personal goals (maintaining life, honor, and returning) are valued highly enough, a survivor can tolerate almost anything.

**Thirst and dehydration**

The lack of water and its accompanying problems of thirst and dehydration are among the most critical problems facing survivors. Thirst, like fear and pain, can be tolerated if the will to carry on, supported by calm, purposeful activity, is strong.

Although thirst indicates the body's need for water, it does not indicate how much. If you drink only enough to satisfy your thirst, it is still possible to slowly dehydrate. Preventing thirst and the more debilitating dehydration is possible if you drink plenty of water any time it is available, especially when eating.

When the body's water balance is not maintained, thirst and discomfort result. Ultimately, a water imbalance results in dehydration and death. The need for water will increase if the person is sick, is fearful, or expends a great deal of energy.

Dehydration decreases the body's efficiency or ability to function. Minor degrees of dehydration may not have a noticeable effect on a survivor's performance, but as it becomes more severe, body functions become increasingly impaired. Slight dehydration and thirst can also cause irrational behavior.

While prevention is the best way to avoid dehydration, virtually any degree is reversible simply by drinking water.
Cold and heat

The normal human body temperature is 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit (°F). People are known to have survived with body temperatures 20°F below normal, and up to 8°F above normal. Any deviation, even as little as 1 or 2 degrees, reduces efficiency.

Cold, serious stress even in mild degrees lowers efficiency. Extreme cold numbs the mind and dulls the will to do anything except get warm. Cold numbs the body by lowering the flow of blood to the extremities; this results in sleepiness.

Survivors have endured prolonged cold and dampness through food, shelter, exercise, and proper hygienic procedures. When flying in cold weather areas, wearing proper clothing and having the proper climatic survival equipment are essential to enhance survivability.

Just as numbness is the principal symptom of cold, weakness is the principal symptom of heat. Most people can adjust to high temperatures, whether in the hold of a ship or in a harvest field on the Kansas prairie.

It may take from two days to a week before circulation, breathing, heart action, and sweat glands are all adjusted to a hot climate. Heat stress also accentuates dehydration. In addition to the problem of water, there are many other sources of discomfort and impaired efficiency directly attributable to heat or environmental conditions in hot climates. Extreme temperature changes, from extremely hot days to very cold nights, are experienced in desert and plains areas.

Proper use of clothing and shelters can decrease the adverse effects of such extremes.

Bright sun has a tremendous effect on the eyes and exposed skin. Dark glasses or improvised eye protectors are required when confronted with direct sunlight or rays reflecting off the terrain. Previous sun-tanning provides little protection; protective clothing is important.

Blowing wind, in hot summer, has been reported to get on some survivors' nerves. Wind constitutes an additional source of discomfort and difficulty in
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desert areas when it carries particles of sand and dirt. Protection against sand and dirt can be provided by cutting small slits in a piece of cloth for vision and tying it around the head.

Acute fear has been experienced among survivors in sandstorms and snowstorms. This results from the terrific impact of the storm and its obliteration of landmarks showing direction of travel.

Finding or improving a shelter for protection from the storm itself is important.

Loss of moisture, drying of the mouth and mucous membranes, and accelerated dehydration can be caused by talking or breathing through the mouth. Survivors must learn to keep their mouths shut in desert winds and cold weather.

Mirages and illusions of many kinds are common in desert areas. These illusions not only distort visual perception but sometimes account for serious incidents. In the desert, distances are usually greater than they appear, and under certain conditions, mirages obstruct accurate vision. Inverted reflections are common occurrences.

Hunger

A considerable amount of edible material (which survivors may not initially regard as food) may be available under survival conditions. Hunger and semi-starvation are more commonly experienced among survivors than thirst and dehydration. Research has revealed no evidence of permanent damage, nor any decrease in mental efficiency from short periods of total fasting.

Frequently, in the excitement of some survival, evasion, and escape episodes, hunger is forgotten. Survivors have gone for considerable lengths of time without food or awareness of hunger pains. Make every effort to procure and consume food to reduce the stresses brought on by food deprivation. The physical and psychological effects described are reversed when food and a protective environment are restored.
Returning to normal is slow, and the time necessary for the return increases with the severity of starvation. If food deprivation is complete and only water is ingested, hunger pangs disappear in a few days; even then depression and irritability occur. The individual tendency is still to search for food to prevent starvation. Such efforts might continue as long as strength and self-control permit. When the food supply is limited, even strong friendships are threatened.

Food aversion may result in hunger. Adverse group opinion may discourage those who might try foods unfamiliar to them. In some groups, the barrier would be broken by someone eating the particular food rather than starving. The solitary individual has only personal prejudices to overcome and often tries strange foods.

Controlling hunger during a survival situation is relatively easy if you can adjust to discomfort and adapt to primitive conditions.

**Frustration**

Frustration occurs when a person's efforts are stopped either by obstacles blocking progress toward a goal or by not having a realistic goal. It also occurs if the feeling of self-worth or self-respect is lost.

A wide range of environmental and internal obstacles can lead to frustration. This often creates anger and is accompanied by a tendency to attack and remove the obstacles to goals. Frustration must be controlled by channeling energies into a positive and worthwhile obtainable goal. The survivor should complete the easier tasks before attempting more challenging ones. This relieves frustration and instills self-confidence.
Isolation

Among the most severe survival stresses during isolation are when survivors experience loneliness, helplessness, and despair. People often take their associations with family, friends, military colleagues, and others for granted. Survivors soon begin to miss the daily interaction with others.

These, like other stresses, can be conquered. Isolation can be controlled and overcome by knowledge, understanding, deliberate countermeasures, and a determined will to resist it.

Insecurity

Insecurity is the feeling of helplessness or inadequacy resulting from varied stresses and anxieties. These anxieties may be caused by uncertainty regarding individual goals, abilities, and the future. Feelings of insecurity may have widely different effects on your behavior. You should establish goals that are challenging yet attainable. The better you feel about your abilities to achieve goals and adequately meet personal needs, the less you feel insecure.

Loss of self-esteem

Loss of self-esteem may occur in captivity. Self-esteem is the state or quality of having personal self-respect and pride. Lack or loss of self-esteem in survivors may bring on depression and a change in perspective and goals. Humiliation and other factors brought on by the captor may cause the survivors to doubt their worth. Humiliation comes from the feeling of losing pride or self-respect by being disgraced or dishonored and is associated with the loss of self-esteem. Prisoners of war (PWs) must maintain their pride.

They must not become ashamed because they are PWs or because of the things that happen to them as a result of being a PW. Survivors who lose face (personally and with the enemy) become more vulnerable to captor exploitation attempts.
solve this problem, survivors should try to maintain a proper perspective about the situation and themselves.

**Loss of self-determination**

A self-determined person is relatively free from external controls or influences over his actions. In everyday society, these controls and influences are the laws and customs of society and of the self-imposed elements of our personalities. In a survival situation, the controls and influences can be very different. Survivors may feel as if events, circumstances, and in some cases other people are in control of the situation.

Some factors that may cause individuals to feel they have lost the power of self-determination are a harsh captor, captivity, bad weather, or rescue forces that make time or movement demands. This lack of self-determination is more perceived than actual. Survivors must decide how unpleasant factors will be allowed to affect their mental state. They must have the self-confidence, fostered by experience and training, to live with their feelings and decisions. They also must have the self-confidence to accept responsibility for the way they feel and how they let those feelings affect them.

**Depression**

As a survivor, depression is the biggest psychological problem that has to be conquered. It should be acknowledged that everyone has mental highs and lows. People experiencing long periods of sadness or other negative feelings are suffering from depression. A normal mood associated with the grief, sadness, disappointment, or loneliness that everyone experiences at times is also depression.

Most of the emotional changes in mood are temporary and do not become chronic. Depressed survivors may feel fearful, guilty, or helpless. They may lose
interest in basic life needs. Many cases involve pain, fatigue, appetite loss, or other physical ailments. Some depressed survivors try to injure or kill themselves.

Psychiatrists have several theories as to the cause of depression. Some feel a person who, in everyday life and under normal conditions, experiences many periods of depression would probably have a difficult time in a survival situation. Depression is a most difficult problem because it can affect a wide range of psychological responses. The factors can become mutually reinforcing.

Fatigue may lead to depression. Depression may increase the feeling of fatigue. Fatigue leads to deeper depression and so on.

Depression usually begins after a survivor has met the basic needs for sustaining life (water, shelter, and food). Once these basic needs are met, there is often too much time for that person to dwell on the past, the present predicament, and future problems. The survivor must be aware of the necessity to keep the mind and body active to eliminate the feeling of depression. One way to keep busy (daily) is by checking and improving shelters, signals, and food.

Fear

Fear can either save a life or cost a life. Some people are at their best when scared. Many downed fliers, faced with survival emergencies, have been surprised at how well they remembered their training, how quickly they could think and react, and how much strength they had.

The experience gave them new confidence. On the other hand, some become paralyzed when faced with the simplest survival situation. Some have been able to snap themselves out of it before it was too late. In other cases, a fellow aircrew member was on hand to assist. However, others have not been so fortunate and are not listed among the survivors!

A person's reaction to fear depends more on the individual than the situation. This has been demonstrated in actual survival situations and in laboratory experiments.
It isn’t always the physically strong or happy-go-lucky people who handle fear most effectively. Timid and anxious people have met emergencies with remarkable coolness and strength.

Anyone who faces life-threatening emergencies experiences fear. Fear is conscious when it results from a recognized situation (an immediate prospect of bailout) or when experienced as apprehension of impending disaster. Fear also occurs at a subconscious level and creates feelings of worry, depression, uneasiness, or general discomfort. Fear may vary widely in duration, intensity, and frequency and may affect behavior across the spectrum from mild uneasiness to complete disorganization and panic.

People have many fears. Some are learned through personal experiences, and others are deliberately taught to them. Fear in children is directed through negative learning, such as being afraid of the dark, noise, animals, or teachers. These fears may control behavior; a survivor may react to feelings and imagination rather than to the problem.

When fantasy distorts a moderate danger into a major catastrophe, or vice versa, behavior can become abnormal. There is a general tendency to underestimate. This leads to reckless, foolhardy behavior. An effective method of controlling fear is to deny that it exists. No sharp lines are between recklessness and bravery. Behavior must be checked constantly to maintain proper control.

Throughout military history, many people have coped successfully with the most strenuous odds. In adapting to fear, they found support in previous training and experience. There is no limit to human control of fear.
Survivors must control fear and not run away from it. Appropriate actions should be to understand fear, admit it exists, and accept fear as reality.

Training can help survivors recognize what individual reactions may be. Prior training should assist survivors in learning to think, plan, and act logically, even when afraid. To effectively cope with fear, a survivor must try to keep in mind the following abilities:

- Develop confidence – Use training opportunities. Increase capabilities by keeping and maintaining fit.
- Be prepared – Accept the possibility that “it can happen to me”. Be properly equipped and clothed at all times. Have a plan ready.
- Keep informed – Increase knowledge of survival environments to reduce the unknown.
- Keep busy – Prevent hunger, thirst, fatigue, idleness and ignorance about the situation, because they increase fear.
- Practice religion – Don’t be ashamed of having spiritual faith.
- Cultivate good survival attitudes – Keep the mind on a main goal and everything else in perspective. Learn to tolerate discomfort. Don’t exert energy to satisfy minor desires that may conflict with the overall goal, which is to survive.
- Cultivate mutual support – The greatest support under severe stress may come from a tightly knit group. Teamwork reduces fear while making the efforts of every person more effective.
- Practice discipline – A disciplined group with good habits has a better chance of survival.
- Lead by example – Calm behavior and demonstration of control are contagious. They reduce fear and inspire courage.

Every person has goals and desires. The greatest values exercise the greatest influence. Because of strong moral, religious, or patriotic values, people have been known to face torture and death calmly rather than reveal information or compromise a principle. Fear, a normal reaction to danger, can kill or save lives.
By understanding and controlling fear through training, knowledge, and effective group action, fear can be overcome.

**Anxiety**

Anxiety is a universal human reaction. Its presence can be felt when changes occur that affect an individual's plans, safety, or methods of living. Anxiety and fear differ mainly in intensity. Anxiety is a milder reaction and specific causes may not be readily apparent; whereas, fear is a strong reaction to a specific, known cause.

Anxieties are generally felt when individuals perceive something bad is about to happen. A common description of anxiety is butterflies in the stomach. Anxiety creates feelings of uneasiness, general discomfort, worry, or depression. Common characteristics of anxiety are resentment, indecision, fear of the future, and a feeling of helplessness.

To overcome anxiety, you must adopt a simple plan. It is essential that you keep your mind off of your injuries and do something constructive. For instance, one PW tried to teach English to the Chinese and to learn Chinese from them.

**Panic**

In the face of danger, a person may panic or freeze and cease to function in an-organized manner. He may have no conscious control over individual actions. Uncontrollable, irrational behavior is common in emergency situations. Anybody can panic, but one may go to pieces more easily than another.

Panic is brought on by a sudden overwhelming fear and often can spread quickly. Every effort must be made to bolster morale and calm the panic with leadership and discipline. Panic and fear have the same signs and should be controlled in the same manner.
Hate

Hate is a powerful emotion that can have positive and negative effects on a survivor. Understanding hate and its causes are the keys to learning how to control it. It is an acquired emotion rooted in a person's knowledge or perceptions. The accuracy or inaccuracy of the information is irrelevant to learning to hate.

A person, object, or anything that may be understood intellectually (political concepts or religious dogma) can promote feelings of hate. These feelings (usually accompanied with a desire for vengeance, revenge, or retribution) have sustained former PWs through harsh ordeals. If an individual loses perspective while under the influence of hates and reacts emotionally, rational solutions to problems may be overlooked and the survivor may be endangered.

To effectively deal with this emotional reaction, the survivor must examine the reasons why the feeling is present. Once reasons have been determined, the survivor should decide what to do. Whatever approach is selected, it should be as constructive as possible. A survivor must not allow hate to control him.

Resentment

Resentment is experiencing an emotional state of displeasure or indignation toward some act, remark, or person that has been regarded as causing personal insult or injury. Luck and fate may play a role in any survival situation. A hapless survivor may resent a fellow PW, travel partner, and so forth if that other person is perceived to be enjoying a success or advantage not presently experienced by the observer.

The survivor must understand that events cannot always go as expected. It is detrimental to morale and could affect chances of survival if resentment over another's attainments becomes too strong. Imagined slights or insults are common. The survivor should try to maintain a sense of humor and perspective
about ongoing events and realize that stress and lack of self-confidence play roles in bringing on feelings of resentment.

**Anger**

Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and belligerence aroused by a real or supposed wrong. People become angry when they cannot fulfill a basic need or desire which seems important. When anger is not relieved, it may turn into a more enduring attitude of hostility, characterized by a desire to hurt or destroy the person or thing causing the frustration. When anger is intense, the survivor loses control. This may result in impulsive behavior which may be destructive. Anger is a normal response that can serve a useful purpose when controlled carefully. If the situation warrants and there is no threat to survival, one could yell, scream, take a walk, exercise vigorously, or get away from the source (if only for a few minutes). The following person could not control his anger.

**Impatience**

Psychological stresses brought about by impatience can manifest themselves quickly in physical ways. Internally, the effects of impatience can cause changes in physical and mental well-being. Survivors who allow impatience to control their behavior may find that their efforts prove to be counterproductive and possibly dangerous. For instance, evaders who don't have the ability or willingness to suppress annoyance when confronted with delay may expose themselves to capture or injury.

Potential survivors must understand they have to bear pain, misfortune, and annoyance without complaint. In the past, many survivors have displayed tremendous endurance (mental and physical) in times of distress or misfortune. While not every survivor is able to display such strength of character in all situations; each person should learn to recognize things which may make him impatient in order to avoid acting unwisely.
Dependence

The captivity environment is the prime area where a survivor may experience feelings of dependency. The captor will try to develop feelings of need, trust, and support in prisoners. By regulating the availability of basic needs (food, water, clothing, social contact, and medical care), captors show their power and control over the prisoners' fate. Through emphasizing the prisoner's inability to meet his own basic needs, captors seek to establish strong feelings of prisoner dependency. This dependency can make prisoners extremely vulnerable to captor exploitation. By recognizing this captor tactic the PW has the key to countering it.

Survivors must understand that, despite captor controls, they control their own lives. Meeting even one physical or mental need can provide a PW with a victory and the foundation for continued resistance against exploitation.

Loneliness

Loneliness can be very debilitating during a survival situation. Some people learn to control and manipulate their environment and become more self-sufficient while adapting to changes. Others rely on protective persons, routines, and familiarity with surroundings to function and obtain satisfaction.

The ability to combat loneliness during a survival situation must be developed long before the situation occurs. Self-confidence and self-sufficiency are key factors in coping with loneliness. People develop these attributes by developing and demonstrating competence in performing tasks.

As the degree of competence increases, so does self-confidence and self-sufficiency. Military training, specifically survival training, is designed to provide individuals with the competence and self-sufficiency to cope with and adapt to survival living.

In a survival situation, the countermeasure to conquer loneliness is to plan, to be active, and to think purposely.
Developing self-sufficiency is the primary protection since all countermeasures in survival require the survivor to have the ability to practice self-control.

**Boredom**

Boredom and fatigue are related and frequently confused. Boredom is accompanied by a lack of interest and may include strain, anxiety, or depression. This is particularly true when no relief is in sight and the person is frustrated. Relief from boredom must be based on correcting the basic sources-repetition and uniformity.

Boredom can be relieved by varying methods-rotating duties, taking rest breaks, broadening the scope of a particular task or job, or other techniques of diversification. The gratifying nature of a task can be counteracted by clearing up its meaning, objectives, and in some cases, its relation to the total plan. One survivor couldn't think of anything to do, while another survivor invented something to do.

**Hopelessness**

Hopelessness stems from the negative feeling that, regardless of actions taken, success is impossible or the certainty that future events will turn out for the worst no matter what a person tries to do. Feelings of hopelessness can occur at virtually any time during a survival situation. Survivors have experienced loss of hope in:

- Trying to maintain health due to an inability to care for sickness, broken bones, or injuries.
- Returning home alive.
- Seeing their loved ones again.
- Believing in their physical or mental ability to deal with the situation.
A person may begin to lose hope during situations where physical exhaustion or exposure to the elements affects the mind. During captivity, deaths occurred from no apparent cause. Individuals actually willed themselves to die.

The original premise (in the minds of such people) is that they are going to die. To them, the situation seemed totally futile, and they had passively abandoned themselves to fate. It was possible to follow the step-by-step process. The people who died withdrew themselves from the group, became despondent, then lay down and gave up. In some cases death followed rapidly.

One way to treat hopelessness is to eliminate the cause of the stress. Rest, comfort, and morale building activities can help eliminate this psychological problem. Another method is to make the person so angry he wants to get up and attack the tormentors. A positive attitude has a powerful influence on morale and combating the feeling of hopelessness.

Since many stress situations cannot be dealt with successfully, it may be necessary to work out a compromise solution. The action may entail changing a survivor’s method of operation or accepting substitute goals.

Evaders faced with starvation may compromise with their conscience and steal just this one time. They may ignore their food aversion and eat worms, bugs, or even human flesh. A related form of compromise is acceptance of substitute means to achieve the same goals.

Your family will only be as strong as you will feel!