

The Subtle Way Manual

10 Essential Skills for Survival into the 21st Century

Introduction

This is the simplest of practical manuals. It is unique because it provides information that is essential for survival in the times that are now upon us and into the future. For anyone staying abreast of the overwhelming severity and crisis facing our world in the beginning of the 21st century, it should be obvious that we must learn to reevaluate our present lifestyles. Not only must we learn to adapt to global warming and its effects on weather, food production and carbon emissions, we must face the inevitable demise of civilization as we know it.

The continuous escalation of human population, along with the destruction of the wildness of nature, is causing irrevocable stress and damage to the world's delicate eco-systems. The demand that increased population places on clean air and water, fuel, food, shelter, sanitation and health care means that there will be untold suffering in the years to come if we don't confront and rethink our basic ideas, values as well as individual lifestyles.

This manual contains vital information on how to create a sustainable lifestyle whenever the infrastructure of modern society has begun to erode and we find ourselves limited to a certain location. No matter where we find ourselves, whether in the city or in a rural area, the information contained in the following pages gives us a clear outline of the basic skills necessary for maintaining health and comfort.

It is important to consider what life will be like when there is a disruption in basic utilities and supplies, such as little or no electrical power, running water, fuel or food. (Just remember what happened to the people affected in recent years by hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunami, floods, droughts, etc.) If you had to survive a few days or weeks without the basic infrastructure of modern civilization do you know what to do? How will you eat, how will you stay warm, provide shelter and keep your spirits high? And what if the people around you start to become fearful and panic, can you maintain your composure and be helpful, or will you too become lost in the whirlwind of anxiety? Don't believe you can rely on the government. Remember Hurricane Katrina?

Personally, I have always believed that a simple life was the best way to achieve vital health, physical and emotional strength, financial security and peace of mind. Yet few of us are able to recognize this and fewer still fortunate enough to work it out and earn enough money to be able to achieve it. Sadly there are many young people who simply do not have the money it takes to purchase a piece of land, build a shelter or purchase tools and store supplies. Their lives are perhaps trapped in a web of "surviving in the present system," that is, paying rent, keeping a car running, holding a job in order to maintain health insurance, daycare costs, paying off student loans, and credit card debt.

Many are merely waiting and wishing for the world to collapse so they can squat on a piece of land for free.

Then there are those who recognize the value of voluntary simplicity too late in life. These are the ones who are suffering the ill effects of a lifestyle of poor diet, health problems or prescription drug addiction, only to end up struggling financially to keep their heads above water. Often they are unable to implement the changes that are needed because of failing health, lack of self-discipline or financial resources.

There may be little hope for such people being able to retreat to a rural area in order to set up an alternative lifestyle. But this should never matter! What is most important is simply learning the basic skills that will give us the very best advantage and implementing them now as part of our ordinary life.¹ These skills are powerful and can be accomplished no matter where we are. As long as we possess determination, willingness, vision and self-discipline, there is no reason why positive improvements cannot be made.

For what is truly essential in life? It is really quite simple. It is what the ancient masters taught and revered - the sacred life-force energy of the universe, the *Living Current of Life*. Survival means nothing if one lives only to experience stress and anxiety. Man exists to evolve, create and achieve something profound. He is here to learn to feel and channel in his body the *biogenic* (life generating) energy of the planet. Then he moves beyond survival into the realm of co-creation with all life. These essential skills enable one to become self-reliant and healthy, which are the tools to reach and sustain this experience.

In our personal study of the ancient Essene teachings as well as our decision to choose to live a modern Essene lifestyle (living what is essential to man's physical and spiritual evolution), Donna and I have realized that there are 10 basic skills necessary for successfully living such a lifestyle. This manual briefly outlines each of these important elements so that an individual can become familiar with them and study, practice and live them now.

It is wise to learn these skills while there is still time to prepare and improve your health. For the day may soon come when it will prove more difficult to acquire the tools, health care and resources needed to make an easy transition. Please find a suggested list of basic supplies and tools on page 170. We strongly recommend that you acquire these as soon as possible.

Section 1: What's the Point?

We are often asked, "what's the point in living the way you do...are you just trying to escape society?" And the answer is this: the point of living the simple life - for us - is to get our living expenses down to the level where we don't have to work more than necessary. We only want to earn money for what we really need. It's about getting our lives in harmony with natural, organic life and using money only to supplement and help supply our basic needs. In other

¹ Consider starting a local support group with a few friends. Get together once or twice a month in order to study and discuss the 10 Essential Skills. Start making them a part of your life now.

words, we want to use money, not be used by it. We've often said that the only real freedom is in the minimum of needs. And that is something each person must eventually define for himself.

And what exactly is freedom - true freedom? How free are we in this country? We think we are free, but it is an illusion in modern society. Many people live in little boxes - isolated, tidy, immaculate, scrubbed, odor-free, predictable, and insulated from nature. If and when it ever happens that there is no more food in the super-supermarkets of our cities (and it is, in time, going to happen), who is going to feed us? If we haven't grown or bought sufficient food, what sort of freedom is that! Who is going to give us a handout?

Freedom is in intelligent preparation, working cooperatively with the earth and obeying the forces of nature. Those who seek to be in alignment with it must work to free their minds from ignorance and false values. Those who are meek are always prepared. They store up provisions, not because they are anticipating great calamity, but because they love themselves and others enough to live sovereign, never wanting to be dependent on anyone else.

Nature is the wild, free, ever-moving life-force. Only nature exhibits complete freedom for all life. Modern society exhibits complete enslavement and a disregard for natural life processes, depending upon the system of commerce and exchange. Survival and preparation does not promote fear. The ant or bee does not add to fear. It adds to the harmony of the natural world because it is in alignment with what it innately knows to be the truth.

Earth changes will always be with us. We must understand that the earth's environment is a living system and the more that human society continues to mess around with that system, upsetting the delicate balance, the more important it is for conscious and concerned individuals to learn how to become self-reliant. Many people may not like hearing what I am saying in this manual, but experts agree and have been warning humanity for several years about the things we will be facing in the coming years. (See the article on our website entitled "*Scientists Warning to Humanity.*")

Droughts, famine, disease, plagues, environmental disasters, wars, economic hardship and floods are happening right now, and these things will only get worse unless mankind changes his present course quickly. There won't be a balanced system if we keep consuming natural resources and dumping our pollutants and cutting down old growth forests. The stock market cannot support the world's population with hefty annual returns. We can't all live in cities and live excessive materialistic lifestyles. For everything we take from nature, someone else down the line has to do without. The earth's resources are finite.

The good news is that surviving need not be a hardship. When you are in flow with nature, you never have to struggle to survive, because you are just "in the flow." You may still need money to survive at this level - that's true - but do you know how much money is enough? Do you really know? How much money and how much time must you put into working for others in order to provide yourself with the simple basics? That is the question we all have to ask and

confront, because wanting more than the simple basics of life leads you toward further deviation away from the easy, basic laws of nature. When you're in the flow and your mind fully understands the laws of nature, then *"your yoke is easy and your burden is light."*

The way back to harmony with real life - natural life - is not to make more and more money - it is about needing less and less, and providing for yourself through cooperation with the earth. (Eating a natural vegetarian diet is an important starting point as well.) If you have to keep paying someone else to provide you with what you need, when will it ever end? How secure is that? Nature freely gives to us abundantly. But we don't value what she offers - we want more and more and more. Most of our desires are totally unrealistic (huge houses, boats, new vehicles, diamonds, gold, expensive techno-gadgets, servants...there is no end to it). As with everything, it takes education, but that doesn't necessarily mean school education.

For example, I completed two years of college and another year and a half in trade school and I ended up not even knowing what wheat looks like, how to plant it, how to separate it from the chaff, or how to bake it into bread. That was the result of 16 years of 20th century public school education. But what I did learn to do was get a job and sell my labor to someone else in order to earn some money so I could purchase bread that someone else baked! Instead of learning how to work directly for primary reinforcement (the stuff I need to survive), I was taught how to sell myself to earn secondary reinforcement (money) to buy what I need. I think that's quite an inefficient model.

Now when we look at the conclusion of all the ancient cultures and sacred philosophies of the world, it is consistent - we must go back to the wilderness and align ourselves with the natural rhythms of life and the cosmic order. For it is there that we discover contentment, a sense of purpose and all we need to be healthy and happy... *your Heavenly Father and Earthly Mother already know what you need.*

Going against nature is never going to work. In the end, everything that is out of alignment with the cosmic / natural order will eventually crumble and destroy itself. Our present society is already doomed to fail because the system that supports the world economy is short-sited and not sustainable. That is the simple fact. It's not a criticism or moral judgment; it's just the way it is.

If you study the history of ancient *Persia* (modern Iraq) and look at the area known as the "cradle of civilization", the once fertile land between the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, you will see the most shocking site imaginable. Today it is a barren wasteland of rock, sand and rubble, and the 5000-year-old remains of several great cities. They are all gone. The horizon spreads out for miles without a single blade of grass, not a single tree or bush in the landscape. This land is now totally useless because it was over-farmed by growing wheat and other grains in order to feed the large populations which migrated and gathered there (ancient cities), in order to create commerce, businesses to make money, and the trading and selling of goods.

The same thing happened in the region of what is now known as the Sahara desert in Africa, which was once an abundant fertile land. It was destroyed by years of growing wheat to supply the Roman Empire in the height of its years of world domination. During that time, nothing was done to cooperate with the land and to care for it with sustainable methods of agriculture.

Similarly, in America it happened during the era known as the dust bowl. Settlers came in and cleared the land in order to raise wheat and nothing was done to rebuild the topsoil. Soon after that, the U.S. Government started to advocate the use of chemical fertilizers. Crops grew, but they weren't healthy crops. That brought an over-abundance of insects, naturally programmed to wipe out diseased plants, so then we started using pesticides and herbicides...but still, nothing was done to rebuild the topsoil. It took the earth millions of years to create that level of fertility, and now we've almost completely wiped it out in 3 generations!

These desert lands are a warning of what is happening to America. If not for chemical fertilizers and pesticide poisons, modern agriculture would not be able to sustain huge cities. And all we have done is put off the inevitable demise. There is no topsoil left in this country. It has been gone for many years. The rich abundance that we see in supermarkets is due to chemical usage and agri-business. But the sad reality is that it takes more and more chemicals each year to produce the same amount as the previous year. This escalation of chemicals is reaching a critical mass effect, destroying the health of the planet. And what isn't good for the planet is always worse for terrestrial and oceanic life forms, even including man himself.

Is this a fearsome truth? Is it doom and gloom? How could nature be doom and gloom? How could it be anything but admirably beautiful? But if we fight against it we will not win, because Nature knows it is forever, while we are still fragile and insecure when we remain in ignorance about the cosmic and terrestrial laws of life.

To prepare is a wise thing to do. If a person has even a small piece of land, he can grow his *Staff of Life*, and he can learn to preserve that which he grows. That will carry him through even the most difficult circumstances. Then he is free. But most people today are not free! When a drought comes and the baker doesn't bake the bread because there isn't any wheat, because the wheat didn't grow, because the rains weren't there, how are they going to have bread? Will they even know how to bake it? Will they even know how to grow the wheat and separate it from the chaff? Many don't know because they are no longer in love with the land. Instead, they love only modern conveniences.

It has been said that the meek will inherit the earth. It is not going to be the intellectual. It is not going to be those who love complexities. It is the meek, the simple people, those who are humble within their hearts, who are close to the earth and work harmoniously with it. They are the ones who are in alignment with it.

Droughts are already happening. The water table is dropping drastically in the midwestern states and California's water supply is drying up as well. The grain belt is being hit the hardest, with lower yields than ever before. Always store up some wheat or grain!

The planet's temperature is rising (causing moisture levels to decrease: 1-degree rise in global temperature means 10% less average rainfall). Glaciers are melting which adds too much fresh water, thus reducing salt levels in the oceans. This action slows down the heat transfer in the Gulf Stream and is believed to trigger ice ages.

The food supply in America is threatened because we keep feeding the world, making other nations dependent on artificial fast food, instead of encouraging native foods and sustainable agriculture. Genetic modification of seeds and animal life is not going to work because it is short sighted and profit driven. The argument that we need genetic bio-technology or hydroponic chemical farming to maintain a growing population is false. How are the world's poor going to pay for these kinds of technologies? Where are they going to get the money for chemical fertilizers and pesticides? The only real, sustainable answer is earth-friendly, bio-intensive organic gardening and farming, utilizing mulching, recycling organic materials and smarter use of water. And that is something that more and more people are going to have to do on their own. Large corporations and governments simply won't do it because these easy methods do not produce profit.

Cities are seductive and many people want to live there. They love the big city lights, traffic, shops, theaters, restaurants and shopping malls. But what is the major disadvantage to living there? When you think about it and apply common sense, the answer is clear. There are no fertile fields, only parking lots, freeways and buildings piled up on top of one another. There is little room to grow anything but baskets of flowers. Where does their food come from? When we reason it out it makes perfect sense that it is not advantageous to live in a city. Cities are death traps. They are going to be the first to spew forth diseases and plagues simply because there will be no fresh water and not enough food. Where will all the human wastes go when there isn't enough water to flush it away? This is just simple fact and it is very obvious. (See the book entitled: *The Humanure Handbook*, by Joe Jenkins.)

The model America is following is not working. There has to be another way, an approach that will begin to liberate mankind, heal its people and bring peace to the world. Trying to create a business to make money, to be independent, to be free, to be happy and fulfilled is not the way anymore. Consumerism and commerce are not natural systems. Trading goods and products is good, certainly, but trying to generate money (secondary reinforcement) has become restrictive and inefficient, especially for the working poor. But most of all, the system is not sustainable and cannot keep going on at its present rate. Something is going to give sooner or later. For every thing we sell as a product, produced from natural resources, someone else has to do without it. When a natural system is followed, when people take responsibility

for their own primary reinforcement first, then their works and efforts are efficient and harmonious. In other words, it's better to produce your own food to eat yourself than it is to grow more food than you need in order to sell it for money to buy other stuff that you don't really need (or to pay government fees, taxes, permits costs, etc).

Every time we expand too big and desire more than what is basic or easily obtained from our immediate environment, we waste precious resources and human energy. And we take these resources out of the hands of the poor. You see, it is our desire for more and more that causes us so many consequences and takes away our power and peace. The less we want, the more content we are; the more we have, the less satisfied we feel. It's the iron law of cause and effect governed by natural / cosmic law.

Trading what we produce is far better, and less able to be regulated. It empowers communities and creates trust. But of course it's not always easy to do, so we have to earn some amount of money. Often we have to sell some of our goods and services and that is perfectly okay. There's nothing wrong with that. But it isn't necessary to create a business to fulfill some dream in order to be happy. Creating a business is often a real nightmare; especially with all the restrictive government regulations, taxes, licenses, etc.

Donna and I tried to create a business with our sourdough bread baking. In fact, almost everyone we knew encouraged us to do so. "It would be great," they said, "you'll make a fortune...everybody needs that bread!" We quickly realized, however, how stupid and complicated the whole system has become. We wanted to supplement our income and decided it would be fun to try and sell just a few loaves at a weekly farmer's market. So we went through all the proper and legal procedures and checked with the local health department, the department of agriculture and the local government office to see what was required. The bottom line is this...they are completely insane! We discovered that for us to bake only 20-30 loaves of bread a week it would cost us \$1100 a year in fees to the government agencies and the local farmer's market committee. To cover that cost would mean we would have to sell 50 extra loaves a week. So now, to make a little bit of cash selling 30 loaves of handmade sourdough bread each week, we'd have to bake 80 loaves a week. Now of course, we cannot physically do that by hand so we would have to purchase an electric grain grinder (\$600), a mixer (\$3000) and a bigger oven (\$4000) and upgrade to get a certified kitchen, add a bathroom, install 3 sinks, large freezer and refrigerator, cover marketing costs, packaging, labels (and the associated permits for each product), additional equipment, possibly hire some help...now we're up to \$20,000, and by this time it's not the same quality handmade bread anymore because we're using machines to produce it.

Gone are the days of the local village baker happily supplying his relatives, friends and neighbors without interference from local and federal agencies. Though the present system has been designed to "protect" us from unsanitary health conditions, more often than not it has only tied our hands and caused unnecessary hardship to those who want only to honestly generate a

modest income. You see the system isn't designed to work. It's easier to bake the bread for ourselves and trade a few extra loaves for apples or seeds or whatever else we find that others may want to offer.

The idea of creating a business to be financially free is not simple anymore. It's far better to sell or trade your services, labor or expertise to earn a little money and spend the rest of your energy and time providing for your basic needs and improving your consciousness, developing art and studying ancient wisdom. In other words, go out and use the system as minimally as possible, and then take the money and run! Run back to your safe, sane and humble hovels, which you have created, where you can live simple and peaceful lives, in cooperation with the forces of nature. Starting a business at home, though it seems like the American ideal dream of success (like winning the lottery), often requires going into debt.

Donna and I have a simple goal to earn and live abundantly on only the amount of money that will keep us below the poverty level (less than \$18,000 a year). In this way we minimize the taxes we pay and do not contribute financially to a government that is hell-bent on war mongering, the insane production of military expansion, bombs and nuclear weapons. What we've sought to demonstrate at *EarthStar* is that simplicity means valuing you and your family's life above everything else, especially profit and money. Making a "legal" business trying to bake bread would do nothing to empower other people and it would only enslave me. I'm more than happy to freely share my information with others. More people should bake their own bread anyway (real bread doesn't exist in a supermarket, see our article entitled "*Facts About Naturally Fermented Bread*").

Valuing our health and relationship with the Earthly Mother is far more satisfying than getting involved in complex, antiquated strategies. For some people a business works fine. They have the skill and determination to make it work. Good for them! But not for me. There are entrepreneurs, who have the financial resources and guts to become highly successful business people, but it's almost always at the expense of someone else and it threatens the limited resources of the planet. And also, they are at the mercy of customers that have to spend some money.

In summary, to be a conscious consumer is the first step. That is why we teach others to make smart food choices right away. Our food choices affect all the other aspects of our lives and set us free on the path back to the natural laws of life. (See our article entitled "*Eating for Freedom*"). It also contributes to sustainable agriculture and good health for us as well as the environment. Living in a large town or city, eating out in restaurants and shopping at Wal-Mart cannot be the answer for everyone. It is a system that cannot sustain large populations without robbing valuable resources from others. Eventually large cities will have to dismantle; those who don't get out may possibly perish. Sustainable agriculture is the only real foundation of a successful community. It is not bio-technology, factories, nor medical institutions...sustainable agriculture is the only real answer.

Healthy Soil = Healthy Food = Healthy People.

This is a formula for success! If anyone is really interested in further study of this subject please read Professor Szekely's book "*Cosmos, Man & Society*". The following quote, from page 127 is one of my favorite passages, and it inspires me every time I read it.

"We must lead mankind back from the great towns to the country, just as the peoples of the Bible were lead out of Egypt. Disease and death and destruction are close at hand, and the new society can only be constructed if the fundamental equilibrium of human society is re-established and seventy-five percent of people return to the fundamental occupations of a simple, natural life, to a natural agriculture, to freedom, and to harmony with the natural laws and natural forces."

Section 2: The 10 Basic Essential Skills

If you are a person who has the wisdom and the necessary pre-conditions to live a life of spiritual and ecological integrity, consider this wise and independent model of living. You will gain freedom, superior health, and practical knowledge by studying the open book of nature and you will deepen your connection with the unseen life-force.

Here are ten basic life skills that are needed in order to live happily in a small apartment, Essene Hermitage or cabin. Learn them, practice them and make them an essential part of your life as soon as possible. And even if you cannot afford a piece of property in the country and must remain in the city to earn money, many of these things can be implemented into your life right now. The *Subtle Way* is a life of preparedness. Whenever there is a collapse in the basic infrastructure or political and social unrest, you will have already worked out what to do to survive no matter where you are.

10 Basic Essential Skills

1. Humanure composting
2. Organic gardening
3. *Biogenic* nutrition & indoor gardening
4. Cosmotherapy
5. Minimize reliance on the electrical grid
6. Catching rainwater
7. Simple living & shelter
8. Self-discipline & financial independence
9. Simple carpentry & other self-reliant skills
10. Using wood for heating and cooking

1. Humanure composting

This skill is one of the most important. Even if you can't use this information right now, it may come in handy some day if you find yourself without enough water to flush the toilet.

We must understand that Humanure is not a waste product, but a valuable resource, especially during times of economic depression brought about by earth changes, severe weather conditions and so forth. It is the answer to drought and famine. When water is in short supply it will prove unwise to flush it away. Remember this information. It may mean the difference between life-threatening unsanitary conditions and sound environmental stewardship.

We have been composting this way for several years and would never go back to using a water-wasting toilet. Humanure composting is as easy as constructing a wooden box to hold a five-gallon plastic bucket and adding a toilet seat or purchasing a portable bucket potty from a camping store. To use the potty, simply make your deposit and then cover it over with a layer of rotted sawdust, leaf mould or peat moss. That's it! No black water septic system to maintain, no wasted water for flushing, no clogged pipes, no smell and best of all, no need to buy fertilizer for your garden. The potty bucket requires emptying about 2 or 3 times a week for two people. And it only takes about 3 minutes to dump the bucket onto the compost pile, cover with hay and then rinse out the bucket. I prefer rotating between two different buckets, letting the previous one air out in the sun.

The benefits to using this system are the tremendous reduction of water waste and ground pollution, rebuilding your soil, reducing your food bill, improving your health, as well as saving the planet. All this from simply dropping your load in a bucket! There are of course companies that sell composting toilets, but they are quite expensive and require a venting system and a significant amount of room to install. The sawdust-bucket method costs next to nothing.

Donna did an interesting experiment when she was living in a garage apartment in the landlord's back yard. She got permission to make a small compost bin behind her apartment and began doing humanure composting, telling no one about her "secret ingredient". She emptied her bucket when no one was around, carefully covered it with hay and leaves and no one ever knew what she was doing. She grew a beautiful little raised-bed garden and used her "special" compost.

As we said before, humanure is a valuable resource. The reason people become *fecophobic* and are turned off by the whole idea of composting their body-wastes is simply because they don't consider it a resource, which is why they call it "waste." But on the contrary, humanure is a superior, valuable amendment for your organic garden. As long as it is properly covered in the compost bins with carbonaceous material such as hay, grass clippings, pine needles or leaves, there is absolutely no smell!

Simply build your compost pile for one year and then leave it to cook for another year. This way, there is never a need to turn the pile over. After this long

period of breaking down (known as *thermophilic composting*), the humanure will be perfectly cured and safe to use around trees and plants. *Thermophilic composting* has been proven to neutralize the effects of some radioactive materials too. This is a workable, realistic answer for helping to heal the planet. But we must educate all the *fecofobes* first. On the other hand, maybe *fecophobia* can be used to your advantage to prevent your garden from getting robbed during hard times. Just put a sign next to your garden that reads: "This garden is fertilized with humanure!"

Kitchen scraps can be collected on a daily basis to put on the compost pile. We keep a gallon-sized plastic paint bucket in our kitchen for this purpose and collect about a bucket of scraps each day. Everything can go in your compost pile, except dog and cat feces (which can contain parasites), cooked meat scraps or bones. If you want more information on humanure composting, simply look up Joe Jenkins invaluable, highly readable, informative and well-researched book on the subject, entitled, "*The Humanure Handbook*." (This entire book is on the Internet for free.)

We have been using only humanure in our garden and have added no other fertilizers of any kind. The soil is now black and spongy and filled with earthworms and each year the plants have become healthier and more disease and insect resistant. We have proven for ourselves that humanure fertilizer has all the necessary amendments needed to grow nourishing food. It is a completely self-reliant method of growing a garden.

2. Organic Gardening (2 hours a day)

Starting an organic garden is a lot of work, but the rewards are well worth the effort. The initial set up is the most difficult part and after a few years it practically grows itself. Donna and I had no idea how to begin. The only advice available to us was from people who used the antiquated method of plowing the soil into rows, using chemical fertilizers and herbicides for the weeds. That model of gardening is inefficient, costly and a lot of hard work, especially if you don't own large equipment. Furthermore, it is dependent on petroleum-based chemical products and is not sustainable. There are easier, much more efficient ways to garden. But what is important right from the start is a little investment in good tools, such as a shovel, hoe, rake, and a pickax (a small tiller is very useful too.)

To start your garden, find a suitable spot that gets at least 6-7 hours of full sun. If you live in the country, build a six-foot fence around your garden (if you can afford it) or it might become the favorite all-you-can eat restaurant for the local critters in the area such as raccoons, possum, rabbits and deer. Good watchdogs are also a wonderful help to keep unwanted diners away.

After many years of experimenting, we've come up with a simple, efficient method of gardening. After choosing a spot for your garden, cover the area with black plastic sheeting and leave it in place for two to four months. The black plastic will kill all the grass underneath and you can then begin to dig or till the soil. (With the method we use, you only have to till and chop the soil the

first year.) After removing the plastic, till the area with a shovel and hoe (a tiller is nice if you have one) and then mix in the compost from one of your compost bins, use well rotted cow, rabbit or chicken manure or buy some if you don't have any. Then cover the entire garden area with thick layers of leaves, hay, rotted sawdust, or whatever you have.

When ready to plant, simply pull the mulch aside and plant the seeds or vegetable plants. For example, to plant corn, we pull the mulch aside in 18-inch circles and plant 6 corn seeds in each circle. You can just plant whatever you want all over the garden in your "crop circles". We keep adding compost and layers of leaves and hay to our garden on a continual basis. We have never tilled again because the garden stays under a heavy mulch year around and the soil stays fairly loose and moist. A little loosening of the soil with a trowel in each "crop circle" and the addition of a shovel-full of our humanure compost is all that is necessary to plant seeds or plants. The earthworms come and the ever-rotting layers of mulch and added compost continuously improve the soil as the years go by. (Two excellent books on mulch gardening are *Lasagna Gardening* by Patricia Lanza and *How to Have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back*, by Ruth Stout.)

It will take a little experimenting with the kind of soil you have in your area to see what works best. For example, the *Lasagna Gardening* book does not tell you to pre-kill the grass like we do and says that the initial tilling is not necessary. But our soil is very dry and compacted and needed the step of tilling first before adding the layers of mulch.

We learned that in order to become self-sufficient, we needed to purchase non-hybrid, open-pollinated seeds in order to save our own seeds from year to year. This eliminates having to purchase costly seeds each year. Non-hybrid seeds will adapt to your climate and soil as the years go by.

Seed saving is also important because corporate agribusiness has been busy promoting hybrid laboratory manufactured seeds for years. It is their intention to eventually patent and own each and every species of plant on earth. The rise in GMO (genetically modified organisms) foods, bio-tech research and cloning all stem from the point of view that the life systems on this planet are best controlled through manipulation and science rather than for mankind to cooperate with nature.

In wintertime, several weeks before the arrival of spring is generally the best time to start seedlings to plant out in the early spring. A good way to grow these seedlings is in a cold-frame box, which you can build yourself. The cold frame has a sloped, hinged lid that is covered with translucent plastic sheeting, Plexiglas or even old window glass. It allows sunlight to warm the baby seedlings and keeps them safe from freezing temperatures at night. It is really just a mini greenhouse and is an excellent way to get your seeds off to a great start. The hinged lid allows you the opportunity to adjust the temperature by venting the box to different heights. I built one for Donna out of scrap 1x6 boards and placed it on the south side of the shed. Starting a few weeks before spring planting time, she is able to begin sprouting seeds indoors and

transplanting them into pots without fear of losing them to freezing temperatures. During freezing temperatures we place a heat lamp in the box, close the lid and they survive perfectly well.

Gardening also includes arboriculture (the care and maintenance of trees.) Trees are the brothers of man. That is why we should continuously propagate and take care of them. They are essential to our survival on this planet. Even if we don't own land to plant trees, we can at least spend time around them. We can appreciate their beauty and work to protect them. There is no greater gift to offer a child than a small piece of property with several fruit and nut trees. Imagine a world where every child received such a gift when they reached the age of 18. They would already be a step closer to freedom and independence.

3. Biogenic Nutrition & Indoor Gardening

Biogenic nutrition is an ancient science, also known as the "*Chemistry of Youth*," and is described in detail in [Section 14 of this book](#). It is a vegetarian diet: raw vegetables, soaked nuts and seeds, fermented foods, simple breads or other grains, sprouts and soups. (If you wish to eat meat, 15% of your diet can be organically grown meat, seafood or wild game.) It would be wise to study the information and integrate it into your life. The time may come when medical treatment will not be available or out of your financial reach. Cultivating superior health and being drug-free is necessary for self-reliance.

The most important part of this skill is learning about *biogenic* foods (sprouts, indoor greens, soaked seeds and nuts) and bioactive foods (fresh, organic raw fruits and vegetables and wild edible weeds). These are the healing foods that can help us survive our toxic environment. Please see the article on our website entitled, "*The Starburst of Life: Biogenic Foods: Growing Sprouts & Indoor Gardening*," for more information about the importance of these foods.

During times of famine, natural disasters, pandemics, quarantine and wars, the grocery stores may run short of supplies and *biogenic* foods could mean the difference between life and death. They are the most valuable and important foodstuffs on the planet. The vast majority of people in the world do not know this. These foods are cleansing, packed with superior nutrition, incredibly inexpensive and the seeds can be stored easily for several months. Also, eating homegrown *biogenic* foods eliminates the need for expensive supplements.

Even if a person cannot plant a garden, everyone can produce healthy food supplements for themselves by practicing indoor gardening. By using a few gallon size pots or containers as well as a few quart jars, it is possible to grow enough food to survive during periods of drought or famine.

4. Cosmotherapy (the healing forces of nature)

It has been said, "*Man is the measure of all things.*" Each one of us is an intricate part of the natural world, influenced and sustained by the cosmic and terrestrial forces of life. Therefore, cosmotherapy is the simple method of using these forces of nature to strengthen the mind and body. If we want to be whole and complete (mentally, physically and emotionally), we must connect with

nature each day. Throughout human history, mankind has always turned toward nature for comfort and healing, but in recent times, and especially in modern society, there has been a continuous reduction of these practices. Instead of embracing the natural world, we are taught to insulate ourselves from it. The ancient knowledge is all about cultivating and sustaining vital *biogenic* energy in the body. These practices lead to vibrant health, emotional security and happiness. To survive into the 21st century and beyond, it is imperative that we learn to apply the wisdom of cosmotherapy in our lives.

These are:

- Sunbaths (*heliotherapy* for the nerves),
- Air-baths (*aerotherapy* for the lungs),
- Water baths (*hydrotherapy* using alternating hot and cold water for healing muscles and pain).
- Mud and clay compresses (*geotherapy*) can actually help pull toxins out of the body.
- Joy through movement exercise (*dynamo-therapy*) dancing, running, martial arts, etc.
- Occasional fasting or the Art of Sobriety (*cellulotherapy*)
- *Biogenic* Nutrition (*vitiminotherapy*) live, raw foods.

5. Minimize reliance on the electrical grid

Consider what you would do if there were no more electrical power. How would you stay warm or cool? How would you prepare food? Wash Clothes? Pump water? How would you stay informed? What about lighting? Think ahead about your options. Don't wait until there is a crisis to figure it all out. Stock up on basic survival supplies and think about using some of the time proven low-tech methods; chopping wood, oil lamps, candles, hand tools, wind-up radio, as well as alternative power sources wherever possible (solar / wind generators, propane, etc.) Freedom is a daily process of reducing your reliance on things that are inefficient and costly. A wise person lives in a state of preparation at all times.

Unless you own a DC powered refrigerator, a standard unit can cost up to 35% or more of your electric bill. Therefore, it is helpful to learn how to reduce this kind of energy waste by choosing a small under-the-counter refrigerator or small freezer instead of larger models. And if you are eating a *Biogenic* diet (eating directly from your indoor or outdoor garden, dehydrating fruit and vegetables, whole grains, etc.) then it will be easier to greatly reduce or even possibly eliminate the use of refrigeration, especially as the cost of electricity continues to rise. The use of large refrigerators has developed to accommodate the Standard American Diet (S.A.D.) purchased from the Super-Markets.

During a two-week power outage in our area, we witnessed most of our neighbors in a state of panic because the food in their refrigerators began to spoil. They simply didn't know any other way to store food. Many were scrambling to get gasoline for generators and trying to keep their lives from being disrupted.

But what would they have done if it had been an even longer disruption of services? If we don't work these things out now, it will be impossible to deal with when it happens. Therefore, the best foods to store are grains, beans, seeds, nuts, dried fruit, salt, powdered milk, honey and drinking water. Don't waste your money or risk your health on the poor nutrition of canned foods or MRE's (ready-to-eat military meals).

6. Catching rainwater (install dug well or cistern)

Water is critical to everyone's health, especially in a survival situation. Dehydration is deadly. Even for a short period of time, the slightest lack of water can cause body and brain damage. And water is important no matter what time of the year, summer or winter. It is possible to die of dehydration at any time. People tend to avoid drinking water in winter because they don't want to sip cold water.

These days it is very difficult to find a source of safe drinking water. It is not uncommon, even in the wilderness, for water to be either biologically or chemically polluted. Since it is not always possible to determine if it is polluted or not, all drinking water, no matter how clear it looks, should be treated or purified in some way.

Boiling is perhaps the easiest method. Simply boil water for about five minutes. This will kill all or almost all the biological pollutants. However, boiling has little effect on chemical pollutants, except that it may help evaporate off any chemical pollutants that have a lower boiling point than the water itself. It is always a good idea to boil any rainwater that you collect.

Filtering water will rid both biological and chemical pollutants to some extent. Yet if you are in the wilderness and the only water you can find is muddy or debris-laden, you can allow the collected water to stand for several hours, which will settle the heavier particles. Then pour the clearer water off the top into another container and pour it slowly through a piece of white cotton cloth, or a piece of your cotton shirt. This should filter out a lot of the suspended particles. Repeat the process several times if the first pass doesn't clarify the water. If you are in an emergency situation and have no suitable cloth, a tightly bound bundle of fine grasses will make an excellent filter. Filtering may clarify the water but will not remove the pollutants. Only the modern filters can do this. Always store several gravity-type drip filters.

Distillation, using either fire or solar heat is an easy way to purify water. It will usually remove most of the biological pollutants and many of the chemical ones too. Distillation is one of the most effective water purification techniques of all. There are simple methods that work, though no homemade distillation process is going to produce a lot of clean water very fast. There are companies that manufacture distillers that can be used on a stove or open fire.

In a survival situation, perhaps the easiest method of all is collecting early morning dew from the leaves of plants. It usually needs no purification at all, not unless the dew is being collected from poisonous plants or those that have been sprayed with chemical pesticides or other poisonous substances. Be aware of this

if you are collecting dew near roadways or from farmland. These are areas that can contain high concentrations of chemical pollutants. Be careful in forested areas as well because sometimes timber companies spray the lands to control undesirable plant growth. To collect the dew, either lick it off the plant directly or wipe it with a clean rag and wring the water into your mouth or a container.

Remember that the climate is changing in many areas all over the planet. No matter where we live, each one of us will inevitably find ourselves subjected to some form of unexpected, extended disruption in basic utilities, water, food supply, etc. Therefore, it may become critical to look for alternative sources of water. Unless you are located near a stream or pond, catching rainwater may be your only alternative. Decide now how you can collect rainwater, either by creating a dug well (4' wide x 12' long x 3' deep, lined with plastic and covered with boards) or installing a water tank, cistern or using buckets.

The water can be used for cooking and cleaning. You can either take bowl baths or Sumerian baths (sun and shallow water baths), sweat lodges, or use an outdoor cold tub in summer or bucket shower. Be sure to recycle all your graywater to keep your plants and trees watered.

7. Simple Living & Shelter

Some of the happiest people are those who live comfortably in a simple, small home. A modest, comfortable home shouldn't have to cost a small fortune. There are so many creative ideas for alternative shelters these days such as straw-bale houses, cob-building, earth ships, or even a simple 12' x 20' cabin made from recycled wood or pine logs and a tin roof. These earth-friendly shelters can help us achieve a life that is in harmony with the environment and save us a ton of money over the cost of a traditional dwelling. An extreme example is the Greek philosopher *Diogenes*, who lived in a barrel. He would roll it along the road until he found a place near trees to stop, eat fruit and sunbathe! Actually, he probably only used the barrel during bad weather.

It doesn't matter what we live in as long as our essential needs are met. The less we need the more freedom we will experience. It is always wise to think small. And yet this is the greatest challenge, especially in the modern world where there seems to be a tremendous push for bigger and better, more expensive, more, more, more.

8. Self-discipline & Financial Independence

My favorite cartoon depicts a poor monk with a begging bowl sitting in a cave with his teacher and the caption reads, "*After deep meditation I realize that there is no inner peace without financial security.*" When I saw that for the first time I felt a deep knowing that it was true. Given the way the world operates, each one of us must confront this issue at some point in our lives or we will never gain mastery over the influence of the money system.

Self-discipline is essential to being free and independent, especially concerning money and handling personal finances intelligently. One should learn to be content with a frugal lifestyle, not addicted to spending money on

unnecessary things. Also, it may be necessary to be alone or isolated for certain lengths of time, but one should also be capable of cooperating with like-minded community. The secret, however, is personal self-discipline, simple living and the ability to improvise and adapt to the changes of the times.

It cannot be said enough in this modern age, "Get out of debt as soon as possible!" You must realize that if you don't get control of credit card debt, huge mortgages or perpetual car notes, you will be unable to experience real freedom and peace in your life. Debt means bondage to the lender.

It always comes down to the issue of personal lifestyle. The simple answer is the same as it is when dealing with overeating - stop consuming so much - stop spending money that you don't have. Just stop doing it. Decide and Act. The belief today that one must establish good credit in order to achieve happiness and security is one of the most misleading popular myths in our society. The fact is with only a little self-discipline and intelligent planning, almost anyone can get debt free, save enough money for emergencies, as well as secure a home for themselves and live without credit cards.

Here is a proven seven-step strategy that will bring you to greater financial freedom and peace of mind. This is exactly the way we did it. Most families can completely get out of debt in about 3 -7 years by faithfully applying these principles. Post these on your mirror, work with them and do not skip even one step:

1. Downsize your lifestyle and live within your means. Live a simple life. Income is a tool for building wealth, so be wise with your life-energy and resources. Get rid of stuff and give away or sell what you don't need. Until you can achieve financial, debt-free independence, get rid of expensive luxuries such as cell phones, cable TV and Internet. (You can get them again later, if you still feel you must have them.)
2. Write down in a notebook a realistic budget and put "savings" on the top of your list. Pay yourself a "savings" at the first of each month. How about 10%? You have to do this before you pay any other bill or you will never save for the future. Your net income (meaning the amount of money left after taxes) should be distributed as follows:
 - 35% for housing; mortgage or rent payment, utilities and insurance.
 - 15% for transportation costs (fuel, maintenance, insurance)
 - 25% for clothing, groceries, household supplies, eating out, etc.
 - 15% for debt payments, student loans, credit cards, car payments.
 - 10% for savings.

If you are spending more than the percentages listed above, then you are living beyond your means. An easy way to stay within your budget, especially for things you have the most trouble overspending on (such as

- food, utilities, gas, etc.) is by simply labeling separate envelopes for each one. Put the amount of money (in cash) you have budgeted for that category in each envelope and use the money only for that purpose. If you run out of money before the end of the month, do without if possible. This will help you develop discipline and resourcefulness and your skill at this will improve each month.
3. Pay cash or use a debit card only (don't use credit cards – ever!). Carry a little notepad with you and write down every penny that comes in and goes out of your life. No kidding! This is a great exercise for developing mindfulness. Then at the end of the month transfer those entries onto a sheet of paper that lists your various categories. (Example: income, savings, groceries, eating out, clothes, utilities, debt payments, gasoline, rent, etc.). Total the categories at the end of the month and adjust your budget accordingly for the next month. Keep modifying and downsizing as best you can. (For additional information on this technique I highly recommend the book entitled, *“Your Money or Your Life,”* by Joe Dominguez and Vickie Robin. This book saved our lives. It is a must read!)
 4. Start paying off all outstanding debts (starting with the smallest ones first helps you see progress). If the debt is too much, consider filing for bankruptcy immediately. Unfortunately, the laws are changing and it may already be too late. Life does not end with ruined credit. Credit is what ruins life.
 5. Cut up all your credit cards immediately and cancel the accounts when you have paid them off. Some people choose to keep one card for emergencies, but what we did was simply put aside \$1000 cash. This became our personal insurance policy for unexpected expenses. Doing this soothed our fear in not having a credit card to rely on.
 6. Put aside the money you have been saving each month into a money market account or some Certificates of Deposit that will only be used for unforeseen events, such as illness, accidents, car repairs, loss of employment, etc. It's wise to have 3 – 6 months of backup money. It may take a couple of years to achieve this but keep at it. In the end you will be out of debt and have a nest egg saved. This may take years, but your freedom and peace of mind are worth it.
 7. Stop borrowing money. (The only exception is borrowing money to purchase a vehicle or land.) Paying interest is a losing game. Liberate yourself from the myth that “establishing good credit” is important. It isn't. That is a lie that has been perpetuated by loan institutions! In time, by following the previous steps you'll have saved some cash to invest. Get

on the right side of compounding interest. Learn to diversify and avoid high-risk investments (stay with Treasury bonds, Certificates of Deposits, gold, silver or other precious metals, etc.)

This is the only way that works. Gambling, get rich schemes and multi-level marketing doesn't work. So study each step carefully and start making the necessary adjustments so you can get free. You must look at your finances openly and work intelligently and logically to improve your situation

9. Simple carpentry & other self-reliant skills

Learning how to do things is what makes a person feel empowered and useful. There are so many wonderful things to learn such as pottery, bread baking, furniture building, sewing, plumbing, and gardening. Building a shelter is a great skill that leads one toward self-reliance. It is necessary to know at least something about basic construction, doing simple repairs, maintenance, rustic furniture, fence building, etc. Learning carpentry isn't as hard as you may think. If you can't learn from someone, teach yourself. Get a good book on the subject with lots of illustrations. Or maybe you could apprentice yourself a few hours a week with a carpenter. How about volunteering for Habitat for Humanity and acquiring experience with building a home?

One of the easiest and most cost-effective building methods that I've found is called "post and beam" construction. Straw bale construction, log building and cordwood methods and teepee assembly is good also. You never know when you will have to put together a shelter.

10. Use wood for heating and cooking

If and when one can move to the country, using wood for heating and cooking is a simple and valuable skill. Besides cutting trees for firewood, there is usually an abundance of dead and fallen limbs on your own or surrounding property. Many people in rural areas give away free firewood in exchange for the work of removing a fallen tree from their property.

Baking sourdough bread in an outdoor oven is a good skill to know, as well as cooking simple meals from fresh ingredients. We promote and teach how to bake whole-grain sourdough bread because wheat is so nutritious, satisfying, cheap and easy to store.

An outdoor mud or brick oven can be used for other things as well, such as baking beans, making soup, dehydrating herbs, fruit, vegetables, etc. (See *Build Your Own Earth Oven* by Kiko Denzer.) Get a nice, well-seasoned cast iron skillet and a cast iron bean pot or learn to make primitive clay cooking pots.

Cook simple meals from scratch and always avoid pre-packaged foods, frozen dinners, canned foods and so forth. These will only destroy your health and pocketbook. The simpler the meal the more satisfying (a true pleasure) and it is much better for your digestion too.

Supplies and Tools to Gather

It is a wise investment to have a few basic supplies on hand at all times. Do not neglect to do this. When there is a natural disaster or emergency, it is difficult to get what you need, especially when everyone else is trying to do the same. Don't be caught off guard. Prepare now! Live in a state of readiness at all times.

Here are a few things to consider getting as finances permit. Be prepared to spend at least \$300 - \$500 dollars. There is no better use for money than purchasing things you need to survive. Real wealth is perishable!

- Minimum food supplies to have on hand at all times: 25 pounds wheat berries or other grains, 10 pounds dried corn, 10 pounds rice, 10 pounds dried beans, 10 pounds unbleached flour, 5 pounds Celtic Sea salt, 5 pounds sugar, 1 gallon olive oil, 1 gallon honey, powdered milk, baking soda, dried herbs, spices, and of course, vegetable seeds for gardening, 2 pounds of sprouting seeds for indoor gardening. (Any stored food should be rotated continuously by using and replacing it.) This will last two people about 12 weeks.
- Tools: shovel, rake, gardening hoe, good knife, axe, splitting maul, pick-axe, pitch fork, post hole digger, pruning saw, carpenter saw, hammer, nails, level, chain saw (oil and gasoline) and a sharpening stone.
- Other Supplies: Always keep on hand at least \$500 cash in small bills (and a few pieces of gold and silver if possible). Whenever there is a disruption in the power grid, electronic transactions will not work. People will revert to cash and later they will begin trading. Consider purchasing Carla Emery's classic book: *The Encyclopedia of Country Living*. Also secure some of these useful items: manual grain grinder, sprouting jars and lids, several 5-gallon poly-buckets with tight fitting lids for storing water and food, cast iron skillet & other outdoor cooking utensils, tarps, twine, magnesium fire starters, matches, drip-type gravity water purifier and extra filters, .22 rifle and shells (while you can still purchase them), emergency candles, oil lamps, lots of soap, 5 pounds of diatomaceous earth (for preserving and protecting your grain from pests) and toilet paper.



Recommended Resource Material

FOOD

Dining in the Raw (vegan, raw food ideas) by Rita Romano
The Bread Builders, Hearth Loaves & Masonry Ovens by Daniel Wing & Alan Scott
Dick Gregory's Natural Diet for Folks Who Eat: Cooking with Mother Nature
Nourishing Traditions, by Sally Fallon
Search for the Ageless, Volume 3, The Chemistry of Youth, by Edmond Szekely

BUILDING & SHELTER

CordWood Building, by Rob Roy
Build Your Own Earth Oven, by Kiko Denzer
The Complete Book of Woodworking, Published by Landauer Corporation
Low-Cost Green Lumber Construction, by Leigh Seddon

GARDENING

The Humanure Handbook, by Joe Jenkins
One Straw Revolution, An Introduction to Natural Farming, by Masanobu Fukuoka
How to Grow More Vegetables, by John Jeavons
How to Have a Green Thumb Without an Aching Back, by Ruth Stout
Square Foot Gardening, by Mel Bartholomew
Lasagna Gardening, by Patricia Lanza

SIMPLE LIVING, SPIRITUALITY & ANCIENT WISDOM

The Encyclopedia of Country Living, by Carla Emery
Extreme Simplicity: Homesteading in the City, by Christopher & Delores Lynn Nyerges
Balance Point – Searching For a Spiritual Missing Link, by Joe Jenkins
Choosing Simplicity, Real People Finding Peace & Fulfillment in a Complex World,
by Linda Breen Pierce
Tom Brown's Field Guide to Living with the Earth, by Tom Brown
Deep & Simple – A Spiritual Path for Modern Times, by Bo Lozoff
Living Without Electricity, by Stephen Scott & Kenneth Pellman
The Ancient Secret of the Flower of Life (Sacred Geometry), by Drunvalo Melchizedek

NATURAL HEALTH

The Biogenic Revolution, by Edmond Bordeaux Szekely
The Art of Sexual Ecstasy, by Margo Anand (Excellent book on enhancing intimacy!)
10 Essential Herbs, by Lalitha Thomas (an absolute must for applying natural healing)
Seasalt's Hidden Powers, by Jacques de Langre, Ph.D.
The Essene Gospel of Peace, translated by Edmond Bordeaux Szekely
The First Essene, by Edmond Bordeaux Szekely
DNA: Pirates of the Sacred Spiral, by Leonard Horowitz
Healing Celebrations, by Leonard Horowitz