

STRATEGY

Good planning and preparation enable the survivor to confront difficulties and dangers that pose a serious threat to survival. They become contingencies for which you are equipped. But you cannot anticipate everything. You must be ready to respond rapidly to the unexpected danger and to deal with potential disaster rationally and realistically. You must overcome the tendency to panic and take the action appropriate to the situation.

Sometimes a collision or other accident occurs with no warning of any kind, but in most instances there is a moment of realization that something is going to happen and it is in that moment that instinctive reaction can save lives. In many situations there is a considerable time in which an awareness of potential disaster can develop and that is when the panic reaction is probably most dangerous.

As mist closes in on a hillside, reducing visibility to almost nothing and making it easy to lose any sense of direction, most people would begin to panic at the thought that they are going to be trapped. They begin to do foolish things and increase their danger. They should, however, already be assessing the possibilities and looking for some suitable shelter in which to wait until conditions become safe to continue. Keeping calm, in the knowledge that you have the ability to handle the situation, will not only enable you to see it through but also to see other solutions.

Some situations are predictable and knowledge of the techniques for handling them will minimize the risks. Learn them, they may save your life. They may take considerable nerve - like waiting for the right moment to escape from a car that is sinking under water - but they are based on experience. The answer to more general survival problems, however, will often lie in inspired improvisation drawing on those skills appropriate to the situation.

Disaster may involve you in a contained situation which you must handle alone – or you may find yourself one of hundreds of people in a large-scale disaster over which there can be no control at all.

SURVIVALSCENARIO

If the weather or conditions in your camp change, should you revise your survival strategy?

You should have a strategy for every scenario, therefore as situations change, so should your strategy. You must be flexible and be prepared to adapt.