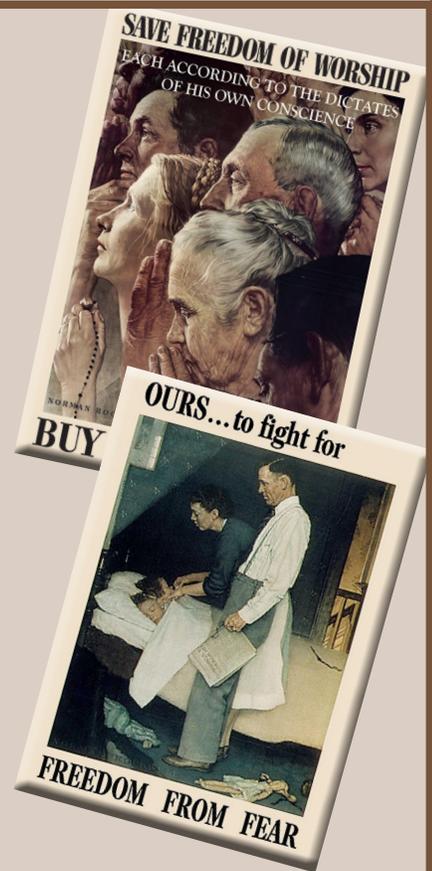


STAYING SAFE IN AN UNSAFE WORLD



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When the children of this editor of *FRONT LINE* were young, and she was active in a community study group, they decided they would practice what they had been preached, e.g., *practice makes perfect*. Accordingly, one summer day at home with company in the front room, her oldest son decided he would train for his Boy Scout merit badge. She realized her guests were not paying attention to the discussion and knew something was distracting them. It seems that her guests were drawn away by a strange procession of small children repeatedly *going up* the stairs, but *never coming down*.

Suddenly, she saw her six-year old daughter fly past her from the upstairs bedroom window into the front bushes. It seems that fire drills were the activity of the morning (for the merit badge), and who better to practice with than the smallest child to test the evacuation plan of throwing down a blanket onto the bushes, and then dropping out the second story window to see who survives. They were going to be prepared!

How can we do the same?

FLOODS

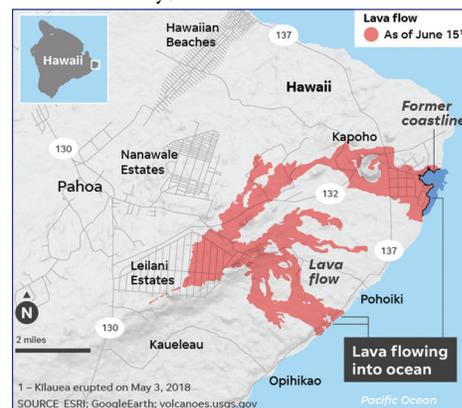
In June, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan was quickly hit by seven to eleven inches of rain. In a remotely settled area, roads had suddenly flooded and buckled becoming impassible. Rising rivers threatened bridges in wilderness areas. Rescue personnel were spread over thousands of acres. The governor declared a

state of emergency in several counties. Many were left on their own to fend for food, water and shelter.

In December 2015, St. Louis experienced “a deadly, rare winter flood [which] shut down portions of two interstates, threatened hundreds of homes and caused sewage to flow unfiltered into waterways. ‘Now that the rain has moved out, the threat has now changed, but it is not by any means over, especially for communities along the rising Mississippi River and its tributaries here in the St. Louis region,’ former Governor Jay Nixon told the media. Thirteen flood-related deaths [later twenty-two] have now been confirmed in Missouri, with 12 deaths occurring in vehicles caught in the flood waters.”¹

EARTHQUAKES AND VOLCANOES

Recently, Hawaii’s islanders were suddenly awakened by massive lava flows and eruptions from earthquakes, and by mid June,



“lava from the Kilauea volcano in Hawaii ha[d] been spewing for over a month, but the thick, slow-moving lava ha[d] taken a new shape,

transforming into a wide, hot, flowing river of lava traveling long distances.

“The 2100-degree lava is flowing together into a molten red river running 9 miles from the fissure into the ocean at Kapoho.”² (The flow is resulting in a dangerous chemical reaction called laze.)

LONE SHOOTERS

It was a typical Sunday in September 2017, for those at Burnette Chapel Church of Christ in Antioch, Tennessee. Suddenly, a masked gunman started firing.

“One woman was killed and seven other people were hurt after a suspect identified as a Sudanese immigrant opened fire at a Tennessee church Sunday, police said, as the FBI confirmed it’s launched a civil rights investigation into the shooting. The suspect, 25-year-old Emanuel Kidega Samson, emigrated from Sudan two decades ago, police said. He’s suspected of bringing at least two pistols and a mask to the predominantly white Burnette Chapel Church of Christ in Antioch, southeast of Nashville, before opening fire.”³

More would have been killed had an usher not “used his personal firearm to subdue a masked gunman who had already killed one woman in the church’s parking lot and injured six others inside.”⁴

TERRORISTS

On Halloween 2017, in New York City, “Eight people have been killed and more than a dozen injured after a man drove a truck nearly a mile down a bike path in lower Manhattan, striking pedestrians, cyclists and a school bus. ...

The New York Times reported that “handwritten notes in Arabic near the truck ... indicated allegiance to the Islamic State,” while *CNN* said a note was written in English, also indicating support for ISIS, and was found inside the truck. Others including the *Daily Mail* claimed an ISIS flag was found in the truck.”⁵

NUCLEAR ATTACK

Dr. Peter Vincent Pry executive director of the Task Force on National and Homeland Security, former CIA and former chief of staff on the Congressional EMP Commission just alerted Americans to a real threat from Russia.

“In 2016, Russian state television ‘accidentally’ revealed plans for an unmanned robot submarine, like a huge intelligent torpedo, armed with a massive 100-megaton warhead – the largest nuclear weapon ever deployed by any nation. Poseidon would explode underwater to radioactively contaminate and inundate with tsunamis U.S. coastal cities and seaboard, where are concentrated

much of America’s military-industrial strength and population.

“U.S. intelligence confirms the existence of Poseidon in the 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. Russia is testing a prototype. ...

“ ‘On March 1, [2018] the Russian president spoke about the creation in Russia of unmanned underwater machines capable of moving at a very low depth and at intercontinental range at a speed far exceeding the speed of submarines, the most modern torpedoes and all types of surface ships, even the most high-speed ones.’ Putin said Poseidon carries a ‘massive nuclear ordinance.’ ... *Russia’s 100-megaton doomsday bomb is real.*”⁶ (Emphasis added.)

Dr. Pry has been one of the loudest voices for a number of years, warning that North Korea, Iran, China and even Russia could launch an Electronic Magnetic Pulse (EMP) bomb above the U.S. that could within the year kill 90% of the population by starvation. He adds that a solar storm could

do the same, similar to the 1816 “New England Year Without Summer” that some scientists believe was caused by a solar storm.

Are you panicking yet? Fearful? If you have not been calloused by too many horror shows on television or video games, you *should be* at least a little worried and asking yourself one of several questions. One, what are the odds of anything like the above happening to me? Two, does it make any difference to learn what I can do in a dangerous situation? Three,

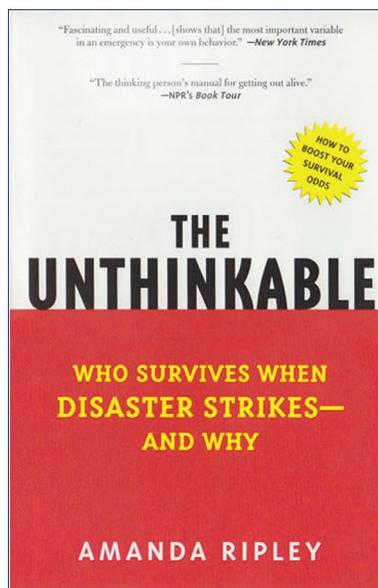
is it futile? Four, how hard would it be to be prepared without becoming consumed by it and having it take over my life?

It’s true. *We do* live in a very dangerous world. In 2006 *Time*, using statistics from the Hazards and Vulnerability Research Institute at the University of South Carolina noted, “About 91 percent of Americans live in places at a moderate-to-high risk.”⁷ The list of hazards is endless, but the question is the same:

How Best Can I Stay Safe In An UNSafe World?

THE UNTHINKABLE

In 2004, Amanda Ripley, a reporter who was working on *Time* magazine’s coverage of the third anniversary of 9/11



talked with some of the 9/11 survivors. Then she also interviewed survivors from “shipwrecks, plane crashes, and flood waters.” What she found turned into an invaluable book, *The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes – And Why*. She warns, “disasters are predictable, but surviving them is not.”⁸ She notes:

“About one hundred lightning strikes hit the earth every second, and in many years, these bolts of fire kill more people than any other weather. But lightning is not something most of us worry about very much.”⁹

Another example recounts a common disaster that occurred in the 1999 Hurricane Floyd, where 70 percent of the fifty-two people who died, did so from drowning, mostly in their cars.

The value of her research and insights is shared in the story of two cities, Jantang and Langi:

“The 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia killed an estimated two hundred thousand people ... A crushing wall of seawater seems like one situation in which death is nonnegotiable. ... But for thousands of people, the best warning system was old and homemade.”¹⁰

Why was the survival rate for these two cities near the epicenter dramatically different? Jantang lost over 50 per cent of its people and Langi lost zero. The lesson? Langi learned the signs of a tsunami from the 1907 tsunami that killed about 70 percent of the population and passed the lesson on through the generations. “When the ground shakes, run for high ground and stay there.”

LESSONS FOR TODAY

Even though Americans are by nature optimistic and think they are invincible, natural disasters occur everywhere. Hurricanes do hit U.S. coastal areas, tornadoes and lightning strike almost anywhere, volcanoes erupt in the Western states, and earthquakes shake California’s coast and rock Missouri. The biggest earthquake ever recorded in the U.S., the New Madrid fault in Missouri in 1811-12, changed the course of the mighty Mississippi River, even reversing the flow and pushing it upstream. Because of this memory, in Missouri when the clock turned from 1999 to 2000 many heeded warnings to be prepared for a coming earthquake connected to the New Madrid fault. Bottled water flew off shelves and dried food merchants got rich. Yet, the earthquake did not happen and we went back to sleep. Experts still say it is getting *more-likely-than-not* that the big one will happen in Missouri. St. Louis, a city built of brick buildings and old skyscrapers, is especially vulnerable.

In 1999, many people made an effort to learn what to do in a particular disaster. They learned the history of the New Madrid fault. Preparation consisted of physical items to survive the earthquake and fires, but few ever addressed the most important elements of survival – your mind set. This is where Amanda Ripley’s book becomes significant. **Staying safe in an UNSafe**

world involves teaching “our brains to work more quickly even more wisely, under great stress.”¹¹

Ripley divides her book into three parts covering “Denial, Deliberation and The Decisive Moment.” Under “Denial,” she covers *Delay and Risk*, under “Deliberation,” she discusses *Fear, Resilience and Groupthink*,” and under “Decisive Moment,” she covers *Panic, Paralysis and Heroism*. In the final section, she takes the reader through *Making New Instincts*.

All of the different kinds of threats have some similar responses that with proper attention will give you confidence in a crisis situation. Ripley points out that humans rely primarily on either intuition or analysis for decisions. “The intuitive system is automatic, fast, emotional, and swayed heavily by experiences and images. The analytical system is the Ego to the brain’s Id: logical, contemplative, and pragmatic. The best combination is to collect the data on the possible disasters and threats making sure that if the scare is real, let emotions and “feelings point us in the proper direction, take us to the appropriate place in a decision making space, where we may put the instruments of logic to good use ... [do not] avoid emotion – or wish it away – capitalize upon it. Dread, properly tapped, can save our lives.”¹²

DELAY

Retrain your brain to respond instantly and correctly. Delay is one of the greatest dangers in a crisis situation where time is critical. Because we first deny what is happening, we often under-perceive the risk, and we delay. We know something is wrong, but are not sure what to do, unless we have taken the time to think out a situation like this and have mapped out some of the basic survival pathways. In a disaster, we think and perceive differently. On the plus side, when we have done some of the mind exercises to retrain the brain, we learn how to react correctly and increase our chances to survive.

HOW can you train yourself to respond instantly and correctly, avoiding denial and delay?

Start with the simple things like using your eyes and ears to take in your surroundings. If this is a place you frequent, are you aware of the normal sounds and would you notice something out of place? In times of extreme danger, researchers say our hearing changes, and we hear sounds otherwise not audible.





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When you are walking down the street, are you aware of those you pass? Those lingering in a doorway? How do you carry your briefcase or purse? Do you have a whistle instantly available to blow should you be personally attacked? Have you scouted out where there is a safe place to run?

When you are on a commuter train, bus, airplane, or in a hotel, do you know the closest escape door and route? Have you practiced grabbing your identity papers, money and cell phone, or are they in different places and therefore, not accessible in a split second?

By taking a few moments to assess your surroundings and always be alert, you will not only have a greater chance of survival should something happen, but your comfort level will be higher, and you will feel safer.

OVERCOMING FEAR

Practice makes perfect in a disaster. Fear is normal and frequently an asset. It is God’s adrenaline to get our attention and “typically at its peak once we’ve grasped the danger we face.”¹³ What we do with it determines whether or not we are a survivor.

Because “our abilities to reason and perceive our surroundings deteriorate,”¹⁴ first and foremost, *literally*, start breathing deeply. “By consciously slowing down the breath, we can de-escalate the primal fear response that otherwise takes over.”¹⁵ Next get the facts when available and then let “raw emotion”¹⁶ complement the situation.

Because advertisers and television use fear to motivate us, we can use their research/productions to practice determining whether the threat is real or not and start training the brain for what to react to and what not to. Brain research shows the “anterior insula” is activated by the idea of bad things happening to you. Images motivate us. Use images in your mind to map a way out of a scenario. When you see on the nightly news pictures of a raging river with a car floating downstream and a person

inside, imagine how you would get out. Use other stories of disaster to role-play what you would do.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF BEING SAFE – FALSE SAFETY

Many Americans have security systems for their homes, cars, and iPhones/iPads, etc. Some even have systems that can monitor everything in their home while they are hundreds of miles away. What about the commercials that show someone ringing your doorbell and you answer from the grocery store miles away? Some stop the criminal, but most catch the criminal *after* the crime and *do not stop* the crime. We are eager to buy what we think is security when in many cases, *it is just a means to collect data on all of us.*

Sophisticated cameras, attached to every streetlight that can read and identify a face in three seconds, are increasingly monitoring streets across America.

All of these security systems rely upon several things: remote control via the *Cloud*, radio waves, data centers with the latest technology, and convincing you that it is all necessary for you to be safe.

The dark side? As attorney John Whitehead recent wrote:

“Nowhere to run and nowhere to hide: this is the new mantra of the architects of the police state and their corporate collaborators. (*Facebook, Amazon, Netflix, Google, YouTube, Instagram, etc.*)

“Government eyes are watching you.

“They see your every move: what you read, how much you spend, where you go, with whom you interact, when you wake up in the morning, what you’re watching on television and reading on the Internet.

“Every move you make is being monitored, mined for data, crunched, and tabulated in order to form a picture of who you are, what makes you tick, and how best to control you when and if it becomes necessary to bring you in line.

“When the government sees all and knows all and has an abundance of laws to render even the most seemingly upstanding citizen a criminal and lawbreaker, then the old adage that you’ve got nothing to worry about if you’ve got nothing to hide, no longer applies.”¹⁷

What to DO to Stay Safe?

PREPARATION FOR FOOD, WATER, SHELTER & SAFETY

The Internet is loaded with books listing how to store water and food, keep warm and dry, and protect yourself from wild animals and people. *Just in Case, How to be Self-sufficient When the Unexpected Happens* by Kathy Harrison is one of many books

that are well organized and easy to follow. The best way to really prepare is to make a game out what you find in many of the chapters, and yearly refresh your preparations.

ACTIVE SHOOTERS

Confronting an active shooter situation with a gun is only for those who have made a commitment to train regularly with firearms. Ripley recounts the story of a NYPD police officer Jim Cirillo, on a stakeout confronted with three robbers with guns. Cirillo tells how his subconscious took over and “despite fear coursing through his body [as an instructor who had taken training very seriously], he had created subconscious muscle memories for holding his gun in one hand, two hands, every conceivable position, so that he did not need to think when the time came to fire.”¹⁸ Cirillo illustrated Ripley’s observation that “the best way to negotiate stress is through repeated, realistic training.”¹⁹

On Tuesday, June 19, 2018, “An armed off-duty paramedic, who is also a pastor is being hailed as a hero after he shot and killed a shooting suspect at a Washington State Walmart. ...”²⁰ Guns used for defense do stop disaster. Rickey Fievez, the victim of the carjacking, is still hospitalized, but his “son says the Good Samaritan’s quick actions saved his dad’s life. ‘That bystander who shot him is a hero’, said Tyler Fievez ...”²¹

In America, the number of guns used to *stop* a disaster heavily outweighs those used to commit crimes. “After the Sandy Hook school massacre in 2012, President Obama issued an executive order allowing the [CDC] agency to review existing studies on causes of and ways to reduce gun violence.”²² The CDC found “Almost all national survey estimates indicate that defensive gun uses by victims are at least as common as offensive uses by criminals, with estimates of annual uses ranging from about 500,000 to more than three million per year, in the context of 300,000 violent crimes involving firearms in 2008.”²³

As the national debate on guns rages on, Americans need to practice *staying safe in an unsafe world* by getting their facts, starting with “Section 311 of the U.S. Code Title 10 (as last amended in 1958) says: ‘The militia of the United States consists of all able-bodied males at least 17 years of age and ... under 45 years of age who are, or who have made a declaration of intention to become, citizens of the United States and of female citizens of the United States who are members of the National Guard’.”²⁴

CONCLUSION

The best way to boost the odds of surviving is to “get to know your disaster personalities before you really need to.” Ridley lists six action items. We would add a seventh item, but making it the first one to consider:

Acknowledge that there is a Sovereign God who loves you and wants to be by your side in all things, especially during times of disasters. However, sitting



by and waiting for God to act is not enough. God gave you eyes, ears, hands, feet as well as a brain and emotions. All of which you need to call into action instantly – but at the same time, lean on Him for the wisdom that provides calmness and decisiveness. Ridley sums this up with her lead into her six suggestions, “**You matter more than you think.**”

1. “**Cultivate Resilience:** Attitude really does make a difference [because] people who perform effectively in crises and recover well afterward tend to ... ‘believe they can influence what happens to them, ... find meaningful purposes in life’s turmoil and ... are convinced they can learn from both good and bad experiences’.”²⁵
2. “**Get to Know Your Neighbors:** The people who will save you ... will be your neighbors and coworkers.” She suggests throwing a neighborhood party and passing around a sign-up sheet for emails and phone numbers and identifying possible special needs in a disaster with neighbors indicating: a) what they might need *help for* and b) what *help they might be able to offer*. Each of us has different abilities, connections and even possible areas of shelter to offer others. In our impersonal and fast paced world, most people would be delighted to get to know their neighbors in this way.
3. “**Lower Your Anxiety Level:** Start by practicing your breathing. Next time you are immobilized in a traffic jam, practice breathing in for four counts, holding for four counts, and breathing out for four counts. Then repeat. Your driving will improve and, and possibly your day.”²⁶
4. “**Lose Weight** [and improve your physical abilities] What helps us in regular life helps us in disasters.”
5. “**Calculate Your Risks:** Make a list of your biggest risks ... [realizing that] the most deadly, underappreciated threats in most places are fire, flood, and lightning.”²⁷
6. “**Train your Brain:** By far the best way to improve your performance is to practice.”²⁸

How DO we stay safe in an UNSafe world?

Start by making the time, using these basic pieces of information. Enjoy the positives that will come with your practice such as strengthening your family, getting to know your neighbors better and having some laughs along the way. And remember, loyal friends and neighbors, family and our faith are the glue that holds it all together.

(Endnotes)

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STAYING SAFE IN SCHOOL

How Parents Can Push Back Against Troubling Trends in Education

Reprinted with permission as published on June 18, 2018 by Jane Robbins at truthinamericaneducation.com

The trend lines in public education are troubling. The system is relentlessly remolded from liberal-arts education to narrow workforce training to benefit politically connected corporations. Teachers are marginalized in favor of machines, as curricula move online and students are relegated to screens instead of face-to-face instruction. Sophisticated software platforms compile mountains of intensely personal data on the operation of the child's mind. Digital tools, magnanimously provided to schools by Google, Facebook, etc., suck each student into that corporate universe and provide a steady stream of data to keep the profitable engines humming.

Children are subjected to intrusive "surveys" about sensitive topics that are manifestly none of the government's business, and class time is spent more on probing personalities than instilling knowledge. Students play classroom video games that are designed to "nudge" them into government-approved mindsets.

All the resulting data is analyzed, sorted, and fed into proprietary algorithms that can influence or even determine the child's future paths. It may be sold – even to China – for purposes unknown to the student's parents. Or it may be combined with other data troves within the federal government, so that the omniscient State can know everything there is to know about the citizen – or, by virtue of new algorithms created when his data has been shaken and stirred, even things he doesn't know about himself.

Especially since parents tend to give their own local schools high grades even if they're disturbed by developments nationally, the tendency is to quietly surrender and hope for the best. But for the sake of our children and our society, surrender is not an option.

So what can be done?

For decades the education establishment, federal and state, has operated with practically free rein. Despite mini-revolts when the train really veered off the tracks (for example, the pushback against Outcome-Based Education, now called Competency-Based Education, in some states), by and large the educrats have done what they wanted. This situation must change, and it must start at the local level.

A few practical suggestions for parents. These suggestions address primarily data and privacy issues. The list is by no means exhaustive, but it's a good start.

- Pay close attention to digital technology in your child's classroom. Demand to know what data the software is collecting and what happens to it. Request to see the vendor's contract with the school, and especially the privacy policy that governs the data. If you're not satisfied with what you find, refuse to let your child use that platform. Ditto, regarding the use of platforms that don't offer a parent portal so you can see what your child sees. Demand that the school provide an identifying number so that your child doesn't use his own name on any platform. And as a general rule, tell the school your child is not allowed to play video games. Period.
- Don't allow your child to use "Google Apps for Education" or any school-issued device (including "wearables," such as Fitbit). Give the school limits on how much time it can put your child on a screen.
- Don't give the school any data about your child unless you understand the need for it. No, the school doesn't need your kindergartner's dental records; don't provide them. Don't give social security numbers either.
- Read everything the school sends home with your child, especially handbooks and other information at the beginning of the semester. This may be where the information about objectionable surveys is buried. Opt your child out of every survey. *Every one.*
- Teach your child to notice his educational surroundings and report to you when something seems amiss. (HT to radio host Shannon Joy in New York) If a test includes unusual questions, he should tell you. If he's stuck on a screen in class longer than you have permitted, he should tell you. If





he's told to take a survey, he should politely decline until he gets your permission. (Opting out of assessments is its own category, which is not covered here.)

You are in Charge

The initial reaction of administrators to your instructions will probably be incredulity. After all, they have rarely, if ever, been challenged. They'll probably insist you can't set these boundaries. **But you can.** You are in charge here, and unless they can show you a state or federal statute requiring you to subject your child to the objectionable mandate (hint: there is rarely such a statute), stand your ground. Get other parents to join you. Maybe we can take back education, **one child at a time.**
