

Transcription: Jonathan Hollerman – Instant Disaster

**Jeff:** You're in the middle of a road trip with your family, on the way to grandma's house for the holidays, when the street lights all go out and the radio starts producing nothing but static. Maybe you're sitting at your desk at work when the office goes dark, and the cube dwellers all around you start swearing at their lost work. Maybe you're at the grocery store, or at the park playing with your kids, or in line at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Wherever you are you're anywhere but at home, with your stockpile of survival gear and supplies, when a major emergency happens. It could be a blackout or a tornado, an earthquake, a terrorist attack. Whatever it is, it's something bad, and now you've got to react immediately.

So what do you do when you're caught away from home, away from your gear and with family to protect? What if you and your family aren't together? What if you just aren't ready?

Hello, everyone. This is Jeff Anderson, Editor for *Modern Combat and Survival Magazine*, and Executive Director of the *New World Patriot Alliance*, with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot. With us today to talk us through responding to an instant disaster is survival expert and best-selling author, Jonathan Hollerman. Jonathan, welcome to the program man.

Jonathan: Hi, Jeff. Glad to be back.

**Jeff:** It's good to have you. I know you've been really busy over there with a lot of stuff you're working on with books and everything else, and a lot of new training. I know we're going to get into some of that stuff now.

Listen, everyone. If you haven't listened to our other podcasts with Jonathan, you're in for a real treat. He is a former Air Force elite S.E.R.E. instructor where he's training hundreds of students in how to survive under the most extreme circumstances—including in the harshest weather conditions and under extreme food and sleep deprivation.

Today Jonathan has gone on to make his unique survival background experience and philosophies, to take him to a much larger audience through his best-selling books such as *EMP: Equipping Modern Patriots*, and *Survival Theory: A Preparedness Guide*, as well as his latest bug out DVD.

In addition, he has gone on to help others benefit from his background by offering personalized preparedness consulting in everything from putting together your personal survival plan to planning, buying and building your own survival retreat.

**For more information on Jonathan and his training and services, please go ahead and visit him at his website at [www.GridDownConsulting.com](http://www.GridDownConsulting.com).**

**All right, Jonathan. So let's go ahead and jump into this now. When we're talking about an instant disaster, so many people talk about emergencies, disasters and terrorist attacks, and things like that, like it's an abstract idea. What I want to do is I want to talk about the cold, harsh realities when it comes to an instant attack. A hurricane you can see coming. You see the weather reports and all this stuff. It gives you time. But an instant disaster doesn't give you that time.**

**So when people are caught when they don't have warning of a crisis coming. Let's start off conceptually. What are maybe the first three actions somebody needs to take just to be able to set themselves in, set a foundation for their next action to take?**

Jonathan: A lot of this comes down to just having a preparedness mindset and thinking through problems, coming up with solutions to problems. There's a lot of top ten, top three lists online from different survival experts on do this, do that. The problem is, what scenario are we talking about? Are we talking about a bomb going off in New York City? Are we talking about an EMP attack, where a good portion of vehicles aren't working? Are we talking about solar flare cyber attack on the grid?

So there are limited scenarios where it's instant, and I just kind of named them. Pandemic, financial collapse, hurricane, things of that nature, you can see those coming from a mile away. So those are scenarios where if you find yourself not prepared, shame on you because you knew it was coming. Right?

In the case where it's an instant situation, the first thing you need to do is focus on your personal protection. So if we're talking a bomb going off and your building's on fire, obviously leave the building, follow the crowd, go in the same direction a lot of people are going. There's probably going to be rescue personnel showing up. Just follow instructions.

A lot of people get really in the weeds. In the case of a scenario like that in New York, they really want to have all this bug out bag gear and everything at their office. But the thing is, if it's a localized disaster there's going to be people coming to help, and if you looked at this in any semblance of your imagination as to what would I do if this happened, that happened. And that's the biggest part of it is game plan it. Put it down on paper. Think about different scenarios. What would I do under this situation? What would I do under that situation? Have a plan of action in place, so that you're not just completely taken off-guard.

Which would lead me into the long-term loss of the electric grid—whether that be from an EMP attack by North Korea, which is a very imminent and immediate risk right now; a solar flare, which we're long overdue for; a cyber attack on the electric grid; or just a good old-fashioned physical attack on the electric grid.

If we lose the electric grid long-term, a lot of people aren't going to really understand how bad it's going to get. So it is imperative, once you think about personal safety, getting yourself out of the immediate danger area. How do I get home? How do I get back to my family? How do I get back to my other resources? Ideally you'll have a car in a parking garage, or a car in a parking lot, that you'll have a get home bag in that you can get to that, get any immediate action equipment that you will need to get home and get a hold of that.

A lot of it just depends on the situation. So a lot of that just comes down to mindset, thinking through scenarios beforehand how you're going to react.

**Jeff:** That makes a lot of sense. We talk a lot about mindset. The only thing I would add to that is when you're talking about—when an incident happens isn't the best time to try and think about what your plan is. Right? So take an example of you are in a building. A good example is maybe the nightclub fire, where everybody just kind of died at the doorway. The fire started. That would be a case where you maybe wouldn't go with the crowd. Right? But if you didn't think about your plan ahead of time, you would be just in panic if you didn't have a plan. You would just follow the crowd and get stuffed inside of a doorway, and probably die of smoke inhalation.

Whereas if you had that mindset ahead of time anywhere you go, whether it's a restaurant, a nightclub, any building, and you look around and you see, okay, well there's the exits but there's where the backstage is, that's where the door to the back stage is, and if something were to happen would I follow everybody out the front door or would I go back where—I know seven people are going out the back door where the stage is. That might be a better plan. But if you don't think about that ahead of time, then your mindset is just going to be in panic mode right with everybody else, a lot of times.

**Jonathan:** Absolutely. You're absolutely correct. You're absolutely correct, Jeff. A lot of my focus with my clients and my consulting is around societal collapse scenarios. You're talking immediate action, localized events. So yeah, the thought process behind that is considerably different. A lot of that's having your head on a swivel, having situational awareness to the situation and the environment that you're in.

A perfect example was the nightclub fire. Anytime you go into a large—whether it be a football stadium, something along those lines, not just looking for alternative exits. Because in that situation you don't want to go with the crowd, because you're probably going to get trampled trying to get through a six-foot wide door.

You want to pay attention to back doors, windows that you could get yourself and your loved ones out of in a situation. Also looking for potential places of cover. If you're talking about the shooting down in Los Vegas, a lot of the people just sat down on the ground or got behind a chain-link fence. There's a big difference between covered concealment, as

you're well aware of. Where are my locations for cover that can stop a bullet? So keep an eye on those things.

Whenever I go to a restaurant, if we're in a booth I always position myself facing the front door. Pay attention to people around you. Are they nervous? Is there some guy that's nervous or looking distraught? Don't ignore those types of situations. Pay attention to them. Keep your eye on that individual and see how they're going to react.

**Jeff:** **Jonathan, we talk a lot about everyday carry gear at *Modern Combat and Survival* and the importance of having gear, because in an incident type of a disaster you're not going to have maybe that giant pantry of food back home or the escape and evasion equipment that's in your car. You might only have what you have right there at the time of an event.**

**A good example of that is an active shooter scenario. You're at the mall shopping or whatever. You hear gunshots going off, or whatever it might be. Your gear can be a good help for you. It doesn't take the place of knowledge and tactics. It doesn't.**

**But when it comes to what gear can be useful for you that you actually carry on your person, what are some things that you recommend people have, as far as everyday carry gear that they wear on their person, that they have with them, for an instant type of a disaster?**

Jonathan: A lot of that is dependent on where you live, too. So if you live and work in New York City, your options are going to be pretty slim as to what you can actually carry on your person. I was actually just down in Washington, D.C. this past week and you can't even have a full-sized survival knife down there. So I had to take my extra magazines out of my bug out bag when I drove down there. I had to take my hobby knife, my survival knife out of my bag.

So always pay attention to your laws in your state or your city that you live in. A lot of times from the survival retreat consulting side of it that's tough. If you live in one of those states I still recommend you play by the rules, because if you get caught doing something bad you go to jail or you lose your rights to own guns for the rest of your life. So I don't ever want to see that.

But with all the terrorism, the crazy people that are out there in this world today, the church shooting, Las Vegas, the nightclub, you can go down the list, a gun. I have a concealed carry permit. If you see me out in public, there's a 99.5 percent chance that I'm probably carrying. So if you have the ability to conceal carry in your area, then I would recommend it. I also worked an office job for a few years where the dress did not allow that. I had to wear a tucked in shirt. I could have worn an ankle holster. It was something that I never really asked about. But I always had a handgun in my get home bag that I carried to work, or in my briefcase.

So the gun is a great equalizer. If you have the ability to carry a weapon, I would highly recommend it. I don't really push for really small guns, like the .380s. There's not a lot of stopping power. You're very limited in rounds. I personally carry a Glock 19. But I'm also a pretty big guy. I'm 6'4", 230 pounds. So I conceal it pretty well. A Glock 43 is a new weapon that's out. That's a good self-carry gun.

Anyway, so if you have the ability to carry a weapon on you that is the best case scenario. Otherwise you're running and you're hiding like everybody else. It's just a matter of time that that crazy person gets to where you're hiding under the chair and shoots you. So the ability to carry a gun would be the first thing on my list if you can.

Pocketknife. When you start talking EDC, you're talking about stuff you carry on your person in your pants. I see a lot of people on Instagram that put out their current EDC and they've got so much stuff that I'm like, what are they wearing, cargo pants every day with their pockets bulging and life straws hanging out of this pocket? EDC is just to get you to your get home bag or to get you to the rest of your equipment. Even if you're at work, that's something that should be close by and close at hand.

So on your person, very limited. I carry a pocketknife. I'm a big fan of the Kershaw Camber, which is a really good quality knife. It's got S30V steel, which is a very good steel. You can pick this up for about \$60 or \$70. Cheaper Kershaw knives are really good if you're on a budget. Or if you've got a lot of money you can get a ZT, or something along those ends. So a pocketknife. I use mine every single day, opening boxes, cutting binder twine for bales of hay. I use it every single day. So a knife.

A couple other things that you should consider would be a flashlight. Some people carry these large flashlights. I always carry a small flashlight. I've got a Klarus Mi7. I actually don't have it on me. It's downstairs. I should have brought it up. So a Klarus Mi7. Something that's small that can fit on your keychain is what I recommend, because if you get one of these bigger flashlights eventually you get tired of carrying that big bulky thing in your pocket. So a small flashlight.

At night if you're traveling, if you have to walk home from some location, I don't recommend using a flashlight. You're drawing attention to yourself. Let your night vision work. Especially if you're on the open roads, you can see pretty well. Just let your night vision adjust. So a flashlight would just be an emergency type thing.

I have a paracord bracelet. These things get kind of crazy. You can get these things with everything and the kitchen—

**Jeff:       Machetes inside of them and stuff.**

Jonathan: No. I don't recommend that. So mine has a handcuff key in the buckle. Inside of it there is a small lock pick and a razor. So there's only two or three things in here. I kept it pretty basic. The small blade would be for cutting zip ties if you've got your hands tied behind your back. So a survival bracelet, these are good. But I also understand if you work a white-collar job showing up at the office in a survival bracelet is going to be kind of weird.

Let's see here. Lock pick, handgun, flashlight, paracord bracelet, handcuff. Lighter. I always carry a lighter on me. I don't smoke. I smoked when I was younger. I don't smoke anymore. But having a lighter on you is always a smart thing to have.

Then the last thing I think is a big thing that people overlook—cash. If you have the ability to carry a thousand dollars in a concealed location on your person, that can go a long way to helping you out of a situation. Convincing somebody to give you supplies or get some food. A big thing people overlook is they always focus on walking home from work. If you have a thousand dollars in your pocket—half of the Americans in this country own bicycles—start knocking on doors. Ask somebody, I'll give you \$500 for your kid's bicycle. That will cut your travel time home in half. So having some cash on you, what you can afford to carry on you, that you can conceal really well, would be a good idea as well.

**Jeff:** If you see me along the road riding somebody else's Hello Kitty bicycle with training wheels on it, and I paid \$500 for that, somebody shoot me right there.

We've been talking with survival consultant Jonathan Hollerman of [GridDownConsulting.com](http://GridDownConsulting.com) about how to prepare for an instant disaster. We have a lot more to get to—including what to do when you're at work when a crisis strikes; survival gear for your vehicle so you're always prepared, even between destinations; and how to rally your family together at a moment's notice, even if you're all in different locations when the balloon goes up. All that and more coming right up. But first, check out this special message.

Okay. We're back with Jonathan Hollerman of [GridDownConsulting.com](http://GridDownConsulting.com) talking about steps that you can take now to be prepared for an instant disaster that could catch you away from your home, your gear and your family. We've got a lot more to get to, so let's go ahead and jump back in now.

Jonathan, a lot of us spend a lot of time in our cars, especially if you've got a commute to work and you're traveling back and forth to work. Or no matter where it is, just running around with errands. When an instant disaster happens, a lot of times you might be in your vehicle when that happens. In an instant disaster we can get traffic jams, anything like that that's a natural disaster, like an earthquake or something like that, it can still jam up the roads and everything. And you might just have that gear right there, what you have on your person and in your vehicle.

So let's talk about your vehicle for a second. What survival gear should I be carrying in my car, my truck, and what specific items might we put inside of that kind of a pack?

Jonathan: Sure. A lot of this is situational-dependent on how far you drive. What you carry in your car is going to be different if you drive 40 minutes to work every day or if you have a five-mile drive to work every day. A lot of it is going to be dependent on what part of the country you live in. Are you out in the desert somewhere in Las Vegas? Or are you in

downtown New York City? So you have to use some common sense to wrap your head around exactly your particular geography, your particular situation.

The thing I see a lot is people carrying three-day bug out bags in their car to get home. Let's say you have a ten-mile walk to get home from work. You don't need a sleeping bag. You don't need 50 pounds of gear to get home. That's just going to tire you out before you even get home, before you start your bug out to go wherever you're heading.

So I recommend to really err on the side of slimming down what you carry in your car. A couple things are really overlooked. One is going to be a comfortable pair of shoes. If you work a white-collar job, or if you have to wear work boots or dress shoes where you work and where you're heading, I would always carry a good pair of tennis shoes, or if it's winter time a comfortable pair of winter boots, in your vehicle.

The last thing you want to do is have a ten-mile walk ahead of you and have to wear those penny loafers that you've got on your feet. So have a comfortable pair of shoes in your vehicle. And water. You're going to be exerting energy walking home. The last thing you want to do is dehydrate yourself before you even get home. I always carry a gallon jug of water in the trunk of my vehicle, and that goes along with the CamelBak that I have in my get home bag.

A lot of people have canteens. The problem with a canteen, if you're carrying it in your get home bag and you're walking you're going to constantly have to stop to reach around to get that water out and drink. When I was a S.E.R.E. instructor and survival instructor in the military, CamelBaks, it's much easier to stay hydrated with a CamelBak, because the tube hangs over your shoulder and you have access to water. Drink constantly. If you feel dehydrated, it's too late. You've gone too long without water. So a CamelBak is a much better scenario in your get home bag than an actual canteen.

On my website I have access to a list of all the different types of bags that I recommend. There's some confusion online. If you type "get home bag" you'll get lists for people's bug out bags. you'll get lone wolf packs, you'll get all these different lists. I break it down into four categories.

I recommend everyone have a three-day bug out bag, which is enough equipment for three days to get you from your home to your bug out location. A lot of people confuse that with what I call a lone wolf pack. A lot of people's bug out bags or three-day bug out bags look like these monster packs, and they're carrying a lot of extra gear they don't need to get to their retreat. A lone wolf pack is something that you'd pack—once you get to your retreat location, you move your equipment over into that. Then you can have everything and the kitchen sink in that bag, if you have to bug out from your location.

Then an assault pack, which is a really condensed, like a CamelBak, the old little tiny pack that you carry if you're walking patrol around your property or around your location. Just the basic stuff that you have on you.

Then the last would be a get home bag. I think it's important to specify the different types of bags. The get home bag is going to have a fire starting kit, water purification kit, water, a small trauma kit—you don't need a big four-pound medical sack with you—flashlights, TP wipes, some food. Calories is really important. So having some high-calorie foods to munch on, on your walk home, is important. Having this stuff in your trunk at all times.

The last thing I would recommend, that goes along with the shoes, is having a winter coat. If you're traveling in a winter area, or if it's wintertime in your area, you have cold weather, a lot of people are used to getting in their car, driving to work, driving to a restaurant, and they just brave the cold with their thin leather jacket or something to get in or out of the restaurant. But if you break down on a highway somewhere and you don't have a winter coat, that could go very badly.

So having the proper clothes in your vehicle, so you have a comfortable hike home. Having the proper things in your get home bag to get home. Again, that really varies depending on, like I said, whether you're in New York City or you drive 40 miles in Nevada somewhere to work.

**Jeff:** Yeah. It's all really good points. I think a lot of people really don't consider, when they're packing up their car on their way to work, things that they could have in there. So that's really good.

**So Jonathan, speaking specifically about work. A lot of us spend a lot of time at work. When they say we spend about a third of our lives at work, if you ask my wife it's about two-thirds for me and then one-third with her. But there's a good chance that when an instant disaster type event happens, you're going to be at work. Of course this is going to be situational-dependent, if you're a construction worker and you're out somewhere, or you're a road worker and you're out somewhere, or you're a cubicle monkey like I was, you're at work with a bunch of other people.**

**But when it comes to preparing for a disaster there, whether it's gear-wise or whatever you need to do, what are some tips that you have for people when an instant disaster happens and you're at work?**

**Jonathan:** Sure. So again, situation-dependent. Are you on the fiftieth floor at the World Trade Center, or do you work somewhere in suburbia where you work in an office and your vehicle's right down below you? It really depends on how far away your get home bag is. That's going to be an individual thing that you're going to have to brainstorm and think. What would it take me to get from where I'm physically working at my cubicle or on the roof, if you're a roofer somewhere. Where's my vehicle in coordination to where I am, and what would I need to get from there to my get home bag?

So if you're in a situation, like New York City, you're in a high rise building, your car's in a garage somewhere or you rode the tram in, I would have a briefcase or something that you keep at work that basically resembles your get home bag and have all your



equipment at work. If you're not going to have easy access when the balloon goes up, you go down to your vehicle in the parking garage somewhere and get access to that, I would keep all that equipment at work the best you can. Whatever you're allowed to have there, obviously.

If that's not the case, if you work somewhere rural, if you work in a suburban environment where you have access to your vehicle, then I would keep the get home bag in your trunk and not freak people out because you've got a MOLLE bag with a six-inch survival knife strapped to the side, dragging that in and out of work every day.

So that would be my recommendations on that front. Obviously you're going to have your EDC stuff, your pocket knife, your lighter, some of the stuff that you carry on your person, that can get you to your get home bag in your trunk.

**Jeff:** Yeah. Because when you think about it, you have your stuff at work but then you also have the stuff that you carry on your person as well. All of that combines really well for a full everyday carry plan.

**So let me ask you, Jonathan. One of our biggest concerns that people are talking about all the time is, what if an event happens and I'm not near my family? Because that's most likely what's going to happen. Right? I'm going to be at work. My spouse is going to be out, either at work or running errands or something. The kids are going to be at school. Something happens, do we really want to rely on all the systems around us, to be able to make sure that the traffic's going to flow well, the communication lines are going to be there? We always have to plan for the worst case scenario.**

**So what are some ways that we can rally our family together in the disaster and make sure that we can all come back together so that I can protect my family, no matter where we are, even when we're separated?**

**Jonathan:** Absolutely. I do a lot of survival retreat consulting. I fly around, look at my clients' existing survival retreats and their current plans of actions, and what are you going to do if this happens, what are you going to do when that happens. I play devil's advocate with them. Or what if you're at work? I run through a lot of these scenarios. That's a big thing that I find is that a lot of people are prepared. They have food in their basement. They've got water, purification methods. They've got all this stuff. But they've actually never focused on different scenarios. They don't have an exact plan of action in place, and that's going to cause a lot of confusion and a lot of stress when this situation comes down.

So I would say communication is the key. The most important thing is have a written plan of action for each of these scenarios and plan it out. What happens if I'm at work? What happens if, like you said, the wife's at—it's going to be different whether she's at Walmart, or maybe she works really far away, or you work really far away. What

happens if I'm at the store? What happens if I'm away on business somewhere? What are your plans of actions?

A lot of people want to sit down and have a family conference. I always err on the side of caution with that at first. I think whoever's the head planner, whether it be the wife or the husband, think through all these scenarios. Come up with a plan of action for each different scenario. Write it down. Print it out. Discuss it with your significant other. Okay. Well if you're at the store it's going to make more sense for you to swing by the school, because the school's over here. Get the kids on your way home. Have different scenarios and then have a fall back plan. Well, if something happens and none of these scenarios fit, we're all going to meet at the house. Right?

Husband and wife discuss the pros and cons. Put it down on paper. Right? Then figure out what you're going to include with your kids, depending on their age. If they're 16-, 17-year-old high schoolers you can get a little more in-depth with them as to the different scenarios and everything. But if they're younger, you need to come up with a plan of action. You need to know your school's plan of action. What's their plan? Most of the time it's a lockdown scenario where they're going to lock the school down. If that's the situation, hey, stay put, we're going to come and we're going to get you.

Then the next question is, how am I going to get my kids? A lot of times the school isn't very far from where you live. But in rural areas, like where I live, the local school is 20 miles away. So how are you going to go and get that child if it's an EMP attack and your car doesn't run? Do you have access to a bicycle or a lawn mower, or anything, to go down and pick them up? So a plan of action in place, written down and discussed within the family, is so very important and it's so very key.

The last thing I would mention is having that fallback plan. The scenario that doesn't fit the mold. I mentioned how everybody's going to meet back at the house in that scenario. I would also add in, have a spot in your house that only you and your family members know to leave a hidden message. Let's say your fallback plan is everybody meet at the house. You get home from work. They should have been home long before you. You show up and they're not there, for whatever reason. Maybe the neighbor was threatening them and they felt like they had to leave the house.

Have a spot. For me and my wife, our spot is behind the headboard. We're going to write a handwritten note. Tape it behind the headboard. Then you can go in there and you can find out. You communicate that way, where it's not out. You don't want to leave it out on the kitchen table and tell people where you're going and what's going. So whether it be behind the headboard or inside the microwave, something along those lines.

**Jeff: That's awesome. It's good to have that backup plan too. Right? Because there could be a situation. I have a teenager now, and so he knows that anytime if there's something where I need to pick him up at school and it's an event like that. Even just getting into the freaking parking lot in the morning during drop-off, with all the kids coming in at the same time, is a real hassle. You can sit in traffic there**

for quite awhile. I can imagine with an incident like that it would be even sometimes more difficult.

One of the things that we did was, we have it set up. There's a road behind there. There's a back road behind the school. He's old enough now. You're not going to ask a six-year-old, typically, go meet me on the back road rather than the front road. But if you don't brainstorm those different possible scenarios and think, okay, this is our perfect scenario, now what if that doesn't happen. What if I can't get to you? What if you aren't at work that day, but it was on your plan to go and get our kid from school? Thinking through those situations really is important, so I'm really glad you brought that up.

Jonathan: Yeah, Jeff. It's very important. I want to really agree with you. A big aspect of survival and preparedness is mindset. You cover that a lot on your website, mindset and thinking through scenarios, and that's so important. Because a lot of times people will email me. They'll be like, what do you think I should do? It's like, well, I need a whole lot more background information on where you live, what you know, what your plan—it's not an easy question to answer.

So I'm trying to give kind of the overview, but you need to have the ability to problem solve, not when the time happens, but have a plan of action, a place beforehand. Think through these scenarios. Problem solve them. Figure out what you're going to do before the situation happens. If you wait until you're in ground zero, or whatever scenario, and all of a sudden you've got to figure everything out, you're probably going to make some big mistakes and it may be deadly.

Jeff: **All good stuff, man. All good stuff. So listen, everybody. As you can tell, there really is a lot of mindset, gear, tactics, planning, training even, with your family and just going through these different scenarios. There is a lot to it. These are some of the things that Jonathan really specializes in, he puts it into a lot of his books, his survival guides and things like that, that you can find online. But I want you to go check out his website over at [www.GridDownConsulting.com](http://www.GridDownConsulting.com).**

**Also, check out the show notes. We can put some of the different gear lists that Jonathan was talking about, we can put those in the show notes there. Also, go to the page that is going to have this on our website. We'll go ahead and give you a resource link over there to check out more of Jonathan's gear lists and things like that that he's got on his website. We'll give you a direct link over there, so go check that out as well.**

**Until our next *Modern Combat and Survival* broadcast, this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train and survive.**