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The Barter Value of Skills

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Recently, we talked about the [necessity of learning skills](#) ^[1] to aid us in a survival situation. Don't underestimate the value of those skills for barter. If the grid goes down, people may be left with no access to medical care, serious gaps in their knowledge or the inability to repair vital items. If you possess those abilities, your skills will be in high demand.

In the situation of economic collapse, there will be a revival of the barter system. To barter means to exchange your goods or services for someone else's goods or services. To complete a satisfactory barter transaction, each person must desire something

from the other party. Despite the potential of desperation, it's morally imperative to be fair to the party that is most in need. Remember that one day, that person who is most in need may be you.

Right now, if something breaks, the replacement is only as far away as the closest Wal-Mart. However, in the event of an economic collapse or a disaster that causes the trucks to stop running, it won't be easy to replace broken items. The ability to repair broken items will be in very high demand. It will be a rare skill, because we live in a world of planned obsolescence. Few people actually know how to repair an item in a sturdy and long-lasting way.

Brandon Smith of Alt-Market calls this about bringing back the American Tradesman:

"If you wish to survive after the destruction of the mainstream system that has babied us for so long," he says, "you must be able to either make a necessary product, repair a necessary product, or teach a necessary skill. A limited few have the capital required to stockpile enough barter goods or gold and silver to live indefinitely. The American Tradesman must return in full force, not only for the sake of self preservation, but also for the sake of our heritage at large."

Check out Brandon's excellent article on the barter system [here](#) ^[2].

There is no limit to the skills that could be used in a barter situation. Some examples would be:

- First Aid for traumatic injuries
- Sutures
- Midwifery/delivering babies
- Dental care
- Herbal remedies
- Animal Husbandry
- Veterinary Skills
- Teaching children
- Teaching skills to adults like knitting, gardening, machine repair, etc.
- Mechanic's skills: the ability to fix solar generators, small machines, automobiles, etc.
- Other repair skills: the ability to repair tools, woodstoves, plumbing, etc.
- Gardening/Farming
- Construction

- Gunsmithing/Weapon repair
- Security services
- Food Preservation
- Sewing/Mending
- Making soap and candles
- Blacksmithing

If the grid goes down or the economy collapses in a long-term way, gone are the days of making your living doing IT work or ringing through purchases at the grocery store. You will need to become not only self-sufficient, but a provider of goods or services. Consider what abilities and knowledge you possess that can be shared with others. Nobody can do it alone – there is always going to be something you need that you can't provide for yourself.

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URLs in this post:

[1] necessity of learning skills: http://readynutrition.com/resources/10-essential-skills-necessary-for-survival_19022010/

[2] here: <http://alt-market.com/articles/146-top-post-collapse-barter-items-and-trade-skills>

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