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Week 50 of 52: Bartering and the Community

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One of my favorite chapters in [Patriots](#) ^[1] was when the main characters were invited to a community market where they bartered with other like-minded individuals for supplies. Personally speaking, that chapter expressed hope – hope that our civilization would not crumble, hope that a community would flourish, that business exchanges would still carry on and ultimately, it was the beginning of a community coming together. If a long-term emergency causes an end to our existing monetary system and an end to the exchange based on fiat currency that our world currently operates in, people will resort back to bartering for skills and services in order to make transactions.

Living in a bartering environment means one must possess certain goods or skills that others find value in. As Brandon Smith writes on the subject:

“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]. So what items or services would be ideal or deemed valuable for bartering in a long-term emergency? Ideally, for bartering in a short-term emergency, you want to consider the basic survival items that may seem to quickly disappear or items many did not plan for. A list of the top 100 items to disappear first can be [viewed here](#) ^[3].

Goods

Barter items can be purchased at the dollar store, the flea market or at liquidation houses. Many who are investing in bartering items purchase the smaller quantities of certain items. For example, if someone wanted to stock up on soda for a bartering situation, they would stock up on the cans and not the liter versions of the product. This helps you sell more products. Yard sales are also great places to purchase “trash to treasure” finds. Items that you can acquire and store inexpensively may one day be more valuable than gold. For an in-depth list of items to invest in for a bartering system, [click here](#) ^[4].

Don’t forget about the items that you can produce yourself. This goes hand-in-hand with the barter of skills. Stock up on the supplies you need to create the following items for a long-term flow of “income”.

- Fresh produce
- Ammunition (see *caution below)
- Home canned items
- Preserved meats (jerky, ham, etc.)
- Warm knitted or crocheted items (mittens, hats, scarves)
- Yarn spun from animal fibers
- Homemade candy
- Homemade soap
- Homemade candles
- Wooden or clay bowls and plates
- Herbal remedies

**Caution: Exercise great discretion when bartering with weapons and ammunition. It is entirely possible that those items could be used against you to take your supplies. These are items to be bartered only with someone you trust implicitly or as an absolute last resort.*

Skills

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. And further consider acquiring new skills that could be used as a bartering exchange during a long-term emergency. To see a detailed list of suggested skills for a bartering situation, [click here](#) ^[5].

Precious Metals

Precious metals are the only form of currency that has stood the test of time. Keep in mind, that if you plan to use precious metals to barter with, it may be difficult to make small trades with. To circumvent this issue, invest in a supply of pre-1965 US silver coins:

1. These will be useful as cash, due to their known bullion content, and low, easy-to-use value, when the paper money crashes in purchasing power. A dime is now worth about \$3 and may be worth \$30 or more after the crash.
2. Silver is less likely to be confiscated by the government (not worth the political and physical effort). FDR did it for gold in 1933.

While you may be able to easily utilize gold and silver as a mechanism of exchange at the onset of a crisis to buy much needed supplies during a currency meltdown and use it to exchange for land or equipment during a recovery period, you may be faced with a period of time when no one will be interested in your PM's. Selco of [SHTF School](#) ^[6] points out that gold is not the silver bullet that provides complete insulation from TEOTWAWKI. When all hell breaks loose, as it did in the Balkans in the 1990's, and a war is being fought right outside of your front window, gold and silver may not get you very far, as people are more concerned with the immediate need of getting out of harm's way than they are with anything else. To learn more about money and wealth preservation during times of uncertainty, [click here](#) ^[7].

If you plan on purchasing larger quantities or diverse investments of precious metals, there are many different ways to acquire gold and silver. Here are a few of the safest:

- Purchase the pieces from mints or exchanges
- Purchase old pieces of jewelry or coins from yard sales, estate sales, thrift stores and Craigslist
- Purchase from reputable sellers on EBay

Mints and exchanges offer a sure thing. These businesses are built on trust and integrity. If you are investing a large sum of money into precious metals, gather details about the types of coins you are buying, especially if you're buying gold. Acquire a [coin caliper](#) ^[8] and/or testing kit to ensure you're getting what is being advertised. To learn more on how to properly test and inspect precious metals before accepting them, [click here](#) ^[9].

To conclude, if studying preparedness has taught me one thing, it's that we can't go it alone. Psychologically speaking, we are social creatures and naturally prone to gravitate toward others. Bartering will not only serve as a way of trading goods and services, but will also serve as a way to bring the community together, to grow closer and start putting the pieces our community back together.

Preps to Buy:

This list provides some suggestions. For a more in depth list, click on the links provided in the article.

- Matches and lighters
- [Seeds](#) ^[10]

- Canning jars, lids and rings
- First aid items
- Tools
- Water Filtration Supplies
- Sewing supplies
- Vitamins
- [Salt](#) ^[11]
- [Feminine Hygiene Supplies](#) ^[12]
- Vitamins
- Fishing Supplies
- [Fuel](#) ^[13] (e.g., gasoline, propane, kerosene, etc.)
- [Sweeteners such as honey, sugar and syrup](#) ^[14]
- Coffee/Tea
- Carbonated beverages
- Liquor
- Cigarettes/[tobacco](#) ^[15]
- Small packages of food (e.g., bags of beans/rice, etc)
- Livestock
- Cooking oil
- Firewood
- Farm supplies (e.g., pesticides, fertilizer, etc.)
- Weapons, Ammo*
- [Batteries](#) ^[16]
- Warm clothing
- Hats/Gloves/Mitten (think about these the next time you are at the dollar store)
- Soap/shampoo
- Hand sanitizer
- Dental care items (e.g., toothbrushes/toothpaste/floss)

Action Items:

1. Research which items will be [most valuable in an emergency](#) ^[3].
2. Make a point to research, take a class or practice one set of skills per month.
3. Stock up on necessary items for bartering.

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URLs in this post:

[1] Patriots: http://www.amazon.com/Patriots-Surviving-James-Wesley-Rawles/dp/156975599X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1345835212&sr=8-1&keywords=patriots

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

[3] viewed here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/emergency-items-what-will-disappear-first_11112009/

[4] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/cash-is-out-bartering-is-king_26042012/

[5] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/the-barter-value-of-skills_23042012/

[6] SHTF School: <http://shtfschool.com/trading/on-buying-gold-silver-for-survival-preparedness/>

[7] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/week-44-of-52-collapse-investing-money-and-wealth-preservation-during-times-of-uncertainty-and-instability_12052012/

- [8] coin caliper: <http://www.safepub.com/categories/tools-coins-trade-equipment/p/electronic-coin-caliper>
- [9] click here: http://readynutrition.com/resources/testing-precious-metals-for-long-term-preparations_26032012/
- [10] Seeds: http://readynutrition.com/resources/survival-gardens-25-seeds-you-need_05112009/
- [11] Salt: http://readynutrition.com/resources/james-rawles-salt-will-be-the-1-bartering-item_05032010/
- [12] Feminine Hygiene Supplies: http://readynutrition.com/resources/no-boys-allowed-female-shtf-preparations_29032012/
- [13] Fuel : http://readynutrition.com/resources/the-6-most-popular-types-of-fuel-to-store-for-emergencies_20092011/
- [14] Sweeteners such as honey, sugar and syrup:
http://readynutrition.com/resources/week-36-shtf-sugars_09032012/
- [15] tobacco: http://readynutrition.com/resources/it-aint-just-for-smoking-known-but-beneficial-uses-for-tobacco_27082010/
- [16] Batteries: http://readynutrition.com/resources/week-39-of-52-alternative-power-sources_30032012/

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