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## What To Do If a Society Breaks Down

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With the recent earthquake in Haiti, tens of thousands of Haitians are displaced and relying on the government to come to their aid. A disaster plan has not even been formulated. It is estimated that 50% of the city is in rubble. Two days after the massive earthquake struck, looting and anarchy are rampant in the streets, communication and transportation systems have been crippled, roadblocks made of dead corpses have been assembled in the streets, desperate Haitians are frantically searching for food and water and many women and children who are seen as easy prey are attacked by the looters. When help does not come as fast as the survivors want it to, the surreal threat of a societal breakdown becomes closer and closer to reality. With the threat of a societal downfall coupled with the possibility of dangerous health conditions due to the massive amounts of corpses, this small country is holding on for dear life that there will be some form of restoration and peace that will be brought back. The survivors of this disaster are literally living in a nightmare of a situation.

## It is the Human Condition

When a massive, unplanned disaster occurs, societal breakdowns, gang driven crime and chaos are all a part of what happens when a society is turned upside down. It is actually the people, and not the disaster that creates societal breakdowns. Unfortunately, some who participate in the breakdown of society feel their desperation is a justified reason and opportunity to steal. While some participate out of desperation to get what they need for their family. However, the running theme in these scenarios is that desperation has no boundaries. This is the human condition and a harsh reality. When a person is in a desperate situation, they will stop at nothing to get what they need to survive. This is the entire point of preparing for disasters. A person cannot rely solely on their country to rescue them. There has to be some sort of self sufficiency if a person wants a better chance at survival. The government of Haiti is already showing examples of government's mismanagement to plan the proper plan in aiding their citizens. According to a news [source](#) <sup>[1]</sup>, Haiti is situated along a strike-slip fault between two great plates of earth's crust, just like the San Andreas fault. Did the Haitian President set up an earthquake disaster plan? No, there was nothing.

## There are some ways to prepare oneself if a societal breakdown were to occur:

- **Having as much self sufficiency as possible and relying on preparedness items that are in the home, having an evacuation plan and having a means to defend oneself is vital in a massive disaster.** Have as much food and water as possible. Having a water filter during a situation like the Haitian crises would be helpful beyond words. Having a stockpile of one's very own medical supplies would also be useful. As many are reading, certain disaster organizations are running out of medical supplies. Additionally, having access to a communication source such as a radio, police scanner, etc in order to hear about what is happening would be an invaluable resource. If a communication system is still functional, the government will be broadcasting news on an emergency channel.
- **Find a group that one can trust.** It could be a group of neighbors, friends and family members. Once the disaster has occurred. Meet at a

pre-planned location. There are power in numbers. If a group can band together to create conflict and chaos, then a group can band together to defend themselves against this foe as well.

- **Have a plan in place.** *Everyone* should have an emergency plan of action. If no plan is in place before a disaster hits, irrational decisions based on confusion and shock will lead to a dangerous situation.
- **If a person can leave, go to a safe house outside of the disaster location. If a person is unable to leave their home, stay in and prepare as much as possible.** In the immediate aftermath of a breakdown, venturing out is extremely dangerous and all precautions should be taken to keep a person safe. Stay as close as possible to the home or shelter.
- **Be aware of one's surroundings and if someone is getting too close to the property, take necessary precautions.** Until necessary help arrives, a person is literally on their own in a case such as this. Safety and rational thinking are the keys to staying alive in a breakdown. A person must be mentally prepared to handle an uncertain situation as rationally as possible. As nice as it would be to stay inside a shelter until the conflict is over, sometimes that is more difficult than realized.
- **Prepare to defend yourself, your family and your property.**

The devastation of the Haiti is a sad reminder that the threat of a breakdown and a disaster of this magnitude is real and can happen almost anywhere. As James Wesley Rawles, the writer of [Survival Blog](#) <sup>[2]</sup> writes:

“The aftermath of the recent earthquake in Haiti has underscored the fragility of modern societies. In the event of a major disaster, it doesn't take long for ‘the thin veneer’ of civilization to be peeled back.”

Each citizen of this world must face this and realize that even though the disaster may be different, the threat of a breakdown is still present. Preparing for this and knowing what to do to keep a person and their family safe will give them a better shot at surviving.

[Charities Helping the Haiti Eathquake Survivors](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

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URLs in this post:

[1] source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/15/opinion/15blum.html>

[2] Survival Blog: [http://www.survivalblog.com/2010/01/notes\\_from\\_jwr\\_272.html](http://www.survivalblog.com/2010/01/notes_from_jwr_272.html)

[3] Charities Helping the Haiti Eathquake Survivors:

<http://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=content.view&cpid=1004>

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