

BUILDING SOCIAL CAPITAL BEFORE THE BAD DAY

Source: Episode 34, A Non-Apocalyptic Intro
to Personal Emergency Preparedness
with Jeff Donaldson, PhD

THE PREMISE

One of the single strongest predictors of which communities recover well is the strength of its social capital. The majority of earthquake survivors tend to be pulled from rubble by their neighbors.

HOW TO USE Print this sheet. Check a box when you start it. One action a week. Review the roster once a month.

TIER 1
YOUR STREET

- ☐ **Map the block before you work it**
Sketch the 12 nearest homes. Write what you know. The blanks are your target list.
- ☐ **Manufacture a reason to knock**
Borrow something you do not need. The transaction is a pretext. One door per weekend.
- ☐ **Host the garage conversation**
Print a Sunday flyer. Invite the street to talk preparedness. Expect a handful who already think this.
- ☐ **Inventory shared resources**
Generator, chainsaw, truck, well, pool, ham rig. Propose a rotation now — three-hour blocks — so the schedule exists before the outage.
- ☐ **Log who needs help and who can give it**
Needs: refrigerated meds, mobility limits, kids home alone. Capacity: nurses, electricians, radio operators, heavy equipment.

FIRST MOVE
This weekend: sketch the 12 houses. Knock on one blank.

FIELD NOTES

TIER 2
YOUR PEER GROUPS

- ☐ **Convert contacts into relationships**
Pick one association, committee, or chapter you already belong to. Call one member a month. No deliverable attached.
- ☐ **Use groups that already trust each other**
Faith community, club, league, volunteer board. Offer one preparedness talk on the calendar and see who surfaces.
- ☐ **Give three times before asking once**
Jab, jab, jab, hook. Send the useful thing. Make the introduction. Answer the question. The ask comes after value is already on the table.

FIRST MOVE
This month: pick the group. Put one name on the calendar.

FIELD NOTES

TIER 3
WORKPLACE & CLIENTS

- ☐ **Be a known face first**
A title in the signature block earns nothing from someone hearing your name for the first time.
- ☐ **Ask how they want instructions**
Do this in writing, in advance. Five steps or full background. Text or email. Then honor the answer.
- ☐ **Find the connector with no title**
Usually an office administrator or EA who knows every vendor, badge, and back hallway. That person moves faster than authority does.
- ☐ **Bring value outside your mandate**
Harden an employee's home network. Walk a client through a family plan. It builds the standing you will need later.

FIRST MOVE
This week: write the connector's name. Ask two people how they want instructions.

FIELD NOTES

STANDING REVIEW

30 MIN · ONCE A MONTH

Coffee in hand. Has anyone joined the household, moved, changed jobs, or changed medical needs? Most months the answer is no. Run it anyway — the review is what holds the habit in place.

LAST RUN _____

THE TEST

- Can you name ten neighbors on sight?
- Would three of them lend you a generator without hesitating?

If not, that is the work. It costs nothing but time.