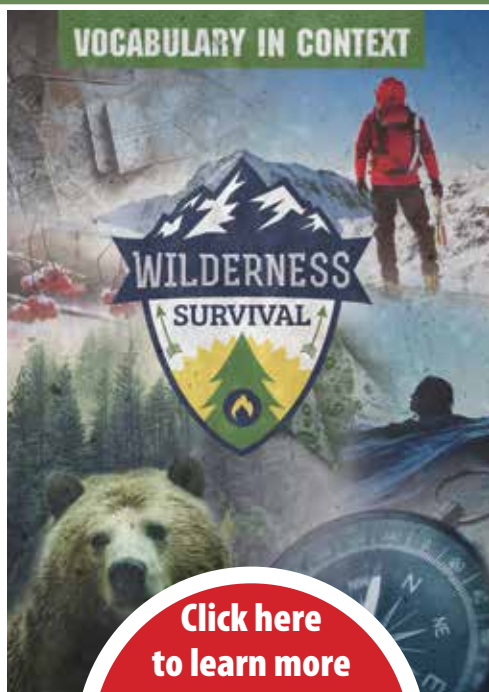




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VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT: WILDERNESS SURVIVAL

Senior Editor:

Paul Moliken

Writers:

Douglas Grudzina

Rachel Natbony

Leah Rodriguez

Lisa Tetrault

Cover and Text Design:

Chris Koniencki

Layout and Production:

Susan Moliken



Prestwick House

P.O. Box 658 • Clayton, DE 19938

(800) 932-4593 • www.prestwickhouse.com

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PSYCHOLOGY OF SURVIVAL

You read about the survivors of an earthquake. You hear about a teenager lost in the woods. You can't help but think what you would do in a similar crisis. You can't *know* how you'll act if you haven't experienced such a situation yourself. You know you're not supposed to panic, and you might want to be **imperturbable**, but when you're in a real emergency, your feelings just might overrule your ability to reason. Fear, anger, and loneliness might chip away at your calm and trick you into making a wrong decision.

Conquering your feelings is as important—and as difficult—as mastering the conditions you find yourself in. You might be alone or with only a few other people. In addition to the weather, landscape, and wild animals, you'll need to **cope** with feeling isolated and needing to rely on yourself or on a few total strangers. You might have to deal with grief if you think someone you love has been hurt, or worse.

Much of the work necessary to survive—digging, cutting, and building—can be physically difficult but dull. Such **drudgery** can take its toll on you. So can attempts that fail. The collapse of a shelter or a spilled bucket of purified water can cause you to feel **morose**. You may even consider giving up.

But imagine the alternative to surviving!

Failed attempts can also stir anger, which is possibly the most harmful emotion. When success means survival, and failure might mean death, it is difficult not to lash out and **belittle** others who are not skilled at building huts or strong enough to carry full buckets of water. Rather than losing your cool, though, remember that everyone with you is experiencing the same fear, anger, and frustration that you are.

One way to maintain your **composure** and not give in to destructive feelings is to expect them. As you prepare yourself for the realities of

survival, know that it's common to feel frightened and discouraged. When those feelings strike, you'll be prepared to curb them and focus on the important work of surviving. Maintaining a realistic but positive attitude increases your odds of survival. For example, you can take **solace** in the knowledge that someone is searching for you. Focusing on the good gives you hope to keep going.

Some stress, however, is **beneficial** to your cause. This is not a picnic where you've forgotten the can opener. It is important not to panic. But don't underestimate your need for water, food, and warmth, either. Positive stress reminds you that, despite being tired, lonely, or discouraged, you want to live.

Fear can also be controlled to help. The “fight or flight” response can make your senses more **acute** so that you are more aware of possible dangers and better able to see and hear what you might otherwise ignore.

Luckily, you will probably never face the do-or-die frenzy of a survival situation. If you do, understanding your feelings will make them a help rather than a **detriment** to your survival. When it's a matter of life or death, your attitude is every bit as important as your skills.



TIPS TO KEEP YOUR EMOTIONS IN CHECK

- *Struggling now is a good alternative to not surviving later.*
- *Try to understand those around you, not criticize them.*
- *Stress can actually be a good motivator.*



EXERCISE 1

WORD LIST

Use the context in which the word is used to determine what the word probably means. Write a brief definition in the space provided.

1. **acute:** _____

The “fight or flight” response can make your senses more **acute** so that you are more aware of possible dangers and better able to see and hear what you might otherwise ignore.

2. **belittle:** _____

When success means survival, and failure might mean death, it is difficult not to lash out and **belittle** others who are not skilled at building huts or strong enough to carry full buckets of water.

3. **beneficial:** _____

Some stress, however, is **beneficial** to your cause... It is important not to panic. But don't underestimate your need for water, food, and warmth, either. Positive stress reminds you that, despite being tired, lonely, or discouraged, you want to live.

4. **composure:** _____

Rather than losing your cool, though, remember that everyone with you is experiencing the same fear, anger, and frustration that you are. One way to maintain your **composure** and not give in to destructive feelings is to expect them.

5. **cope:** _____

You might be alone or with only a few other people. In addition to the weather, landscape, and wild animals, you'll need to **cope** with feeling isolated and needing to rely on yourself or on a few total strangers. You might have to deal with grief...

6. **detriment:** _____

Luckily, you will probably never face the do-or-die frenzy of a survival situation. If you do, understanding your feelings will make them a help rather than a **detriment** to your survival.

7. **drudgery:** _____

Much of the work necessary to survive—digging, cutting, and building—can be physically difficult but dull. Such **drudgery** can take its toll on you.

8. **imperturbable:** _____

You know you're not supposed to panic, and you might want to be **imperturbable**, but when you're in a real emergency, your feelings just might overrule your ability to reason.

9. **morose:** _____

Such drudgery can take its toll on you. So can attempts that fail. The collapse of a shelter or a spilled bucket of purified water can cause you to feel **morose**. You may even consider giving up.

10. **solace:** _____

Maintaining a realistic but positive attitude increases your odds of survival. For example, you can take **solace** in the knowledge that someone is searching for you. Focusing on the good gives you hope to keep going.



EXERCISE 2 / USING WORDS IN CONTEXT

Fill in the blanks with the vocabulary word that best completes the sentence. In some cases you may need to change the tense of a verb or number of a noun.

acute	belittle	solace	composure	imperturbable
detriment	drudgery	cope	morose	beneficial

1. Rather than _____ younger and less experienced hikers for their mistakes, good leaders teach them the proper way to do things.
2. Although being stranded on the top of the mountain was frightening, I took _____ in knowing I had built a good signal fire and that people were looking for me.
3. Experienced hikers develop senses so _____ that they can hear sounds that beginners are completely unaware of.
4. Whether or not you survive in the wild often comes down to how well you _____ with your fear and loneliness.
5. The _____ of cutting wood for a shelter will make you both physically and emotionally exhausted.
6. When something goes wrong, having a temper tantrum will do no good at all. Instead, maintain your _____ and find a solution to the problem.

7. Being calm does not mean you are _____, only that you are able to control your anger and fear.
8. It simply makes sense that a positive attitude will be more _____ to your survival than a gloomy one will.
9. Few things will be more _____ to your survival than panicking.
10. Instead of sulking _____ when there's been no sign of a rescue party, do something positive like building a better signal fire.



EXERCISE 3

READING COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS

Select the best answers to the following questions based on a close and thorough reading of "Psychology of Survival."

1. Which of the following best summarizes the central idea of this article?
 - A. It's best to ignore all negative emotions.
 - B. Experiencing strong emotions is dangerous.
 - C. Stress is beneficial to people in a survival crisis.
 - D. Attitude is as important as knowledge and skill.
 - E. Conquering negative feelings is as difficult as building a fire.

2. In addition to the one addressed above, a second central idea developed in this passage is that
 - A. some emotions can be dangerous, and different ones can be helpful.
 - B. emotions can both help and hurt one's efforts to survive.
 - C. everyone experiences the same feelings in a crisis.
 - D. only an emotionless person will survive an emergency or crisis.
 - E. most people will never find themselves in a survival situation.



EXERCISE 4

MAKING INFERENCES

Choose the best answer.

1. A **morose** person is likely to do all of the following EXCEPT
 - A. walk with eyes cast down.
 - B. sit at an empty cafeteria table.
 - C. complain about a neighbor's children.
 - D. greet people on the street.
2. The statement most likely to provide **solace** to a child whose dog is missing is,
 - A. "Dogs may run away if they aren't watched."
 - B. "Let's put up posters; somebody may see it."
 - C. "You'll get over it. We can buy another one."
 - D. "The dog will probably return home soon."
3. Which of the following character traits contributes most to someone's being **imperturbable**?
 - A. greediness
 - B. honesty
 - C. patience
 - D. determination
4. Which profession probably requires the most **acute** sense of direction?
 - A. a plane's navigator
 - B. an astronaut
 - C. a racecar driver
 - D. a bus driver
5. Which of the following is most likely to be interpreted as a **belittling** comment?
 - A. "Blue is a good-looking color for you."
 - B. "I can tell you've been practicing on the violin."
 - C. "It was very tough, but you took on that challenge."
 - D. "I really think you should avoid trying to fix that."

 **EXERCISE 5** / **ROOTS, PREFIXES, AND SUFFIXES**

Answer the questions below that are designed to help you arrive at some conclusions about word families and origins.

1. Briefly define **detriment** in your own words. What part of speech is **detriment**?

A. **Detriment** is related to the Latin *trit* and also to *detere*. Both mean “to wear away,” as well as “to weaken.”

Considering the Latin origins of **detriment**, what other words probably share the same root?

B. What do these related words mean?

C. What sense or meaning do **detriment** and these related words all share?

D. What suffix is added to the root *detere* to form the word **detriment**? What is the function of this suffix?
