

Urban Survival Guide

by Duke Mills

Introduction

I am going to be doing something a bit different today. A number of members here and people have come across in conversation or my posts that I was formerly homeless, and asked me how to live like that. I understand many of you face unique challenges. Some of you want to get out of your parents' house. Some of you are trying to escape an abusive relationship. Some of you just want to save money. Regardless of the reasons why, in today's modern society, I am sure we can all agree, whether it is unable to afford rent, getting out of a toxic abusive environment, or just for pure adventure, the modern world is not very accommodating to people who want to live parallel to the system and path laid out for us. "Get a job! Live in a house! Get a car! Get insurance!" There are also a lot of stereotypes about homeless people. People accuse them of being drug addicts, or running from the law. And those people absolutely exist.

This guide is going to be based on my real world experience, and part of a new series of posts that will be called "Life Guides." I was a 9 year army veteran, I escaped an abusive family of drug addicts and I got on my feet and survived even when I was homeless for 3 years in the streets. No matter what situation you find yourself in this guide should be able to cover most circumstances. This is not a perfect guide. You are to use your own discernment and judgement in your own unique life situations. It's not possible to cover every single situation that can arise, but I will share with you what has worked for myself.

Chapter 1: Urgent Priorities

The first thing you are going to need to do, especially if you are escaping an abusive or controlling family, is to have the following, and I will explain why in a bullet list below. Even if you are in an extremely bad situation, do not leave your household UNTIL you have the following things, or your survival is not guaranteed:

1. **Driver's License, Up-to-date:** You absolutely need a driver's license, and you need to know how to drive. I am sorry, there are ****no exceptions to this.**** If you don't know how to drive, you are going to face some extreme hardship. Homeless and being on a bicycle or going by foot is going to severely limit your chances of surviving.
2. **Bank Account in your name only:** Do not have it in anyone else's name, do not grant anyone access to it. If you have a friend or relative that will let you use their mailing address - do so. The only alternative is switch to paperless statements which most banks let you do online. Do not have your mail going to a place where abusers or controlling family members reside. They will try to take your money out. I've had this happen. There are a number of options including digital only banks.

3. **Cellular Phone:** You need a phone. Also, in your name ONLY. Do not give your number out to anyone you do not trust. If you want cheap options and cannot afford a contract phone, get a prepaid. Prepaid phones have no obligation and you can just renew them when you can afford to do so. Get social media accounts, too. It doesn't hurt to ask for help online. But be honest about your situation. If people find out you lied, you're gonna lose a lot of respect.
4. **PayPal, CashApp, Stripe, Venmo, or other online payment services:** Get as many of these as you can, connect and verify them with your bank. I hate to say this, but you're going to have to let go of your pride, and have a way to get people to send you money sometimes. If you're worried about people doxxing you seeing your legal name, well, they kind of can't. *You're homeless,* and you're going to be roaming a lot. Most people won't be able to significantly harm you anyway unless they just rubbish your reputation online, which means squat when the only thing that matters is your immediate survival in the physical environment.
5. **Vehicle registered & insured IN YOUR NAME ONLY:** It goes without saying, you are going to need a vehicle. I know your living situation probably sucks, if you're getting abused. Save your money, get a vehicle. Register it. Get liability insurance only. Get an older used car, look on Craigslist. Get it inspected. Get all oil changes all stuff fixed. If the upkeep starts getting too expensive you probably need to sell it as is and get one that has less stuff wrong with it. Look - trust me, GET a vehicle. I have been homeless without a vehicle and it will greatly reduce your ability to thrive on the streets. Badly.

You absolutely, positively, need these 5 things up above. There are no exceptions. No excuses. You need to be working. You need to have a job. Don't bum off others and ask for handouts all the time, handouts are only going to cover you occasionally when someone is generous enough to do something. Don't be ashamed to ask people for help.

To conclude Chapter 1 we are going to make a priority list of Do's and Do Not's and then move on to each priority:

Do:

Get a job. I do not want to hear any excuses. You're homeless. People don't care. The system doesn't care. Work and be productive, or die. I don't make the rules. I'm telling you from experience, how everyone sees this. It doesn't matter what the job is. As long as you have a steady full time job, you'll survive. Grocery store. Retail. Try NOT to work in fast food, but, if you absolutely have to, just take what you can get. Get your money digitally deposited in your bank or a pay card. If you work a construction job or something that still does paper checks, make sure your bank accepts photo scans of checks. Thankfully, most do now. RIP THE CHECK UP WHEN YOU ARE DONE, people can steal that crap.

Have good hygiene. This when homeless, is even more important than food and water. Why? Because if you get sick, you are out in the open and exposed to the elements. First of all you're going to be sleeping in your vehicle. Get disinfectant wipes and wipe the interior down often, vehicles get dusty inside. Brush your teeth daily, use mouthwash, floss, and brush. Shave. Get

razors. I know this seems like money you do not have. Invest in this. Don't have a hobo beard. Be presentable, it'll help you get jobs better. I've had dental infections while homeless and they get bad quickly. It can kill you. Use baby wipes to wipe your body down if you can't shower, which I'll discuss how you can shower in the next bullet point.

Get a Gym Membership. Planet Fitness is what I recommend if you are in North America, because it is widely available in the US and Canada. It's super cheap. It has a shower you can clean up in. Most people won't ask questions. I would even shave and brush my teeth in the showers there and nobody bothered me. Plus you can also go there to do cardiovascular exercise which believe it or not will help your immune system and keep you healthy. Cardio is more important when homeless.

Plan your travel. Remember when I said have a cellphone? I wasn't kidding. Google maps freaking saved my life so many times, whether I was trying to find a laundromat, a place to eat or a gas station so I could use the bathroom. Map out the area you're going to be in. Take note of places you can park and sleep as well, you're going to be sleeping in your vehicle.

Watch the Weather. You ain't in mama's house anymore, kid. You're not under a roof. You're homeless. You're in a vehicle (I am hoping.) Rain, ice, high winds..these are all going to be dangers to you now. Make sure you have rain jackets, ponchos, or at least layer your clothing appropriately for the extreme cold, and have gym clothes too for when it gets hot in the summer. Yes you have a vehicle but in some situations you're gonna have to do a lot of walking as well, to save your gas money.

Do NOT:

Walk in to Gang Territory. If you are in a ghetto or hood area, and you start seeing strange spraypainted symbols that are frequent, or anything like Star of Davids with weird letters on them, see any frequent tags with names written in funky ways, this urban art is common, but it is also a warning sign. Don't go into these areas. It most likely means a gang controls the area. There is nothing you can do once a gang member catches wind of you sleeping in your vehicle or walking through their controlled territory. Businesses are no exception. If you're in the bad part of town - GET OUT OF THERE. I know you're homeless but the last thing you need is to get caught up in that crap.

Stop and talk to people approaching you on the street: Keep moving. Do not stop. It is your instinct when someone shouts "Hey! Hey!" to stop, turn, and look. Do not do this. Keep walking. Or say "Sorry I gotta get going." Do not explain yourself. Nobody that stops you on the street or comes up to your car has good intentions. If you are in your vehicle, do not get out of it. Do not roll your window down. Keep moving.

Linger around or use Greyhound Bus Stations or bus stops in general: Pan handlers as they are called hang around these areas. Usually also gang members. They do what is called "friendly extortion." If you have cash on you, they'll let you go. If you don't, they'll probably try to kill you. I used to use Greyhound buses to travel. But Gangs and Drug Cartels use Greyhounds

to do gun runs, and traffic drugs, as well as go out of state to commit crimes. They don't screen people on these. Greyhounds also have shitty drivers that will fuck you over on your luggage or not drop you off or tell you when they're stopping. Do not EVER use Greyhound bus stations unless you absolutely have no choice, and when you do, do not exit the terminals for any reason except to get on your next bus or go to your final destination. These places are SO dangerous. Fights happen. People extort money. Just...don't go to or park around these places. Ever. Please.

Move in with someone quickly: Unless you seriously know somebody, I know it is tempting to just take the very first person on their offer. But I have been screwed so many times moving in with others. When you are homeless the way people perceive you will be much different. People will see you as expendable and disposable. And since you probably know nobody they know, they can just discard you at any time, for any reason - and nobody will be able to help you. Stand on your own two feet. This is about you becoming self-sufficient. Don't piggyback off others unless they are helping you do the same. You don't know how they live. They might keep the place trashy. They might do illegal stuff. The instant you walk into someone else's territory they can blackmail you or enforce any personal policy on you. Just..don't do this, unless it is guaranteed they won't screw you. Especially if they're a drug addict.

Get an Addiction: I was a recovering alcoholic when I became homeless. Don't be the stereotype homeless person that caves in and does drugs. Drugs like cocaine and meth alter your mind where you cannot live without it. If you see how crackheads live - they're not very healthy and die young. You're going to have to drop whatever habits or addictions you have if you want to survive.

Carry a knife or gun: I know this sounds counter-intuitive. But in today's society this can get you in a lot of trouble. RESEARCH your laws of your area online. Be educated. If you're allowed, do so. But what you can do is carry a fork for self defense. I know that's brutal but it will work just as effectively. If police pat you down you can say you use it for eating out of the can, which you'll probably be doing often. Another option is carry a hammer with you and you can just say you use it to bang out dents on your car, or a tool like a wrench. You can't really get in trouble having a tool on you. The law isn't always going to be in your favor. Be creative. Don't do illegal stuff. Research your local laws.

Go to a Homeless Shelter: These places are poorly regulated. The staff don't care. People steal your shit. Drug addicts bring bedbugs in. I stayed at a homeless shelter and it was good for a while, until I had to keep throwing away all my clothes every week, because one guy there kept bringing bedbugs in from the crackhouse. They knew who it was and never kicked him out, to the point staff then became infested carriers of bedbugs. It took me months to get rid of them even after I left the place. I must have thrown away probably \$800 USD worth of clothes because of the bedbug infestation. Don't stay in a homeless shelter, unless it is one with a good reputation.

Chapter 2: Setting up your "Home"

Your vehicle is about to be your moving fortress. Your base. Your home. It is all you have. Keep up with the oil changes. Change the brake pads once a year. Get your inspections done. Keep liability insurance. You might have to shop around. Always maintain your vehicle. I had a vehicle blow out because I was helping somebody with a move - don't help people, they will use you and throw you away. She promised she would help pay for my trip back. I got all their furniture there, moved everything in, and then she gave me no gas money to get home. My engine broke down. Thankfully, my manager at my job there let me tow my van and park it in his driveway, but my situation being homeless got significantly tougher once my vehicle broke down. I had to go everywhere by foot with a backpack and God did it suck. I have permanent knee, ankle and back problems, and got trenchfoot often from hours of walking in the rain. So, keep your vehicle maintained. A bicycle is a decent alternative, but it's not going to keep a roof over your head. Your only alternative then is to live in an abandoned building with a tent, which I have also done, but that is illegal and will put you on police radars. I did it because I had to, I am not telling you to do it. It's illegal. Now that we have covered the importance of this let's discuss the general setup of your vehicle.

Type:

Ideally, you are going to want a van. Older vans are usually cheap. I had a 1986 Chevy Conversion van:



These vans are not made anymore and sometimes getting parts for them is difficult. While it would be the most preferable, to get a more modern one that has parts that are still serviced, they also cost money. I know money is probably something you don't have. These usually are relatively cheap when used. You can shop around online for them. This is ideal. If you can't get a van, a small pickup with a cabin in the back is good. A car can be done too but you're going to have to hollow out and cut out the back seat area so you can make the entire backseat + trunk area where you sleep.



This truck with a small RV style cabin in the back with a bicycle would be the absolutely perfect setup. If you're just the "nomad adventuring homeless" and not homeless as in broke escaping an abusive situation this would be the absolute ideal scenario. Unfortunately not everyone reading, is going to be in the absolute ideal scenario. This kind of setup would cost you almost as much as a small house if not more.

If you want some ideas of some decent setups for cars, YouTube search "stealth van" or "stealth car living," there are a lot of tutorials about this including ones on winter survival.

Sleeping Area:

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/HZ9ci4coPQg>

Ideally you are going to want to set up your vehicle for privacy. The video above is a good example. Some people cut out the back seat area so you can put a mattress, or a bunch of blankets in the trunk area. He puts privacy curtains on his windows, and parks in a Walmart Parking lot. Most Walmarts have people that do this.

Typically I know many of you probably sometimes see vehicles parked for days at some businesses, off in a corner somewhere, with tinted windows, or way off near the woodline. These are probably people just like you, that have mastered living parallel to the system, and just minding their own business.

Find places to park that are safe and where police won't ask you to leave. If police do approach you, just be honest. Tell them your situation, tell them you are okay and have shit figured out, that you're just working your job until you can afford a home. If they ask you to leave, don't give them any trouble. If they ask to search your vehicle, let them. It's okay, they just want to make sure you're not a criminal. They won't arrest you for it, they'll just ask you to leave. Just go find somewhere else to park.

You also do not want to stay in the same place every single day. Rotate out with other places. Also be careful where you park. If you get your car towed that is time and money lost with a chance you'll never get your vehicle back. This is also why I like to work Night Shift Jobs: on night shift you usually get off work when everything is opened, doctors and banks, dentists, government offices, etc. You can also sleep in your car during the day and have far less issues, and if you're working at night time you don't have the additional headache of dealing with weirdos on the street.

Pay attention to your surroundings at all times. If a business owner asks you to leave, comply. Don't break down crying or give excuses or say you're homeless. Just make up some bullshit, say you were sleeping because of a long trip home.

Another option is Highway Rest Areas. These unfortunately do not always show up on Google Maps but look up good highway rest areas. Nobody will bother you at these places even if you show up regularly.

Get blankets , pillows and sleeping bags. Wash your sheets and stuff at least once a week, or whenever they start to smell. You can't always smell your own funk, so clean often. Wipe down with bleach or disinfectant wipes once every single day. EVERY single day. No excuses. Germs and dust build up fast.

Laundry:

Have a designated laundry area for your dirty clothes. Have hampers , and also have laundry bags. Odors are going to build significantly faster in the enclosed space of a car. Google maps search for laundromats. You can also usually sleep around these areas and nobody will bother you, because even people with homes sleep around laundromats in their vehicles. Make sure it is a 24 hour one. If it looks kind of seedy or shady, don't go around it. You absolutely need to keep your clothes washed. Hygiene comes before even food and water. Which, will be next:

Food & Water:

Ah, yes. Food. Water. First of all, do not go to fast food. I know it is tempting. I know it is convenient. But this will blow through your money super fast. Also do not eat gas station food. I

got so obese from that. Not to mention it is so much more expensive. Go to places like Walmart, Dollar General, Aldi. Canned foods are not always ideal because the chemicals and preservatives are going to really mess your intestines up. I had to go through that. Watch what you eat. I would not recommend keeping bread or meats unless you plan to consume them within the day, they spoil fast.

Now some people have these fancy setups, with mini-fridges, and all of that stuff. If you have saved up the money and want to do that you absolutely can. I just didn't bother with it. There's setups where people use USB plugins on more modern vehicles or cig lighter plugins with electric strips or even set stuff up directly from the car battery, if you know what you're doing you can absolutely do that but when you get a vehicle inspection or repairs done most places won't touch a vehicle that's been too heavily altered and you'll be forced to do the vehicle maintenance all on your own. But here's some noteworthy setups:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-u1HjXLQhy0>

If you're experienced, and know what you're doing, then absolutely you can do this. But you're going to have to stay up on maintenance and upkeep. If something goes wrong - you are going to have to fix it yourself. And in bad weather areas that's the last thing you want happening.

Now that I got that all out of the way, good choices for food are:

-Beef Jerky: Long shelf life. Doesn't spoil.

-Canned Tuna: Don't go overboard on this, causes digestive issues. But healthy.

-Packet Condiments: Obviously without a fridge, you can go to restaurants and stock up on packet condiments and stuff like napkins. Napkins will be extremely useful.

-Dried Fruit: Also long life.

-String Cheese: Not a bad choice. Do consume it within the hour without refrigeration though.

-Chips: A bag of chips now and then won't hurt you. Don't overdo these. I wouldn't have over a bag daily.

-Canned Chicken: Good shelf life, lean meat.

-Canned Ham: These are pretty bad on the sodium. Limit, but keep on you.

-Ramen Noodles: If you have a coffee pot and it is summer time, fill it with water and let the coffee pot sit in the sun in your window. This is called "Sun Ramen." It's pretty good. Don't overdo the ramen either. It'll make you fat quickly. And you don't want to be obese in a homeless situation, being immobile isn't good.

-Bottled Water: Do not drink soda. It will make you urinate way too much. Just regular, good old fashioned water. I also know this sounds gross, but for us males, you may have to use these to

urinate if a bathroom is not available. Just deposit at the nearest gas station garbage cans. Soda will make you urinate way too much. Maybe on occasion but I would not recommend. Just good old fashioned water. Get tons of it by the case. You will also need water for hygiene when your gym is not open for it, and for cleaning certain things.

Toilet:

You're not always going to have a gas station, gym, or store open. Some places are dicks about using their restrooms, obviously because customers go in there and mess them up, or drug addicts go in there to shoot up heroin. Actually had that happen when I worked at a gas station, so I can see why they close them to the public.

No matter. We have the solution. You need a cardboard box. Fold the top flaps inward or cut them off. It needs to be a box big enough you can squat and hold the sides. Get those big black yard trash bags, line the box with the trash bag. Then you need to buy cat litter. Pour the cat litter in the bottom. It will clump your urine and feces the same way it does for a cat, the litter has the additional bonus of preventing ammonia buildup in the air. Bag it up, tie it, and deposit in the nearest dumpster. Get rid of it. Gas station garbage cans are your friend here.

Do not hang on to this and have aerosol ready and preferably your windows down. It's also preferable you are out of sight. Since this is not always possible sometimes putting your privacy curtains up is the only choice.

If you shit or piss yourself - I've done it before too. We all have sometime in life. If it's bad, throw the clothes away. Or go immediately to a laundromat. Which is the next important topic:

Clothes:

Go to Goodwill, or places that sell used and sold clothing like AMVETS, you can actually find very good, high quality clothing here, winter jackets, shoes and boots even, for very low prices. Some of them might not even have anything wrong with them. Places like these have gems as well. Go to Pawn shops as well and check out those places once a week. You might find some very useful cheap things with absolutely nothing wrong with them.

There is nothing wrong with looking nice and investing money in that. Your appearance and presentation will carry you a long way when seeking the help of others or making professional contacts. For storing clothes I recommend hampers or get those little plastic compartment drawers, or even just having small laundry bags, one for socks, one for underwear, pants, shirts, jackets.

Have something for every occasion. Cold. Heat. Summer. Rain jackets. Cold Weather jackets. I'd have minimum 2 pairs shoes, one pair boots. Let your shoes and boots air out, they WILL stink quickly. Use foot powder and baking soda in the bottom of the soles often, and get some vinegar spray to occasionally spray the insides and bleach will eat them up. Do get bleach spray anyway while we are on that topic because bleach kills any odors and germs.

Also this is your friendly reminder to WIPE DOWN ALL SURFACES OFTEN. Do not let a mold or mildew infestation get in your car. It's hard to get out and will make you sick. I lived with one almost a year and it reduces your stamina and performance at work too. Wash clothes often. I know frequent trips to the laundromat suck. Do it anyway.

Last but not least carry a backpack, anytime you go on foot, and carry it to your job. Have a towel in there, a change of underwear and socks. Underwear is super important because there may be times you have digestive issues, you'll be ingesting a lot more germs and you'll sometimes have diahrea, underwear has saved me many pairs of shorts and pants. If you go on yourself, you know what I mean, go to a bathroom, throw out the undies if you have to, and wipe the pants out a few minutes with toilet paper. I know it sucks. Do what you have to do. I've lived through all this humiliation, I went through it for three years.

Chapter 3: The Social Dynamics & Politics:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-RCMRYM7x24>

This is a good channel to follow. There is absolutely nothing wrong with connecting to other vehicle lifers, joining reddit communities about it or even linking up with others. Living off-grid or in your vehicle, I wouldn't say is illegal, it is more like a legal gray area. Just keep to yourself, don't draw attention to yourself and don't break the law and you shouldn't have too many issues. There's a lot of people living this lifestyle now because housing has become so unaffordable. So stick with these people who know what they're talking about, and put in the work to keep yourself safe.

Regarding "Team-ups" with people and pets:

I would be hesitant to take on a secondary person with you, or bringing pets. Some homeless people manage having a pet, others can't. I went without pets or secondary people. You need to take care of YOU first. That sometimes involves, telling other people "no," or even leaving a pet you love behind.

I've been there. I have had to ditch pets to leave bad situations. It breaks my heart to this day. But you can't just hold your entire life back over an animal. I know that sounds cruel and heartless. You have to take care of you. If you're really that concerned try to find it a new owner or take it to a no-kill shelter. I know it sucks. I'm not trying to make a moral argument for or against it. I miss my pet cat Ozzy, that I personally found on my grandparents' farm in the wild, took home at 8 years old and raised til I was 19 when I joined the army. I know the army is not gonna be everyone's escape method, it was mine, and also resulted in me being homeless too. I'm rambling now, look, you get the point. Pets to me are a no-go. You'd just be putting them in an even worse situation.

Secondary people will just drag you down. I met a guy years ago online. Said he was in a bad situation. I moved him in with me, got him two jobs, he ended up working 2 weeks, quitting his job and I was having to take care of him. He bought an Oculus Rift and just sat on that all night. He almost got me fired and that was like taking care of a pet in and of itself - just minus the

benefits pets have like emotional support and .. you know, actually being thankful for it. Just go it solo. It's ok to ask for help sometimes online, have people Paypal or Cashapp you money, but, taking someone else in is not something you should ever do. I don't care how well you think you know the person. Unless you're married or in a serious relationship, if it's just a friend, even a close friend, I wouldn't even do that. I've had a childhood friend since I was 4 use me and abuse me and not even feel bad about it. Don't take care of people. I don't care who it is, even family, you are homeless. YOU need to survive. YOU don't have the resources to take care of others , and if you try, you are going to die. Survive, adapt, and overcome. You have to look out for yourself in these situations.

Regarding people offering places to live, or offering rides:

I had people offer me help before then change their mind. Or when they found out my political and religious views (I am pagan) I endlessly got lectured about how I was "wrong" and I was homeless because "I turned my back on God." I had a woman offering me rides and every single time the entire time lecturing me about God, telling me to stop working so much and go to church. Lady, I have bills to pay. My cell bill. My insurance. My vehicle upkeep. I don't have time to go to church. People like this are troublesome. They've never BEEN in your situation. Some people just won't understand something until they go through it. Even if you show them videos detailing your life, even if you explain to them, these people, WILL not understand you, unless they have a higher emotional spectrum of intelligence enabling them to understand, or are willing to see anything outside their narrow minded perspective of their boxed-in way of believing how life works. Avoid these people at all costs.

In the ufo community, an alleged extraterrestrial left an encoded message once. It can be applied to any life situation , and is even street smart:

"Beware the bearers of FALSE gifts & their BROKEN PROMISES. Much PAIN but still time. BELIEVE. There is GOOD out there. We oPpose DECEPTION. CONduit CLOSING!"

While this of course I believe was meant to apply to hostile collectives such as Greys, this applies to everything in life. From supernatural, to how humans even interact with each other. Beware of people giving you things, or promising things and not keeping their end of the bargain. I've had people realize I'm an army veteran in good shape. Had me help them move all their furniture, relocate, and didn't even pay me for it. These people know they're not socially tied to you. They know there are no social consequences for their actions. They'll ask you to do things, "Hey clean out my garage I'll pay you \$300," when you do deals with people, be street smart. People, humanity especially, are going to show you their true colors, once you remove all consequences of what happens to them when they do not uphold their ends of deals. Demand payments up front. Be shrewd with people who ask things of you if they give absolutely no guarantee they will do something in return. People can and will use you. If you think I am just being pessimistic - go ahead and try it and see how it works out for you. Because it won't.

On social media, it's ok to be open about your situation. I wouldn't give exact locations, don't share your license plate number or anything, there are assholes that will try to call up the

business or place you're stealth camping outside and get you forcibly removed. But also remember, once again, people will perceive you differently. People will look down on you or not care. I'm a hobbyist roleplayer. On social media, all people cared about was just getting me to reply to their stupid roleplays. Bro, I am walking in the rain, to the laundromat. I can't check my messages. I'm doing shit to take care of myself.

Other times I would vent and complain. This actually helped me sometimes because people would offer to send money. Always show gratitude or find small ways to return the favor. Sometimes I gave life advice or I drew art for them or did other small menial tasks such as contact somebody for them. But some people when you vent and complain won't care or see you as a nuisance. "Lighten up, man!" this was ACTUALLY a response I got when I was having a dental infection, was sick and barely able to walk with arthritis in my joints and having nerve pain in my back, and crying out for help on Facebook. This was a reply, an ARMY VETERAN I SERVED WITH gave me. You would think someone who has walked in the rain and done sleeping in tents and field training in and of itself would realize how bad this would suck if you were doing it because you were homeless. No! Not even him! HE was even ignorant to how this stuff is.

So yeah. You're gonna find out who your real friends are. You're gonna see people as they are. They won't see you as YOU are, because they'll judge you. But you will have a first hand account of just how badly people don't care.

At work or at jobs - I wouldn't go into too much detail with people. When trying to get hired on saying you're living out of a vehicle, sometimes can help at some places but make you seen as a liability at others. Applying through temp agencies guarantees you a random job but it's not a guarantee they will hire you, they will rotate you out a lot of places. I would in fact try to have a job landed before you even do this lifestyle if possible.

Last but not least, be yourself, unapologetically. It's going to take some time to figure yourself out, and to find your "tribe." You'll find your people. Stay around intellectually open minded individuals, people who are open to hearing other perspectives. Stick around professionals, people who work hard, people who are smart. Don't hang around drug addicts, alcoholics, don't go to parties, first of all you can't afford that and second of all those types of people are probably going to end up right where you're at, and never leave it. Make friends at the gym. Make friends at work. I would avoid churches because they are all prissy little pansies that are going to impose and enforce the "flowchart human" lifestyle on you. "Go to church! Praise God! Get Married! Have kids! Don't do anything fun in life!" this is not anti-Christian sentiment, this is anti-establishment sentiment. The reason you are even in this situation is because this broken ass system only works for some people.

The Bottom Line:

Never Panic. Never Give Up. Things are going to be tough. Things will be difficult. Save your money. Don't worry about hobbies. Make friends. Make professional connections.

No matter how bad it gets - there will eventually be a way out to move beyond this, get an apartment or house, raise a family or whatever you want to do in life - even if you want to keep the nomad lifestyle as well.

Be unapologetically you and do not compromise for anyone. Hang tough and survive, you will get through this, and maybe someday you'll be sitting in a nice home writing guides about it just like I am.

May the love and light of the Master and the Kingdom of Mystinar be with you.