



THE UNION OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND A CONVENTIONAL LIFE

Most of the self-sufficiency articles, websites and books talk about the need to reject all of conventional life and the convenience that comes along with it. Unless you desire to drag yourself out into the wilderness, eat berries all day, and waste all of that college education you will be forced to find an alternative. There are lots of people, like me, who want to simplify their lives and still enjoy some of the things that made society so wonderful. The ultimate goal is to reduce your expenses/increase profits, produce most of what you consume and help to improve the environment.

Reducing expenses and increasing income is something that people have strived for all of their lives. With self-sufficiency you can do both although you probably won't get rich without years of saving and investing. A traditional house typically costs the owner more money than it will earn a person after appreciation. When we compare the worth of having a roof over our head (true worth) and the cost of a house in the city we have seriously overpaid. However, houses in a rural setting are generally less than their counterparts in the city. For example, I can buy a 3 bedroom house on a typical lot for the same price that I can buy the same house with 20 acres out in the country. The benefit is that the 20 acres can produce an income which I cannot get inside the city.

Not only can you produce an income on the twenty acres but you can reduce your grocery bill to almost nothing. The food will be better for you and more fresh. From the seedling to the kitchen pot you can be sure that nothing was added that is unhealthy for your body. The satisfaction that comes from knowing you can produce your own food and survive even during a great depression is a wonderful feeling. If a disaster is not in your future there is a good possibility that your property will be worth much more in the future than it is today. Everyday products like cheese, milk, vegetables, bread, meat, etc. can all be made with a small household farm.

One of the most important aspects of self-sufficiency is the "connection" man makes with nature. Unlike the mono-crop farmers who pour tons of fertilizer on the soil and reduce its lush qualities to desert the self-sufficient farmer is likely to engage in raised bed farming, organic farming, diversified crops and experimentation as a means to increase his/her yield. Scientists have come around in the past decade to agreeing that organic farming is the only way to grow sustainably for years. There is no contamination, little soil erosion, and no damage to the soil in small organic operations.

Self-sufficiency can be a healthy balance to a busy city life. It allows for a well-rounded perspective, protection from poverty, returns on investment and in many cases a second career. Many of us do not desire to give up all of the modern conveniences yet and still enjoy the benefits of living in modern society. By living simply and investing in land we are often able to decrease our expenses and increase our investments. This principle follows suit with widely available financial advice and furthers a person's understanding of his/her world.

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