



## 8 Ideas to Make Some Extra Income as Part of Your Self-Sufficient Lifestyle

By Diane Ziomek on May 22, 2013 - [Self Sufficiently](#)

With the changes in the economics of many areas of the world, those who wish to be self-sufficient should try to, and can truly, do so. Being self-sufficient doesn't only mean relying on a regular away-from-home job; it also means completely providing for your own needs. So everything from sourcing food and shelter to securing your finances as well. You can work towards this and here are ways to ensure you can move towards income self-sufficiency and aren't reliant on that 9-5 job!

Many people think certain industries will provide all of the income they will ever need, and fail to realize those industries can, and do, have down times. With many industries, there are booms and busts. The good times can last for years, but when downturns come, they can come hard. Many communities are built around the assumption it will last forever, but the reality is it never does. The gold rush is a great example – it ended and people had to move on because they had no other means of supporting themselves. So how to aim for financial independence?

### **Minimize and Capitalize**

There are ways to ensure that no matter the industry in your area, you will be able live a financially independent life. It is important to implement the strategy before you are stuck – there is no time like the present.



Gardening – vegetable by Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, on Flickr

Most of these actions listed can be implemented whether you live in a rural area or an urban environment

- **Cut your costs:** the first step is to minimize your expenses. By doing so, you won't be stuck needing a high income. By minimizing the amount of money that you have to pay out each month, you will be able to get by with less and be more resilient should there be an economic downturn – don't forget that debt is a cost, so make sure you are minimizing your debt too.
- **Grow your own food:** by growing some, or all of, your own food you can cut the grocery bill considerably each month. Preserve whatever you can for winter use.
- **Raise fiber animals:** if you have the space, fiber animals (by this we mean sheep, goats, alpaca, rabbits – any animal that produces natural fibers) will not only provide you with the raw materials to clothe you and your family, they will also provide an additional form of income from the fiber or the snuggly products you make.
- **Provide a service:** by providing a service such as lawn care or snow removal, you will be able to help others in the community and earn an income at the same time.
- **Trade and barter:** remove the need for money! If you are able to trade one product or service for another of equal value, you will not be so reliant on your income.

- **Sell your surplus:** this is an ideal way for the self-sufficient person to earn an income. By selling produce (or other products) at the farm gate you will not only earn an income, but you will be helping others as well. The items you sell could be anything from produce to eggs – and even offspring of your animals.
- **Sell bedding plants:** for those of you who have a green thumb and have the space, starting bedding plants is a great way to earn an income from home. Commercial greenhouses are often more expensive, and the plants often are shipped in from other parts of the country or world. By starting and selling locally, your customers can be assured the plants they buy are suited for their demographic area.
- **Put your crafting talent to use:** this is a great income source for anyone who is talented in sewing, spinning, knitting or crocheting. By making items such as quilts, mittens, scarves, toques, socks and slippers, you can either sell them from your home, online or at a local market. Items such as these sell well in colder climates, so utilizing your skills can provide you with the income you want. If you do not have the resources to raise your own fiber animals for yarn, another option is to spin the fiber others provide and keep a predetermined amount for your efforts. By being paid in fiber you are free to make and sell items to generate your own income.

## So How to Get Things Done

By combining any or all of the above suggestions, you can work toward the goal of being truly self-sufficient in income. It does not end there, however. Plus, it takes a game-plan to make it all work to your advantage. For those of you who are just contemplating becoming self-sufficient, there are a few steps to follow. Don't worry, they aren't difficult.

- **Set goals:** by setting goals you will have something to work toward, and you will not feel overwhelmed by the entire process. Decide what it is you wish to accomplish today, tomorrow, this week, this month and this year.
- **Start a “To Do” list:** this helps keep you on track, no matter what it is you're trying to accomplish. Be realistic with your list; in other words, don't make it so long you feel you will never get through it all. Make sure it is a physical (or virtual) list, not a mental list. Actually, write it out on paper and tack it to your fridge or filing cabinet; or find a great online or mobile To Do list – this way you will see it every day, which will encourage you to get through it. Check off each item on the list as you go.

- **Categorize your list:** this will make it easier to determine where you need to concentrate your efforts on any given day. If it is nice out, you can work through your outside list. If it is cold and miserable, you will have an inside list to work on. You may wish to break down your lists further than “inside” and “outside” as well. Outside is a big place, and there is always a lot to do when your goal is to live off the land. Sub-categories could be garden, barn or livestock.
- **Don’t stress:** take time to relax and do something fun, even if you have to set aside a block of time in your list. Being self-sufficient is not all about working ’til your fingers bleed; it is about finding a balance between providing for yourself and family and also making good memories. It is also about teaching your children to appreciate the simpler things in life.
- **Enjoy life:** life is short, and when you are always on the go the time flies by much quicker than you realize. It is important to stop and smell the flowers you are growing (whether for your own enjoyment or for sale!). Don’t get caught up in the hustle and bustle of life and forget what it is all about. Life is for living, so do things that make you feel alive.

By setting goals, making lists and enjoying life, you will find being full or partial income self-sufficiency can be achieved.