

HALLOWEEN SURVIVAL GUIDE

For one or more hopeful survivors of Halloween

One night every year, the children of the world shed their innocent guises and reveal their true selves: These monsters roam neighborhoods, searching for helpless adults to feed their endless hunger. Mercifully, we have found that a common household chemical—sugar, of all things—numbs their murderous ravaging.

You can avoid a grisly fate through preparation and common sense, but you'll need to keep your wits to do it. Read on to learn how to prevent panic and handle monster encounters with a cool head.

Plan Ahead

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You will need to prepare your home to receive trick-or-treaters; scary decorations and creepy music soothe these little monsters, but most particularly, you will need a bag or so of candy of more than one type. Place the candy in an area where all survivors can see and access it.

Share Secrets

SHARE SECRETS

Each of you is an adult; a human who has passed the age of monsterhood. Each of you must complete the four following actions during the night, but can do so at any time, in any order, at any pace. (If you're going to die anyhow, why rush?)

- ★ Reveal your most favorite candy. Eat one.
- ★ Reveal your most despised (or least favorite) candy. Make someone else eat one.
- ★ Reveal your greatest Halloween fear. There is a monster that exists to terrify each of us, preying on our deepest insecurity.
- ★ Tell the harrowing tale of a past Halloween that went terribly wrong for you.

WE ALL DIE SOME TIME

Answer the Door

ANSWER IT

Greet trick-or-treaters. If you don't, *they will kill you*. But when you do, you'll become scared. One monster scares you **once**. Multiple monsters scare you **twice**, regardless of the number in their group. Whether you are the one to greet them or not, each group of monsters that includes your greatest fear scares you an **additional time**.

Eat Candy

EAT CANDY

Childish though it may seem, eating candy is an important Halloween survival tactic. It's impossible to cope naturally with all the fear monsters inspire, and you risk long-term neurological damage—as well as a potentially fatal heart attack—trying. Sugar chemically *transforms* human fear into a variety of less dangerous emotions. **Whenever something scares you, eat a piece of candy.** The force of emotion behind your fear won't disappear, but it is diverted.

Your favorite candy turns fear into a positive emotion while other candy is less predictable. The candy you despise turns fear into a different negative emotion—which is less than ideal, but still better than the alternative.

Such emotions remain until you experience a new one that contradicts them. Behaviors are forgotten after they are satisfied, or if ongoing, until you experience a strong positive emotion.

EMOTIONS THAT CANDY TRANSFORMS YOUR FEAR INTO

FAVORITE CANDY

OTHER CANDIES

DESPISED CANDY

JOY

LUST

AWE

GRIEF

LOVE

DETACHMENT

OPTIMISM

DESPAIR

AMUSEMENT

ANXIOUS
GIDDINESS

NUMBNESS

ANGER

SERENITY

APPREHENSION

BOREDOM

DISGUST

ECSTASY

ADMIRATION

ANNOYANCE

REMORSE

AMAZEMENT

PARANOIA

Affects of Pure Fear

FREAK OUT

Whenever you fail to eat a piece of candy when something scares you, your mind copes by adopting a negative behavior, such as:

- * Trying to hoard or hide candy for your own self-preservation.
- * Trying to scare other adults.
- * Forcing an adult who is not ready to volunteer to answer the door.

Take Care of Each Other

TAKE CARE

You'll be going through some pretty weird stuff. If you've got someone there with you, don't try to handle it alone. Talk to each other. Work out the wild emotions you're dealing with. Pat someone's back. *Give as many hugs as you can.*

If one adult demonstrates understanding and empathy for another—and reassures them through physical contact—the soothed adult is calmed, relieving the recipient of the most negative emotion or behavior currently affecting them.

Keep Cool

DO NOT PANIC

Monsters are a sensitive lot. If you startle them or make them cry, they will become angry and will likely kill you and everyone else. It's hard, but you must *try* to suppress your emotions when greeting monsters: Treat them kindly and calmly. Should someone fail in this, **hide**. If no other monsters come to your door within 10 minutes, it's because they smell that you've already been killed; You're all dead, ghosts lingering until you accept the fate that was too traumatic for you to recall. If other monsters do come within 10 minutes, you have somehow escaped the previous monsters' wrath, you lucky fools.

Death may be an end, but it is not release. It is a grisly, lingering, soul-wrenching end. Do everything to avoid it.

== EVERYTHING

Rationalization is Healthy

DEAR GOD WHY

That monsters are real is terrifying and incredible. That our own children are monsters in disguise is disturbing and unbelievable. That they reveal themselves once a year and hunt openly through the streets is a trauma so horrible that it strains belief. But it's *true*. It's undeniably true. We don't talk about it the rest of the year... It's too much for us to handle. We just bury it down, deep below our psyches, until the next year—the night when we struggle merely to survive and cannot spare the strength to accept our reality, much less to discuss it.

That leads to a lot of unexplained disparities, of course. “I haven't seen our neighbors in months.” “Oh, I think they moved.” “Without saying goodbye?” “They must have. They must have moved in the middle of the night.” “How odd.” And so we rationalize. You will find yourself dealing with contradictions tonight. It's okay. Find an explanation for them, no matter how tenuous, and choose to believe it. This is not failure. This is humanity. Do what you *need* to keep yourself together tonight—lie, drink, dance yourself to distraction—because not everyone will survive, and panicking will not help your odds.

Common Sense

TRY NOT TO DIE

As eating a great deal of candy is a terrible idea, you will want to **stop actually eating candy** at some point. You can hide a piece of candy instead.

Violence is terrible, and consent is vital. If there is conflict between adults—or romance—**agree on a safe action** to represent the event, rather than acting something out that may cause someone harm, physical or emotional.

Avoiding the vicious kind of death that monsters promise is stressful. If anyone needs a break, **give them space** to be alone for a while. **Everyone is welcome to leave** at any time, with or without explanation. If you don't intend to return, please let someone know, so that the rest of the adults aren't tempted to brave the near-certain fate that awaits them outdoors trying to find you.

Good luck.