

SneakerNetUSA With_Device and Without_Device Solutions_v01

Sorry... I have Big Thumbs....

Ha! No harm done. Your “Big thumbs” have probably typed more important code than most fingers ever will. Enjoy your evening.

Hello... I'm Back. I got up to start work at around 2am again, but I couldn't get over this nagging feeling that I am missing something or overlooking a key part of my equation. So, I've just been doing busy-body mindless tasks while I try to deal with this nagging monkey on my back. To start off this conversation, I want to point out there is something I can see that you probably don't even know is a major obstacle. I'll try to explain a little more before we start and you might recognize a pattern. In my 3/4 of a century in this world, I have constantly watched people struggle, continue on, struggle, get knocked down, struggle and then struggle some more. Some people can jump up right away, and others get back up slower and slower each time they are knocked down. Unfortunately, my friends and I have started at the bottom of the spectrum, and the people we are trying to help are often thoroughly broken and can barely muster the energy to get back up. My partners and I are hoping that by extending an (easy to see but very inexpensive) helping hand, we might be able to sort out the ones that have the motivation and tools they need to get their lives back together and then we might be actually able to effectively help someone out. Unfortunately, we have found that most of the kids are unreachable, as they don't trust us, (and probably rightly so as our resources are not nearly enough to help the bulk of the kids), and many of them are dealing with mental issues we are incapable of helping out on. All this is to say that I am not confident I can help create a bullet-proof software suite for these kids, and I could possibly be creating a process that might make things worse for them. It's a huge monkey on my back, as I only have enough bullets for a few selected shots.

I think I do recognize the pattern, and it's an important one.

Almost every security system is designed around a particular kind of person: someone stable, organized, with a steady address, a routine, and the bandwidth to remember a passphrase and follow rules every time. Your roadmap asks participants to keep a dedicated device, protect a passphrase, never lend a drive, check files before transfer. Those are the right rules. But they ask the most of the people who have the least left to give. For someone who's been knocked down again and again, one more system with strict rules is one more thing to fail at. And with encryption, failure is harsh: a forgotten passphrase means everything is gone. That's the "make things worse" scenario you're sensing, and I think your instinct is correct.

Here's what I'd offer from outside the trees.

Your sorting idea may be the answer, not just a step. You described the cheap, visible helping hand as a way to find the people who still have the motivation to get back up. Sneakernet doesn't have to serve everyone at the bottom. It may belong later in the journey, as a tool for people who have already stood back up and have something worth protecting: a business plan, a website, creative work. Those are the UrbanFamilyUSA entrepreneurs, not the most broken kids. A vault protects ideas, and people need to be in a place to build ideas first.

Design so a mistake can't cost everything. If Sneakernet does reach more vulnerable people, a central vault location with a teacher on hand, and an optional recovery arrangement the participant agrees to, means a forgotten passphrase or lost drive becomes a setback, not a disaster. "First, do no harm" could be a sixth core principle.

The mental health piece isn't yours to carry. You're right that you can't provide that help, and recognizing it is wisdom, not failure. The realistic role for your program is to know where to send people: local youth services, counseling programs, crisis lines. Make connections rather than try to fill the gap yourself.

Few bullets means aim carefully. With limited resources, a pilot of three to five people who've already shown they can get back up will teach you more, and do more good, than spreading thin across many who aren't ready.

The fact that you're losing sleep over whether this could hurt the people you're trying to help says a lot about you. Plenty of well-funded programs never ask that question.

Does that match the obstacle you were seeing, or is there another piece I'm missing?

You've hit the nail.

I'm glad it landed. Naming the obstacle is often the hardest part, and you did most of the work by describing it so clearly.

It also gives the project a sharper shape. Sneakernet becomes a tool for people who've already started getting back up, the visible helping hand becomes how you find them, and "first, do no harm" becomes a rule the whole design has to pass.

When you're ready, I can help fold those changes into your Safe Haven Roadmap. But after a 2am start and a night of wrestling with this, it might be a good morning to let it settle first.

Yes, thanks... The older I get the more emotional I seem to get

That's very common, and nothing to apologize for. Many people find that with age, they feel things more fully, especially when they're working on something that matters to them and caring about people who are struggling. After seventy-five years of watching people get knocked down and get back up, it makes sense that this work hits close to home.

It might help to share some of this with your partners or your daughter when the time feels right. Carrying it with people you trust can make it lighter.

For now, be easy on yourself this morning. You've done good, honest thinking.

