

# My Interview With Adam Chudy - Some New Tidbits About GYFG

*I have done numerous interviews and blog posts across the personal finance blogosphere and after enough time passes I like to share those pieces with you here on this blog. I hope you enjoy the interview below and learn a few things you didn't know about GYFG.*

[This interview was originally published on Adam Chudy's blog.](#)

*Please enjoy!*

**What's your story? Feel free to share in any free form you choose about how you got on the blogger track, your current or prior career, and why you are interested in the personal finance / personal improvement space. This can be multiple paragraphs.**

I like to tell people that I am living the American Dream and creating my own Rags to Riches story. My story starts with very humble beginnings. I grew up in poverty, with drug addict parents, living on government assistant programs like Welfare and Section 8 housing. My father was in and out of prison for the manufacturing of Meth (yes, totally Breaking Bad, I know). As a kid, my 4 brothers and I slept on the floor of a 2 bedroom apartment, while my mom and grandmother shared a room, and my uncle took the other room.

Statistically speaking I should be in prison.

Somehow I managed to beat the statistics and get myself as far away from the life I knew as a kid as possible. I was fortunate to find some really great mentors that helped guide me along the way. Since as long as I can remember, I have been promising myself that I would not flounder the opportunities this country offers those willing to put in the work. I knew from a young age that I wanted all the Freedom's afforded by wealth. And I wanted to live a life that most only dream of...at least where I came from.

Since I have actually told this story in different forms on many other blogs

([including this one](#)), I won't spend much time here rehashing it.

### **When people ask you what you do, what's your answer?**

I usually tell people that I work in finance and that I anonymously write a personal finance blog. I even go as far to say that I consider myself to be both an Intrepeneur and an Entrepreneur.

### **How do you explain your side hustles?**

Typically I just describe them as they are. Over the years I have had 3 main side hustles:

1. A direct marketing health & fitness company with Beachbody, selling workout programs and supplements that I personally used and got results with myself. I didn't really sell, I shared  [2011 - 2013]
2. [A digital marketing and analytics consultancy](#). I helped e-commerce businesses use analytics to increase the ROI of their marketing dollars and increase on-site conversion. [2014 - early 2015]
3. Personal finance blog. Where my mission is to Humanize Finance, Build Wealth, and Reach Financial Freedom!

I guess you could technically consider renting out a room in our home a passive side hustle (is that an oxymoron?). I would even consider my investment activities as side hustles as well.

### **What's the best and worst financial mistakes you've personally made?**

#### **Mistakes:**

I bought my first house at 19 when they were giving them away like candy. I was still in college and it was 100% financed. Long story short is that after several years I eventually let it go to foreclosure and it cost me about \$35K (the difference in the monthly expenses and what I could rent it out for over two years and some change).

It probably wasn't quite \$35K, because I did get some good tax benefits for two years out of college since it was technically considered a primary residence. The good news is that my credit score has recovered significantly since to above 800 from a low of around 540.

Prior to this, I had lost \$14K in the stock market in 2007 when I put way too much money in a one trick pony (bio-pharma Company). I was sure I was going to make 100X my money. Little did I know and how naive I was at the time. But it was a great learning lesson. It motivated me to learn as much as I could about trading and investing. I even went on to trade as a professional for an oil company for a few years.

Then in 2011, I decided I needed a new car when at the time my car was only 4 years old. After I sold my car for \$4K, I had to come up with another \$28K which was like 40% of my gross income at the time.

I did end up paying cash after financing it for 2 months because I could not stand the thought of paying interest on a car (especially at 8% interest with my bad credit at the time), but that could have been used for investments that would have put a lot more money in my pocket. The next year we did the same for my wife and spent another \$25K for a new car for her (again her car was only 4 years old). We ended up financing it over a little less than two years at a 1.74% interest rate.

### **Good Decisions:**

When I worked for a public company with an [employee stock purchase program](#) I contributed the max 15% of my salary. The program allowed us to purchase stock every 6 months for 15% less than the lower of the closing price on the 1<sup>st</sup> and last day of the 6-month trading window. In other words, it was a guaranteed 15% return and many times much better than that. I sold after every distribution and my returns were 180%, 120%, and 70% before I eventually left the company. That company has since filed for BK. You know what they say, you don't look a gift horse in the mouth.

We bought a house that was 50% of the price the bank said we could afford. Today that means the total mortgage with taxes, insurance, and HOA only makes up about 10% of our gross income. This is going to allow us to be [mortgage free in 7 years 3 months](#).

I started maxing out my 401K early in my career, so I don't even think or miss that money.

[We adopted the law of 50/50](#). It's a very balanced approach to personal finance. We get to spend 50% of our after-tax income guilt free. We save the other 50%.

I created a 20-year financial blueprint that will evolve over the years but provides annual goals of where we need to be in order to hit [our goal of \\$10M](#).

### **What area of your life do you indulge in luxuries? Where do you cut ruthlessly?**

We spend a lot of money on food and eating out. This year we have averaged about \$1,600/month for just the two of us. To be honest we don't spend a lot of time cutting expenses. I usually go through an expense review twice a year to rationalize or cut expenses. If there is something we are spending money on that is no longer bringing joy to our lives, it goes to the chopping block.

But otherwise we really just try to save 50% and spend the other 50% guilt free.

That said, come January 2016, I will be going through this process and am sure I will find at least a couple things to eliminate.

### **We don't save money just to stare at the commas. What goal are you working toward and why?**

Really? I was hoping to make it to the billionaires club, so that I could create my own Tres Commas Tequila, like they did on the show Silicon Valley.

Actually, all joking aside, I am working towards [building a Net Worth of \\$10M](#) by the time I'm 48 (as I write this I am 29). How did I land on \$10M? First, everyone wants to get to a million and based on my income that should be a walk in the park, so there is no reason to aim for something I am confident I could do without much effort. Plus \$1M is not what it used to be (hello inflation).

Even though \$10M would put me in the double comma and eight-figure club, if you assume 3% inflation, in today's dollars it is only about \$5.5M.

This is the dollar amount that I thought would be a stretch to reach in 20 years but something that was still achievable. No doubt it will take a lot of discipline, focus, and hard work. At \$10M I am confident that this will be more than enough money for my family to live well, give well, and leave the world a little better than we found it.

My wife and I envision a future where we follow the 3/6/3 schedule. Whereby we live

3 months by the beach, 6 months at home, and 3 months in a foreign country (Italy is first on the list). At some point, we plan to have a kid or two and it would be amazing to have the resources and the flexibility to take them on what they used to call [The Grand Tour](#). You can ex-out all the elitist crap and then you're left with a pretty amazing adventure to explore the world. This really caught our attention while touring Hearst Castle, and we learned about how Mr. Hearst himself went on such an adventure around the world for 18 months with his mother when he was 10 years old.

Achieving this Net Worth goal isn't really about the money. The money itself is just the means to a much greater end...**FREEDOM!** Time Freedom, Location Freedom, and Financial Freedom. It's not even about retiring early. Currently, we don't really have any desire to retire, instead, we plan to do work we love for the rest of our lives.

### **What opinion or belief do you hold that most people don't?**

[That it is entirely possible for anyone to become financially independent in 10-20 years.](#) Of course, the big fat if is whether you're willing to do things differently than most people. If you do what most people do, then all you can expect is the result that most people get.

Another belief that is an extension of this, is that you don't have to live a super frugal life either (i.e. living like a college student). If you focus on growing your income and following the law of 50/50, whereby you save 50% and spend 50% of your after-tax income, you will have no problem reaching Financial Freedom. **I call this having your cake and eating it too!** It's **relative frugality** (maybe one day I will get a Nobel prize, like Einstein, for my work on the theory of relative frugality) to your income, and it allows for lifestyle inflation as you grow your income.

I can't argue that **the core tenet to wealth building is to spend less than you make** (i.e live below your means). However, the way that is executed is entirely up to you. You can live below your means by cutting expenses to the bone (and all the joy), or [you can live below your means by expanding them](#) on the income side of the equation.

**What's the best \$100 you've spent this year? The point of this question is to ask what small thing have you bought that's brought an unusual amount of utility, use or joy to your life. For example, I bought Caitlin this [lunchbox](#) for \$15.00 that you put in the freezer and it stays cold for 10 hours, no ice needed. She loves it because she's in and out of schools in Houston heat all day.**

Okay, I admit this was a hard one to come up with off the top of my head, especially since we are only 2 weeks away from closing out 2015 as I write this. So, I went over to Amazon (naturally right?) and reviewed the items I ordered over the course of the year.

Hands down the best \$10.50 I spent in 2015 was for a [12 Oz Fresh Press](#). If you like coffee and have never experienced a cup brewed in a French Press, do yourself a favor and try it at least once. You'll never want to drink coffee from a Keurig machine again.

**What does your morning routine look like? When do you get up? Any morning habits (yoga, meditation, workout, coffee, etc)? Looking for interesting tidbits from top performers.**


I wake up almost every morning around 5:00 am (even on weekends, with no alarm). The first thing I do when I wake up is either brew an amazing cup of coffee in my 12 Oz French Press or some Hot Tea. There is something ritualistic about having something hot first thing in the morning that is just so soothing.

Then I usually spend time checking email, read (books & blogs), and writing for my own blog until about 7 am. Somewhere around 6:45 am, I will log into my brokerage account to see if there is anything interesting for me to do (i.e put on new investments), and to keep an awareness of the price action in the market.

At 7 am sharp I put my shoes on, earbuds in (to listen to podcasts or audiobooks), and take my dogs for a 30-minute walk. The dogs make sure I keep a really tight schedule in the morning when it comes to their morning walk.

Upon returning from our walk I will usually make a few eggs for breakfast and proceed to get ready for work. These days I tend to start my day from home and then go into the office between 8 am and 10 am.

**What book have you most gifted or recommended? If nothing comes to mind, just favorite or most influential books?**

Hands down the book I have both gifted and recommended the most is [The Slight Edge](#), by Jeff Olson. I have given away at least 25 copies and recommended it over 100 times in my offline life. Now that I have the blog I have recommended it to thousands of people.

Personally, I read this book for the first time in 2011, and it absolutely changed my life. I have adopted it as my standard operating system in all aspects of life. I love it so much that I re-read it once a year and/or listen to the audio version. Since reading that book [my income has more than doubled quadrupled, my net worth has increased over 600% 1,300%](#), and I lost almost 50 lbs the first year I read it. Correlation or Causation? I don't think it really matters, I know it has made a profound impact in my life.

If you have not read it, do yourself a favor and go pick up a copy and be prepared to change your life. In the meantime here is a graphic from the book that really sums up the philosophy very well:

# Slight Edge Life Paths

## EASY TO DO

Simple disciplines made consistently over time

- Responsibility/Discipline
- Value Driven

What's uncomfortable early becomes comfortable later

PHILOSOPHY → ATTITUDE → ACTIONS → RESULTS → LIFESTYLE

What's comfortable early becomes uncomfortable later

- Blame/Neglect
- Entitled

## EASY NOT TO DO

Simple errors in judgement made over time

**5% SUCCESS**  
Progressive realization of a worthy idea

FINANCES

HEALTH

BUSINESS

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

RELATIONSHIPS

**95% FAILURE**  
Lasts a lifetime

## Any favorite podcasts?

I have listened to many podcasts over the years. I actually started listening to them back in 2012, before they were as mainstream as they are today. Here are a list of a few of my favorites: Entrepreneur On Fire, Smart Passive Income, Financial Mentor, the #AskGaryVee Podcast, The Mentee, Self Made Man, Warrior On Fire, Invest Like The Best, Leading Wisely, Dan Carlin's Hardcore History, The Tim Ferriss Show, and Bigger Pockets.

Cheers,

Dominic @ Gen Y Finance Guy



## Gen Y Finance Guy

**Hey, I'm Dom** - the man behind the cartoon. You'll notice that I sign off as "Gen Y Finance Guy" on all my posts, due to the fact that I write this blog anonymously (at least for now). I like to think of myself as the *Chief Freedom Officer* here of my little corner of the internet. In the real world, I'm a 30-something former C-Suite executive turned entrepreneur turned capital allocator. I am trying to humanize finance by sharing my own journey to Financial Freedom. I believe in total *honesty* and *transparency*. That is why before I ever started blogging, I decided that I would share all of my own [financial stats](#). I do this not to brag, but instead to inspire motivate, and also to hold myself accountable. My goal is to be a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration for *you*, the reader, by living life by example and sharing it **all** here on the blog. My sincere hope is that you will be able to learn from me - both from my successes and my failures! [Read More](#)