

What If Money Were No Object? [Part Two]

“Better to have a short life that is full of what you like doing than a long life spent in a miserable way” - Alan Watts

In [part one](#) of this series, I pondered the thought-provoking question offered by Alan Watts: **what if money were no object?** Alan dove even deeper by asking the following:

- What would you like to do if money were no object?
- How would you really enjoy spending your life?
- What makes you itch?
- What sort of a situation would you like?
- What do you desire?

I've been pondering these questions for several months now. In [Part One](#), I promised to share more with you about what life will look like for the GYFG family when money is no object. I also said I would share how we balance living and enjoying life today while working towards and designing our future life.

Focusing on Alan Watts' quote, and exploring how I really want to live life, is why I so adamantly preach the "[get rich fast](#)" philosophy.

A few things I kept in mind during my reflective period:

- (1) Money is the means, not the end. Money is to be used as the tool it is in order to live life by design - *my* design, not that of anyone else.
- (2) Making the pursuit of money and wealth the sole purpose in life will lead to a very disappointing ending.
- (3) Being wealthy is pointless without also being both [happy and healthy](#).
- (4) Financial freedom is the surest path to being able to live life on one's own

terms.

The Trifecta of Freedom

Money – wealth – is not the only thing we are chasing on our journey to financial freedom (the point I define as where money becomes no object).

- We desire autonomy.
- We desire connection.
- We desire mastery.

Money provides autonomy. Ultimately it's not about the money itself, it's about the optionality that the money provides. Connection is relationships, and work that is meaningful and challenging helps fulfill our desire for mastery.

These three freedoms can be summed up as **financial freedom, location freedom, and time freedom.**

So, What *If* Money Were No Object?

If money were no object, would you retire to drink margaritas full time on a beach somewhere, fulfilling a pro-leisure lifestyle fantasy? To me, a forever diet of that sounds boring and unfulfilling. Don't get me wrong – I love relaxing on the beach as much as the next person, but there is much more in life I want to experience as well.

I want the whole human experience, which I view as being made up of four major components: **work; travel; relationships; and recreation and leisure.**

Work: Continue or Not?

To me, **financial freedom** is not about *not* working, but rather about the freedom to pursue *fulfilling* work. It's about making life decisions no longer shackled to monetary outcomes. As humans, we are designed to be productive. I think that deep down we all have an innate desire for accomplishment and significance, whatever that means to each of us individually. However, when we have to think about how we're going to pay our mortgage and send our kids to college, or even just keep food on the table, we may find ourselves grinding it out, collecting a paycheck because we have responsibilities to fulfill and bills to pay, and living life

on someone else's terms. In that stage of life, there is not much optionality to live life on your own terms because the terms are set by that regular paycheck you depend on. Significance and meaningful accomplishment are not foremost priorities; getting paid maximum to work is.

But once financial freedom is reached? What shape does work take then?

Currently, there is no plan for the GYFG household to stop working once we reach either financial independence or financial freedom ([which I differentiate in this post](#)). Yes, we will continue to gain more control over our time. Yes, we may stop working for our current employers. Yes, we may never work for another corporation again. But that doesn't mean we will stop being productive. For example, I plan to always continue writing this blog – one of my favorite activities, which some would consider work.

Mrs. GYFG would love to get certified as a yoga instructor to continue improving her own practice and to share with others the joy she gets from it. We may start our own lifestyle business, who knows, and maybe this blog will turn into the business I dream for it. I have also considered starting my own consulting practice in the Corporate Performance Management software space (a post for another day).

Mrs. GYFG is also very creative and I could see her selling on a platform like Etsy. She also has the desire to flip homes one day. I have always dreamed of running a family office, a role I currently do part-time, but one I imagine growing as our wealth grows. Mrs. GYFG would also love to volunteer or work for a philanthropic organization. Or maybe even start one herself. [After all, she is the GYFG Chief Philanthropic Officer.](#)

We enjoy being productive, and we also like making money. I see that continuing for the rest of our lives, whether or not that productivity is tied to a paycheck of any certain size. Regardless of what we do for “work,” the difference once we reach financial freedom will be that the decision *to work*, and *what to do for work*, will no longer be driven by our monetary goals.

Travel: The Three-Six-Three plan

A few years ago, Mrs. GYFG and I took a road trip up the coast of California. Along the way, we stopped to tour the Hearst Castle and were inspired by the 45-minute video they share before the tour begins. Although the Castle was amazing, that

wasn't what really stuck with us. It was how William Hearst grew up. When he was a kid, his mother took him on a Grand Tour around Europe for eighteen months, something the upper class did with their children as a rite of passage.

It was this trip that heavily influenced Mr. Hearst in designing his castle, from which he ran the Hearst newspaper empire. He was literally the first remote worker before we knew what that even meant. He had 100 telephone lines installed in the Castle for business calls and had copies of each newspaper flown in for editing before they went to the printing press.

This got the gears churning. How awesome would it be to do your work from just about anywhere in the world? Although Mr. Hearst preferred his castle, the GYFG household wants to experience a multiple of locations, and many other countries. On that trip, we started thinking about how we wanted to spend our time throughout the year. We had fun, but concluded that ultimately we would prefer slower travel.

Over time we developed the three-six-three plan. Our eventual goal is to spend three months a year in a foreign country, six months at "home base," and another three months at a Southern California beach (close to home base and our family). We still have to work out the logistics and kids will definitely affect this plan. It's something we plan to ease into over time.

To begin dipping our toes into this lifestyle, we have rented several beach houses over the last couple of years (only for three to four days at a time) and plan to rent one for a whole month in 2019 [after we have officially paid off our mortgage](#). We have traveled to foreign countries but only stayed seven to ten days, which never feels long enough. I could see going back to Italy for our first slow travel trip and eating our way through the country. As foodies, we want to taste the world literally and metaphorically. We want to be immersed in other cultures and languages. We want to broaden our worldview by experiencing it from many different vantage points.

Financial freedom buys you **location freedom!** We are definitely working towards a location-independent lifestyle.

Relationships (Friends and Family)

We have deep ties with friends and family and don't want to lose those

relationships. This is why our three-six-three plan has us spending nine months out of the year at or close to our home base...although we also hope to convince some of our friends and family to visit us during our travels abroad. Especially with baby GYFG on the way, it is very important to us that our kid gets to spend quality time with grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Recreation and Leisure

Before achieving financial freedom, recreation and leisure has to fit around a job. For most, including the GYFG family, this means early mornings, nights, weekends, and two to three weeks of vacation a year are what is available for recreation and leisure. This model doesn't leave nearly enough time to do all the things we want to do.

We want extended free leisure time to deeply pursue hobbies and activities (recreation) that bring joy.

We are both looking forward to being able to spend more than the scraps of time left after work (and sleep, of course), and allocate time as we see fit. We have plenty of ideas: yoga, swimming, lifting, cooking, fancy dinners out, drinking wine, reading, writing, water skiing, snow skiing, snowboarding, time with friends, time with family, time with our dogs, learning, movies, and making traditions with our new family. Some of our interests might combine travel with hobbies, like not just eating our way across Italy, but taking classes there and learning how to cook Italian as well. Maybe getting that yoga certification on location in Fiji. Financial freedom will buy us **time freedom**, giving us the luxury to spend deep extended time on our terms of what we want to dive deeply into once we are not working jobs.

Right Now: You Have The Freedom to Obtain Balance

All work and no play makes GYFG a dull boy! Whether you have reached financial freedom or not, work should never be the only thing in your life, or you will feel like a slave, and get burned out. Slavery was abolished in 1865 when the 13th amendment was passed! At the beginning of your journey, you may not have *full* autonomy, but you will have *some* autonomy. How do you spend your precious free time? What can you implement now to achieve a working model of life, with at least some time devoted to balance out a healthy equation of work-travel-relationships-recreation and leisure? Plant the seeds now and take bites of what you enjoy, as we

do, so that when the time comes that you achieve financial freedom, Freedom Fighter, you will be able to take full advantage of the great life you have worked so hard to achieve.

Conclusion

So, what if money were no object? Or a better question to the Freedom Fighter reading this post: "What will you do **when** money is no object?"

The GYFG household has a plan and we are working that plan hard. We believe financial freedom isn't a matter of *if*, it's a matter of *when*. And *when* we get there we will take full advantage of its optionality. We will enjoy the trifecta of **time freedom, location freedom, and financial freedom**, balancing our equation of work-travel-relationships-recreation and leisure. We want to work hard, play hard, and travel slow.

To us, this is living life to the fullest and on our terms!

How will you spend your Freedom? What is the equation of your own Freedom Plan? Let me know in the comments below - I'd like to hear your vision!

- 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](#)