

The Only Fortune You Have To Spend Down To Zero

Poof! The first six months of 2020 are officially in the rearview mirror along with the 15,724,800 seconds they represented.

And you thought *money* was slippery?

At the end of the day, **money is only a measure of how much time freedom you have**. If you think about the 4% rule, its basic premise is to accumulate 25X your desired annual burn rate in order to sustain you for a 30+ year “retirement” (in parentheses because everyone’s definition of what this looks like is different). You have to dive a level deeper to realize that 25X before any appreciation, dividends, interest, or rental income is really a measure of time. **It represents 25 years worth of living expenses – in today’s dollars. That is 25 years’ worth of TIME FREEDOM!** *Financial Independence* is really about *time* independence: buying your *time* back to spend it as you see fit.

Ever dream of being a billionaire? You were actually born one: assuming what the actuarial tables say probabilistically – that you will live a full 85 years – you have a 2,680,560,000 fortune of seconds to manage over your lifespan. That is almost 2.7B of the most precious resource on the planet. We should make up a new symbol to denote it, a little clock next to the number, like the dollar sign we use for money...

We are all born with this fortune. It’s up to each of us to decide how we will spend it. Unlike money, you can never get time back, as once it is gone it is gone forever. It is truly the most scarce resource we have. Furthermore, money and time have an inverse relationship, in that as your money pile (net worth) grows, your time fortune gradually decays with each passing second, day, week, month, and year. (Actually, whether or not your money pile grows, your time pile still erodes...)

It’s important that we realize this relationship between money and time in order to ensure we are managing the more precious of these two resources properly, and in line with our own goals and values. It’s this relationship that makes the FIRE movement so attractive. It’s a movement driven by a philosophy of optimization and efficiency. The underlying goal of FIRE is to get you to full autonomy over your

life in the shortest time possible. It's about finding the point of equilibrium that allows you to live your desired lifestyle for as long as possible. Which, when seen through the lens of time, means getting to the point of being able to spend your time how you want to, for however long you have some of it.

When it comes to the time fortune that we are all bestowed with at birth, we have no choice but to spend it down to zero. It doesn't compound. It doesn't grow. You can't save it for later. You can't create more of it.

The unavoidable annual burn rate of your multi-billion time fortune is 31,536,000 seconds. By the time this post goes live, you will have burned through 15,724,800 (January through June) of those seconds whether you wanted to or not. And also whether you realized it or not. How did you spend your precious 15,724,800?

A better question may be: how will you spend the remaining 15,811,200 seconds of 2020?

It's easy to get caught up in the pursuit of money but it's even more important to regularly remind ourselves what it is really all about. That it is the **time** in each day. What did you do with yours? With whom did you spend it? I hope you spent yours so far this year both wisely and intentionally. I also hope you didn't waste too much of it.

COVID has intensified my interest in time and has continued to inspire deep thought. I have always tried to remain conscious of time in order to ensure I'm not squandering the fortune that was so generously given to me to manage. I work at it, and I take great pride in spending my time wisely, productively, and without regret. That said, the current state of our world has allowed for a pause in my normal hustle and bustle. Like many, I've been taking stock and going even deeper into re-evaluating and re-prioritizing what's important.

Over the past six years, the GYFG family has been working feverishly and intensely towards achieving the Freedom Trifecta - Financial Freedom, Location Freedom, and Time Freedom. Every action we've taken has been carefully thought out and very intentional. Our goals have not changed but our timeline and path to reaching them have. Partly because of this recent deep dive, we are making changes centered around the concept of time, focusing our choices to free up more of it to enjoy each other as we go, and to regularly savor the rewards of all the hard work we've put in these past six years.

I challenge you to make a promise to yourself and your family that you will always aim to be intentional and conscious of how you spend down your multi-billion time fortune. Whoops - there went another couple hundred of those golden seconds!

- 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](#)