

Annual Memory-Making Budget

You worked your ass off to build wealth to underwrite the life you envisioned. You hit your target but find yourself gun-shy to pull the trigger on the splurges you dreamed of (for example, the extravagant vacations you longed to take). At last, you have the money but spending it rankles psychologically, as it goes against all the habits, disciplines and choices you had to make – indeed, the person you had to become – to build the wealth in the first place.

You delayed gratification to reach your number. Now it feels reckless to be spending so much money on a single vacation or a bunch of material things. After much contemplation you decide that now is NOT the right time, and that waiting would be the prudent thing to do. The timing will be much better when the kids are a little older to remember and appreciate the trip more. Or maybe you convince yourself that you just need a little more time to justify spending the money to build your dream home gym. Or to take your spouse on a once in a life-time adventure. Or to make a huge donation to your favorite charity. The list goes on and on.

The problem is that time passes, maybe a couple of years, and the price tag still feels irresponsible and you still find new reasons not to spend the money on the things you worked so hard to be able to afford. Not to mention the possibility of life changing on a dime with a health challenge for you or someone in your family. Your wealth keeps growing, significantly out-pacing your spending. You're locked into the old habits that helped you reach financial freedom and find it much easier to save than to spend.

You want to spend the money, you really do, but continually question if you *really* have enough. You convince yourself that when you get to X milestone that you will finally be ready to pull the trigger...only to see that milestone come and go and the bar again get raised. You tell yourself “just one more year” or “all I need is X” but deep down you know you have enough.

Does this sound familiar?

I know I've had to battle this over time. But I've adopted certain philosophies and set certain goals over our wealth-building years to help the GYFG family from falling into this trap. The last thing we want to do is go through life and die with a huge pile

of cash and a list of things we wish we would had done.

Here are what these mental “tools” of mine look like in my own life:

- **You can't take it with you!** No one wants their net worth balance on their tombstone. “We want to be remembered for the impact we've had & what we did for others.” – A GOOD FRIEND
- **Trade the Money for the memories!**
- **The [law of 50/50](#)** whereby you spend 50% of what you make and spend the remaining 50% guilt free – it's a free pass to lifestyle inflation. It teaches you to learn to enjoy spending just as much as you enjoy saving. It also teaches you that if you currently can't afford it, you can expand the earning side of the equation to recalibrate.
- Adopting and practicing **relative frugality** (See: [Extreme Frugality Is for the Birds](#)).
- **Live a few years like most won't so you can live the rest of your life like most can't.** We paid our first mortgage off in less than five years and lived significantly under our means (which we still do). We were willing to put in 70+ hour weeks for a decade to accelerate our careers and earning capacity. We now have the means, the time, and the youth to do just about anything we want.
- **It's not that it's too expensive, you just don't earn enough.** This helped us focus more on the income side of the equation vs. the expense side. There is a natural floor in how low you can cut your expenses but no limit to the ceiling of how much you can earn.

I've learned to **enjoy spending** almost as much as I enjoy saving. **I am unapologetic** about how I choose to live and spend the money we worked so hard for in order **to live life by our design**. I also acknowledge that our path is not the right path for everyone. I also know that some of the things I write on this blog may seem outrageous to some yet I choose to continue being transparent about a topic that is so taboo in our society.

The moral of this post is to remind you again that you cannot take it with you. Don't build a pile of wealth only to die without enjoying the utility the money can have on your life. I'm not telling you to be reckless but do trade the money for the memories. Create impact through your giving. Enjoy the fruits of your labor.

Wealth affords you the ability to buy your time back so that you can re-allocate that

time to be a better husband, a better father, a better friend, a better athlete, a better “fill in the blank.”

Work hard but don't forget to Live Well and Give Well.

The GYFG household has committed \$100,000 per year as a dedicated ‘Memory-Making’ Budget starting now.

- 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](#)