



Financial Independence Hub
While You're Still Young Enough to Enjoy It

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Retirement STILL Rocks

By Financial Independence Hub on Jun 30, 2017 09:10 am



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By Heather Compton and Dennis Blas

Special to the Financial Independence Hub

Since retiring in 2004, we've learned a thing or two. Foremost, a rockin' retirement requires more than a bucket list: it's not a given, it's a statement of intention. A satisfying retirement requires finding new ways to satisfy our needs and utilize the skills and talents that give us the greatest satisfaction. Like a working career, a retirement career unfolds, develops, progresses and changes as life circumstances unfold. This doesn't mean some front-end planning won't be useful. Our cornerstones for a rockin' retirement include Lifestyle, Relationship and Finances.

Go-Go to Slow-Go to (sigh) ... No-Go

Many of us will have a third act lasting 30 plus years and few will plan for the full-stop retirement of a previous generation. All play and no work also makes Jack a very dull boy! We may think of retirement as one long time frame, but those who study aging divide it into three distinct phases: the go-go, slow-go and no-go years. Certain Victory Lap careers, travel destinations and budding interests must be pursued in the go-go years; others might wait until the slow-go. Either way, you'll want to mind-bank lots of great life experiences to relive in the no-go years!

Who's Driving?

Most believe they are in the driver's seat in timing their retirement. Surprise! Health issues, layoffs, changing economic conditions, dated skill sets, the need to provide care for elderly parents or an ailing spouse, send some into retirement sooner than anticipated. Jonathan Chevreau calls it "Sudden Retirement Syndrome." It can be a rough adjustment, particularly if you didn't see it coming. The only antidote: set your "plan to" date. Jonathan calls it "findependence" or your personal financial Independence Day (aka Findependence Day). Arriving there means you really are in the driver's seat, choosing how to invest your time.

Lifestyle: Health trumps everything

We are strong believers that relationships are key to a satisfying retirement. So why put lifestyle first? Truth be told – health trumps *everything*. Investing in and making choices that support your health is paramount, in fact it's your new job. Becoming our best selves is the greatest gift we bring to those with whom we share our lives.

Relationship

Who are you sharing this rich life with? Every study on happiness has shown that our social network strongly influences our level of life satisfaction. Do you have friends to grow old with, a partner to cherish, and family connections that sustain you? Are there investments of time, talent or talk that would enrich and grow those relationships?

Finances

Money is intended to be in service to your life, not the other way around. You can't achieve a picture of your money needs without first creating a framework. What does your version of a "Tigger" or an "Eeyore" life look like? Vision mapping helps us to answer "how much is enough?" and decide if work will play a role in that equation. The reality for all of us is that we must "cut our coat according to our cloth."

Becoming Fearless

"One of the great things that happen as you age is realizing what have you got to lose? Aging is about becoming fearless – the freedom of that. You can drop the shackles of pleasing or trying to fit in," says actress and activist Jane Fonda.

Any way you dice it; this is your third act, your last chapter. There is no mulligan or "do-over." What do you see as a well-lived life? Craft your own balance between playing, learning, connecting and contributing. Become fearless.

Heather Compton retired from a career as vice president and senior investment advisor with a major financial services firm and husband Dennis Blas, from IT management positions. Both have extensive experience in personal development and life skills programs. Heather remains engaged in financial and lifestyle issues in her roles as presenter and facilitator of pre-retirement and financial literacy programs; Dennis continues to use his talents as technical guru in supporting Heather's work. They are co-authors of "[Retirement Still Rocks – Canadian Boomers Invest in Life](#)" available from Amazon.ca. See their website at www.retirementrocks.ca.

Editor's Note: See also Jonathan Chevreau's review of the book that ran at MoneySense.ca on Thursday: [Book Review: Retirement STILL Rocks!](#)

The post [Retirement STILL Rocks](#) appeared first on [Financial Independence Hub](#).