

Thoughts on early retirement

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Tuesday, 11 March 2014 21:03 - Last Updated Tuesday, 11 March 2014 21:04

Those of you that know me well have probably heard me talk at least a little bit about how I plan to reach financial independence and retire some time in my mid-40's. I've been basing all of my financial decisions around this and trying my best to make it happen. Truth is, I'm well on track for it barring any major global financial meltdowns [worse than the most recent one a few years ago that turned out to be a stock buyer's bargain hunting dream].

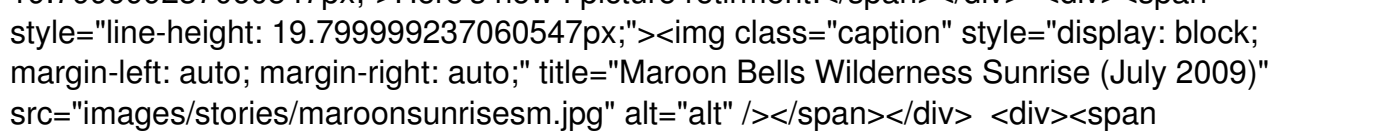
So I was a bit amused when I came across an article that mentioned this fact: [Study finds 64 per cent of those who have 'semi-retired wish they have worked full-time for longer'](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2517800/64-cent-semi-retired-wish-worked-time-longer.html). Am I weird that I can't wait to get out of my job as soon as it seems feasible? I mean, I like that I have challenging work and my co-workers are great to work with, but I can do without status reports and test plans and issue tracking systems and temperamental hardware that won't cooperate and source control databases that are impossible to decipher and frequent check-ups by many levels of management and conference calls and useless weekly status meetings, and, and, and the list goes on.

I've talked with people in the past that have mentioned they wouldn't know what they'd do without their job. That blows my mind. I have a mental list of about 65,536 different things I'd rather be doing than going to work every day -- And most of them aren't expensive. Granted, yeah, I'd like to travel a lot once I'm free from the office, and that's probably why I plan to even work as long as I do, but I'm thinking of so many other things as well:

- Electronics projects (Maybe even some fun robots!)
- Backpacking around Colorado with my camera and not much else (Super cheap and very fulfilling)
- Books (I can't leave the library without taking more books than I can carry, but I usually don't get around to reading them all because work gets too busy)
- Learning languages (Another hobby of mine that I've devoted way less time to than I'd like lately)
- Distance running and other endurance sports (I hate that I'm frequently too drained from work to go out and run lately)
- Friends and family (I have so many friends and family that live in amazing places around the U.S. and the world that I'd love to visit, but hardly get the chance to)

I just absolutely can't imagine missing going to work. I feel a little bit of dread each time I enter the building in the morning. I know I sound melodramatic and I do consider myself fortunate to have the type of job I do, though. It's just a drag sometimes. I got a small taste of what retirement could be like last summer when I had a 6 week long sabbatical from work. IT.WAS.GLORIOUS. I hadn't slept so well in years. I caught up on some reading and got to pay extra attention to myself and kept on track with my eating and exercising way better than I had in since I started my job 10 years prior to that. Of course that good feeling was quickly quashed when I got back to work and the project I had been working on for the prior 6 months was cancelled, making 90% of what I did during that period a complete waste of time (I guess except that I still got paid for it...).

Here's how I picture retirement:



Colorado's 41 designated wilderness areas: I'm coming for you, get ready!