



*Active Service*

**PASSIVE INCOME**

Turn Your  
Sacrifice  
Into Your  
Passion

# MILITARY FAMILY INVESTING

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## Active Service Passive Income

Turn Your Sacrifice into Your Passion

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**Cryptocurrencies:** [My First Book on Cryptocurrencies](#) (book)  
**Real Estate:** [Financial Independence through Real Estate](#) (book)  
**Business:** [Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business](#) (book)  
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# INTRODUCTION



## 01 Active Service Passive Income

I think most of us joined the military for action and adventure. We heard that we could travel to all sorts of remote countries and exciting locales. And, after 22 years, I can say that I have traveled to my hearts' content. But, how many of us joined for the chance to be a [Passive Income Hero](#)?

Yes, the military is a great place to build out unique passive income streams, not just from the retirement pension. I say this not because the military is easy and you have tons of free time. No, I say this because the military is straightforward.

**Josh, what do you mean by the word straight-forward?** I mean, in 22 years, I was never guessing what to do next in the military. I mean, I knew what to do to get promoted to the next rank. I mean that everything I ever needed was on the base that I was stationed at.

Comparing the military world to that of a civilian identifies unique benefits in each. Of course, as a civilian, you have freedom of movement and choice. But as a service member, you have many guarantees that civilians would love to have.

Servicemembers have things like a steady paycheck, accessible healthcare for themselves, cheap healthcare for their families, dental, free gym, free pool, meal allowance or chow hall access, tuition assistance, tax-free housing allowance, tax-free shopping on base, etc.

There is actually too much to list. Needless to say, we have a great life at the cost of time away from our family and putting our lives in danger. We, as servicemembers, need to start appreciating these advantages more often.

One of the main things that civilians lack over servicemembers is a clear line of career progression. This is probably the main advantage of being in the military. Every service member has at least an opportunity to start as a Private (E-1) and make it to the rank of General (O-10). It is improbable, but I have met multiple one and two-star Generals (O-7, O-8) that were prior enlisted.

Civilians rarely have the option to move up into upper management or become CEO of a company. If my son started working at Apple, there would be no path for him to become CEO.

Civilians, especially in today's society, have to move from job to job to access promotions and pay raises. Loyalty is no longer appreciated in the civilian world. If you stay in the same position, you will receive the same pay. That's how it works.

This means that civilians are never really settled into their lives. They are constantly looking for the next big break. They are always seeking new qualifications, education, and certifications to leg up on the next position.

For us military types, this means that we have a chance to build great income streams outside of the military because we have **time to focus**. When we move locations, we keep the same job attributes that we made over the years.

I have watched my wife's civilian career alongside my military career. Every time we move, she has to start again. I move, but my rank and status carry over, same job, different day. This ability to move in a straight line can be what we need to build multiple income streams.

You see, there has never been a better time to earn income streams over the internet. Using our time to focus, we need to start creating content at the earliest possible age. Daily military life alone gives us a ton of content just ripe for creation.

We can create things like YouTube videos, FaceBook groups, Instagram, books, blogs, music, design, physical exercise, healthy lifestyle, dieting, running, etc. On top of our interesting careers in aviation, combat jobs, and information technology, we do so much on a routine basis.

Most young people in the civilian world do not have the "freedom" of those in the military. Yes, the servicemember has more "restrictions," but those allow them to have access to food, meals, room and board, and a steady paycheck. The servicemember is always taken care of, without question. The civilian has to fight to keep his apartment, food, and compensation—this can be stressful.

So as young servicemembers, start thinking long term. Begin to read books and learn the ways of passive income. This income can supplement your lifestyle throughout your military career and afterward as well.

If you decide to [finish 20 years in the military](#), with additional streams of passive income, you should easily be able to stop working a job at the ripe age of 38. Yep, that's right; you can use the [military as your wealth generator](#) and the [military pension](#) as your income base.

From there, over your 20 years, you just need to stack on some real estate ventures, dividends, cryptocurrencies, and royalties, and you can have a fantastic life. I started late, at age 38, after 20 years in the military.

Now, at 22 years and going strong, I have three houses, a large-ish dividend portfolio (\$170,000), and a growing base of book royalties. If I had started five years ago, when I was at 17 years, my income streams would have been a lot more mature. But there is no use in crying over spilled milk. All I can do now is share my experiences with others.

Servicemembers, use the advantages you have of consistent and telegraphed promotions and lifestyle to build your income streams out. You will be traveling from duty station to duty station; you may as well be buying houses at each location. You can create a travel blog or YouTube channel on military life.

Whatever the case is, figure out something that you enjoy doing and keep doing it consistently. That is how you grow an audience over time; you give them content daily. We are the most disciplined people that I know, so use that to your advantage.

If you are looking for a place to start, read the articles below. Do your research, form your self-education, and you will become a Passive Income Hero. Good Luck!

**Financial Mindset:** [Become CEO of Yourself \(book\)](#)

**Retirement Planning:** [Retirement Planning at Any Age \(book\)](#)

**Investing:** [How We Plan to Retire on Dividends \(book\)](#)

**Cryptocurrencies:** [My First Book on Cryptocurrencies \(book\)](#)

**Real Estate:** [Financial Independence through Real Estate \(book\)](#)

**Business:** [Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business \(book\)](#)

**Everything plus way more:** [The Biggest Book on Passive Income Ever! \(book\)](#)

## SUCCESS IN THE MILITARY

# Military Success 101: Physical Fitness



## 02 Military Success 101: Physical Fitness

**Introduction.** The military has been good to me, and it might be a great starting point for you as well. I started my military career, and I went over 20 years- it was my wealth generator. However, the military is not for everyone as there are plenty of reasons that can make it difficult.

Before you join the military or decide to make it a career, it is good to research the profession of serving your country. I joined the military in 1999 and didn't have anyone to talk to about being a successful servicemember.

This series will focus on values, ideas, and lessons that I have learned over the past 22 years and can now share with you. It will cover these topics first, and I may add more as time goes on: physical fitness, mental fitness, educational fitness, family fitness, and financial fitness.

Hopefully, after reading this series, you will not only have an idea of the roadblocks to avoid but the paths that lead to success. The "Success in the Military 101" series is the book I wish I had when I was 18 years old and leaving for the military. With no further ado, let's begin the series.

**Physical fitness.** When you see the military videos, you can observe that everyone is running, hiking, and jumping- all in shape and healthy. Yes, the idea is to be physically fit at all times in the military.

To prepare yourself for the rigors of maintaining a constant level of fitness, you have to prepare your mind and body. Without mental toughness and resilience, you will not sustain the physical attributes of a service member.



There are two parts to remaining healthy and in shape; health and fitness. In my own words, health is diet, and fitness is exercise. Both are vital to your long-term success in the military. It is essential always to prepare yourself to stay in the military for the long haul, no matter what your intentions are currently. I have seen too many Marines plan to get out and set themselves up for failure when opportunities outside fall through.

**Health.** Health is what you eat and drink. The military can fool many young people because when you join at 18 years old, you don't need to watch what you eat. Your metabolism is so high that your body can burn calories at a high rate.

Let me tell you that your metabolism can slow down very quickly. The military can be a high-stress environment, and many service members like to blow off steam with food and drink. I know I did back in the days. Then one day, you wake up, and you have gained five pounds.

If you can get your diet under control at a young age, you have a higher chance of success in the military. Do not wait until you are pushing the height and weight standards before taking dieting seriously. Having a diet plan, even a simple one, will ensure you are ahead of the power curve when it comes to living a healthy lifestyle.

I like to use clothes as my control technique. I found a pair of nicely fitting pants and a slim shirt. When I put them on, I am the current size if I feel good about myself. If they fit poorly, then I need to step up my diet game for a few days. I have done this for the last 12 years of my career. I have been able to hover around the 150-pound weight since 2010. It is simple and effective.

**Fitness.** Fitness is the physical aspect of staying in shape. Fitness is the part that everyone wants to focus on because we can see the results of running, lifting, and swimming. However, dieting is 90% of keeping your weight off and staying slender. If you can control your diet, physical fitness will be there to tone and shape, not lose weight.

A word of warning, be careful about going too hard in the gym. I have seen lifting end many careers. I cringe when I see people comparing bench and squat targets and goals. Usually, these heavy lifting sessions lead to bad backs, shoulders, and knees. Be careful. Think about the long-term. The military can be very lucrative if your body can survive.

Another word on supplements, be selective on these as well. I watched a young man have a seizure because he was taking creatine. I have never taken supplements in my career, and I have done okay. I was never a powerlifter either, so to each their own.

The same can be said about running as well. I consider myself a runner but rarely do I run over four miles in one session. I have seen many runners start down the path of marathons, ultra-marathons, and iron man competitions. They are in excellent shape until they are not. Their bodies start to deteriorate with so much added stress from performance.

Balance is the keyword here. If you joined the military to become a powerlifter or marathon runner, so be it. That will be a tiny percentage of service members. The rest of us just need to stay healthy and fit—no need to try to become something that we are not.

Along those lines, I will talk about sports. I have witnessed more career-ending sports injuries during pick-up games than I care to recount. Playing ultimate football and basketball can lead to broken bones and stress injuries. Be careful. Again, unless you are on the All-Marine team, you are getting paid to do your military occupational specialty (MOS) and not play sports. Balance your appetite for competition with the need to stay healthy and fit.

I know that I sound like an over-concerned parent, but these are my observations after 22 years. Remember that you will have to pass a physical fitness test every year (twice a year in the Marines) to stay in the military. So if you hurt your shoulder while playing sports, it could affect your ability to do pull-ups. Most people without a college degree do not have a path to earn \$133,000 a year; however, that is what I make. And I don't have a college degree.

**Lesson Learned.** Somehow, I did stay healthy and fit throughout my career. I was a fast runner at some point in my career (3 miles under 18 minutes), but I never got carried away and started running marathons. My focus has always been on the long-term.

I speak from experience. In 2003, while serving in Africa, we played a pick-up game of football. During the game, I broke my wrist. I was close to my first reenlistment, and I couldn't even do one pull-up. I needed to pass the physical fitness test in order to qualify for re-enlistment. The stress I felt at that time was unbearable. I was only 22 years old and had no family, bills, or plans. What if I had a family to support?

I believe that this moment, so early in my career, shaped who I am today. I do play sports, but I am very cautious. I never let my competitive juices overflow too much. I look at the big picture. Do I want to end my career over a pick-up football game?

**My daily fitness routine** consists of either a four-mile run or an hour on the elliptical. On the rare occasion that I have more time, I do both back to back. I enjoy when I can do both, but time is of the essence. I like to exercise early in the morning, between 4 am, and 5 am. Again, this is my routine. Some people prefer lunch and others like to exercise after work. Whatever you like to do.

**Final thoughts.** I hope I did not undersell dieting and exercise. I am 40 years old and have spent my entire adult life, since ten days after high school, in the Marine Corps. I have served overseas for about ten of those years. I have always remained in control of my career because I have stayed injury-free and slender.

If you want to make the military a long-term career, you will have to come to terms with dieting and fitness. By come to terms, I mean adjust your lifestyle to that of the military. If you are waiting for the military to tell you to diet and exercise, you are too late.

The maximum weight that I can be is 170 pounds, for my height. So I stay around 150 pounds. When I creep up to 158 pounds, I put myself on a strict diet and fitness routine to get closer to 150. I can regulate myself.

I do not wait for the military to tell me to go exercise and diet. If you can understand this concept, You will make it far in life and the military. As a military person or an entrepreneur, those that can control their habits are the ones who have the most success.

Yes, you will get yelled at during boot camp, but other than that, you are treated like an adult. The military gives you a set of rules and guidelines, and you just have to follow them. Staying in shape and monitoring your food intake is an adult thing to do- will you be able to handle it?



### 03 Military Success 102: Mental Fitness

In [Military Success 101](#), we learned how vital it was to stay in top physical shape for a long, successful career. Equally important, if not more so, is to stay in top mental shape. Keeping your mind in the game will take training because there will be lots of ups and downs throughout the years.

From the start, the military will challenge you mentally. In this article, I will focus on mental toughness and resilience, and in Military Success 103, I will hone in on educational fitness.

I remember leaving for Marine Corps boot camp in 1999 and being so nervous that I didn't know what to do with myself. Boot camp, as physically demanding as it was, is a mental challenge.

Across the broad spectrum of events to complete, you will have some sort of issue or fear for at least one of them. We shot the rifle, conducted swim qualification, did close-order drill, ran a physical fitness test, took multiple academic tests, and rappelled off a tower.

Most people struggled with at least one of these events. To be successful, we had to believe in ourselves and our training. Boot camp is a microcosm of the military. From the day you leave boot camp until the day you retire, you will constantly get new events, billets, people, or assignments thrown at you.

Remaining mentally tough will consist of balancing your personal life, professional pursuits, and physical fitness. Every time you get comfortable, something will change. Whether that is your commanding officer, your assignment to a new base, or the military personnel under your charge- you will have to stay on your feet. It is humbling.

Let's take a look at some ways that the military will challenge you mentally. Each of these is not too earth-shattering in and of itself; it is the combination of these that will eventually require you to overcome your mental toughness and agility.

**Military Occupational Speciality.** Your MOS is your job. No matter what your job is and what you go to training for, things will change. I went to school for Air Traffic Control Equipment, including radar, communications, and navigational aids. All the gear that I learned in 1999 and 2000 is retired, as the Marine Corps brings in fresh new equipment.

By the time I was an E-7 and E-8, I led Marines trained on the new equipment. I never went back to school to learn this new gear, so I had to learn enough to show them and help them troubleshoot.

That is why learning the "theory of operations" is vital to everything you do. Consider that I bought an iPhone 1 in 2008. Now I am using a Galaxy S21 Ultra (my wife's). If I were trained on the iPhone 1 and had to lead Marines using Galaxy S21 Ultras, I would have to employ my knowledge and experience to gain leadership over these Marines. Some operations of the phone are the same, some different. These are challenges you will face across your career.

**Duty Assignments.** Some people are never happy, no matter how good of a station at which they are working. Others make the best of wherever they end up. You want to be in the latter group. The military will give you some duty stations that you would rather not go. That is part of moving every three to four years.

Keeping a positive attitude is a must for long-term success. The Marine Corps has three assignments, east coast (North Carolina), west coast (California), or overseas (Japan). Yes, you can end up in many reservist bases across the United States, but for the most part, these are your choices.



I ended up on the east coast (South Carolina, Florida), the west coast (California, Arizona), and overseas (Okinawa, Mainland Japan). I also was able to be stationed overseas in Niger, Turkmenistan, and Finland- when I was on Embassy Duty.

Over the years, I have heard more complaints about duty assignments than I care to remember. I loved each of my duty assignments. They are all unique, and I learned something from each of them. When I joined in 1999, I had never ridden an airplane; now, I am a seasoned traveler. Stay positive, look at the possibilities, and you will love the travel the military provides. Plus, it pays for everything as well.

**Deployments.** Yes, you will have to deploy. That is why you join the military- to serve overseas. Deployments are a part of life, and you have to be mentally prepared for them as you serve in the military. Every branch of service and MOS has different jobs to perform in combat.

Some are on the frontlines, and others are further away, in support roles. You'll be surprised at how deployments affect everyone differently. For some, just being away from home is the hardest part. For others, being away from family is unbearable. Others can't handle terrifying sights and sounds. You have to prepare for the worst and stay strong.

As an Air Traffic Control maintenance guy, we were generally not on the front lines with the grunts. However, on occasion, we are asked to venture out to help control aircraft closer to the battle. I always tell Marines, "Your uniform doesn't identify what MOS you are; the enemy doesn't care."

In Afghanistan, I traveled from base to base, ensuring communications were good. Flying over the battle zone can be trying times, depending on your faith. I always believed that if it was my time, so be it. I ensured that I lived a life that was worth remembering. My wife knew me very well, and she would pass my legacy on to my sons.

Speaking of sons, my second boy was born while I was in Afghanistan. As I watch Americans become needier and needier, I realize that the military is not for everyone. If you need your spouse to be there every step of the way, please do not join the military. Military families have to be the strongest families in America.

**Leadership.** You cannot hide out in the military. Eventually, your rank and position will force you to perform your job and lead other military folks. Some people are natural leaders; most are not. Leadership is a learned skill.

You can probably make it to the rank of E-6 before leadership expects you to become a solid leader. The Marine Corps takes about E-4. The Marine Corps holds you accountable for your subordinates' actions, no matter what they did or where they did it.

If your Marine takes leave in Alaska and does something stupid, expect to be standing tall in front of the man (or woman). It was your failed leadership that allowed this Marine to make this mistake.

It's all part of the game- for lack of a better word. What they are trying to convey is they need you to get involved in the lives of others. Lead them and mentor them. Some people are naturally good in the military. They understand the rules and how to follow them. Others need a lot of help. We are all raised differently, and by extending our hand to help others, we all become better.

After 22 years of looking after others, I won't lie; it will feel good to be responsible only for myself. But the truth of the matter is, I learned a lot about leadership that I now have to use with my kids. I have been leading 18 year olds for the last 20 years, and soon my sons will be 18. So all my leadership is now going to assist me in the ultimate test, raising productive children.

**Family.** Nothing will destroy your mental capacity like your family- if you let it happen. Before you marry and have children, learn how to communicate. Being in the military will magnify everything about what it means to be married- for good and bad. On a day-to-day basis, you are in control of your life in the military. On a year-to-year basis, you are not in control of your life.

One day, you could be in a friendly, calm maintenance billet. You have strong subordinate leadership, and life at work is excellent. You can come in at 0800 and leave at 1600, with a nice lunch in between. But that is just an illusion. You come in one day, and your assignment changes to Squadron First Sergeant. You now have to work 0600-1800 and deal with all the riff-raff of the unit. Life has definitely changed.

At this point, your family comes in to assist. In the good ol' days, you were able to drop off and pick up the kids, help them with homework, and prepare them for bed. Now, you are lucky to see them at all. And you are so burnt out that your mood is always different.

If your spouse does not understand how military life works, you will be living in hell. Everyone is frustrated because you are not in control of anything. I was lucky to have a great spouse for 15 years. She always understood my position in life. I have watched so many divorces that it is not even funny.

Communication is key. Tell your spouse how the military works- why it works this way. Enjoy the things that you can. If your weekdays suck, focus on having great weekends. If your family doesn't like the desert, find a way to keep them happy, like finding a home with a pool.

Your family is the number one factor for success or failure in the military, outside of yourself. If you can't mentally handle running a household, then your life in the military will be miserable. I have seen many people wait to start a family until they retire at age 38-40. It could be easy for males, maybe a little harder for females.

The key is to talk to your loved one BEFORE you get married. Yes, before. Explain how the military works, the hours, change of duty stations, schools, and deployments. It's all part of military life. I will go more into it in a later article in the Military Success Series.

**Substance abuse/depression/suicide.** Mental toughness, or lack thereof, can lead to many other causalities, including substance abuse, depression, and suicide. The military is ripe for this behavior or these situations, just because of what we do. The environment can be high stress, but the problem is identifying this stress.

Knowing yourself inside and out is how you prevent these types of situations. Stress can be tough to identify by yourself. You may eat a little more, drink more beer, play more games, or talk to people less. Everyone is different, but learning how you react to stress can lead to further military success.

In 2013, I achieved burnout. By the time I self-identified, it was full-blown anger management. I turned myself over to an anger management specialist, and it all worked out. I haven't been that angry since that time.

I remember being on the elliptical machine and listening to some music, and my anger was so bad that I was gripping the handlebars so hard. I knew something was wrong. I probably should have turned myself over three months sooner. At the time, I was serving an unaccompanied tour in South Carolina because our house in Arizona was a financial nightmare. We couldn't afford to rent the house without losing a ton of money- this is why I harp on financial education.

Whatever the case may be, staying mentally tough will mean identifying when your mind is out of alignment. Not just knowing yourself but taking corrective action is a must. I always ask my Marines, "Would you go 20 years without having your car looked at by maintenance professionals?" Well, the same in the military. We do so much, at the highest stakes possible, that we will need to seek assistance. It can be from family, church, or others, but we need to build a network of trust.

**Done rambling.** I went over my time limit again. I am passionate about mental toughness in the military. The military is not a child's game; it is a harsh world full of adult actions and decisions. Be prepared to grow up as soon as you join. Ensure your spouse is also an adult as well. Learn yourself and be ready to seek assistance if necessary. More importantly, always try to enjoy your time in the military. It is a once-in-a-lifetime experience.



## 04 Military Success 103: Educational Fitness

The military is perhaps the best place to become an educated young person in America. Not only are there too many educational opportunities to list here, but most of the things I list will be free. Moreover, some of the classes you will travel to will make you money. How cool is that?

First things first, this is part three of our Military Success series; please check out [Military Success 101: Physical Fitness](#) and [Military Success 102: Mental Fitness](#) when you get a chance. Now back to my favorite benefit of being in the military, the education.

Service Schools/Special Skills							
CODE	SCHOOL/SPECIAL SKILLS	ST	DATE	CODE	SCHOOL/SPECIAL SKILLS	ST	DATE
LSS	LEAN SIX SIGMA GREEN BELT	PA	2016	WZ6	CONFIGURATION MGNT FOR ORG	PA	2016
G4D	SENIOR ENLISTED AVIATION M	PA	2018	X99	NAVY INSTRUCTOR TRAINING C	PA	2017
P2M	NAVAL AVIATION MAINTENANCE	PA	2017	57X	SENIOR ENLISTED JOINT PROF	PA	2016
T5X	NAVAL AVN MAINT CTRL MGMT	PA	2016	57V	SENIOR ENLISTED JOINT PROF	PA	2016
KZ5	USMC SENIOR ENLISTED PME (	PA	2016	SCJ	MARINE AVIATION SUPPLY SHO	PA	2016
KCN	MATC MAINTENANCE MANAGERS	PA	2016	300	JOINT AVIATION SUPPLY & MA	PA	2015
L9F	1STSGT/MSGT SEMINAR	PA	2015	L9Q	CORPORALS COURSE DEP	PA	2012
KZF	SENIOR ENLISTED JOINT PME	PA	2012	T8J	LEADING MARINES DEP	PA	2012
T8H	SNCO ADVANCED COURSE	PA	2012	M53	NAVAL AVIATION QUALITY ASS	PA	2009
KCM	MATC WORK CENTER SUPERVISO	PA	2009	T3K	SNCO ADVANCED DEPWF NON-RE	PA	2008
T8A	SNCO CAREER	PA	2007	T5P	SNCO CAREER COURSE DEP	PA	2007
T3W	SERGEANTS COURSE DEP	PA	2005	81H	MARINE SECURITY GUARD SCHO	PA	2002
59M	MARINE AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL	PA	2000	E2X	AVIONICS WARFARE APPRENTIC	PA	2000
A93	AVIONICS TECHNICIAN COMMON	PA	2000	M92	MARINE COMBAT TRAINING	PA	1999
808	RECRUIT TRAINING, MALE	PA	1999				



The educational opportunities in the military are immense. In most cases, these are the highest-ranking courses in the world. You can get top advice, guidance, and mentorship from the top professionals in the world.

One of the things I love about the military is that everyone who teaches you at a course has performed the actions in “the real world.” When I went to school to become an Air Traffic Control Communications Technician in 1999, all my instructors had 5-15 years of real-world experience in that field. The same goes for snipers, tankers, and supply instructors.

Having instructors who have real-world experience may sound trivial, but in academia, some professors have never ventured past the halls of a university. They get their degrees and then become professors directly after graduation. No experience necessary.

I am going to try to condense this article down to keep it brief. If we need to revisit it, we can always return and expound upon some of the topics here. As you can see from my educational history, I attended loads of courses. This snapshot is not even half of the classes I attended; these are considered professional education. I have also attended local courses like safety, hazardous materials, equal opportunity, substance abuse counselor, etc.

I will break down the education types into four categories: Military Occupational Speciality (MOS) Training/Related, Professional Military Education, related civilian job training, and higher education.

**Military Occupational Speciality (MOS) Training/Related.** MOS training is where it all begins. Most of the time, when you join the military, you will be assigned a MOS. People rarely join as “open contract,” which means you will get assigned a MOS after boot camp. I love the way the military teaches its servicemembers. The training is as inclusive as possible. Everyone in the class should pass the class. Some of the brighter students may find it easy, but the goal is to get everyone through the course and to the fleet. The fleet is the “real world” of the military. In the fleet, you will be assigned to an operational unit and have a chance to deploy to exercises, operations, and warzones.

I joined and was assigned to become an electronics technician. I had never touched electronics in my life. The military sent me to Pensacola, Florida, and taught me electronics for over one year. When I got to the fleet in September 2000, I was the lowest man on the totem pole. I had no idea what to do or how to do it. When I left the fleet in July 2017, I was the top man on the totem pole. I was a Master Sergeant and an Air Traffic Control Systems Maintenance Chief. I had 50 Marines under my charge and \$25 million of Air Traffic Control equipment that my maintenance folks were responsible for maintaining.

To go from knowing nothing about a topic to eventually leading a group of Marines in combat and being responsible for everyone and everything highlights the power of military education and training. I believe the military is the best at what it does— training, educating, and ensuring servicemembers gain valuable experience.

On top of your specific MOS training, you have the opportunity to attend related training courses. For example, as an ATC communications person, some of the radios I used were also used by field radio operators on the ground side. The military lets you attend their training as well. Participating in other MOSs schools adds about 5-10 times more courses to your inventory.

When I served as an ATC System Maintenance Chief (Master Sergeant E-8), I used the Navy supply system every day. To get a better grasp of how supply works, I attended the Navy Aviation Supply Course for three weeks in Newport, Rhode Island. This course is for middle management level leaders in the Aviation Supply Community. When I returned from the course, I was better able to relate to my supply representative because I had attended their course.

The travel associated with attending these courses is also top-notch. Some of these courses take place in premier locations like Newport, Rhode Island; San Diego, California; Tokyo, Japan; and Key West, Florida; to name a few. Every service has its favorites, and you can also attend courses from different services—the possibilities are truly endless.

I will take this time to mention something not spoken about very often. Your training and education opportunities are incumbent on you to fulfill. After you get to the fleet, you should be the one tracking these courses down. Once you know what classes are out there, your leadership will attempt to get you there. Some leaders build a calendar of courses for the shop to attend, but usually, you are in charge of your destiny. I followed all of my studies on my own initiative. I know people who have achieved the rank of E-9 in my profession who have attended no MOS training outside of initial schools. You have to decide who you want to be early on.

**Professional Military Education (PME).** Professional Military Education is very similar to your technical training, except it doesn't focus on your technological abilities; it focuses on you. Yes, PMEs' goal is to make you a more well-rounded, effective leader. The Marine Corps has PME specifically for each rank— Lance Corporal (E-3), Corporal (E-4), Sergeant (E-5), Staff Sergeant (E-6), Gunnery Sergeant (E-7), and First Sergeant/Master Sergeant (E-8). The Officers also have a similar structure.

PME is one of the best education systems because teaching you how to think critically is the main objective. Notice I said education, not training. Understanding the difference between education and training is one of the most significant concepts of your entire life. If you can grasp the difference, you will be better at understanding why you attend specific courses.

Training is a technical, step-by-step process of performing an action. Education is the broad analysis of why you perform an action. It may sound confusing so let's take some examples. When I read the book "[Rich Dad, Poor Dad](#)" for the first time, Robert Kiyosaki told me to start a business, buy real estate, and put the proceeds into the paper assets (stock market). He gave me an education on how money flows and how to capture the process of wealth best. From there, I read more education on business, real estate, and investing. However, when it came

time to open my business, a blog, I had to seek specific training on opening my site, adding blog posts, customizing my layout, etc.

Not knowing the difference between training and education is why so many people get stuck in life. People go to YouTube to learn how to start a blog but don't know why they are starting a blog. Starting a blog to make money will not keep you going long-term. Knowing that a blog can lead to multiple streams of income like advertising, affiliate marketing, personal product sales, online courses, and merchandising will keep you going. However, you need that education before you get the training.

PME will give you knowledge and education on leading other service members in garrison and combat. PME also includes courses that will assist your unit in accomplishing its mission outside of your MOS. These courses include ground safety, security manager, substance abuse, equal opportunity, and more. Attending these auxiliary courses will make you highly sought after in the civilian sector because they are responsible for maintaining the same programs.

**Related civilian job training.** Being in the military gives you the best of both worlds, military training and the chance to attend civilian training. The military understands that sometimes the civilian world is the leader in a specific activity. While the military catches up, they will pay for civilian training. Most of the time, the training has to correlate to your MOS, but not all of the time.

Some examples are the information technology courses Security+ and Network+— these courses are very valuable in the civilian sector. The military will send you to a two-week preparation course and then pay for your certification test. They will then pay to keep your certification up to date. How cool is that?

I was able to get certified as a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) radio operator and radar technician. The military paid for me to attend a one-week prep course at a local community college in Beaufort, South Carolina. I tested out and received my two certifications. These two certifications opened the door to South Carolina jobs paying \$60,000 to \$70,000 in 2013. I was also able to become qualified as an Electronic Tester apprentice with the United States Department of Labor. Again, the possibilities here are near endless. If the demand is there, I will elaborate further in separate articles.

**Higher Education.** The military appreciates that having a higher degree will make their servicemembers more well-rounded and more effective leaders and communicators. Therefore, it will pay for your off-duty education. I know tons of Marines who have received their bachelor's and master's degrees in their off-time. It is possible.

Officers get to attend Master level courses during their official tour of duty. Higher education is a nice perk of being an officer and something you may want to consider.

I would caution you from joining the military only for higher education prospects. You never know what unit you will arrive at first or even second. The company may be highly deployable and time of the essence. Also, if a war kicks off, everyone is highly deployable. You do not want to find yourself in a warzone getting shot at, thinking you joined college. Join for the right reasons and have college be a great benefit in addition to those reasons.

I am not going to talk too much about college opportunities because I never used them. I haven't taken one college course in my 22 years. I didn't join to go to college. But that is just me; I want to be rich. However, if the demand is there, I can get with many of my friends who have leveraged military education to get high-paying civilian jobs. I have a friend who is making a very lovely military retirement and making \$140,000/year in Los Angeles as a high school ROTC instructor. That \$140,000 is on top of \$72,000/year in military pension. Yes, the opportunities are there, and they are amazing.

**Final thoughts.** This article is just the tip of the iceberg of what the military has to offer. It is too much to write in one piece. If you would like to see more about these opportunities, please let me know, and I can build something out. The chances are that if you are curious, others are curious as well. The military is truly the place to be for self-improvement, education, and training.



## 05 Military Success 104: Family Fitness

Thus far, we have covered many diverse topics throughout the military success series; [physical fitness in 101](#), [mental fitness in 102](#), and [educational fitness in 103](#). Now, I want to talk about something we rarely discuss before joining the military, family fitness.



That's right; family is one of the most important aspects of having a successful military career. I have seen many service members end their careers because the spouse couldn't handle military life. So let's explore three topics: finding the right spouse, marriage in the military, and raising kids in the military.

**Finding the right spouse.** I am assuming that you are reading this before you have left for boot camp, or you are just thinking about joining the military. When you are a young person in the military, it can be exciting to be free from your parents.

During our younger days in the military, we love to date other young people. We all have cash flowing in from our military paychecks—life is good. And then the enviable thing happens, someone gets orders. And this is where the pain starts.

You see, I have seen more people get married because they received orders than I care to count. Receiving orders seems to trigger a response like “let's continue the adventure at our next duty station.” It sounds good in theory.

However, we need to take a step back and evaluate the situation. Usually, the service member is away from home. The future spouse is usually a local or a student attending a local college. The prospective spouse has a support network already built up in the area before the service member arrives.

When you decide to uproot someone from their support system, you take all the responsibility for that person. Many negatives can happen at your next duty station; they don't find a job, don't get into college, don't make friends, etc. Their issues then become your issues.

I am not saying that these are inherently wrong things; they are just life. However, what is terrible is that we rarely talk about them before we marry and relocate. Without these conversations, our marriage starts on the wrong foot and may never catch up.

My wife, Kristina, is from Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. I removed her from her support network in 2006 to move to America. She has thrived in America, but she also knew what she was getting herself into before most of the time—helping her prepare herself for the rigors of military life.

When contemplating getting married, please have the hard conversations. Military marriages can sometimes be complicated. You need a spouse that can handle the idea of you being away from you at least 50% of the time. You may be home more, but if a person can accept that you will be gone half the time, they may be able to adapt to military life.

**Marriage in the Military.** Divorce in the military is higher than in the general population. I can think of a few reasons: uprooting, long-distance relationships, fidelity, and job satisfaction. Let's talk about each individually. They can all eventually stack on top of each other.

1) **Uprooting.** As we discussed earlier, uprooting your spouse from their native land can be very tough. The service member usually can easily handle being away from family and friends. That is why they were able to join the service.

However, the spouse may not feel the same. When you are initially getting married, they may say that leaving their family won't be a big deal. But, you will not know until you all move to another location together. Some people love their native environment all their lives and want to stay there, which you need to consider before uprooting someone.

2) **Long-distance relationships.** Stacking on top of uprooting is long-distance relationships. Now that you have uprooted the spouse, there may be some animosity. Then, you have to go on a six-month deployment. The spouse does one of two things. 1) Tries to make it work in their new duty station 2) Goes back home to the support network.

In my experience, those who decide to tough it out in the new location usually do better in the long run. Sometimes, there are unique situations that lead the spouse to head home; however, they are the exception to the rule.

Many people cannot handle long-distance relationships. To survive when you and your spouse are separated, you will need to have a shared mission that you can focus on together. Whether saving for a house, a future vacation, or paying debt, focusing on something will ensure you are not wasting your time while apart.

3) **Fidelity.** You have uprooted the spouse, and now you are deployed. The spouse is lonely and makes new, younger, single friends. They decide to party and hang out to pass the time. Keep in mind; they are usually 21-28 years old.

Going down this road usually leads to trouble. Nothing good happens after midnight, and nothing good happens when going to the club as a married person. Yet it happens all the time. When looking for a spouse, try to find someone who can handle your absence like an adult. Also, if a person goes down this road, try to understand their logic. Again, they are uprooted and away from family; they may just need you to know what they are going through.

But, hold on, service members. 50% of the time, the service member is the one who is cheating. For the service member, traveling can be an exotic lifestyle. Being away from home, in friendly hotels in foreign countries, and lots of liberty can lead to feeling like a single person. You are not. Many people in the military will want to convince you otherwise. You must do the right thing; if not, don't expect your spouse to go back home. Two wrongs don't make a right. Be a stand-up individual and spouse.

4) **Job Satisfaction.** Somewhere along the lines, Americans started to feel as though they want their jobs to be satisfying. They want to be "happy" at work. I don't necessarily understand this

logic. I know that you don't want to be in a hostile or toxic environment, but beyond that, work is work.

You, or your spouse, may hate military life. I have seen it both ways. People hate their duty stations, bosses, the military, the hours, the physical fitness, intrusive leadership, travel restrictions, the pay, the rules, the guidelines, standing duty, living on-base, the commute, moving, etc. There are too many things to hate.

However, if you focus on the bad, then everything will be wrong. I tend to focus on the good: the pay is excellent, the hours can assist you when you need to attend family appointments, the medical benefits are second to none, the retirement is the best in America, traveling is excellent, new duty stations bring new experiences, you get paid to work out, you eventually become a leader, etc. I love most aspects of the military.

You and your spouse have to stay optimistic about all aspects of military life. If not, you will go down a negative rabbit hole that will lead you to get out of the military or one person leaving the other. Also, many people tend to blame the military for their marriage failing, then go on to get divorced two more times. Brother (or sister), it wasn't the military; it was you.

**Raising kids in the military.** Raising children in the military is a great experience. There are so many resources that the base offers your family, in addition to standard civilian benefits, that it has been an enjoyable experience.

Sure, you will have to leave your children from time to time, but kids understand that you have a mission to fulfill. I'll be honest, most of my kids' friends are divorced. Even though I am away, at least I am coming back.

I have been gone for at least 50% of my marriage, but our kids are okay. They understand what I am doing and why I am doing it. They also understand that my wife and I love each other, and I am still here and will always be there for them.

As long as you can keep your marriage on track, raising children in the military is preferable to the civilian world. They will be able to make two sets of friends, on base and off base.

As they get older and start to obtain more friends, it may be harder for them to leave for new duty stations. Leaving a high school can be especially hard. Sometimes parents need to make the ultimate sacrifice and have the service member to the new duty station by themselves. Sometimes it is more feasible for the servicemember to leave for a couple of years to finish up their military career. Situations like when you own a home, your spouse, has a great job; kids are satisfied with the school, you own animals, everyone is comfortable, etc. In a good marriage, you need to do what's best for the family as a whole.

**Conclusion.** There is still much to talk about with the military and relationships. I have been married for 15 of my 22 years military career, and I have seen much. I hope to keep revisiting

my military service time because this is an inside scoop that can help others before they get started in the military.

The biggest thing to remember when starting a family in the military is that you are uprooting someone from their support network. Moving someone is a huge deal, and you will become their entire support network. Be prepared for this moment, but if you are not, don't get married.

It may sound harsh, but you have to think like an adult when you uproot someone. They will be away from family, friends, college, jobs, animals, and a familiar city. You will have to support them financially, emotionally, and with their new college, finding friends, and looking for a job.

It is a total package, and you need to be prepared to get that person on their feet. Even better, once they get set up and comfortable, you will receive orders to a new duty station, and it starts all over again.

Being married in the military has been an incredible experience for my wife and me. However, we have acted like adults and made tough decisions along the way. We never had a time where we allowed ourselves to get caught up in the negatives. We stayed positive and stayed married. I highly recommend marriage and family in the military if you can think like an adult. Good Luck!



## 06 Military Success 105: Financial Fitness

Now, for the moment I have been waiting for—I am writing the article that I wish I read before I joined the military. When I joined the Marine Corps in 1999, I had no concept of money. I didn't

know the value of reinvesting your money to make more money. In fact, it took me 20 years in the military to figure it out.

So, here it is, my article to myself. I will keep this article direct and straightforward to function as a good starting point for young people to take action. I would love to get into the weeds of not buying cars, side-stepping loans, avoiding credit cards, and preventing lifestyle inflation. However, if I can give you the broad tools of success, you can wield them to your advantage.

I will break this article down into four sections, which will correspond to your timeline in the military. The four sections are financial education, military finance, multiple streams of income, and the bigger picture.

**Financial Education.** Man, why is it so hard to read books as a young person? If a young person can start reading books by age 18, they could probably start their own country by age 38. Reading is the most powerful tool in the arsenal of education. These are the two books I recommend to every single person seeking financial independence.

[“I Will Teach You to be Rich.”](#) by Ramit Sethi, is a step-by-step guide to winning your financial independence. This book is the first step I took on my journey to financial freedom. After reading this book and taking action, I was motivated to learn more. My next book was:

[“Rich Dad, Poor Dad”](#) by Robert Kiyosaki, began my love for Mr. Kiyosaki’s books. This book will bend your mind and make you reevaluate how you view money, wealth, rich people, jobs, college, and your personal residence.

These two books will arm you with the financial mindset and actionable steps to build your path forward. You should be in control of your finances after reading these books. Even if you are an E-3 or E-4, you can still start saving, investing, and learning about wealth. **Rich people are wealthy long before they have money.**

Your financial education doesn’t have to stop there. I have 40 more books that I have read, and they are all excellent places to continue your education. You can find them in these articles: [“20 Books that Will Make You Rich”](#) and [“20 \(more\) Books that Will Make You Rich.”](#)

**Military Finance.** The military can take care of you financially and set you up for a wonderful life post-military. However, you have to understand the tools available to you. Knowing your benefits will help you decide if the military will be a 20+ career for you. Let’s take a look at some of the perks.

**Thrift Savings Plan.** TSP is the military 401k program. I recommend you max this out and receive any matching benefits the military offers. It’s free money. Do this from day one.

**Military Pension.** Although the military pension was cut a little because of matching TSP benefits, it is still the best retirement in America. After 20 years of service, as early as 38 years old, you could be drawing a retirement check for 40% of your salary.

Most people do not truly understand how much this retirement equates to in passive income dollars. If you are a dividend investor, you probably strive to receive a 4% yield on your investment portfolio. If your military pension were \$3,000/month, you would need \$900,000 in an investment portfolio to match that pension amount. Plus, keep in mind, you would still have your TSP account growing.

So, if you are thinking about getting out of the military early, do the math. Let's say you get out at age 22. Can you build a dividend portfolio of \$900,000 and a TSP of probably \$300,000 by the time you reach 38 years old? That would be tough—extremely tough. That military pension is solid!

**Healthcare and other perks.** Some people say military retirement is worth it just for the healthcare benefits. I would tend to agree. If you retire, you will also get access to commissary, base hotels, campsites, free gym, free pool, military specials, etc. There are lots of benefits to retiring from the military. Take your time and do the math; it is tough to match perks in the civilian sector.

**Multiple Streams of Income.** I just learned about various streams of income, and I am kicking myself in the behind. If I started creating different income streams earlier, I would be benefiting from them now. That's okay; I will pass on my love for income streams to you. My article "[20 Creative Way to Make Money from Home](#)" (and [the book](#)) is a great place to start.

Creating multiple income streams is the best thing that you can do to make yourself rich early in life. The typical millionaire has seven streams of income. I like to spread my income streams across five asset classes: military pay and other employment, investing, cryptocurrencies, real estate, and business.

**Military pay and other employment.** Your military payment is a given. Ensure you prevent lifestyle inflation by living on a strict budget. You can also get other earned income jobs, but I don't recommend holding them for too long. If you need to pay off debt, this could be a quick fix, but we do not like to exchange time for money. There are far superior ways to make money.

**Investment income.** Dividend-paying stocks and interest-paying bonds are ways to build up your income streams. They take a while to get going, but they will start to perform well because [of compounding](#).

**Cryptocurrency income.** Most people invest in crypto for capital gains, but there is a passive income element. You can use staking and farming to passively earn coins that you can also appreciate. Always invest in passive income.



**Real Estate income.** You may not be able to invest in a house early on, but there are many other ways to earn passive income from real estate. These ways include tax liens, buying raw land, or getting a roommate. With the VA Loan, you might be able to get into your house soon, especially with the help of your family.

**Business income.** Early in your career, I would recommend royalties as your passive income from a business. Creating royalties from music, books, or videos is portable and can move with you from duty station to duty station. As you settle in, you can move into a larger business structure. You will also gain a large amount of management experience from your military career.

**The Bigger Picture.** Putting everything together, the military is a fantastic place to get rich. Your paychecks are steady, you can map out promotions, and the pension is impressive.

I recommend that you incorporate multiple income streams as early as possible. If you can survive the first five years without lots of debt, you are well on your way to financial success.

The bigger picture is that you can set yourself up to be fully retired at your 20-year retirement date if you can grasp these concepts early on. Early retirement could be age 38. When you are young, it may sound like it is common for people to retire at this age fully, but it is not. The standard person is working until 65 years old, at least.

To fully retire at 38, I recommend a few things:

- Maximize the TSP matching incentive.
- Get promoted (duh!)
- Figure out the passive income number (i.e., \$7,000/month) to be comfortable
- Build multiple streams of income to combine with your pension, to set you free

An example of your passive income number can be \$7,000/month. Let's say that after running your future retirement plans through the calculator, you will be at \$3,000/month. You then can create passive income to match that number by retirement.

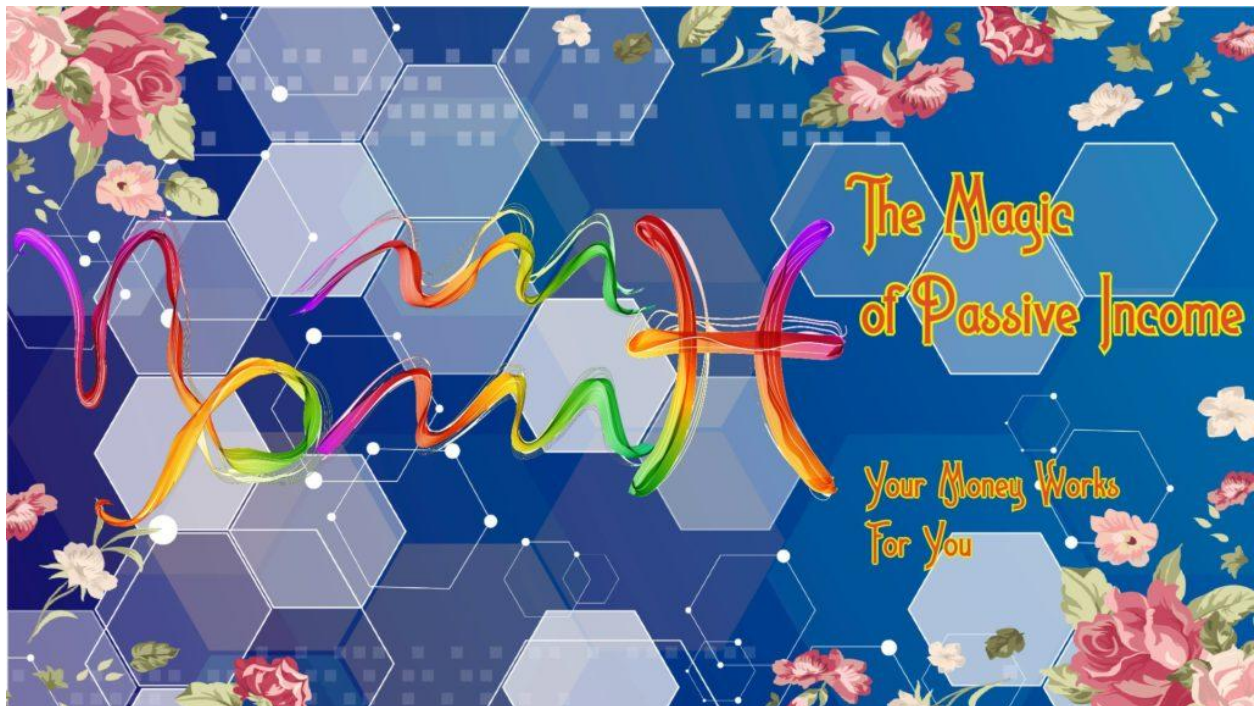
In this case, you have a \$4,000/month deficit. You can add a couple of rental properties that bring in \$1,500/month. \$1,500/month for dividends and \$1,000/month for YouTube. Now you have a \$7,000/month passive income retirement by age 38.

When you see these numbers start to add up in real life, you will be amazed by how easy it was. The hardest part is getting your mindset in a position to see this path. This path is not standard by any means. So you will have to decide if financial freedom is right for you. You will always have a nice government contract job waiting for you if you take the standard route.

Me, I choose to be home with my family. I am doing all the work upfront to relax and spend time with my family, as my money comes in passively. My way takes a great deal of financial education, but in the end, it is worth it for me.

How about you? Do you want to do 20 years in the military and become a government contractor for 20 years? It is not a bad life. These decisions are ones that only you can make. Hopefully, I have given you enough tools to start your decision-making process. Good Luck!

## THE MAGIC OF PASSIVE INCOME



### 07 The Magic of Passive Income

We all should dream of someday being financially free from the confines of the workplace. We may dream of a beach, island, or lake—no matter, it's definitely not an office cubicle. But how do we get there?

Is saving our money in a 401k going to get us to a lifetime of financial freedom? How about a savings account and social security—will they work out for us? The answer to these questions is **MAYBE.**



## [The Magic of Passive Income](#)

However, we want to build a definitive answer. We want to ensure our futures are brighter than the morning sun. And the only way I know how is through building streams of passive income.

Passive income is your money working for you when you are not working. The best part of passive income is that we can build as much as we need. Through the process of learning, we can decide how much passive income we need to create. And then we begin.

If we need more income from our dividend portfolio, we can add [high-yield products](#) like [closed-end funds](#) to the mix. If we want more growth stocks for our children, we can add in young blue-chip companies.

If we need more income from rent, we can purchase more property. We can use [creative financing](#) to acquire more projects or storage units. Or we can add [tiny homes](#) or mobile homes to our existing properties.

If we need more business income, either royalties or automation, we can create more streams by maximizing advertising or marketing. We can also use our land to start a small business to increase our bottom line.

What is the main difference between passive income and 401Ks? Options. Passive Income will give you a massive variety of options and customizability to ensure you not only reach your goals but also can aim for even more.

Why settle for a fixed income when you can have as much income as you want or need? There is only one caveat, though? You will need to learn, and you will need to act.

These are the two hardest verbs for most people to do—to learn and to act. We are told once we have our college degrees, the money will flow to us. We will be the hotshot that all businesses want. You will be guaranteed to be a high-earner.

But this is not the truth. Yes, you will most likely make more money than a high school graduate, but you will need to sacrifice something to make huge money. Most high-earners (let's say over \$200,000/year) have some sort of sacrifice they have to deal with.

Mainly it involves time. However, it can also affect stress at work or lifestyle stress. Making a high income is impressive, but how long can you deal with this type of stress. Would you want to do it for 40+ years?

How do we transition from a high-income (or low-income) job to white sand beaches? Passive income is the answer because your money will be working for you.

While on the beach, [your dividends](#) will be compounding and paying you a return on your investments. You can get paid in cold-hard cash or decide to reinvest. Or you can take what you need and reinvest the difference. You have options.

While on the beach, [your rental income](#) will be getting paid and increasing in value. Also, your home prices will be increasing as well. Even though we will not sell our homes, we can tap into our home equity to buy even more houses or make other investments.

While on the beach, [your royalties](#) will continue to find people who love your work. Since you took the time to ship creative work, all you have to do is enjoy the passive cash flow. When you are ready, you can create more work for an even more significant return.

The only decision you will need to make is if you are ready to embrace passive income. We are not taught to think in this manner. We are taught to work for money. That is how we earn our actual income by exchanging time for money.

To break this cycle, we will need to learn about the stock market, real estate, and business. Nothing is complicated about learning, but we will need to make a leap of faith at some point. We will have to put all that we learned into action.

Whether that is by doing a cash-out refinance and investing the payout or by renting out your master suite, we will have to act. Analysis Paralysis usually sets in around this time. Don't let yourself talk you out of doing something great.

Nothing is quite like going through the month and receiving [300+ tiny paychecks](#). This is how the rich get rich and stay wealthy. You have to decide who you want to be. Passive income is the art of challenging yourself and winning. Only you can prevent yourself from creating multiple income streams.

Good Luck on your journey, and when you are ready, go ahead and find a way to get started. I have plenty of books to help you build the correct mindset to envision a world of money. Read first, act second, and you can have everything you want.



## 08 The Magic of a Military Pension

It's funny. I have been in the US Marine Corps for over 22 years, yet I rarely write about my experiences. Maybe after so many years, it is easier to focus on new shiny objects, like passive income from [rents, royalties, and dividends](#).

However, that means that I forget to talk about the mother of all passive income, the US military pension. You see, in the US military, if you do 20 years of service, you can retire after those years with a retirement that begins immediately upon completion.

So, if you begin at 18 years old (like I did), you can do 20 years and walk away with a 40% retirement pension (50% for us old-timers) at age 38. This money may not be enough to sustain you for a full day-to-day living, but it is life-changing money.

Even though the new military pension pays 40% of your salary upon 20 years, there is still a 401K element to sweeten the pot. The military will now match your 401K (called Thrift Savings Plan) up to 5%. So, if the servicemember begins saving at age 18, they can amass a nice chunk of change for those 20 years. But, of course, the hard part would be getting 18-years-olds to save and invest.

**Life-changing money.** Okay, let's make some assumptions so we can continue the planning process. My oldest son is currently 14, turning 15 years old, and is thinking of joining one of the service branches. These would be some of the numbers I would have him consider.

If he left at age 18 and retired at age 38, let's say his pension would be \$3,000/month. Let's also assume that he walked away with \$300,000 in TSP savings. This is life-changing money because of the options that this opened up for the rest of his life.

**Work another job.** At age 38, he could work another job and stack the new money on top of his pension. His pension would allow him to choose a career that interests him, no matter how much it paid him.

**Start a business.** Many veterans decide to start a full-time business because they have the security of knowing that they can survive while the business grows.

**Pursue passive income sources.** This is where you use your pension as a base of income and pursue other avenues of income like dividends, crypto, business, rents, etc., to fund your lifestyle.

**Move to a low-cost area Stateside.** There are many low-cost areas in the US States where you can have an extraordinary life for \$3,000/month—especially if you [house-hack](#).

**Move overseas.** There are many countries where you can live like a King and Queen for \$3,000/month. You just want to ensure they are somewhat safe.

Using the military pension as your financial base is the true magic of this passive source of income. With it, you can pursue many other ventures with the safety and security that many people will never have.

**Combination of all of the above.** I am taking a combination of all of the above as I head into retirement. I am already over 22 years, and the longer I stay in, the larger my military pension grows. In the meantime, I can begin developing my passive income sources to ensure they are large enough to fund a friendly lifestyle for my wife, me, and our kids. But, first, let's take a look at my overall game plan.

**Military Retirement.** If I continue until I reach 30 years, My retirement may hit \$8,000-\$9,000/month. Remember, we older guys have a higher defined pension without any TSP matching from the government. At 30 years, my pension would be 75% of my salary plus any disability I may have acquired from sustained injuries.

**New Job.** I don't plan on working a new job; however, it isn't a bad idea to have earned income. You see, you can't contribute to a Roth IRA unless you have earned income. I plan to continue to work as an online adjunct faculty teacher for a military science class. The work is not time-intensive, and it allows me freedom of time and movement.

**Low-Cost Area.** My wife and I have already moved to a low-cost area and secured homes for a cheap monthly mortgage. This allows us to protect ourselves against inflation and market fluctuations. Our homes cost \$1,100 and \$1,500/monthly, and they are some very nice



properties. With a large military pension, we are already guaranteed a nice life. **Oh, did I mention someone else pays both of our mortgages entirely?** Just saying.

**Move Overseas.** Yes, this is in the plan as well. We want to spend a considerable amount of time in the country of Turkey. There, they allow you to buy property as well. Once I retire, we will be able to buy a small apartment, or two, to build an empire over there. The cost of living is a shadow of what it is in America.

**Start a business.** I do not have a plan to start a full-time, job replacement-style business. I can reach the same amount of income, but passively.

**Passive Income!** Whew, as you can see. My wife and I are already set from our military pension alone. So why keep going and building more passive income sources. The only negative about a military pension is that it cannot be passed down to your children.

This fact means that I need to convert all of my military pension into passive income sources, thus leaving my kids and grandkids well off. I also want to teach them about these income sources to ensure that they can recreate the magic. That is why I write articles like [The Magic of Passive Income](#), [The Magic of Dividends](#), [The Magic of Rents](#), and [The Magic of Royalties](#). I am leaving breadcrumbs for my kids and everyone else to follow in my footsteps.

**Dividends.** Our dividend portfolio is nearing \$200,000, and we should reach that amount by the end of the year. The idea is to keep growing our dividends until the end. Dividends have been a complete joy to grow, and each month they bring a smile to my face.

**Rents.** Ah rents don't have the same joy as dividends because they are so steady. However, when it is time to spend them, they are life-changing. I still cannot forget the time our family was sitting in our backyard, and one of our roommates walked up and gave me \$800 cold-hard cash. Right then, I knew the power of passive income.

**Royalties.** Whew, royalties are outstanding because of the knowledge and education you need to earn them. When you start building up this income stream, you know nothing about anything. Then you start learning and improving. I am on pace to reach over \$60 in passive income from books. I earned \$3 in my first month (five months ago). As your knowledge compounds, your pay compounds. I love it, and it can be very addicting to get your royalties off the ground.

**Business Automation.** I haven't had a chance to start these yet because I am serving in Japan. However, that is a good thing because I can flesh out my book business. I have many business ideas, including a [passive Airbnb business](#), [an herb garden](#), [a rental car business](#), or [a property management business](#).

In the end, all of these other income streams will stack quite nicely on top of my military pension. So this begs the question, "[Is Doing 20 Years in the Military Right For You?](#)"

As I mentioned in my quest for royalties, the person you become in the military is a far cry from the person you entered. However, the situations that the military puts you in are life-changing, and you will return to a far braver person than before.

If you are a parent, the military may be suitable for your child. I know giving up your child to a life of service is scary, but it is even more dangerous watching your child drift directionless through the world. As I wrote in "[Mentorship is Dead](#)," we are the best mentors for our children. At least in the military, they have an opportunity to find someone to assist them throughout their career.

Please read the [Military Success 101 Series](#) for more information on my time in the Marines. It may help your child make some decisions they may be struggling with. You can always reach me through my blog if you have any other questions! Good Luck.



## 09 The Magic of Dividends

Did you ever have a best friend that you could count on through thick and thin? Isn't it great to be able to trust someone and make decisions based on that trust? Well, there is a way to rekindle that trust in the form of monthly income.

Having monthly income coming in consistently is like using a warm blanket inside a nice air-conditioned room in the desert. Even though you like to have the house nice and cool, it still feels good to have the choice to warm yourself with a blanket.

Dividends give you a choice on how you want to spend your income. If you have never received dividends before, then you are missing out on the magic. You see, receiving dividends is like receiving free money, at least to me. I'll explain.

I currently work hard for money. I go to my daily job in the military, quietly earning a wage. I use all of my earned income to pay expenses and fund my dividend portfolio. I have been doing this for two years, during which time I have decreased my spending habits.

When I started dividend investing, I was concerned about building a retirement portfolio to take into retirement. As I learned more and more about passive income sources, I created various income streams.

I started by investing with small amounts, but soon it became a passion. I reinvested all of my dividends back into the stocks that they came from. I opened more and more brokerage accounts. I now have five brokerage accounts, and my wife has four.

I also have a [treasurydirect.gov](https://www.treasurydirect.gov) account where I keep government bonds and a [Fundrise](#) account, a real estate investment trust that pays me quarterly dividends. I won't even go into my rental income and royalties—I'll save those for another article.

Needless to say, I stuck with my dividend investing over the last two years, and now my wife and I have amassed over \$170,000 in our portfolio. I am [forty years old](#), and I will be a millionaire (from my dividend portfolio) before [turning fifty](#).

The terrifying part is that our dividend portfolio is only part of our five-pillar approach to our cash flow retirement. The other pillars are becoming just as strong as dividends; the other pillars are retirement income (military pension, social security), cryptocurrency (capital gains, interest payments), rental income (homes, rooms), and business (royalties).

All of this is a long-winded way to say I can enjoy some of my dividends today. When you look up and earn passive income every day, it changes your perspective on things.

My wife and I put in the work to learn about passive income and build our dividend payments. By having five different dividend accounts, I can choose how I want to spend my dividends. And this is the magic of dividends: **guilt-free spending**.

If you are like me, you didn't grow up with a lot of money. In your 20s, you were working hard for money, and you had to buy some items with your credit card. You are not a crazy spender, but you have to do what you have to do when you have a young family.

But, the day finally comes when you have to [pay off your debt](#), and that is when you start to feel it—the guilt. You begin to feel guilty when you spend money on yourself. You may see a videogame or jewelry and have an urge to buy it; then you think about how responsible you need to be.

You think about paying off your car loan, student debt, credit cards, etc., and you want to do the right thing. One day, you ultimately pay off your debt, but you know what remains? The guilt. You still feel as though you have to prepare for the future by saving and investing.

And then one day you realize **you are rich!** It kind of sneaks up on you. As I write in "[From -\\$77,000 to +\\$150,000 in 22 Months.](#)" it happens fast. All the money that you were paying towards debt now is going into your dividend portfolio. You receive a pay raise from work, your rents increase, and your royalties improve.

Also, your dividend payments have increased to a level that they are fun to receive. So you are relatively young (40 or 50), and if you continue on the same glide path, you will become even more prosperous. What are you going to do? You are doing everything right; all you have to do is continue on the path. Perhaps create more streams of passive income, because, why not?

Now, back to that guilt. For me, I looked at all that I have learned and all that we are doing. We are doing amazing things at a young age. Our kids have brokerage accounts, treasury bonds, and rental properties. Plus, I still go to work every day. Why do I still have this guilt?

We are taught to work hard for money. Passive income is the exact opposite; it is **thinking** hard for money. When we don't have to work 8-10 hours a day to earn a paycheck, it concerns us. This is how we are taught to build an income, by exchanging time for money. **Bullocks!**

It is time to enjoy our lives. We achieved the unimaginable. We paid off our debt, set up our kids for the future, have an emergency fund, own rental properties, created royalties from our creative works, and built an extensive dividend portfolio—what more do we need to do before we give ourselves a break?

So, my guilt is subsiding. When I receive dividends, I have every intention to spend them, at least in my Cash App. You see, my Cash App dividends arrive directly to my checking account and can be spent using my Cash App debit card—immediately when I receive them.

It is like receiving little paydays throughout the month, except now they are not so little. Last month, my total from Cash App dividends was \$77. That is \$77 of guilt-free money deposited directly into my checking account.

If you haven't received guilt-free money, it is a game-changer. To me, it may as well be \$1,000 because you can buy anything you want and have zero remorse or worry. You know that next month, you will be receiving even more guilt-free money.

Remember, I am investing all of my earned income from my job. So each month, my dividends will continue to increase. I am also reinvesting 70-80% of my dividends, which leads back to guilt-free spending.

Have you ever walked through a store with \$77 trying to spend it on something? You have zero guilt. You aren't telling yourself, "Oh, I need to pay down the credit card," or "I should save this for a rainy day."

No, this is your money, and you know that your investments will continue to grow and keep paying you. This cash is just a small showing of appreciation from your investments to you. Thanks, brother.



If you have no idea what I am talking about, you probably haven't got on the dividend bandwagon yet. That's okay; you still have time. You can start now by reading my article "[How We Plan to Retire on Dividends \(book\)](#)."

I'll be honest; your dividends will start with minimal amounts. My first month off dividends was a total of \$0.25. For the entire month. You know what? I was incredibly proud of that quarter because it was my first taste of passive income. It started the fire that still drives me every morning.

Now our dividends are roughly \$500/month. I have a single monthly dividend that pays me \$52 on the first of every month. I look forward to that money more than the paycheck from my job. It is truly magical to see money appear from the air—all the while your investments are still growing.

This article is probably hard to read and understand if you don't know the feeling of dividends. The best thing is to jump in and get started. Start small, start large; you will have to overcome your learning curve. Everyone has their own risk tolerance; there is no investment style for the masses.

The only way to learn is by doing, so jump in. Trust me; the water is warm and guilt-free. The even scarier part is this. My wife and I have only been doing this for exactly two years. What happens when we get to \$2,000/month or \$4,000/month. It will be insane.

But all we can do now is keep grinding our accounts up. We can enjoy our small victories in the form of dividend payments. In the end, having \$77 to spend guilt-free is all we need. Everything else is a bonus. Good Luck!





## 10 The Magic of Rents

Ahh, wouldn't it be nice to sit back on your chair, relax, and still make tons of money? I guess that would be the ideal way to receive cash passively. I never thought about passive income this way until a strange event happened in my life.

My wife and I had just bought our third house; this one was in Florida. The home has two huge, luxury master suites, so we decided to rent them out for \$800 each. We were still on the grind, paying off debt and building our [dividend portfolio](#).

The house has three acres of grassland, and we loved to sit out in the shade and have some beer. One day we were hanging outside with our two boys, enjoying the spring weather when one of our roommates approached.

The roommate came up to me and gave me \$800, and walked off. At that moment, I knew the power of rent. Sometimes, the power of passive income can get lost in translation because you are running around doing things in the world.

Because you are busy, nothing looks pretty passive; however, you are earning double money. I mean that passive income also allows you to make more money while other cash is coming consistently.

And the mother of all consistent income is rent. It is hard not to become rich when you have the constant cash flow of rents to supplement your lifestyle. Rents are especially powerful if they can fund your dividend portfolio. So you see, [rental income is a wealth generator](#).



I consider business and real estate the two most potent [wealth generators](#) out there. However, most people will not create income from either of these. Strangely, everyone can build wealth from rents—by sharing their property.

My wife and I are currently making \$2,500/month in tax-free rental income. It is tax-free because we can use tax breaks like mortgage interest and depreciation to lower the rental income to zero.

However, a large chunk of that cash comes from our two room rentals. In addition, we receive \$1,600/month from the two master suites. My wife recently helped us save even more money by completing a refinance of my primary residence.

We are now paying \$1,530/month for a 2,500 sq ft home on three acres of land. Even better, our roommate's rent completely covers the mortgage, plus \$70 cash flow. How many people in the world can say that they are cash-flowing from their primary residence.

And this is just the start. Ladies and Gentlemen, rents just continue to go up. My oldest son will graduate from high school in four years. If he stays local, he can live in this house. My wife and I can buy another house nearby.

He will continue to rent out these fantastic rooms, and by then, the rent will be \$1,000/month. The mortgage will stay \$1,500/month, making his cash flow positive by \$500/month. There is even another room he can rent for \$750. Now he is positive \$1,250.

What if we drop a mobile home on the property as well? Or a large shed that he can rent storage space to the renters? The possibilities are endless, and they all bring in excess cash passively.

Yes, dealing with roommates and tenants can be a pain **sometimes**. But going to work is pain **all of the time**. Rent is a powerful force multiplier that can propel anyone to the land of the rich.

Think about this. My wife and I receive \$1,600/month for basically doing nothing but sharing—roughly \$20,000 a year. If I only used this money to fund my dividend portfolio, I would still be hyper-rich.

Just renting at this rate for 30 years at an 8% return would be \$2.3 million. This is life-changing money for us, which also can provide for my kids for multiple generations. Many times people sell their homes to avoid the stress of renting out their property. Please keep your homes.

Our first home was a nightmare because we bought it in September 2008, when the world changed due to the financial crisis. We lost all of our equity, and rents were upside down. I had to execute orders to South Carolina, leaving my wife, mother, and two kids behind in Arizona, because we would have been cash-flow negative roughly -\$700/month in rents.

So, I know what a bad rental situation looks like. However, we endured, and this house will prove to be a cash cow for the rest of our lives. We owe it to our kids to fight through the pain to get to the reward—cold hard cash.

With the rental income, you get tax breaks, capital appreciation, consistent returns, and rent growth. It is almost like a joke the world plays on you. They scare you with things like vacancies, maintenance costs, and bad tenants. Those things happen, but the people who endure them become hyper-rich.

Don't let the idea of [property management](#) scare you from the reality of becoming rich. If my oldest starts a family in 10 years, he already has a positive cash-flow home to raise his family in. In addition, being positive cash-flow means that they can probably work from home and home-school their children.

These are powerful ideas that make the rich even richer. I am glad my wife and I opened our minds to the power of keeping our homes and opening our doors to tenants. As a result, by the end of this year (2021), we will have \$200,000 in our dividend portfolio.

Much of this money is the result of rental income. Rents helped us pay off our debt and fund some minor house maintenance. My wife and I recently put new rain gutters on our homes in Florida, fully paid for by rents. Having that consistent cash flow of rents can make your life more comfortable than you could dream of.

Don't let the American media fool you; you do not have to become a home-flipper or real estate tycoon to make a large sum of rental income. You just need to share your property. There are tons of ways to make money from your residence.



A good starting point is my article "[Financial Independence through Real Estate \(book\)](#)." I walked through many of the steps we took to obtain three homes and a mindset of [Mortgage Zero](#).

In the end, only you can prevent media contamination. For example, people will look at you funny when you say that you have roommates. Meh, there is a 97% chance that they do not have \$200,000 in an investment portfolio.

Who would you rather be, someone who conforms to society or someone rich as hell? I know which one I choose. Good Luck!



## 11 The Magic Royalties

I have been feeling a bit magical recently. I have felt the [magic of dividends](#) and the [magic of rents](#), but lately, I have been touched by another: the magic of royalties. I am entirely new to this form of passive income, so let me explain.

I never knew that a standard person could earn royalties. Truthfully, I never looked into it much. When I came to Japan 10 months ago, I was hell-bent on making money via a second job. I would use this secondary income to fund my dividend portfolio.

Something inside me told me not to sell myself short for \$10/hour. So I stumbled into reading some financial education and personal finance books. The second book I read was "[Rich Dad, Poor Dad](#)," in which Robert Kiyosaki said that I could create an asset without any money.

To be clear, assets produce money. So he was saying that I could create an [asset from thin air](#) and have it make money for me. Well, I was intrigued, to say the least. I had already been writing many articles for my blog, so I was starting to form an idea.

I took my articles and my artwork and put them into book format. I figured the artwork would help the reader stay engaged with the words. And, I just continued to do that every day. Slowly but surely, I continue to see results.

Last month, five months into my quest, I made \$40 from book sales. To me, that is a lot of money. First, I love what I am doing for this money (writing and artwork). Second, the books will continue to sell for a long time. Third, the money comes in without me working for it.

So, I had to choose when I arrived in Japan, work for money or learn how to build royalties. I am thrilled I chose the latter. The skills that I have learned on my quest for royalties will serve me well for the rest of my life.

You see, the only way you will make royalties is if you make sales. To make book sales, you have to learn to [advertise](#), [design](#) and [write](#). To make sales in video products (YouTube), you will have to learn a whole other set of skills.

I recently wrote an article where I reviewed my early article designs. Whew, they were very rudimentary. The article is titled "[Basics of Design 101: Don't Leave Home Without It.](#)" The entire series covers some of the main design principles that have helped me increase sales over the months.

But, I will continue to improve my writing, art, and advertising. In the meantime, I will be earning royalties. And that is where the fun comes in, the randomness of royalties. You never have any idea what will sell on any particular day.

I had a book I released in my first month that made its first sale in month five. I had a book I released that sold two copies in 24 hours upon release. It has indeed been a fantastic experience to see people interact with my works.

Luckily, I read a book called "[The Practice](#)" that helped me understand how to ship creative work. The goal is to create your own practice, or routine, that allows you to keep producing work. Do not focus on the outcome, which is sales or blog views. Those things are entirely out of your control.

I have my routine now, where I wake up early and write an article, go exercise, and go to work. After work, I edit my writing, create some artwork, and publish it on my blog. Once I have enough content, I put it together into book format.

That is it, nothing special. I also make sure to read a new book 30-60 minutes a day and do a book report when I finish. This allows me to continue to [have great content](#) for my blog and readers.

So, what makes royalties so unique compared to the other forms of passive income? Royalties are entirely and utterly removed from economic forces. By this, I mean interest rates, inflation, stock market, real estate market, etc. Royalties exist in their own world and act as a great way to [diversify your passive income](#).

Royalties are also random. Yes, some books will have a stronger propensity to sell, but overall you never know what you will get. I had a book that I wasn't particularly fond of; however, my wife loved it. It has turned out to sell well for me continually.

I highly recommend everyone begin to create content with the intent of making royalties. The things you learn and your personal growth are beyond words. I have found something that I can see myself doing for the next 30-40 years. Not only does my mind stay sharp, but I am creating value for a subset of people.

It is also super fun to see your works do well. My wife and I have already decided that royalty income will be our restaurant money for the month. Last month I made \$40, and this month, 16 days in, I have already passed that amount.

So one day, we may be eating steak and lobster all from book sales and royalties. It is a great life to be able to do things without feeling guilty about them. It also feels good for royalties to have a tangible meaning to myself and my family.

Another thing about royalties that make them extraordinary is creating multiple income streams from them. Let's say I have about 50-100 readers of my books currently. I can start putting ads, affiliate marketing, online courses, seminars, web conferences, etc., inside my books. I can also teach people how to create and publish books.

I am very early on in my journey. My main focus is to create great content. But one day, probably once I retire from the military, I will have the time to exploit other income streams from my writing. And that will be truly amazing.

I hope I have done an excellent job of selling you on the power of royalties. Although they are random, there is a science to them. Just like the [magic of compounding](#) works with dividends and compound interest, it will also work here, with your works.



A good place to start is my article "[Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business \(book\)](#)." This book will guide you through building a business mindset, adding value, and shipping creative work.

From there, decide what kind of royalties you will want to begin your journey with. You have artwork, writing, books, videos, music, etc. You even can do things like t-shirt designs and printables on Etsy. There are many ways to skin this cat, but the goal is to start and keep learning and doing.



I hope everyone will experience the joy of earning royalties. It is magical to randomly come home to have sold five books in one day. It is an intense feeling; creating value for others and being paid at the same time. Good Luck!



## 12 The Magic of a Roth IRA

I will be the first to admit that I was never a fan of Roth IRAs or traditional IRAs, for that matter. I never understood why you would spend all these years building something up, only to dismantle it during retirement. I do have a Roth IRA, but I have been investing into it sparingly.

But everything changed while I was reading the book "[Smart Couples Finish Rich.](#)" With a couple of sentences, my whole investing outlook towards Roth IRAs changed. But before I get into that, let's do a quick review of what Roth IRAs are.



[The Magic of a Roth IRA](#)



A Roth IRA is an after-tax savings account. This statement means you will get paid from an earned income job, pay taxes, and fund your Roth IRA after that. There are some limitations on Roth IRAs that you will need to be aware of.

### [Is Saving Money Bad?](#)

**Information on Roth IRAs.** First, there is an annual cap to how much you can invest per year—each year is different. For 2021, the cap is \$6,000/ year if you are under 50 years old. \$7,000 if you are older than 50 years old.

Second, you can only invest if you have earned income for the year. And you have to make more earned income than you invest. For example, if I work a job that pays me \$3,000 for the year, I have a \$3,000 limit for the Roth IRA. This is important for people like me who plan [to retire on dividends](#).

Lastly, your money needs to stay in your account until age 59.5 before you begin withdrawing. The money you invested can be withdrawn at any time; however, your earnings face severe taxes and penalties if drawn before 59.5 and under five years of owning the account. So if I invested \$1,000 and earned \$500 over a timespan, the \$1,000 is a free game. I need to wait until age 59.5 to withdraw the \$500 in earnings and face a 10% penalty, plus capital gains taxes. Read more about [Roth IRAs here](#). Please get to understand the rules before you jump in.

**Where does the magic come in?** “Josh, this sounds boring and not magical at all! I want to see the magic!” Okay, okay, here comes the magic. With traditional IRAs (pre-tax investment vehicles), there is something called required minimum distributions or RMDs.

RMDs basically tell you that you have to start withdrawing money at some point, roughly age 72. So after years of building up your pre-tax traditional IRA or 401K, you will have to sell off your investments and pay taxes on the whole piece of the pie. Each year in retirement, my RMDs would become larger and larger until I would be withdrawing vast sums of money until my death. Whatever is remaining is left to my children, who also have to continue to dismantle the account.

### [Dividends vs. Royalties Part I](#)

This rule never made sense because I will have a [sizeable military pension](#) that my wife and I will use to fund our retirement. Why would I build up a \$1 million account, only to watch it get withdrawn, taxed, and the balance forced to zero?

For the last couple of years, I believed that the Roth IRA also had RMDs. I was under the impression that you also had to dismantle your Roth IRA starting at roughly age 72. **However, Roth IRAs have no RMDs! I repeat, Roth IRAs have no RMDs!**

**How is this magical?** That means that you can build up a considerable post-tax Roth IRA and retrieve all of your dividends tax-free after age 59.5. Let's take a quick dive into my new Roth IRA strategy.

### [Cash Flow 102: Creating Passive Income for Retirement](#)

**My new Roth IRA strategy.** My goal is to build an extensive portfolio of growth stocks in a Roth IRA by maxing out each year's contributions. I will mainly use the Total Stock Market ETF (VTI) for my growth vehicles, which is my favorite "growth" stock. Then I will add in some S&P 500 (SPY), Dow Jones Industrial Index (DIA), and Nasdaq (QQQ).

There is no reason to invest in dividend-paying stocks at this point. Remember, I will need to have earned income. I plan to never work for a full-time job after my military service, so what's my plan? I have a part-time job as a military science instructor. It is an online teaching gig. I can just keep this job for another 30 years, investing all my earnings into my Roth IRA.

So, running the numbers through my compound interest calculator, I will have roughly \$700,000 by age 70 in my Roth IRA. This is if I start investing \$6,000/year for this year and the next 30 years at an 8% return.

**The magic of dividends.** So I have \$700,000 invested in VTI (Total Stock Market) at age 70. I can sell all of these off without any tax penalties at all. I now have \$700,000 cash in my Roth IRA. I can then buy the [highest-yielding investment products](#) that I want. I can aim for a 10% return on my investments.

For example, I can put the entire \$700,000 into a [high-yield closed-end](#) fund such as Pimco Dynamic Income Fund (PCI), which yields about 10%. This would net me \$70,000/year or almost \$6,000/month—all tax-free.

I won't need the money, so I can literally just give it to my kids. My sons will be 45 and 41 at this point, and they will be able to access this tax-free money through me. I can keep investing in my Roth IRA as long as I have earned income from a job or my business.

### [\\$30,000/month Cash Flow Retirement](#)

Upon my death, the Roth IRA can be left to my sons. They will have to dismantle the Roth IRA in ten years, but they still have all the money coming out tax-free. So they can live off the dividends for nine years and buy some property in year 10.

The most important part is teaching my sons how to leverage this tax-free money. Rolling everything into [real estate](#) may be able to keep everything tax-free for their lifetimes.

### [Happy Cash Flow Retirement](#)

**The magical conclusion.** Using the Roth IRA is one of the only ways to get tax-free dividends! You all know I am about my dividends. I wouldn't need the dividends now; I would want to invest in safe stock market index funds to grow the portfolio "worry-free."

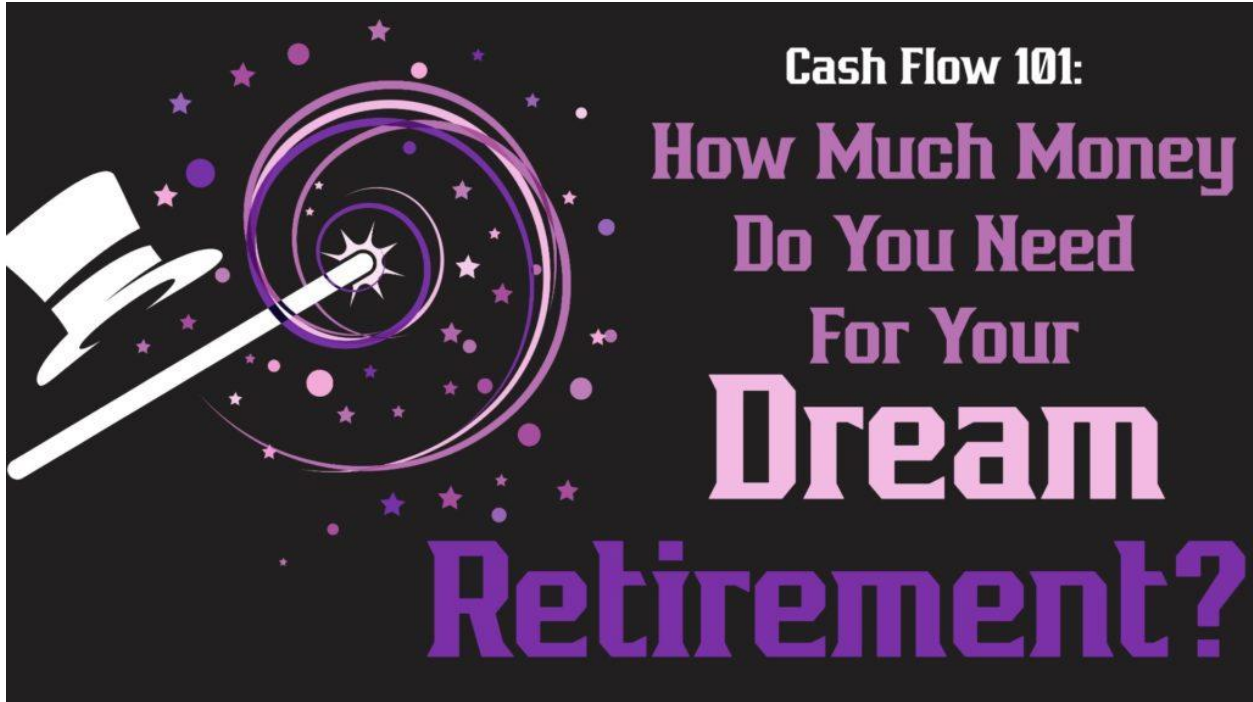
Once I get to a certain age, say 70, I would sell off all my safe index funds and invest in high yield dividends to get as much current income as possible. I can then use these dividends to support my family tax-free. How freakin' amazing is that.

<b>Retirement portfolio</b>	<b>\$2,517.83</b>	>
	+\$579.83	

Now, I need to decide how I want to fund my Roth IRA. It may be best to invest \$500/month. I'll figure it out and write another article on my progress. Here is a picture of my little Roth IRA today. As I said, I never made it a priority. Now that I have an investment plan, I can start to fund it. I will also need to fund Kristina's as well, while she is in the workforce.

What do you think of Roth IRAs? Have you been diligently investing in them, not being stubborn like me? I look forward to growing our Roth accounts over the years. Luckily, VTI pays a tiny dividend; at least, it is something to look forward to every quarter. I love my dividends! Good Luck!

## **GETTING STARTED WITH PASSIVE INCOME**



### 13 Cash Flow 101: Your Dream Retirement?

I want to be very clear; we aim for the most significant number we can dream of. Most people do the exact opposite of this. They retire and see how much money they have coming in; they tailor their lifestyle to fit inside this amount's confines.

Your lifestyle, when living within a small retirement, is not only meager but also fearful. Because you never learned how to build wealth, you will live in fear of running out of money. This habit is called a scarcity mindset. You feel that there is not enough money in the world, and you will never have enough of it to be comfortable.

Today, we will break this mindset and dream about our [rich life](#). After we envision our dream life, we can build our cash flow plan to fund our fantastic lifestyle.

Just because we dream of our best life doesn't mean that we have to live like idiots. We can still keep our expenses low, reduce taxes, and create multiple streams of income. The goal is to focus on experiences and people, not necessarily on things.

The first three articles of this series cover 101) how much our rich life costs, 102) how to build cash flow to fund our rich life, 103) how to use businesses to maximize our rich life's effectiveness. With that, let's continue building our rich life and asking for everything we want in life.

**Expenses.** We start with these costs because this is the first financial yardstick we need to cover with passive income. First, starting today, we need to cut our expenses to the minimums.

You should know today how much you will need to cover your necessary costs plus some surprise expenses. Essential expenses include housing, utilities, car (operations), cellphone, tv, media, and incidentals.

The necessary expense to focus on is housing. If you can reduce this [amount to zero](#), then everything else falls into place. Keeping your costs low is the easiest way to feel wealthy.

Notice that I did not list credit card debt, student loan debt, personal loans, car loans, etc. Debt is something that we need to remove immediately. There is no room in our cash flow retirement for bad debt. Go ahead and write your total expenses down. I will personally go for \$3,000/month for my number. Yours may be higher or lower.

**Experiences.** Now that we have our basic living expenses covered, let's live a little. Time to go and build experiences that our families and we will remember. Experiences include everything from travel, concerts, graduations, national parks, etc. You can also stay at fancy hotels, rent RVs, go camping, rent motorcycles, cruises (maybe in 10 years), sporting events, and visit museums.

We mustn't hold back our expectations. The time for us to dream big is now. If we don't aim big, we will settle for whatever social security pays us. We do not want to put ourselves in a position to "survive" from social security, small pensions, and maybe a little 401K. We are not only creating our cash flow retirement for ourselves but our family. Our kids might be just getting started in life and will need our assistance to travel at a young age. Plus, the example that we set is what will live on in our children.

If all we can do is survive, then they will be survivors. If we can thrive, then they will be thrivers. Parents positioned to thrive and facilitate experiences can be involved in their kids' lives. Survivors are too concerned with their problems to pay any attention to their children. What example do you want to set? I will put the amount of my personal experience to \$3,000/ month.

**Generations.** Generational assistance is the factor that most first-world countries do not account for in their plans. I read an article that told parents that their #1 focus should be on their retirement plans. Maybe that is solid advice for some parents, but not for my wife and me.

Generational assistance is being there for whatever your children will need. However, this does not mean supporting kids that do not want to work or perform. This assistance is for kids doing well and doing things as "right" as possible.

The world is simply not built for the average person to get ahead. The harder you work at a job, the smaller your chance of climbing the ladder. By using generational assistance, we can undercut and expedite the system. Let's take a look at some ways generational assistance, using education and funding, can help our kids leapfrog ahead of their peers.

**Buying a car.** When our kids buy a vehicle, we can either co-sign or make an even better plan. Even if our kids start with an 18% loan- we can pay it off in a few months. Then they can repay us at a rate of 3%.

**Going to college.** Our kids can live at home with us for cheap or stay in one of our rental houses and charge their friend's rent.

**Having a wedding.** Since we own land or know people who do, we can leverage this to have a reasonably priced wedding.

**Buying a house.** We have learned so much about real estate; we can work with our children to get a home that meets all our criteria to achieve [Mortgage Zero](#).

**Starting a business.** Being employed as a W-2 employee usually does not lead where we think it ought to. To truly get ahead, our kids will need to start a business. We have learned so much about business, and now we are in a palace to offer our kids start-up funding. They will still need to present a business proposal and plan.

As you can see, generational assistance is the most critical and expensive cost that we will have in retirement. Even some of you reading today are shaking your heads. Assisting one's kids is not built into every one. It is something I believe deeply in after 14 years of parenthood. I also think that it keeps the parents involved in their children's lives. The kids can talk business, real estate, and investments- as well as grandkids, travel, work, and friends. You can have it all. I will put my budget for generational assistance at \$5,000/month.

My total is \$11,000/month of passive cash flow income. \$11,000/month is a lot of money. The funny part is that my [Retirement 4-50](#) plan calls for me to earn \$24,000/month. To achieve this sum of money will take a large amount of financial education. I am not trying to save my way to this amount. I will need to proactively seek out investments that will passively earn income while I sleep.

What was the total income needed for dream retirement? Do you agree with generational assistance, or are your kids going to be on their own?

In Cash Flow Retirement 102, we will cover building our income streams to fund our passive income requirements. Remember, we will not settle. If we agree to a small income, we lose. If our goal is \$50,000 a month, we can achieve it. Financial education is the key to reaching all of our dreams. If we can envision a world where we make \$50,000 a month, we can get there via smart work and education.





## 14 Cash Flow 102: Creating Passive Income for Retirement

Creating passive income is the reason why my website and books exist. Consider this article a way to get back to our roots and boost our motivation for ensuring we have the best retirement we can build through hard work, education, and planning.

The strategy I use for retirement planning is my plan called [Retirement 4-50](#)- it consists of four pillars of passive income. The four pillars are retirement income, investment income, rental income, and business income.

Now, refer back to your dream numbers from [Cash Flow 101](#). How much cash flow did you need to live your dream life throughout retirement? I hope that you dreamt big and didn't hold anything back. Now we need to put our plans in motion. Let's look at our four pillars and start to brainstorm ideas to build our passive income streams.

**Retirement Income.** Our W-2 employment is how we fund this pillar of passive income. I have a defined benefit pension coming my way from military service. You may not have this but use your 401K instead. On top of these methods, you have other ways to create passive income. My go-to website for this income source is [Kiplinger's Retirement](#).

The other ways include traditional IRAs, Roth IRAs, social security, insurance plans, health saving accounts, and annuities. These sources of income are what mainstream media focus on-almost religiously. Most people will never stray out of this source of income. If you are working a full-time job, you owe it to yourself to get smart on all of these income types. The article "[Is Saving Money Bad](#)" goes more in-depth about retirement income.

**Investment Income.** Dividends and interest make up this passive income pillar. If you don't know anything about these income forms, I wrote a few articles on [stock market investing](#) and [real estate investment trusts](#). These articles are an excellent start to navigating your way through the stock market. My go-to website from investing is [Seeking Alpha](#).

Take your time when investing. The stock market is not a get-rich-quick scheme- it is not meant to be a wealth generator. Once you find ways to create income, the stock market is a way to make a small return on this money. However, finding other ways to make large sums of money is a must. Real estate and business are excellent wealth generators and should be used to get your money system started.

**Rental Income.** The world of real estate is vast and has many different models to make money. My favorite saying is, "Real estate is the best wealth generator for the average person." This quote means that with financial education and real estate knowledge, the average person can make tons of real estate money. Real Estate is the [I.D.E.A.L. investment](#). My go-to website for rental income is [Bigger Pockets](#).

The main reason real estate is accessible to most people is because of leverage. Leverage can be a double-edged sword. Leverage can magnify the good and also heighten the bad. Be careful out there. Ensure that you are reading and using the appropriate investment personnel (tax accountant, business lawyers, property managers) to build your portfolio.

**Business Income.** You can divide business income into two categories; royalties and residual business income (automation). Royalties usually come from creative pursuits such as music, art, photos, videos, and writing. Once you create these forms of work, the royalties come in passively. That is why I enjoy this form of income. Once created, these are almost entirely passive. The website I use for business income is [All Business](#).

An automated business takes more effort to get started. However, the upside potential is a lot higher. When starting a business, always plan to remove yourself from the equation of making money. For instance, if you create a brick-and-mortar shop, how can you run the shop without being there? Management, automation, and out-sourcing our terms we need to learn in this pillar. Please read the article "[Automation and Your New Business](#)."

**Putting all together.** Now that we understand all the different passive income sources, we need to build our personalized "stable" of income. Your choices depend on what you are comfortable with, what you have access to, and how involved you want to be.

My current "stable" consists of retirement income from the military, a dividend investment portfolio, three rental properties, and royalties from Kindle book sales. Over time I expect to add an automated business to my portfolio and perhaps a few more rental income sources. My main goal is to "work" roughly one to two hours a day. If I wanted to work more, I could create a more significant business or obtain more rental properties.

It is essential to understand that all of these sources of income “synergize” or work together. By combining these sources of income, you can grow your portfolios exponentially. For example, if you own an apartment building, you can blog or write books about your experience. The military was my wealth generator, so I can become a consultant to young people who think about joining. Many people want to learn about living from dividends, and I can create a YouTube channel about investing for retirement.

The goal is to have our income coming in as passively as possible. Nothing is entirely passive, and that is okay. The idea is to avoid “easy” work and challenge ourselves to create passive income from sources other than a W-2 job.

A good example is driving Uber. If someone needs to earn an extra \$700 a month, chances are they would start to drive Uber. It is easy to get started, and the path to earning income is straight-forward. But, if that same person took a year writing books for Amazon, they could probably reach up to \$700 after twelve months. The difference is that once they stopped writing books, they would still earn \$700 a month. With Uber, the money stops as soon as the driving stops.

Using this example, we need to evaluate all of our future earning potentials. Yes, if we are skilled web designers, we can make money on Upwork. But, let’s take a step back and ask how we can make money without directly working. Can we create an online course on web design? Can we teach 3-4 people how to design and have them sub-contracting all of our work? Learning to take a step back and remove ourselves from the equation of making money is the key to Cash Flow.

Removing ourselves from the process of making money allows us to earn money while we sleep. Creating passive income is a process upfront. However, if done correctly, you will be earning money while you sleep, eat, and spend time with family. The concept of making money all day, every day, is the takeaway I want you to remember from this article.

The best way to get started is to visit the above websites every day. You can begin to brainstorm ideas on creating passive income through royalties and business. Renting rooms or basements is an easy way to get started in real estate. You can create an investment account today and deposit \$5 a week. The barrier to entry is not very high.

The main barrier is education and motivation. The topics I refer to are not mainstream. You will probably be the only one in your circle who thinks like this. However, it feels good to have money coming in at all times of day and night. I love it!



## 15 Cash Flow 103: Choose Your Wealth Generator

Now it is time to make serious money! Do I have your attention? In [Cash Flow 101](#), we talked about how much your dream retirement would cost. In [Cash Flow 102](#), we talked about creating passive income from four pillars- retirement income, investment income, business income, and rental income.

In Cash Flow 103, we are going to find our wealth generator. A wealth generator is a source of income where we can make lots of money. Ideally, we would use a wealth generator to convert large sums of money into passive investment income (dividends). The benefit of converting our wealth generator into investment income is that now the money is entirely passive. If we want to sell our business or real estate- we can because they served their purpose. They made us rich.

**But what are the best wealth generators?** Well, that is tricky. Everyone is different and has a different tolerance for risk, creation, and stress. It is important to note that you do not have to sell your wealth generator if you don't want to. You can keep it forever and pass it down to your children. For this article, we will sell our assets when we reach \$5 million in investment income. \$5 million would give us roughly \$16,000/month of dividend income. Let's look at various wealth generators.

**Employment W-2 job.** Jobs may be one of the slowest wealth generators out there. I believe the military or other government jobs would be the best option for a wealth generator. With enough time in service, government jobs pay well and the kicker is that they pay you a pension. If you invest, live below your means, and stay humble- you can use your paycheck and investments to achieve this \$16,000 in roughly 20-25 years.

**Dividend Investing.** You would need to achieve \$5 million in a dividend portfolio. Using a regular job, I would give it 20-25 years.

**Capital Gains Investing.** Everyone's dream is to hit it big in the stock market. Using capital gains from high-growth stocks is a way to become rich. I feel that it is risky. You would have to sell all of your investments at the right time to achieve your \$5 million. I would still give it 20-25 years.

**Single Family Homes.** At best, a single-family home is going to earn you \$500/month rental profit. You would need to own 32 houses to achieve your goal of \$16,000/month. You can get into the groove very quickly; I would give it 10 years.

**Apartment Building.** Apartments take more financial education to leverage as a wealth generator; however- more risk, more reward. You could probably reach your goal with 5 apartment buildings as long as you grow each additional purchase's size. It may take some time to get started, find your niche, build a team, and earn the bank's trust, but I believe it would take you 5-7 years to achieve your goal.

**YouTube.** There is a lot of money on YouTube. You can make it big and bring home some huge paydays. If the goal is to reach \$5 million and retire, 7 years is possible. Probably faster.

**Books, Blogs.** Writing is a good source of passive income. Writing will not be as lucrative as creating videos; however, the content can stay relevant for a longer timeframe. Meaning you can earn dividends for much, much longer. I bought and read the book "[The Intelligent Investor](#)" in 2020- released in 1949. I would give it 7 years of intense writing.

**Automated Business.** I consider an [automated business](#) one that can be out-sourced, automated, or run by a manager. Business is tricky because it is hard to predict which one will be a winner. But if done right, using social media, blogs, audience, adding values, etc. I give it 5 years to earn an automated \$16,000 a month.

What wealth generators ended up being the fastest to get us to our goals? Business and real estate. You can accomplish business income via automated business or royalties. You can build real estate income with single-family, apartments, or commercial. These all require a high level of financial education. On top of the education, you will need intelligence in each of the sub-niches of each category. For example, if you want to dig deeper into apartment buildings, there is another layer of information and skill required to make substantial investments.

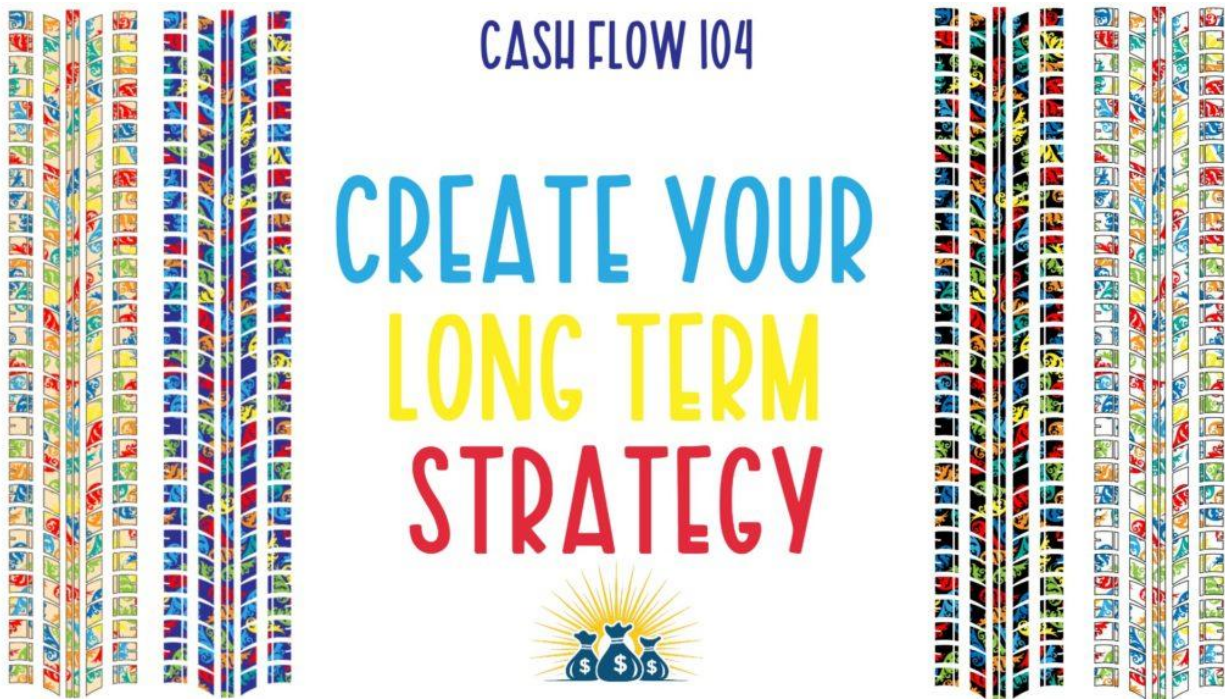
Next, education in investing is mandatory. Remember, the money from our wealth generator is going into our money system. We need to make the right choices for our money system, or we will lose our money. There are ways to leverage your money system to build a higher return on



investment, including options trading. Options trading will require the maximum limit of financial education, risk mitigation, and stress reduction.

As you can see, there are many ways to get us to our final goal- in this case, \$16,000/month. You could also use a combination of these methods. Using multiple wealth generators may even be faster, more diversified, and recession-proof.

Cash flow is king. During the Cash Flow series, we covered how to find your cash flow number, the types of passive income, and which wealth generators will get you to your goals the fastest. The next step is to start reading ([20 Books that will Make You Rich](#)) the books of your chosen wealth generator. Reading will give you the necessary education to get started. From there, go forth and bear fruit. The world is a vast place, and everyone is capable of producing cash flow.



## 16 Cash Flow 104: Create Your Long Term Strategy

Throughout the Cash Flow Series ([101](#), [102](#), [103](#)), we have explored how to turn our dream retirement into a cash flow reality. Now, it is time to take our first real steps into creating and starting our plan. It is through these small steps that we will walk along the path of financial freedom.

The path to financial freedom can seem long at first, so we need to prepare our mindset before we start. We do not want to believe in get-rich-quick schemes or “quick turnarounds.” The only way to obtain wealth is through education and action.



I make this statement because there are a few unrealistic ideas that can slow us down on our path. When we believe that things will be easy or fast, we tend to focus on skewed timelines- such as quitting our jobs to pursue a business, becoming a YouTube star in a few months, building an audience quickly, or selling products to random strangers. If we try to hang our future on short success stories, we may become disappointed.

I want to walk through how a standard employed individual can use all four pillars (retirement, investments, business, and rental income) of a cash flow retirement. Using all four types of retirement cash flow isn't about having vast sums of money when you start; it is about understanding how to combine and employ these assets. Over time, you can build a more extensive portfolio in each pillar. Let's take a look.

**Retirement Income.** Most of us will start here- as an employee. Being an employee has its benefits, such as some security and consistency. Being employed helps us buy a home and start a family. You can begin to build your [Retirement 4-50](#) plan here.

Your employer may match your contributions inside your 401k, so it is imperative to take advantage of this free money. Starting a Roth IRA on your own is also a good idea. You put taxed money into your Roth, but it will grow tax-free for the duration of time. Even if you leave this money to your children, it will be tax-free.

There are not too many jobs with a defined benefit pension plan. Most of the jobs that offer these types of pensions are in the government. You may want to look into either a military career or a civil service job. Having a pension is a great way to start your cash flow retirement.

Social security rounds out your retirement income. None of us know how social security will look going into the future, so we want to put ourselves in a position that social security is "nice to have." Annuities and life insurance are also ways to generate income throughout retirement.

**Investment Income.** Building your money system or investment income will probably be slow going. For most of us, investing in the stock market is not a wealth generator (read [Cash flow 103](#)). The best mindset to have is to celebrate your small dividend income gains. Your dividend portfolio will start with a few cents and begin to build into a few dollars. Eventually, you will be able to buy lunch and other small luxuries: embrace, and document, the journey. I have a whole series on [Investing for Dividends](#).

Investing for dividends is supposed to be boring. Boring investing is usually good investing. You find corporations and ETFs that you feel strongly about, and you slowly build long-term positions in these companies. Most of your dividends should be reinvested- adding to the compound effect.

Investing in capital gains can also lead to financial freedom. I have a few growth stocks, but I use index funds as my growth securities. Index funds are safe vehicles that track the market.

They do not try to beat the market. If I want superior gains, I can earn that outside of the stock market via real estate or business. Please read my [stock market investing series](#).

The last pillar of investment income is bonds. I wrote an article on [Municipal Bonds](#), which are tax-free. Also, you can use government treasuries and bond funds. [Bonds and stocks](#) usually have inverse responses to economic conditions- meaning they behave differently. Having a position in bonds can help long-term gains.

**Real Estate.** Real Estate is a mindset. The best philosophy for real estate is to control your out-of-pocket real estate expenses. I wrote [Mortgage Zero](#) because my wife and I pay no out-of-pocket real estate expenses. Keeping your real estate expenses at zero is a [wealth generator](#). If you decide to buy more real estate properties on top of this, that is great. However, if you can control your expenses, you will be shocked at how fast the income starts to flow.

The number one expense in an American's life is real estate. With everything included (mortgage, utilities, maintenance), it is over 50% of our income. So reducing this amount to zero is a game-changer. You can control your expenses in a few ways: buying a small home, getting roommates, creating rental storage space, renting your garage, building RV hook-ups, Airbnb, starting a business, etc.

Once you have successfully eliminated all of your real estate expenses, you can begin to look into obtaining more rental properties. There are ways to buy properties with [zero or low money](#) down. Be creative. You want as little of your money invested into the property as possible- ensuring our money is in an [infinite return](#) sooner.

Once you become established in real estate, there are even more ways to generate income. [Private money lending](#) and creating real estate notes are just a few ways. Whatever the case may be, the best idea in real estate is to focus on your expenses and branch out from there.

**Business.** Business income is the grandest of all revenue. Starting a business is what most people envision their life to become. However, running a company takes patience and an understanding of business principles. Whether it is a product or service, people will [need to know, like, and trust you](#)- if you want to sell something to someone. You get people to know, like, and trust you by creating value in their lives.

Most people who start a business think of themselves first and customers sense that they are only out for profit. Most businesses do not succeed in America, so when you start your business, start small.

There are two types of business income that I focus on: [Royalties and Automation](#). I recommend that everyone start by creating royalties. By building a base of royalties, you are learning the basics of business. You will be making a product (books, music, videos), advertising, marketing, and improving over time. From there, you can add affiliate marketing,

merchandise, and other items to upsell. For your business to succeed, it needs to add value to your audience, which will make them customers.

Next, you can start an automated business. You will have built robust business tools throughout your royalty journey. Plus, you will already have an audience that knows, likes, and trusts you. Your business can be something that may appeal to your existing fanbase. Grow your business only when it makes sense, do not rush it. Remember, it is only a part of the larger plan; if it is not our wealth generator, that is okay.

**Putting it all together.** Always keep a view of the larger plan. If you can create any income, no matter how big, in all four pillars, consider yourself successful. You have learned how to diversify your income across four significant types of income. Preparing for the next financial crisis or economic disaster by diversifying your income can help you excel. Let's look at a simple example of how someone could create income across all four pillars in less than a year.

Ron works a 9-to-5 job making \$75,000 a month. From this, he contributes to his 401k, a Roth IRA, and rents a room in his house for \$600 a month. Next, Ron keeps his expenses low to invest all of this \$600 into his dividend portfolio. He also maintains a herb garden where he makes a \$100 a month business income- and takes it a step further and creates YouTube videos about his garden. From this, he makes \$200 a month from YouTube.

From the example above, it may seem that Ron is only making \$800 a month extra income. Most people will scoff and say that they can make more by driving uber and working overtime or a second job. They do not understand the power of passive income or an infinite return. They also do not know that the rich do not work for money.

Ron has three assets in an infinite return, the rental room, herb garden, and YouTube channel. He has very little invested; however, they make him money. Over time his YouTube will grow, and he will sell books or courses from his works. The most crucial part is that Ron has control of his time and his earnings. To become wealthy, you need to control both of these. With Uber and overtime, you do not control your wages or your time.

What will your long-term strategy be? Remember to start small in all four pillars. You may only be able to invest \$5 a week. That is okay. Over the long term, the knowledge you obtain from this \$5 a week is more valuable than anything else. We all have to start somewhere. I implore you to explore content creation, business, investing, and mortgage zero. Using a combination of all of these will ensure that you are well diversified and ready for a passive cash flow retirement.

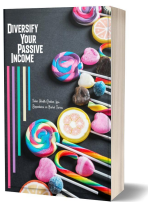
# DIVERSIFY YOUR PASSIVE INCOME



## 17 Cash Flow 105: Diversify Your Passive Income

“Variety is the spice of life,” or so they say. And why getting rich to be any different. Currently, the crypto market is down, the stock market is flat, the rental market is up, and my royalties are doing very well.

So which one do I have to focus on to be successful in today’s world? All of them and none of them. I can just keep doing what I always do, continuing to be a [Bonafide Investor](#).



### [Diversify Your Passive Income](#)

You see, first I have a job. I will not quit my job until my passive income is in a position to support my family (and generations) for the rest of my life and beyond. Next, I diversify the rest of my passive income so that one is always doing well at any given moment.

“Josh, how do you diversify your streams of passive income? I don’t know anything about real estate, business, cryptocurrency, or investing.” Do you think that I learned this in middle school?

No, I took the time to learn these things by reading books and getting involved. Each stream of income takes patience and education before you see results. Let's take a look at the early days of each of these investments.

**Retirement Income.** When I joined the Marine Corps in 1999, I averaged \$900/month for the first year. Now, I am making around \$140,000/year. Even better is that my retirement pension raises every day I continue to stay in the military.

**Real Estate.** We bought our first house in 2008 and lost all the equity we had from our down payment. Now we own three homes and average around \$2,400/month of rental income.

**Investments.** I started buying dividend-paying stocks in June 2019. It took two months to get my first dividend, and it was \$0.23 from Papa John's. Now we bring in \$400-\$500/month in dividends.

**Royalties.** I began publishing books on the Kindle platform in January 2021. My first month of book sales produced \$3. In May 2021, my total for the month was \$40.

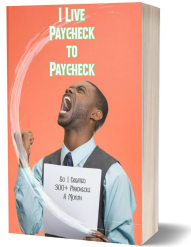
**Cryptocurrencies.** I jumped into cryptocurrencies in May 2021 by putting \$5,000 into the market. The market proceeded to take a dive and take 40% of my cash (on paper, you only lose when you sell). I just continue to keep buying.

No matter where you start, you will have some ups and downs. That is part of life and something that you should expect. Everything worth doing in life will require some form of hardship. We have to overcome limiting beliefs in each of our pursuits.

I remember when I started writing and publishing books. I had all kinds of limiting beliefs like "you are not a writer," "Who will listen to you?" But, by reading books, I realize that I could overcome these [limiting beliefs](#) by taking action.

I used to worry if my audience liked my work or not. Now, I can care-less. It's not that I don't want my audience to enjoy my writing, but it has nothing to do with me. It is an outcome I cannot affect. I now write for myself. I love the purity of filling a blank piece of digital paper with my thoughts. To me, there is nothing like it on Earth. Even better, I am building a library of great articles that I can leverage for my entire life.

For example, I recently wrote an article titled "[I Live Paycheck to Paycheck, so I created 300+ Paychecks a Month](#)." I thought that it was a snarky title. When I released it, a few people read it, nothing major. But, I then went and created a [small book under the same name](#). And what do you know, random people enjoyed it. It sold two copies in the first couple of weeks—this is huge for books, by the way.



The book can now sit in my library, and people can buy it for the rest of my life. Maybe it will sell two copies for the rest of my existence. Or perhaps it sells two copies a month, forever. That is the exciting thing about royalties. You never know what you are going to get.

I bring this up because royalties are entirely removed from stocks, crypto, business, retirement, and real estate. I plan on getting my royalties up to \$6,000/month. It may take five years, but it is absolutely worth having a source of income completely removed from everything else.

Now, I am going to really blow your mind. Inside of each of our passive income asset classes, we still need to diversify even more. No, we can't just invest in McDonald's stocks for our investment income.

We can separate each asset class into different categories that can help us withstand downturns and prosper in the long run. Again, let's look at each of our investment pillars to discover the diversity inside each of them.

**Retirement Income.** Defined benefit plans (pensions), social security, 401Ks, TSP, Roth IRA, traditional IRAs, disability, annuities, CD ladders, savings.

**Investments.** Index funds, electronic traded funds, real estate investment trusts, mutual funds, closed-end funds, bond funds, commodities, options-trading, leveraged funds, inverse funds, commodities funds, preferred shares, baby bonds.

**Real Estate.** Room rentals, finished room over garage (frog), finished basements and attics, mobile homes, tiny homes, overseas homes, homes in small cities, raw land, single-family, multi-family, commercial, apartments, real estate notes, hard money lending, private money lending, billboards, real estate agents, wholesaling, fix and flip.

**Business.** Online, content creation, royalties, books, YouTube, music, farms, dog parks, food trucks, rental car, rental boat, rental 18 wheeler, winery, brewery, online classes, marketing, gigs, food sales, mentorship.



**Cryptocurrencies.** Stable coins, smart chain coins, interest on coins, staking, initial coin offerings, pooling.

I count 63 off the top of my head. These are just the start, and there are way too many to list. Each one of these can be an article in and of itself. The idea isn't to know all these comprehensively; it is to know of them.

The more we know, the more we grow. If you can learn about many of these, then when the opportunity arises, you won't miss your chance. For example, if you see that a tiny home is 50% off for some reason, you will have the [mindset of an investor](#) and know how you can leverage it if you purchase.

This mindset is the very reason that I write each and every day. Not only am I making myself brighter, but I am passing along actionable investing knowledge to the masses. The goal isn't to be the best investor, real estate mogul, top entrepreneur, or 100X crypto person.

The goal is to be mildly successful in each of these and invest for the long run. I promise that if you can invest in each of these for the long run, your financial future will be outstanding. Let's look at two scenarios—one where the investor makes a tremendous single investment, and the other investor makes many small investments.

Our first person, Brian, makes a considerable investment in Tesla early on. Tesla spikes in price, and Brian now is sitting on \$1 million of Tesla stock. Brian has not diversified in the stock market or outside of it. He doesn't know what to do with the money. Every day he worries about selling Tesla or holding for the long run. He worries that Tesla will not be around for another 30 years to trade for his retirement.

Our second person, Bob, makes a smaller investment in Tesla, and when it spikes, he is sitting on \$500,000 in Tesla. As much as he loves the company, he knows that this is his chance to diversify into other investments, and he has been reading [MilitaryFamilyInvesting](#) daily. He sells some Tesla, paying taxes, and leaving \$100,000 in Tesla.

This leaves him with \$300,000 to invest across his various new asset classes. He first buys a rental home in Mississippi for \$100,000. He buys two Tesla Model 3 models to start a rental car business (\$100,000). He also will create a YouTube channel documenting his business journey. This leaves him \$100,000 to invest. He buys \$70,000 of dividend-paying stocks and \$30,000 into cryptocurrencies.

Bob is now well diversified across his passive income portfolio and will have rental income from his home in Mississippi, dividend income from stocks, interest and capital gains from crypto, and business income from YouTube and rental cars. He even has capital gains from Tesla remaining.

Now, who would you rather be? No matter how cool it sounds to have \$1 million in Tesla stocks, Bob is in a better position to be a millionaire for the rest of his life. He won the jackpot with Tesla and sees that he has an opportunity to set himself up for the rest of his life.

Opportunities like this do not come up often, and when you get “lucky,” you will need to know what to do with your cash. Sadly, people are “lucky” all the time; they just don’t realize it. People who bought homes in 2010 are sitting on a ton of equity. They will need to become a Bonafide Investor and learn how to leverage this equity to diversify their passive income portfolio.

Lucky for you, I am going to help you out a little more. Over the next few episodes of the Cash Flow 101 series ([101](#), [102](#), [103](#), [104](#)), I will go into a little more detail on how to diversify into more of these asset classes. These articles will serve as a cheat guide; however, you will need to dig deeper to get the particulars into each segment.

So, I am off. Hopefully, you understand the purpose of reading as much as you can about passive income. The goal isn’t to invest in everything you learn but to see (or create) opportunities as they arise. Good Luck!

## PASSIVE INCOME STAPLES



### 18 Become CEO of Yourself

What is the secret to becoming wealthy and maintaining lifelong relationships? How do some people have it all— money, success, family, and love? Can you be one of the few that has it all?

I believe that you can if you clearly define what having it all means. Don't clearly define the definition of having it all to me, no. Tell yourself what you want, be specific, and make yourself get there. In the end, you are in charge.

I think two things separate the hyper-successful winners from the ordinary people. Truly successful people know what they want, and they have the self-drive to get there. The standard person wants what others have and has no determination to discover how others got it and complain when they can't get it.



### [Become CEO of Yourself](#)

How do you become one of the hyper-successful, all-around good people who seem always to have things going for them? Easy, decide what you want and get it. Is it really that easy, though? Yes and no. The hard part for most people is deciding what they want.

As I wrote in "[Living a Middle-Class Life is Stressful](#)," trying to keep up with others is the downfall of most people in first-world countries. If you cannot look at who you are, what you have, and be thankful— you are destined for failure.

**For men**, we tend to focus on those that have money and looks. They seem to always have beautiful women all around them. When they enter the room, everyone focuses their attention on them. They are the alpha males— the apex predators of the world. They have a clear shot at becoming CEO of the company and marrying the hottest woman in the building.

But in reality, the richest men in the world aren't the cool guys. Google search Jeff Bezos, CEO of Amazon, and look at his picture and stats. He is very short and doesn't look like the typical apex predator. Nor does Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook. How did they rise to the top and become the silent hunter? Discipline.

**For women**, they have it worse than men. Men can understand that some people are born with their height and looks, women— not so much. With the ability to perform an excessive amount of augmentations, women are constantly looking to upgrade themselves.

Add to this the illusion that all women are college-educated, powerful women on their way to becoming CEOs, and you have a recipe for unhappiness and disillusion. Again, take a step back, and realize what is really going on here.

The first step to defining what you want in life and mastering your path is looking past the first-world country's illusion. I was lucky enough to live in third-world countries very early in my

life, around age 21-24. The lessons I learned about life are still with me today. Here is some of the education I received overseas in countries like Niger (West Africa) and Turkmenistan (Central Asia).

- 1) People in third world countries do not compete with one another like in western cultures. These countries' main goal is to put food on the table and make a better life for their children.
- 2) Family is paramount. Nothing is more important than family. The children don't leave the house to become hot-shot lawyers, doctors, and politicians. The children grow up, get jobs, and take care of their parents.
- 3) Everyone is an entrepreneur. Many people get jobs, but most people overseas have some sort of side hustle. It is natural for them to sell something on the street or open a little shop inside their home.
- 4) Friendships meant something. I noticed that friends overseas were true friends. They had lifetimes of sitting on the porch together. They would assist one another through hard times. They celebrated significant events together, like the birth of a child, and they were happy for one another.

Learning these lessons early on has helped guide me through life. I don't worry about having the biggest homes, the newest cars, and the most expensive clothes. I just want to lead a simple life, provide for my beautiful wife, and be rich. Not everyone else's definition of rich, but my definition of wealth. (read "[How Do You Define Being Rich?](#)")

Let's break this down into small pieces. I want to dig into how you can define what you want in life, which is the essential aspect of becoming the CEO of your life. You need to have a clear definition of what you want and who you are. From there, you have to forge your path ahead and get what you want. I can tell that I will have to split this up into two separate articles. This topic is crucial to finding self-worth, value, and confidence.

**Define what you want.** I want to break this down into three easy categories, ordered by most people's standard path: career, spouse, and wealth.

**Career.** Most people spend their whole working life trying to decide what job they want. Their career is supposed to be fulfilling as well as make them rich. It is supposed to do it all for them—give them a sense of purpose, find them lifelong friends, take care of them throughout retirement, and make them wealthy. That is not too much to ask, right?

I am sad to say; your career is just an extended job. It is a profession, not a lifetime achievement medal. Yes, can having a great career gives you certain benefits and increase your self-worth? Of course. You should celebrate becoming a doctor, lawyer, firefighter, astronaut, or Marine— they are incredible feats. However, if the rest of your life is not in order, these achievements won't mean much.

Tiger Woods and Jeff Bezos both got divorced when at the top of their respective professions. I have met bus drivers and janitors that lead better lives than doctors and lawyers. These standard workers focus on what they have, not on what they want to have. They appreciate spending time with their family and friends. They celebrate small victories for themselves and family and do everything in their power to keep their families together. Families remember them for generations, not because of their profession, but because of their family responsibility.

Take it from me; I thought my career was going to be the end-all-be-all. I worked for 20 years, going from Private First Class (E-2) to Master Gunnery Sergeant (E-9) in the United States Marine Corps. When I got to the top of my profession, looking from the height of the mountain, I saw nothing. It was just an obituary achievement—a pat on the back for a job well done.

What made this achievement great was that I still had my family together. We use the extra money to buy my freedom from the workforce. If I had lost my family along the way, the achievement would have no value to me. Becoming an E-9 allowed me to focus on new things that I love doing, like writing this article at 0200 in the morning. I would have never discovered my love for writing if I had not made it to the top of the mountain.

For you, moving forward, understand where your career fits into your overall life picture. When it comes to money, you can find tons of different ways to diversify your income outside of a job. So taking a job for the money should not be an issue in today's society. I explain how we created multiple streams of income in the aptly named article "[How We Created 13 Streams of Income.](#)"

**Spouse.** Finding a spouse in today's society can be near impossible. Watching friends and family dating made me realize why older generations believed in arranged marriages. With too many options, analysis paralysis can take effect.

I am writing this article because most people do not know what they want to accomplish in their dream life. These same people, who have no idea what they want from their own life, are now attempting to leverage their future spouses' requirements.

I'll explain this last sentence after a quick detour. I met my wife, Kristina (Kris), in February of 2004 when I served at the US Embassy in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. When I met Kris, she did not speak any English whatsoever. She was going to college and working as a waitress. I wanted more time to see her, so I asked her to quit her job. I promised to take care of her, and in return, she decided to take care of me. Seventeen years later, nothing has changed.

After all these years, our roles and expectations haven't changed. I am the provider and father. She is the wife, mother and provides support to everyone in the family. She holds the family together, through thick and thin. On top of that, she runs our property management business and works a day job that pays her \$42,000/ year. She is everything I asked for, times 100. But what did I ask for in the beginning? What did she expect from me?

I asked for someone to understand that I was a military person, someone who could cook and clean and take care of our children. She was/is beautiful also, inside and outside. She expected me to be faithful, a provider, and the leader of the house— she spoke no English, there wasn't going to be any splitting household bills or money. I was in charge of guiding the family on the path to wealth. We keep it simple, and as our life has grown exceptionally, we still have the same simple expectations of each other.

Now back to society and how we levy expectations on each other. Women are currently seeking men making over \$100,000/year plus are six feet tall, work out, sensitive, yet an alpha male. Men are looking for an Instagram model, registered nurse making \$80,000/year, driving nice cars, and can cook. **Where do these people exist?**

These expectations are unrealistic, to put mildly. These expectations are freaking insane, to put it bluntly. We need to go back to the basics. Men, do you want a homemaker who may work a side hustle? Does she need to cook, clean, and take care of the children? Are you ready to be the provider for all mouths inside the house? Can you handle the pressure of guiding everyone's future wealth?

Women, do you want a sensitive man or an alpha male? Are you ready to be lead, or do you want to lead? It is fine either way, but I will tell you one thing, don't take being a leader lightly. I have been in charge of my household for 15 years, and I will say it has its challenges. Stress and predicting the future are things you need to become comfortable with, along with unexpected emergencies. Think long and hard before deciding to take on the rule of the leader.

Once you determine what you bring to the table, find someone who will bring different things to the table but has the same core values. Kris and I rarely step on each other's toes because we focus on different things in life. If I am refinancing one of our homes, she doesn't tell me what interest rate to find or what bank to choose. If she is shopping for the house, I don't tell her what curtain to buy or the couch we need. However, we do discuss all things together.

To be the CEO of your life, you will need a spouse, eventually. Have a clear idea of who you are, what you bring to the table, and manage expectations of what the other person can/cannot do. Remember, we can all grow, especially when we work together. Don't expect to find the perfect husband/wife out of the box. You are not perfect either. Together, we can make the ideal couple with love and time.

**Wealth.** Your career will not make you rich— once you realize this, you will be well on your way to becoming wealthy. But Josh, I make \$350,000/year at my job; I am rich. Yes, you have a lot of money or make a lot of money. You are not wealthy unless you can quit your job and never have to work again.

When you become financially independent, you will become wealthy. What is financial independence? The definition is when the money produced from assets is enough to cover your living expenses— at that point, you are financially independent. I'll give an example.



Suppose my expenses are \$4,000/month. I retire from the military and make \$2,200/month, I have a dividend portfolio making me \$1,000, I have two rental homes making me \$2,000/month, and I have books making me \$700/month— Am I financially independent? Yes, I have a total of \$5,900 to cover my \$4,000 expenses. I am free.

At this point, I can focus on becoming rich. Yes, you heard me correctly; once you become financially independent, quit your job, you can now focus on accumulating a massive amount of wealth.

For example, you can write more books, start a youtube channel, find deals in single-family housing, buy raw land, find tax lien certificates, invest in cryptocurrency, trade options and commodities, or start an herb garden. The possibilities are endless. Working a job is the number one way to stay average.

Now back to the example of the person making \$350,000/year (\$29,000/month). Is that person rich? Perhaps, but chances are they are not. I say this because their lifestyle expenses are probably \$200,000/year. This lifestyle most likely includes luxury cars, a huge home, boats, vacations, private schools, spa days, charity, weddings, travel, etc.

Now, for this person to be financially independent and maintain the same lifestyle, how much money would they need to bring in passively? Doing the math ( $\$200,000 \times 25$ ), this person would need \$5 million invested in the stock market. Making \$350,000/year, this person could invest \$5 million relatively quickly; however, lifestyle inflation probably got the best of them.

Why do I bring up the comparison between the financially free person, making \$5,900/month passive, and the other person making \$29,000/month actively? Who do you consider rich? That is the question that you have to ask yourself. Your answer to this question is what will drive your future decisions and how you view wealth for the rest of your life.

Most people look at the \$29,000/month person and strive to be that guy/gal. Working for money will not lead to happiness. The more you work, the more you spend, the more you will have to work to pay for your spending. It is called the rat race. And most people never get off the hamster wheel.

Kris and I are financially free, yet we are staying in the workforce by choice. We are still relatively young (I'm 40), and both of our jobs are not too taxing on the mind, body, or soul. We plan to do 5-8 more years just to pad out our numbers, and then we have the freedom to do whatever we want to do for our dream life.

**Putting it all together.** Wow, I wrote a lot today, but you must understand the relationship of career, spouse, and job. Understanding how your mindset will affect your choices is the first step of becoming the CEO of yourself. You have to filter out the noise when choosing your career, spouse, and building wealth.

Hopefully, you learned how outside forces are at work, bending our minds for their own devices. You can have it all; you just have to decide for yourself what you want. Do you want a career you can't stand because it pays a lot of money? Do you want an Instagram registered nurse making \$100,000/year, or do you want an attractive homemaker that runs the house and cooperates with you as a teammate would? Do you want to be the person making \$29,000/month with countless liabilities, or the person retired making \$5,900/month spending time with his/her spouse and children?

These questions might be tough choices for you. For me, they are simple and as clear as day. But I have lived a blessed life and see the light at the beginning and end of the tunnel. I know that chasing fake things with fake people leads to an artificial life. But it may be something you have to learn on your own.

So enough rambling; in part two, I will focus on getting the things you want from life. Remember, the first step was deciding what you want; the next step is going out and getting everything you ever dreamed of and more. Until next time, thanks for reading.



## 19 Retirement Planning at Any Age

Why is planning for retirement important at every age? Because you cannot move forward until you know where you are going. When you get in a car and have never been to the destination, what do you do?

You enter the address into Google Maps and ensure you have a path before you get started. Even if you go for a joy ride, you always ensure you know how to navigate home.



### [Retirement Planning at Any Age](#)

When you go to the airport to fly to another city, you ensure you have tickets, ID, passports, and cellphones. You don't want to be stranded.

So why would we want to travel through life without a map or itinerary? It is our guiding light through the darkness (work). We need to have an exit strategy, or the days seem longer, the boss angrier, and weekends shorter.

They do not train us to create our retirements. It is not in their best interest for us to have a game plan. When we know the objective, we can execute violently (sorry, the Marine in me).

If I know at age 20 that my goal is \$3 Million in a dividend portfolio, then my goal becomes to get this money into my accounts as soon as possible. However, when I don't have a plan, I can get detoured.

Some detours include cars, video games, watches, houses, chasing women or men, etc. Now, by the time I look at my map, I am 50 years old. I need my job because I have no cash flow. My boss can come in and cut my salary by 25% for no reason. And guess what? I am stuck.

People, that is what they want. "They" are everyone outside of your immediate family. Hell, sometimes it is your immediate family that doesn't want you to succeed. **You must have a plan.** There is no other option. No one is coming to save you.

**"No one is coming to save you"** is one of my favorite sayings of all time. An author by the name of Ramit Sethi said it in a podcast I was watching. The context was talking about getting your finances in order. I loved that saying so much that I went out and bought his book "[I Will Teach You to Be Rich](#)."

That book was my first book on my path to financial independence. It was life-changing. But that saying, "No one is coming to save you," still sticks with me.

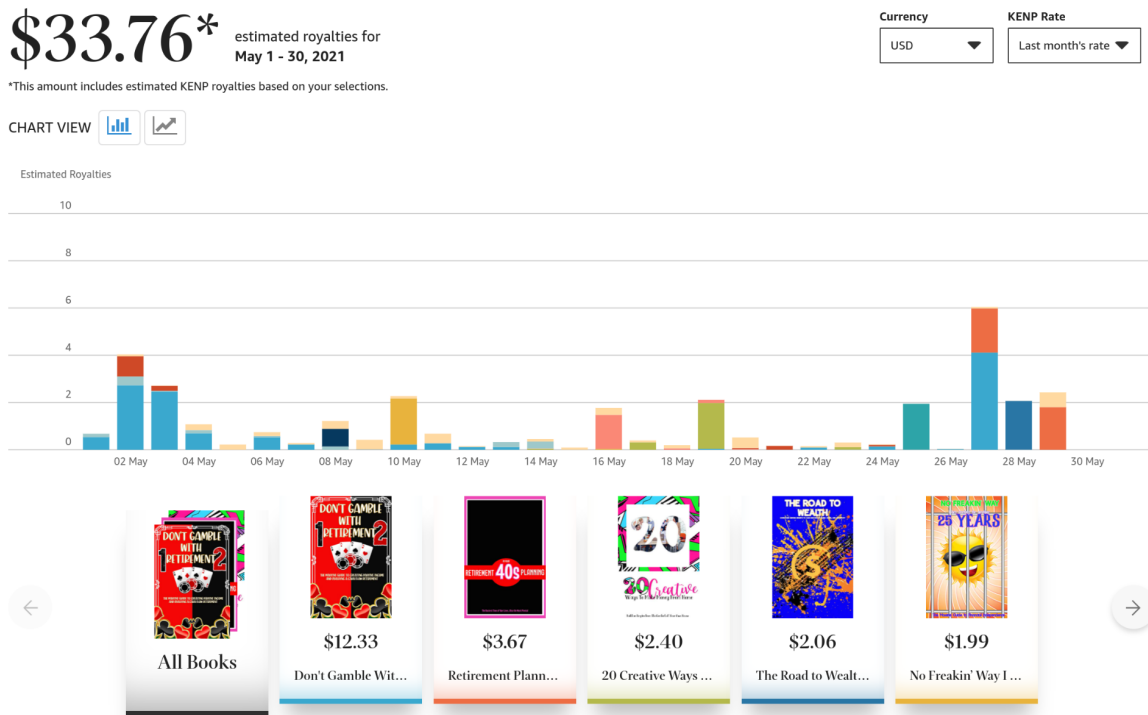
I just turned 40, and as I look around, everyone is waiting for someone to tell them that it is going to be okay. But it is not going to be okay. The 40s isn't the time to spend tons of money on cars, vacations, and luxury items.

Once you have enough assets to have excess cash flow, you will have no choice but to enjoy some of your cash. Now is not the time. **Wealth is having excess income vs. expenses.** Doing some quick math: you can control your income, and you can control your expenses; therefore, you can control your wealth. And yes, it is that simple.

But Josh, my job will not give me a promotion until I am ABC+++ certified and have ten Master's degrees in grass-licking.

Screw them. You don't need a job or boss to make money. Your mind controls your money—no one else. Learn, learn, and when you are absolutely tired of learning, learn some more. Your bank account is a reflection of your financial intelligence. No more, more less.

Don't believe me? I read a book called "[Rich Dad, Poor Dad](#)" that told me that I could create assets from my mind. I contemplated this and thought, hey, maybe I can write books. Six months later, I am selling books, and people are reading. Not a lot, mind you, but this is a long-term play.



What are you doing in your free time—watching Netflix, playing video games, drinking beer, crafting wood, etc.? I challenge you to look at your long-term outlook and see if drinking beer is your end state. If so, keep doing it; if not, make a change. And I love to drink beer, but I have other priorities 95% of the time.

Read through the [Planning for Retirement Series](#) and have a heart-to-heart with yourself. You are the best at being you. Only you can determine what your future holds. If you can get your loved ones on the same retirement outlook as you, it will be magical.

Let your future decide if that new car, vacation, or purse is necessary. Retirement Planning is the Google map of your life. Don't leave home without a retirement plan.



## 20 How We Plan to Retire on Dividends

Retiring on dividends is a dream come true for many people. On the other hand, many have never heard of dividends. I never heard of dividends until I was the age of 38 years old.

I became fascinated with the words passive income when I was overseas, and the idea of living off investments was a possibility. Dividend growth investing was the type of passive income that interested me, and it had a profound impact on my thought process.



[How We plan to Retire on Dividends](#)

**Full disclosure:** I am an active duty Marine currently at 22 years in the Corps. I will have a very lovely pension in retirement. My wife and I also have three rental homes that will bring in income. Dividend investing will be a portion of our larger retirement strategy.

Disclaimer being said, we take dividend investing very seriously. We plan to make enough money in dividends to live off of them completely. Then I will be able to invest my entire retirement check back into our dividend portfolio.

Why do we want to build such an extensive dividend portfolio? My military retirement ends with my wife and me. It is not an asset that we can leave to my children. However, if I can invest all of my military retirement money over the years, our kids will have millions of dollars invested in dividends.

**Where do we stand now?** We started our dividend portfolio in June 2019, when I opened my first brokerage account. In less than two years, we have amassed \$150,000 in our portfolio. The goal is to reach \$1 million five years from now—**which means we aim to reach \$1 million by June 2026.**

**How much do dividends pay you?** The amount that dividends pay you depends on the securities that you purchased. Our goal is to have 4% capital appreciation and 4% dividend yield. Capital appreciation is the price going up, and the dividend yield is what is paid to your pocket.

Right now, with \$150,000, we are getting paid roughly \$500/month in dividends. I will go more into math in subsequent posts. With 4% capital appreciation, the value of \$150,000 will earn us +\$6,000 annually. Of course, we plan to put most of our earnings into the portfolio to accelerate the process.

**How do you build a dividend portfolio?** First and foremost, I recommend that you read a few books before putting any money into the stock market. The first book I recommend is "[The Intelligent Investor](#)" by Benjamin Graham. It is long and dry but will give you a solid base of information on the actual stock market.

Next, I would read "[How to Retire on Dividends](#)" and "[The Passive Income Myth.](#)" These books will give you insight into how dividends will translate into your overall retirement plan. After reading these books, it is time to pick your portfolio slowly.

How do you start picking stocks and ETFs? There are many ways to get started, and there is a lot to know before you decide. You can read my series [Stock Market Investing 101](#) for details on how I choose my picks.

When you are searching only for dividend growth investing, you will hear a lot of varying opinions. Some will say you only need blue-chip stocks like Apple and McDonald's. Others will



say that you need high-yielding products like closed-end funds and [REITs](#). Finally, many will say that you do not need to worry about your stocks' capital appreciation; you just want the cash.

For me, the answer lies somewhere in the middle of all this commentary. I tried to build a portfolio of all high-yield products. It did not do very well. In fact, it sucked. I had to scrap that project, lose some money, and go with a more balanced portfolio. These are the five parts of my dividend strategy.

**Pure Growth.** These stocks do not even pay a dividend yet; however, they have a high capital appreciation, and I predict that they will pay dividends one day. I have Google, Amazon, and Palantir, etc. I have about 2-3% of my portfolio in these stocks.

**Capital Appreciation.** These are stocks that consistently go up. You may hear that the stock market goes up, on average, 8% a year. I want to tap into this growth by investing directly in the stock market. My primary capital appreciation vehicle is the Vanguard Total Stock Market ETF or VTI.

**Bond Funds.** Bonds are boring, but they serve a purpose. [Stocks and bonds](#) usually have an inverse relationship. When one goes up, the other goes down. Do your own research and see what you find. Bond funds pay nice 3-4% dividends, and they pay monthly. They can also have slight price appreciation as well. My favorite bond funds are Long Term Bonds (BLV) and Corporate Junk Bonds (JNK).

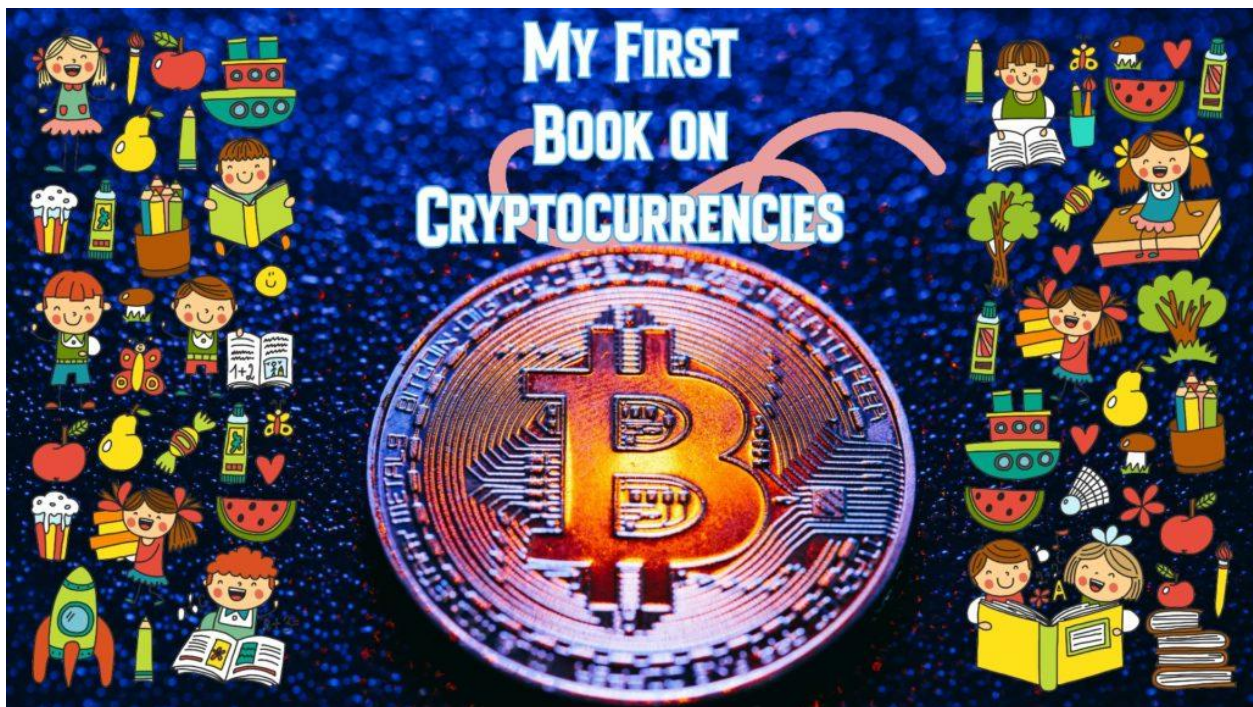
**Dividend Growth Stocks.** The DGI stocks are blue-chip stocks and future blue-chip stocks. Some of the older companies pay 6-7%, like Altria (MO), AT&T (T), and Phillip Morris (PM). Then you have some of the stocks that will appreciate and pay you 2-3%. These include McDonald's (MCD) and Johnson & Johnson (JNJ). Finally, you have some of the younger companies that pay lower dividends but can give more growth; these include Costco (COST) and Ally Bank (ALLY).

**Money Makers.** Money Makers are your high-yielding, take-no-prisoners, all income plays. These are my favorite securities, but they can be risky because they provide little or no growth. For this reason, I like to start with these and layer on other growth vehicles. Some categories of money are closed-end funds, [preferred shares](#), REITs, and business development companies (BDCs).

As you can see, there is a lot to talk about—dividend investing is the long game. After two years, Kris and I are getting to the point where we can actually do exciting stuff with our dividends, like go to restaurants and buy video games (me). I will also go over more fun that will have spending dividends over the next few years.

You will see many people sharing how they have made so much money in crypto-currency, growth stocks like Tesla, and personal residence. Your only goal is to keep your eye on the prize. Very few people can live off their investments. You can be one of the few to understand

how passive income works and the power of compounding. Look for more of my works in the future.



## 21 My First Book On Cryptocurrencies

Well, I am playing catch up with this article. You see, I like to recommend articles and books when someone asks for the best way to catch up on my articles. I have all-encompassing articles and books for all of my topics except for cryptocurrencies.



I released this book, "[My First Book on Cryptocurrencies](#)," about a month ago, and it sold pretty well actually. However, I don't have an accompanying article to match the book. I like to offer everything I write with a free option.

So, there is no better time than the present to catch up on everything we have learned about cryptocurrencies thus far. A few months ago, I knew nothing about Crypto—I was an outsider wondering what all the fuss is about.

I began to read about cryptos, finishing the books “[Ethereum](#),” “[Bitcoin](#),” and “[The Nft Revolution](#)” so that I could play catch-up. These books gave me the base of knowledge I need to form my investing thesis on cryptocurrencies.

Now, I am 100% on board with crypto, not because I like to speculate, because they have actually use-cases and will bring technology to a broken banking system. The [Cryptocurrency 101 series](#) has been my primary means of expressing everything I have learned. The series has eight articles and is still going strong.

I was also able to make some comparisons between [Stocks and Cryptos](#) and [Bitcoin vs. Ethereum](#). The more you learn, the better you can build thought processes for future investing ideas. This also includes how to leverage [Non-Fungible Tokens](#) or NFTs. NFTs may be the future of collectibles and arts.

Finally, I learned that there is [Passive Income in Cryptocurrency](#). Whether it is from interest or staking, there are many avenues to produce revenues from crypto. Even in a down market, you can get paid to keep your investments steady. In fact, I just read a [great little piece on my favorite stable](#) coin, USDC.

There has never been a better time to get into cryptocurrencies. Ensure you allocate the proper amount of crypto to your overall portfolio. I am keeping my allocation at 3% or less of my overall investment portfolio. Don't worry; cryptos will continue to rise as the use case for blockchain grows.

Enjoy your reading on cryptocurrencies and if you want all the articles together in book format, you can [follow this link](#). Find my other all-encompassing article below. Enjoy and Good Investing!

**Financial Mindset:** [Become CEO of Yourself](#) (book)

**Retirement Planning:** [Retirement Planning at Any Age](#) (book)

**Investing:** [How We Plan to Retire on Dividends](#) (book)

**Real Estate:** [Financial Independence through Real Estate](#) (book)

**Business:** [Retire Rich. Retire Comfortable with a Business](#) (book)

**Everything plus way more:** [The Biggest Book on Passive Income Ever!](#) (book)





## 22 Financial Independence through Real Estate

Of all the ways to retire early, I believe real estate is the most attainable of them. I recently wrote an article called "[How We Plan to Retire on Dividends](#)," which laid out our plans to use investments to supplement our retirement. Then, I wrote an article called "[Retire Rich. Retire Comfortable with a Business](#)," where I said business is a great way to supplement your passive income throughout retirement.

So, where does real estate fit into the fold? I believe that [real estate is the best wealth generator](#) available to the standard person. The only issue is that it takes enormous amounts of financial education to obtain real estate.



### [Financial Independence through Real Estate](#)

Real estate is expensive, and it can be challenging for the standard person to wrap their head around financing. Especially now that there seems to be a shortage of affordable housing. For these reasons, I continue to write about real estate.

Without financial education, you will not join in the profits, [tax benefits](#), and passive income from real estate. Kristina and I own three homes, and one of them has been a nightmare, but they have made us financially independent.

I'll give you a quick example of the power of real estate. In June 2021, I will reach 22 years in the Marine Corps. The military will provide me with a \$200/month pay raise, which will be taxed. In 2021, my rent went up across two homes, and we are working on a refinance on the third. In total, we will bring in an extra \$500/month. My next pay raise in the military will be at 24 years of service. In January 2022, I can reassess my rents and see what I can change, if warranted. I am in complete control of my income.

And that is the power of owning real estate; you are in control. Sure, you have to deal with tenants from time to time, but that is part of being an adult. You will not become wealthy by hiding from the world and investing in your 401K. Well, maybe you will but at age 65+.

Where do you start? You have to start by building your mindset. I recommend the book "[Unfair Advantage](#)" by my favorite author Robert Kiyosaki. He tells us how real estate falls into our overall portfolio. Then there are books on **single-family residences** "[Build a Rental Property Empire](#)," **multi-family residences** "[Zero Down](#)," and **real estate basics** "[The ABCs of Real Estate Investing](#)."

Now, this is the hard part. Once you have some education, you have to do something. Having all the information in the world will buy you no dividends if you fail to act. Some ideas are to become a [real estate wholesaler](#), a [real estate agent/investor](#), or [invest in parcels of land](#).

By taking action, you will start the learning process, and over time your knowledge will grow. I didn't always have a blog or publish books. In fact, I am relatively new to both. But I had to jump in so I could learn on the fly. Even if you don't have a ton of money, you can find great mentors by sacrificing your time.

The book "[Sold](#)" describes the life of a big-time real estate agent. Great real estate agents are always looking for someone to off-load menial tasks from their plate. If you are motivated, you can become an intern, albeit making poor wages, but learning from the best.

But do you have what it takes to learn and build yourself? I'll be honest; most people do not have what it takes. It is far easier to work a job. Most jobs require little innovation or true problem-solving capabilities. No, resetting your computer when it is slow is not critical-thinking.

We have become a society of laggards who see eight hours of work as "eight hours **AT** work." We are no longer paid by our performance or the products we produce—this makes us slow, lazy, and dumb. The world of real estate is entirely different.

If you want to find tax lien properties, land for pennies on the dollar, or [private money lenders](#), you will have to hustle. There is no clock to punch. My wife and I are financially free, and I accredit it to real estate.

Of course, I read 46 books over the last nine months, but beyond that, real estate was the key. We have two roommates that pay us a combined \$1,600/month in rent. This money goes straight into our dividend portfolio. We are now entirely free, and we can both retire today. However, there is more to do.

I can increase my military retirement, help our dividend portfolio to reach \$1 million, and expand the royalties from my books. And finally, there is more real estate to purchase.

In today's world, we need to be creative to find financing. That is why I am writing the Creative Financing in Real Estate series ([101](#), [102](#), and [103](#)). We also need to find new opportunities in affordable housing like [tiny homes](#).

Don't forget that we can maximize the land that we own as well. Real estate does not have to be you buying more homes; you can turn a profit on your residence. There are ideas like [opening a dog park](#), a [farm](#), or [running an herb garden](#). How about making a vineyard?

Real estate is a mindset. One of my first articles was "[How to Leverage Real Estate at Any Age](#)," where I talked about keeping your monthly housing costs low for the entirety of your lifetime. "[Mortgage Zero](#)" goes even deeper into this line of reasoning.

With housing at an all-time high and employment wages stagnant, people are leveraging their futures to buy into the market. I assume people pay 50-75% of their salaries into their mortgage costs and housing expenses. Paying this amount is financial suicide. Millennials are feeling the effects of this as well. It is more challenging than ever for [millennials to become homeowners](#).

We have to start working together; brothers and sisters need to start buying homes together, building up their finances, and becoming conglomerates. [Adult children](#) need to start coming home to assist parents and start businesses together. Using [home equity](#) to buy homes in [smaller cities](#) may be a way to get into the real estate market without taking on too much leverage.

The only way out of this rut is to share and work as a team. These corporations love when a young family buys a home that is 60% of their income. These young people will soon be in credit card debt, student debt, wedding debt, ring debt, vacation debt, car debt, divorce debt, private school debt, etc. They own you.

Avoid all of this crap. Use the [four steps to become rich](#), and you will be happier than you can imagine. It all comes to this quote "**Wealth is having excess income vs. expenses.**" This quote is probably the most compelling statement I can find about becoming wealthy.



A person who makes \$4,000/month and spends \$2,000/month is wealthy. A person who makes \$20,000/month and spends \$22,000/month is broke. Somehow in America, we can't seem to grasp this simple concept. If we did, we would all work together to reduce our expenses and build true wealth.

If you can understand this quote, you can understand the value of real estate. Getting into real estate doesn't mean that you have to [become a landlord](#). It means that you will maximize your personal residence to reduce mortgage and housing costs to 0% or, even better, earn a profit. If you can do this, you will become rich. You will have achieved financial independence through real estate. Good Luck!



### **23 Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business**

They say that working in the workforce is what gives our lives meaning and purpose. When we retire, our lives tend to fade away, and we lose ourselves. I am currently 40 years old, and I could retire right now, and my life would gain ten times more meaning and purpose.

Why am I so much different than the rest? I started a business that I truly enjoy and can't wait to retire and spend my time with my family and building my business. Oh, did I mention that my business will make me rich as well? We can have it all—if we learn how to balance the moving pieces.



## [Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business](#)

I will first discuss the business I started and why I decided to build this type of company. Then I will direct the questions to you and what you are looking to do for the rest of your life. Okay, now let's jump into my decision-making process for my business.

First, let's look at my overall retirement landscape. I have four pillars of my retirement 4-50 plan: retirement income, business income, investment income, and rental income. When looking at my specific future, I already had the following going for me:

**Retirement Income.** I will have a sizable military retirement coming in every month. I currently have 22 years of active duty and will be continuing to add more income to my retirement check as I serve. I am also contributing a few dollars a month to my 401K style plan.

**Investment Income.** Investment income includes dividends from dividend-paying stocks and interests from bonds. I currently have a portfolio of over \$150,000, which pays over \$500/month. As we keep adding, our investment portfolio will keep paying us more cash. Our next goal is to get the portfolio to \$1 million, which would pay us \$40,000/year of passive income.

**Rental Income.** I (along with my wife) own three houses that produce a good amount of passive income. We will continue to add more rental income that makes sense in our passive lifestyle.

As you can see, my wife and I already had a sizable passive income portfolio before we decided to start a business. Then why start a business at all? There are a few reasons:

**Diversification.** Our military retirement is an all-weather system that is a rock-solid foundation for building a retirement plan. Investments can go up and down with the wind. The real estate market can have boom/bust cycles as well. Having another stream of income, not tied to real estate or the stock market, can help even our income out.

**Challenge.** Becoming an entrepreneur has been the most interesting, engaging shift of mindset I have ever encountered. To go from the utterly linear progression system of the military to the decentralized world of business is eye-opening.

**Multiple streams of income.** Inside your business, there can be multiple streams of income that you completely control. You are the CEO of your income.

**Robert Kiyosaki told me to.** My favorite author, Robert Kiyosaki, known for "[Rich Dad. Poor Dad](#)," asked an earth-shattering question; how do you obtain an asset without purchasing it? The answer: you create it. Robert Kiyosaki taught me that you could develop assets from thin air. You can print your own money, and ever since I read those words, I have been obsessed over the idea of creating assets.

So that was the backdrop of why I looked into starting a business, but now I had to decide what I wanted to create. There are so many businesses out there that it can seem a little overwhelming at first. However, all you need to do is focus on what is important to you, and the rest will follow.

**Time.** An essential part of my retirement business is time, my time to be specific. I have spent the last 22 years on someone else's time. When I retire, I want to be entirely in charge of my schedule. So I knew that opening a customer-facing business, like a restaurant or coffee shop, was out of the cards. I wanted to start something where my time and money were completely in my control.

**Audience.** After reading "[Superfans](#)," I knew that every business requires some form of audience. The book explains that you do not have to become a mainstream, mass-market media influencer to have an excellent successful business. You only need to reach the smallest viable audience (as Seth Gordin calls it in "[The Practice](#)"). In "Superfans," Pat Flynn says that 1,000 loyal fans will be enough to carry your business.

**Passivity.** I am a huge fan of passive income. The idea of making money in my sleep allows me to sleep even better at night. I wanted to create something where I do all the work upfront, and then the product became an asset. This asset would enter the world and make money for me night and day.

After thinking about these three concepts, I decided to become an author. I already had a young blog; I may as well take the full dive into writing and publishing books. And it has been a fantastic journey.

Becoming an author has opened my eyes to the world of entrepreneurship. If I don't want to write, I don't have to. Nobody controls anything that I do or don't do. Yet, I always feel the urge to write more and more. I always want to publish books in my free time. Every article is another asset that I can use in my bigger narrative.

I don't just write; I also create cover designs, write advertising, and produce artwork for my articles. My eye for design and advertising improves every day. However, these aren't just random gains; I had to read books to identify good practices. I read "[The Non-Designer's Design Book](#)" for best practices in design and "[Ca\\$hvetising](#)" for best practices in advertising.

Right now, I strictly focus on building my body of work. I have published many books over the last five months, but none is more significant than my 641-page massive book "[Don't Gamble](#)

[With Retirement 1+2.](#)” Each chapter has its own unique, custom artwork designed by me. I am incredibly proud of this book. But I hope to have at least 4-5 more of these books out before I start looking into creating multiple income streams.

I may be reading and writing for another 3-4 years before I begin to maximize my other income streams. That is okay for me. You see, I am only one person, and there is only so much that I can do by myself. I currently have no desire to grow my business and accept additional stress. I love the way my business flows in its current state.

My typical day goes like this. I wake up around 2 am, and write an article. Read “[Become Insanely Productive during the Magic Hours](#)” for more on my schedule. Then I exercise and prepare for work. After my eight-hour workday, I come home, edit my article, create my artwork, publish my writing, and check on [Facebook Group](#).

If I have enough material or a new idea, I create and publish a book. On the weekends, my days are primarily the same, except for one major difference—no eight hours of work. Indeed, not having to go to work allows my creative juices to flow without interruption.

Again, after reading “Superfans,” I am not trying to become the most prominent, most famous, household name author. I just want to get to the point where I am bringing in \$1,000/month passive income from books I have already published. This income would help diversify my income away from the stock market, cryptocurrencies, and real estate. I am incredibly content with what I do and how I do it—no need to rush my business along.

However, when it is time to create multiple income streams from my writing, I have the blueprints. I read two books, “[Creating Income Streams](#)” and “[How to Make a Living as Writer](#),” which will help me expand my income universe.

You see, when you start your business, you don’t have to struggle. Everything you need to know about business is already published and available; you just have to read. I have learned more in the last nine months (and 46 books) than I thought possible. Reading has already made my wife and me rich; now, we just keep doing what we are doing.

You see, my top articles are consistently my five takeaways from the books I read. You can find a collection of them inside the articles “[20 Books that will Make You Rich](#)” and “[20 \(more\) Books that will Make You Rich](#).” So I read a book, write my five takeaways, get paid from them, learn more, and repeat until rich. I love this business cycle.

As I said earlier, I wanted to discuss my thought process about my business first, and now it is time to focus on you. In the article “[Are you retiring TO something, or retiring FROM something?](#)” I discussed the idea of your retirement and how to find happiness—relationships are a significant factor; however, staying active is another.

What is your number reason for starting a business that will last you into retirement? How do you feel about your time? Do you want to travel the world and work from your laptop? Or would you like to start a coffee shop and converse with your repeat customers daily?

The world of business is diverse and full of wonder; you, however, will just need to learn how to see this fantastic world. Envisioning streams of income, building audiences, and growing a business are not natural. All I ask is that you become an entrepreneur before you start a business. (I am going to write an article aptly titled after this.)

Inside this book, you will find great starting points for beginning your journey into business. You will find chapters about business mindset, business planning, business ideas, royalties, automation, content creation, and a summary of all the books that helped me create my business.

From here, you will need to dig deeper and find your niche, build your audience and brand, and provide value to your customers. If you can do this, you will become a great entrepreneur, and the money will follow. Money follows value, not vice versa.

Welcome to the rest of your life. Starting a business, small or large, before heading into retirement will be a fantastic journey. Have fun and good luck!

## PASSIVE INCOME IDEAS

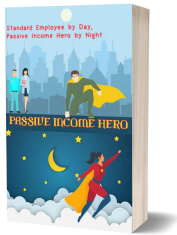


**24 Standard Employee by Day, Passive Income Hero by Night**



Most people over the age of 8 don't dream of being a superhero; our dreams have been supplanted by reality. But today, I can freely admit that I am a superhero—a Passive Income Superhero.

I can finally admit it today because I just came up with the realization yesterday when I was talking to a young Marine. I'll get into that conversation in a bit, but first, I want to ensure that everyone understands I work a full-time job. I have been working a full-time job for 22 straight years in the US Military. Okay, back to my conversation with my young Marine.



### [Passive Income Hero](#)

I have a new young Marine in my shop, and we were talking about his future. He said that he was on the fence about staying in the Marine Corps. So I asked him what his plans were, and he gave me the standard answer I have heard for 22 years; get out, go to school, and get a job.

At this point, I told him becoming a standard employee was for the birds. If that were his plan, he might as well stay in the military. At least he has the opportunity to retire before 45 or 50. Getting out would ensure he worked until age 65 or later.

Then I told him the path to true wealth was through building passive income streams. I spoke about how my wife and I have been doing this, generating nice income streams, and becoming wealthy. Finally, I told him he needed to form a **Passive Income Alter Ego**. You can work a day job, but at night time, you need to focus on passive income.

Hence, I created this article once I reflected on our conversation. Great wealth is created by those that understand the concept of passive income. If you want to be a standard employee, expect to get typical employee results. If you're going to be a superhero, you will have to learn how to fly (build passive income) and fight bad guys (inflation, recessions).

When I was talking to the Marine, he mentioned that he loved to read Japanese comic books. He had a particular style he loved to read and said they were over 700 pages each and translated into English. So, I gave him some ideas on how to monetize this passion.

He could start by opening a blog and reviewing these books for the public. This will allow him to begin growing an audience and establish himself as a subject matter expert. Then, he could open a Facebook group for like-minded readers that love this niche hobby.



Eventually, he would grow an audience so large that advertisers would pay to speak to his audience. At this point, he would be making a nice passive income from doing exactly what he loved. It is possible, but it takes consistency and discipline. That's pretty much it.

I told him my dream would be to play all the Pokemon games on camera and talk about life. However, I don't think that was viable. I want a 100% portable profession that I can take on the road as we travel overseas. So I choose writing, and I adore this profession.

I can develop completely random ideas with writing, like this one, and make them into a usable product. Then, I can fit it into a universe of other ideas that can help others understand the importance of creating passive income streams.

When I write my articles, create my article designs, and build my books, I feel like a hero. This is because I couldn't do any of this just six months ago. That is the power of becoming a Passive Income Hero; your abilities will grow exponentially over time.

Life as a standard employee is excellent but still "standard." But life as a Passive Income Hero is exciting because every day, something new happens. For example, you collect some new rent, or your house values go up.

In the investing world, you earn some nice new dividends, or your stocks make a move upward. Or, the market goes down, and you can go shopping at a discount, allowing you to increase your dividend yields.

In the crypto space, we have been getting punished by governments trying to eradicate Bitcoin miners. Now is a great time to go shopping for long-term success. Understanding these principles is what creates millionaires.

The business world is always exciting. There is always a new idea or opportunity to vet and see if it fits into your lifestyle. For example, our next move is [to start a dog park](#) in our house. However, I need to wait until I get back to the States (I am currently in Japan).

**Becoming a Passive Income Hero.** But to become a Passive Income Hero, there is a sacrifice of time and energy. "With great power comes great responsibility." You will need to learn the ways of retirement planning, investing, cryptocurrencies, real estate, and business.

This learning takes time and energy. I have spent thousands of hours reading books, following websites, researching topics, writing books, and talking to experts. **Thousands of hours!** And I have spent thousands of hours executing my plans in real life.

I did not realize how advanced I was until I talked to this young Marine (age 21). My thought process was way more than 20 years ahead of his. I was light years ahead. I could map out a

whole passive income career for him in just under 10 minutes. Once he told me what he was passionate about, I knew enough to build out his life.

Sadly, most people (97%) will not ever become passive income heroes. Instead, being a standard employee and an ordinary human is what most people settle with. Not that this is bad. But, I can tell you this definitively, **most people aren't satisfied with their station in life.**

In fact, most people want freedom of time, movement, and money. There is only one way to achieve this (at least under 65 years or less), becoming a passive income hero. Passive income is your key to freedom of time, freedom of movement, and freedom of money.

So, how do you get started? Luckily, I have been documenting my thousands of hours in the form of articles and books. Let's take a look at some of my different short books and articles across each asset class. All my writings are available for free on my website, and I have a rotation of [free books on the Kindle Store](#).

I highly recommend getting a subscription to [Kindle Unlimited](#) so you can follow all my new books as part of the subscription. Plus, there are a ton of good books to read as well. I just subscribed last month after paying for 51 books out of pocket in the previous ten months. Okay, let's dig in.

**Financial Mindset.** For this category, I will go with "[Become a CEO of Yourself \(book\)](#)." The best place to start is with your mindset and behaviors.

**Retirement Planning.** It is a challenging topic because I wrote an article about every decade leading up to retirement. So I will go with "[Retirement Planning at Any Age \(book\)](#)," mainly because the book combines all my articles on retirement planning into one huge book.

**Investing.** Wow, I have so many articles on investing. Please look up the investing tab on my website. But now, I am entirely biased. I absolutely adore the cover art on this article and book, so I have to go with this one. "[Investing for Dividends 105: How Do You Want Your Dividends served? \(book\)](#)."

**Cryptocurrencies.** I have a great running series on cryptocurrencies. I am new to the crypto-verse, and as I learn more, I will continue to keep the series running. Here is the latest article and my first significant book on cryptocurrencies. "[CryptoCurrency 107: How to Invest in a DownTurn \(book\)](#)."

**Real Estate.** Real Estate is a huge asset class, and most people are priced out of the market. You will have to learn how to become creative with real estate before you can jump in. However, I am going to start you off with the granddaddy of them all, "[Financial Independence through Real Estate \(book\)](#)." I believe it is like 45 chapters of real estate goodness.

**Business.** Business is a great wealth generator; however, most people start a business without first becoming an entrepreneur. Therefore, let's start with that article and book. "[Read these 10 Books Before Starting a Business \(book\)](#)."

Whew, it is a lot, and that is just the surface. I have been reading books religiously and writing my five takeaways from them. I am up to [51 books completed](#) and still going strong.

Financially, if you just want to read all my thoughts in a straight line, with no commentary, you can follow my [Financial Independence Magazine Series](#). I write every ten articles, jam them into a book, and release them as Financial Independence Magazine. So you can start from number one and flow right into the last in the series. I promise if you do that, it will be life-changing, as it has been for me.

So I guess the last question you have to ask yourself is, do you want to live an ordinary life? Do you want to visit your adult children for two weeks out of the year because you are still working? Do you want to watch your kids struggle with a stressful job, finances, or buying a house?

Or do you want to be a Passive Income Superhero and have freedom of time, movement, and money? Do you want to move near your kids and grandkids and visit them every day because you do not need to work? Do you want to help teach your kids the ways of passive income so they can avoid a stressful job, control their finances, and buy whichever house they want?

Only you can decide what is best for you and your family. I know which path my wife and I have traveled, and it has been excellent. I look forward to waking up every day because I become richer in relationships and income each day. I am a Passive Income Hero, and I am here to Serve! Good Luck!



## 25 Want a Tesla? Start a Rental Car Business

I never knew how badass Teslas were. My friend at work is a Tesla fanatic, and we got on the topic of buying one. He explained so many of the perks— how they drive, how fast they are, how the doors come up, etc. I was genuinely impressed.

Then we started talking about the prices, which weren't unreasonable. However, once you start adding in features and the self-drive package, they can get pricey. Considering that the last car I purchased for myself cost a total of \$7,000, anything more than that seems expensive.

My friend also said he had used Turo rental car service to test drive a Tesla in California. I have already written many articles about how this would be the best way to buy a nice car. My last article on the topic was "[Start a Luxury Vehicle Business.](#)"

I figured I would write a more detailed version based on a super Tesla. The reason was that we looked up Tesla rentals in my part of Florida, and they were going for \$330/day. Wow. And this was for one of the less expensive models.

There is a market for Teslas in the rental car business, and entrepreneurs aim to leverage what the customers want. So let's get into the play-by-play of how I would start this business. There are many YouTube videos from people who created these types of companies. I encourage you to do a deep dive on the subject. Also, you can try the service out with your current vehicle and see the pros and cons. Here we go.

1) **Start an LLC.** I would incorporate my rental car business. Starting an LLC would allow me to leverage business deductions and also isolate the stream of income. Yes, there is more of a headache, but overall, you would be able to write off more of the service's day-to-day operations. I plan on finding a lawyer and accountant that specializes in these types of businesses as soon as I get home.


2) **Obtain financing.** I have not got a chance to start my S Corporation, which would own my various LLCs. (read "[Establish Business Credit Now](#)"). Once I form all my corporations, the banks would still use my personal credit history because I haven't built everything out, which wouldn't be wrong. If you have bad credit, start rebuilding as soon as you read this. Good credit will allow you to expand this sort of business faster.

3) **Do math.** Yes, I know that you do not like to do math, but in this case, it is vital. You always want to make very conservative assumptions. We wish to input three numbers into our formulas: the cost of debt service, the cost of maintenance and operations, and the number of rental days.



## Tesla Model 3 2019

5.0★ (12 trips)

 Book now, save \$51

~~\$349~~ **\$332/day**

This picture is from my neck of the woods in Florida. So let's make our assumptions.



**Cost of debt service:** I would start with a car in the \$60,000 range. There is nothing wrong with starting conservatively. If I obtained a loan at 5%, it would cost me \$1,132/month.

**Cost of operations and maintenance:** Remember, from the article "[Taxes 102](#)", businesses calculate taxes on profits after deducting income and expenses. So we want to list all our gas, maintenance, car-washing, insurance, etc. Let's figure this \$600/month. In a perfect world, I would use my personal vehicle for a few months to get more accurate numbers before purchasing anything. That's just me, though.

**Total days rented:** I have no idea how intense the Florida Tesla rental car market is, so I would be taking a shot in the dark. Again, perform your market research before making a purchase and locking yourself into anything. I will continue to go conservative— I will use 15 days a month at \$180/day.

**Total profit:** Doing all the math, we can come to this rough conclusion. Gross revenue (\$2700), minus debt service (\$1,132), minus operations and maintenance (\$600), equals \$968.

So being conservative will net us \$968/month. That is a nice load of money, but we still have more work to do.

4) **Automate your business.** The goal of your business should be for it to run without you. There are three kinds of automation: automation via systems, out-sourcing, and management. In this particular case, I would leverage my family connections. I have a son that will be coming into the age to run a business like this.

Will he make a mistake? Yes. However, this is the perfect kind of business for a young man to oversee. He can even save money by washing the cars himself. The primary constraint with Turo is that someone has to drop off the car to the client.

There are ways around it that I have seen on YouTube. You can leave the car at a nearby Walmart or similar shopping area. You would have to get permission, of course. Tesla has auto-locking/unlocking and such, plus tracking.

Also, my son could drive the car to the meetup and then take an Uber home. You can account for this extra cost by increasing the price per day. Or he could hire a friend to follow him to the destinations, probably the safest way, and pay him \$10 a trip.

You see, when you start a business, you make the rules. That is the advantage of becoming a boss; you can put your people in a position to succeed.

5) **Count your passive income.** Since I decided to automate my business via my son, I would be paying him the lion's share of the profits. I don't need the money, just the ability to diversify my income across a physical business. You see, when hard times hit, those who have done the



research and took action will have ways for continued success. That is why it is vital to launch small businesses. It is not the money but the opportunity and diversity.

Anyways, If we were netting \$1,000/month profit (I think it would be way more than that), I would pay my son \$700. That leaves \$300/month for my wife and me. Not bad for probably one month of work getting set up and running. My son now has a nice stream of income. If we calculate that it took him 20 hours total to monitor 15 days of rentals, it will come out to \$35/hour. Not bad for a young chap.

6) **Expand your business.** We own 3 acres of land and have a ton of space for more vehicles. Again, the primary constraint is that we would need someone to drop off the cars to the clients. Once we solve this roadblock (and we would), we can open the doors to obtaining more vehicles. I am eye-balling the new Ford Bronco or a nice Jeep. We live in a spring break town, so anything convertible would do amazingly well.

The best way to expand would be to pay off each vehicle and buy the next one; that way, you don't get into trouble in a downturn. It may be a little slower, but if the numbers are higher than we predicted, I see no reason not to be able to pay off a car every 18 months.

7) **Pat yourself on the back.** You have done something 90% of Americans would not do; including researching, reading, evaluating, performing math, and taking action. I am proud of you, and your future self will be proud as well.

I know that I make it sound easy, but honestly, what is complicated about this? Sometimes you just have to look at the worst case. The worst case is that there is no market in your town. From there, you can look into other options. Do you have friends and family in different areas that could leverage the vehicle? If not, you can use the car as a daily driver. Maybe you can loan it to an Uber driver for use.

The car is still an asset, and you can leverage it by using your brain. One last point, although the vehicle is an asset, your ability to think critically is the biggest asset in the world. Thinking will produce you the most amount of money in your lifetime, so always work on making yourself more innovative and more well-rounded. You can do this by reading. On that note, I bid you adieu. Also, check out my new article called "[20 \(More\) Books That Will Make You Rich.](#)"



## 26 Run a Profitable Herb Garden

Time to make money by growing stuff. Not everyone has a green thumb, but that is okay. With time and patience - plus the possibility of making money- we all can be successful inside our gardens.

**Why herbs?** I like the idea of starting a herb garden because they are tiny and can be portable. You can even start one inside. There are tons of blog posts and videos on creating a herb garden, so I won't bore you with the details. But, how do you start an herb garden business?

Running a profitable herb business will take some social engineering. By "social engineering," I mean you will need to become a content creator to make nice-sized profits. If you would like to stay small and sell a few herbs, that is an option.

By becoming a [content creator](#), you will unlock the magic of compounding. Many people want to experience the feeling of growing their food. They need someone entertaining to follow to motivate them to stick with it- even when all their plants die. You could be their mentor. By the way, I got this idea from reading the book "[Dirt Rich.](#)"

**What kind of content would I create?** I think a weekly blog post or video would be enough. Maybe add in some extra content every once in a while. The thing is to be consistent- this is essential for your channel to grow.

Even better would be documenting how you could sell your herbs or dry them out. You could begin to offer beginners and advanced classes as well. Once you have presented a few classes,

learning what the audience wants, you can build an online course. I saw various contraptions for growing herbs, so reviewing these and creating affiliate marketing links could be advantageous.

From there, you can sell branded gloves, pots, aprons, and hats. All sell mugs and t-shirts. Remember, once you have an audience, your die-hard fans will want to support you. You can even dabble in other small fruits and vegetables as well.

**What defines an herb garden?** Herbs are great additions to your food, but they also serve another purpose. If you are growing other plants or flowers, they can attract beneficial insects that help keep the bad guys away. Let's review the essential herbs that you should develop. For beginners- rosemary, oregano, thyme, and mint are considered starter-friendly. Read more [here](#).

From [Homestratosphere](#), here are their 27 types of herbs. Please read their detailed analysis for each herb: mint, lavender, sage, peppermint, cilantro, stevia, coriander, fennel, rosemary, basil, thyme, parsley, lemongrass, chamomile, oregano, chives, tarragon, marjoram, lemon balm, dill, myrtle, chervil, culantro, bay leaves, lemon verbena, winter savory, and cicely.

As you can see, many of these are rare. I have not heard of about 50% of these. There will be an audience if you decide to explore more of the lesser-known herbs. I think you can make a career of just attempting to grow each of these 27 herbs.

**Show me the money!** Now that we have a little background, we can dig into the article's meat-how to monetize. First, I would like to say follow your passion. If you have no love for growing plants, I would not try this. People can feel your enthusiasm, and trying to fake it would not work. I am passionate about building wealth, so here I am.

**Selling herbs.** This is simple- you sell what you grow. You can also sell seeds, dried herbs, pots, etc.

**Blogging.** You will need to take lots of pictures, but this can be a viable way to earn money.

**YouTube.** Who doesn't want to watch someone else garden?

**Affiliate marketing.** You can review herb or garden products and offer your audience affiliate links. You will get a small commission if they buy.

**Merchandise.** Mugs, T-Shirts, gloves, hats, etc. The world is your oyster.

**Books.** Simply repurpose your blog posts into book format.

**In-Person classes.** Courses for beginners and advanced. It would be an excellent place for locals to meet up with one another.

**Online Courses.** You can record your in-person classes and add some more content. Sell for top dollar.

**U-Pick it Garden.** If you have some extra, you have people come around and pick an assortment of your herbs.

**Garden tours.** Your fans would love to meet you and take a tour of your garden.

**Create your own product line.** The ultimate way to make money, create your products. You can sell online or in person.

As I have mentioned before in various articles, including "[Why You need to become a Content Creator in 2021.](#)" almost everything we do from now on will have some sort of content creation portion. No longer can we make money from the shadows. People want to know and see who they are buying from, not just blindly purchasing items.

Since creating content is a must, we may as well jump right in and get started. I believe that a herb garden is a low-cost, high-return business that can pay dividends early on. Remember in the article, "[Pick your Niche: Wealth, Health, and Relationships](#)," I said tie anything you do these niches. You can do this with your garden as well.

**Wealth.** You will show people how you are making an income from your garden. The business-types and stay-at-home spouses would love to make money from home.

**Health.** Maintaining a garden can be an extremely healthy way to make money. It reduces stress and keeps you outdoors. You can also set up a meditation/yoga/relaxation feel in your garden—Zen for the win.

**Relationship.** Adding your husband, wife, or kids to your channel will increase viewership immediately. People love families.

As someone who is slowly building an audience, I know that starting a herb garden is a viable solution to work from home business. You can take your herb garden in so many directions- the sky's the limit. As long as you are passionate about herb gardening, it would be a mega success. However, nothing in business is fast. You have to get your audience to know, like, and trust you before they become customers. Trust will take time, so don't give up!



## 27 Create an eBook Series for Passive Income

Making money from home while doing something you love would be everyone's ideal dream. At least, I would assume most people would love to have freedom of time and money. However, starting a passive income stream takes time, energy, and knowledge.

I became fascinated with the idea of creating royalties after reading "[Rich Dad, Poor Dad.](#)" Since then, I have made it my mission to create passive income from royalties by writing books and articles. So far, the first six months have been absolutely fantastic.



[Create an eBook Series for Passive Income](#)

I have learned so much about writing, designing, and advertising. In fact, those are the three things we need to talk about today. If you can learn these basics, you will be in good shape to start your eBook series.

**Why an eBook series and not a standalone book?** As independent writers, we do not have a ton of leverage. The best way to get attention, at least on Amazon, is to become a prolific writer.

In addition, Amazon's Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) favors new releases, so you have a better chance of someone noticing you if you keep releasing content.

**Here is the bigger picture.** I have something I call the **Triangle of Profit**. The three points of the triangle are my books, my blog, and affiliate marketing. Using all three will help you grow your income three times as fast.

Everything in the Triangle of Profit requires an audience. Everything in life is a numbers game, where everyone starts at the top of your [sales funnel](#). The goal is to have people buy your book, click your ads, or support your affiliate marketers.

Now, books, blogs, and affiliate marketing are not the most lucrative online business around. But what you lack in money, you make up for in pure passivity. I have been creating this passive income stream for six months and haven't dealt with one customer, client, or employee.

I am 100% free to do as I choose. I love to write, so I do this every day; however, if I need to take off for a day, week, or month, I can do so. The money will just keep rolling in. And, if I keep doing it for the long term, more people will become part of my audience, which equates to more passive income.

When choosing how to make passive income for royalties, I decided against YouTube. In the short term (5-10 years), YouTube will be way more lucrative than writing books. However, books over a long time (30-40 years) are more sustainable and can equal or exceed YouTube.

Creating videos also takes a whole studio, time to edit, and worst of all (at least to me), dealing with the YouTube comments section. To truly become a great YouTuber, you have to be a man (or woman) of the people. Unfortunately, I am too old (40) to be arguing with people on the internet.

Nope, I would instead make money from my home, quietly, with only my Chromebook. That's right, all I need is my Chromebook and an internet connection. Writing is a 100% portable profession.

Plus, I am underselling the amount of money made from your blog and book audience. There are so many ways to monetize other aspects of your blog or books. For example, you can create merchandise on Redbubble, sell an online course, or review other people's cover designs. Plus, you can translate your books into more languages and sell limited edition hard books (high-profit margins).

Once you have an audience, the world is truly your oyster. However, I am not at that phase yet. My main goal right now is to create a solid base of content via books and blog posts. I figure I will do that for two years. After that, my goal is to be making \$1,000/month from royalties, \$500/month from my blog, and \$500/month from affiliate marketing by the end of 2022.



That will have been two years because I started in January 2021. Looking at my royalties thus far, I feel that this is 100% reasonable. I made over \$40/month in Kindle royalties in month five. Each month that passes, you have more and more content collecting.

Once I have a ton of content, I can start slowly advertising my blog. This will increase traffic, affiliate sales, build my audience of “Superfans,” and increase book sales. I currently have 450 articles published and over 100 books published on Amazon. People who like my work will want to catch up. The easiest way will be through reading my books.

**“Josh, how did you write so many articles and publish so many books in six months?”**

Alas, time to get to the meat and potatoes of this article, how to start your very own eBook series. You will need first to have the correct mindset. Then you will need to focus on three categories; writing, designing, and advertising. Let’s take a good look at each of these, starting with mindset.

**Building the correct mindset.** First off, you cannot only do this for passive income. A [blog is a business](#), as is creating books. The job of an entrepreneur is to solve other people’s problems at a profit. Thus, you must add value to the lives of others. If you can do this, people will join your audience. If you create blog posts and books filled with spam affiliate links, then your chances are a lot weaker.

The book [“Superfans”](#) digs into the art of adding value from your business to the audience. Also, you can read my article [“Retire Rich, Retire Comfortable with a Business \(book\)”](#), which is an excellent way to read 40+ of my business-focused articles in one place.

I recommend you get your mind right before creating content. Many tutorials on YouTube focus on the making money side of the house, but adding value is what will truly make you rich. If you can help someone, chances are they will tell a friend. Word of mouth is the most powerful form of advertising on Earth.

Recently, I have had readers go through and read over 300 articles in my back catalog to get caught up. Of course, they wouldn’t do that if they didn’t find my work valuable. So aim high in the value department.

Another thing about adding value is that most of the time, adding value means “free.” Yep, you will have to give a lot of your content away for free. It takes over 11 “touches” for someone to want to purchase something from you. So you need to be in the game for the long run. I’ll talk more about free book promotions later in the article. First, let’s move on to the writing phase.

**How to Write 1000+ Words Every Day.** Luckily for me, I just completed an article by that exact name ([“How to Write 1000+ Words Everyday \(book\)”](#)). Please read that article as it is a companion article to this one. Indeed, writing is the most crucial part of creating books—who would have guessed.

So, do you need to have a blog? Yes, I believe that you need a blog. First, you can get many ideas for your books from a blog. Second, your blog has an instant connection with your fans. For example, I released an article called "[How We Plan to Retire on Dividends \(book\)](#)" that did very well on my blog.

I created a book, then added related books on business and real estate. Then, I combined all three books into [one megabook](#). I'm pleased to say, all four books did exceptionally well and will keep making me money for the long term. All this sparked from my blog.

Another reason you want a blog is to diversify your income. You do not want to rely entirely on Amazon for your income. When you sign up for KDP, that is the only platform you can publish to. KDP gives you some perks because of this, but you also want to build an audience away from Amazon. A blog will help you find readers, build an email list, sell merchandise, and connect with your audience. And if Amazon goes to crap, you can sell your books through your website.

So now that you are writing every day and publishing to your blog, what is next? Now you need to decide how you want to roll those articles up into a series of books. I combine every ten pieces into a book ([Financial Independence Magazine Series](#)). These books are usually 10,000 words, which is roughly 40 pages in a book.

**Do people really buy small books?** Yes, people love to pay full price (\$3) for a short book. After reading 51 books in the last ten months, I can completely understand—sometimes, you just want the quick hit of finishing a hyper-focused book. The majority of my direct book sales on Amazon are books with lengths of 40-50 pages.

When it comes to KDP and Kindle Unlimited, it is entirely different. These readers love to have long books to read. For Kindle Unlimited, you get paid by the pages a person reads. So you will want to combine a ton of your related articles to form gigantic books as well. If you are writing over 1000+ pages a day, this will not be an issue. Now, let's review some basics of design and advertising.

**How do you design your book covers?** Before I jump into this question, I would like to refer you to an online course I took six months ago to learn about publishing books on Amazon. In addition, I have followed [Project Life Mastery and Stefan James](#) for over two years on YouTube.

When I finally made up my mind to publish books on Amazon, I knew that his course would be top-notch. His course "[Mastering Book Publishing](#)" (this links to his affiliate marketing course) took me about two weeks to complete, off and on. When you are truly serious about making passive income from royalties and books, this is the best place to start. Also, he spends a reasonable amount of time talking about building the correct mindset.

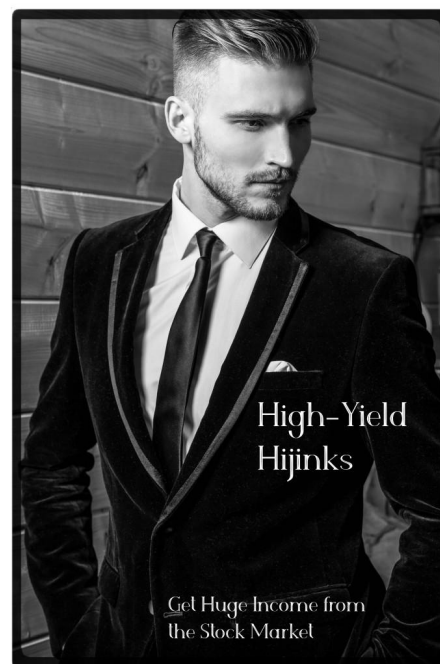
I bring up this course because he recommends that you do not design your own book covers. I can agree with that if you do not want to learn how to design. I forced myself to learn design.

For every article I publish on my blog, I have custom-designed artwork. You should consider doing the same.

I thought I was improving until I read the book "[The Non-Designer's Design Book](#)." This book opened my eyes and allowed me to start creating some magical covers. And guess what? My book sales improved overnight. So, I would highly recommend you learn how to design your own book covers.

You will create books all the time. Once you get into a rhythm, you will have more articles than you know what to do with. This abundance of creative work means you will be creating a book, combining various topics, almost daily.

As I will discuss in advertising, your book covers will appeal to different audiences. For example, look at these two book covers on investing; which one appeals to which audience? So you will need to design your own covers to give you the best options available. You can find some quick tips on design in my [Basics of Design 101 Series](#).



The more you spend on ghostwriting, editing, advertising, and covers, the more your books have to sell to be profitable. I don't spend money on any of these; I do everything myself. Yeah, everything isn't perfect, but it is a solid package. There are tons of perfect books out there if people are looking for that. But, again, I am not trying to set the book-publishing world on fire, just add value and make some nice passive income.

On a side note, it helps to have a goal for your passive income. My wife and I have decided we will use the royalties to go to dinner for the month. So, this upcoming month we will have \$40 to go out and eat. Not bad.

**How do you advertise?** First and foremost, the most crucial forms of advertising are your book cover and your book blurb (description). To understand more about human nature, you will need to read a book on advertising. Luckily I can recommend a good one. "[Ca\\$vertising](#)" is a great book and will help you target and appeal to the portion of your audience the book is designed for.

If I have ten articles on investing, I can create ten different book covers, names, and descriptions to appeal to diverse audiences. I usually like to write a unique introduction chapter to appeal to the group; however, the main content remains the same.

You have groups like women, men, young people, older adults, mothers, fathers, married people, kids, etc. Why create a book that only appeals to one type of group. I have captured some advertising ideas in my [Advertising 101 series](#). You can use this as a quick start guide, but reading the book is the best bet.

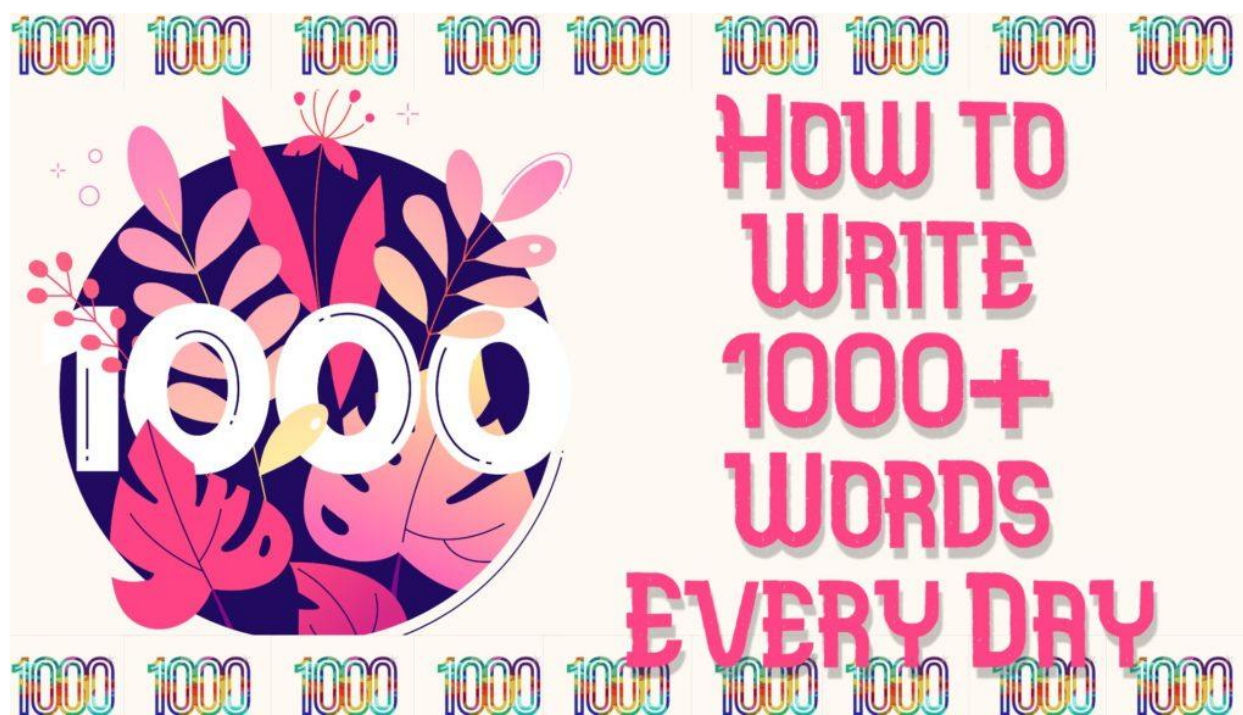
Your books enrolled in Amazon KDP can go on five-day free book promotion, every 90 days. This means that every three months, each book gets to have a five-day free giveaway. These free days help to widen your audience and are a way to advertise your platform for free. In addition, I release a new [free book every day of the week](#).

As I said earlier, to add value, you will have to give something away for free. Don't worry; the more free books I give away, the more book sales I receive. There will be people who take, take, take. Don't worry about them "they are not your people." Your people will support you once you have given value to them. Focus on them, and you will be okay.

**Forming the right mindset.** As I wrap this up, I want to ensure that you understand the intent behind adding value to someone's life. If you're going to have a long writing career, you will need to add something meaningful and **valuable** to someone's life.

Do not try to discover your greater purpose right now. You need to get started, and things will slowly begin to formulate. I didn't just start creating covers and building books in my first month. It was a long progression, and I am still learning. That's what life is all about, pushing forward into unknown territories.

I hope I added value to your life and helped you discover more passive income streams to build. This is the long game, and I am in it for the long haul. There is no easy money. Start forming your base of knowledge and build yourself up from there. What you decide to create will probably be vastly different from mine. And that is okay. Good Luck!



## 28 Learn to Write 1000+ Words Everyday

Ahh, so you want to call yourself a writer? How cute. To earn the distinction of being a writer, there is one major accomplishment you will need to achieve. You will need to write. Yep, that's it. All you have to do to call yourself a writer is write.

Indeed, when I was starting, I was nervous to call myself a writer. I thought that this title was reserved for the hardcore, published artist that studied the trade. Then I read a little book that would end up changing my life, "[On Writing Well.](#)"



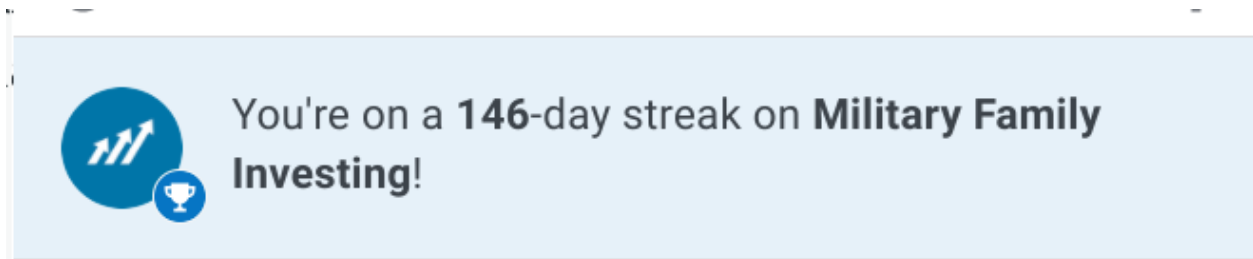
### [Learn to Write 1000+ a Day](#)

The author, William Zinsser, said two things that stuck with me. One, if you write, you are a writer. Two, if you are a writer, your job is to write. He went on to say that it doesn't matter how tired, drained, or busy you are—your job is to write. No excuses. This really took me by surprise.

I thought I was supposed to write when I felt like it. After I read this, I began to write more consistently. Next, I stumbled upon another book that changed my life, "[The Practice,](#)" by Seth



Godin. The author echoes the same sentiments above and says something else quite profound. He says there is no such thing as writer's block.



Ever since finishing "[The Practice](#)," I have written at least one article a day and published it to my blog. Currently, the total is 146 straight days. I love it. However, I am traveling from Japan to Florida next month, so this will break my streak. But that is okay; the intent is to take my writing hobby seriously—sort of like a job.

What I have learned over the last five months is that writing is part of my soul. I cannot stop writing. If I could write all day, I would. However, I am also a graphic designer, publisher, editor, along with being a writer.

Every day I wake up and write at least 1,000 words about the topic of my choosing. You would think that I would run out of content, but at least two more ideas pop into my head for every article I complete. Of course, I keep a running tally of future ideas in my notes. I am sitting somewhere around 400+ more articles to write, and I continue to see more ideas every day.

You will find that your work will begin to accumulate, rather quickly, once you start writing a lot. For example, in six months, I have published three 300+ page books—[Don't Gamble with Retirement part I](#), [Don't Gamble with Retirement part II](#), and [Don't Gamble with Retirement part III](#). These are my flagship books, and, to me, they are amazing.





Each book has at least 70 chapters (70, 77, 83), and each chapter cover is designed individually by me. They are all unique. Each article represents a day in my life where I took the time to write, edit, create a design, and post to my blog.

If you had told me six months ago that I could create three books this amazing, I would have laughed. “No way in my life,” I’d have said. No way could I have thought this to be possible. But, I could achieve this remarkable feat by writing every single day. That is where it starts because nothing is more important to a writer than writing.

So let’s dive into how I began to write every single day. I want to mainly want to cover two topics: how to create your topics and how to give yourself time and space to accomplish your writing.

**How to Create a Never-Ending Stream of Content.** Strangely, I have [an article](#) by the same name. I wrote that article four months ago, right about the time that I began my streak. And everything I wrote about has rung true.

First and foremost, you must prepare yourself to be a writer. It is not something you do when you feel like it. It is your passion. It is your voice on paper. You also have to remove yourself from the results. This means that writing should be your passion, not getting likes, followers, and positive reinforcement. All you can do is release your work into the wild—nothing more, nothing less.

I highly recommend reading the two books I mentioned above to form the correct mindset to last you throughout the creative process. Next, let’s talk about content.

Building a stream of content will be your next big obstacle. When I started blogging about a year ago, I thought I could create content directly from my brain. Sure, it can work for a spell, but you need three things: structure, information, and connections to have a genuinely unlimited creative mind.

The first thing I recommend is coming up with your content niche. As I wrote in "[Pick Your Content Niche: Wealth, Health, or Relationships](#)," those are the three main topics that serve as the overarching narrative of most niches. From there, you can drill down, or "niche down," to a more personal level. Don't let these three niches scare you off; you can choose whatever you want. For this article, I will talk about **Dogs**.

Dogs will be my niche. Now I will start my pre-planning phase. Again, this is not how I started; I was just guessing. However, this stage will help you get your act together before writing 100 articles with no direction. Now let's form our structure based on our Dog niche.

1) **Structure**. The structure is the most critical part of being able to write as much content as you want. I learned how important the system was by reading "[How to Take Smart Notes](#)." This book will give you direction on taking notes and combining them with other thoughts to continually form new ideas. It truly is life-changing. Please read this book before you move into the information stage.

The output of the structure stage needs to be five sub-niches based on your overall main topic niche. Remember, the most valuable major niches are wealth, health, and relationships. So let's build out sub-niches that address these. But, first, let's see what we get for Dogs.

1. Dog Businesses
2. Keeping Your Dog Healthy
3. Dog Training
4. How to Love Your Dogs
5. Dog and Human Love

That's our structure—our main niche is Dogs, with these five sub-niches to complete our ideas. That's it for design. Don't worry; you can always change your sub-niches as required.

2) **Information**. Now that you have a structure of what you want to write about, we need to get information in your brain. Okay, this is what you will need to do—read. Yep, you will need to read books and articles on each of your sub-niches.

First, pick a book on each of your sub-niches. Then, read the book and write a book review or takeaways from it. This period will serve not only as a learning phase but also help you build credibility.

Most people do not want to read a book. They would instead read your quick review. This is the start of how to build yourself up as a subject matter expert. Indeed, this is how I started ten months ago. I read 35 books (book: "[Wealth is a Mindset](#)") in about three months. I wrote my five takeaways for each book.

I have slowed down in my reading, but I still read for about an hour a day. I have completed 51 books in ten months, and each has its book review ([see them on Pinterest](#)). That is the magic of sticking to something and seeing it through; you will accumulate many articles.

Now you are reading books and taking notes. Just take notes on topics that; you have an opinion about, that interest you or you want to dig deeper into. As you take more notes from across your different sub-niches, you will start to formulate brand new content to create.

Now, you still need more information and ideas. Join a website from each of your sub-niches. Ensure they publish at least a few articles every week. Make a schedule of when to check into each site.

You can make it one website per day or read books during the week and websites during the weekends. Whatever is your method, do it, and make it stick. Websites are essential because they will give you more up-to-date information and ideas.

3) **Connections.** Connecting your ideas is what will truly make your content pop. You don't always have to section off your thoughts into the sub-niches; you can explore, combine, and overlap your ideas.

Your books and articles will come in handy as you prepare a list of ideas. You'll be surprised at how much you have learned by reading. It is okay if you only start with 20-30 ideas, so many more will follow.

You see, as you write, you will find that 1,000 words will not do your article justice. You will start to want to create mini-series on specific topics. I have completed over ten mini-series in my few months of creating. It is a great feeling to see one series through to completion.

Again, I have to plug in the book "[How to Take Smart Notes](#)" because it will help you form deep connections between your readings and notes. Please read this book if you want to become a serious writer. So now we have structure, information, and connections—time to start writing.

**How to Write 1000+ Words Every Day.** The first thing that you will need to do is find the time to write. It preferably should be at the same time every day—this will help you build up the necessary internal pre-planning for your writing session.

I found that the best time for me is in the middle of the night. I wrote about it in the article "[Become Insanely Productive during the Magic Hours.](#)" I tried to write when I got home from

work, but it depended on how my day at work went. If it was a crappy day, it was hard for me to overcome when writing.

You have to find the best time to write. Give yourself at least an hour and a half. I can write 1000 words in under an hour now, but sometimes I like to expand into longer sessions. According to the book "[Limitless](#)," you will need 45 minutes to get into a flow state.

**Find Your Flow State.** Flow is when you are in the zone. Sometimes you will enter the flow state and not even remember what you have been writing. It is incredible, but you can only reach this state when you are in deep concentration.

Every time you check your phone or a child interrupts you; your state is broken. It could take another 15 minutes to re-enter your flow state. That is precisely why I write in the early mornings (2 am).

Not only can I achieve flow, but my mind is clear from work, finances, and relationships. It is all about me. Plus, finishing a 1000+ article every morning is an excellent way to start the day. I usually go for a run or hit the gym afterward. It is a winning combination that I do not plan on stopping any time soon.

Now you have your time window and your notes, what's next. I usually pick my next topic at least 10-24 hours before writing. This way, I can brainstorm ideas all day long. You don't need to get into the weeds; just think about some ideas and topics based on your future article.

Then, you get to work. No excuses, no worries, just start writing. You have everything you need to succeed. As you can see from this article, you will be referencing your books and articles in almost every new piece you create.

You see, you are creating a universe based on your writings. They are all interconnected, and all belong in the same universe. People will want to dig into your prior works, so let them know where to find them.

You will start to form derivatives of ideas you have previously. Many articles you may want to re-address with a part two or three. There is no limit to how to keep the train moving. But it all starts with having a structure, information, and connections.

One last thing. Do not try to be perfect. Perfectionism is a [limiting belief](#) and will hinder you throughout your writing adventures. You are going to make mistakes; it is a part of writing. Understand that and move on.

I once wrote an article on starting a [Tesla Rental Car business](#), and every single instance of Tesla was spelled wrong. I did not notice for almost two weeks. Finally, I went back and changed the words and moved on. I didn't even feel bad. To indeed be a great writer, you have to form a small "Don't Give a F\*\*\*" attitude.

So what are my niche and sub-niches? My main niche is Passive Income, and my sub-niches are financial mindset, retirement planning, investing, cryptocurrency, real estate, and business. These topics will all overlap at some point, helping me create a never-ending stream of content.

For example, the article "[Run a Passive Airbnb Business](#)" will have echoes of retirement, real estate, and business. "[How We Plan to Retire on Dividends](#)" will have echoes to retirement and investing.

If you are serious about becoming a writer, please read the above articles and books. Also, check out my blog, where you can see these ideas in action. I have 450 articles published on my blog, with no intention of stopping.

The following article will take a look at the business side of writing. It is fun, and hopefully, you get the design bug as I did. Designing my covers is just as fun as writing. I never knew I had so much creativity in my blood. That's the best thing about creating; expanding your horizons. Good Luck!



## **29 Start a Home Business**

Your retirement is approaching soon. Even if you are 25 years old, you could be less than ten years away from retirement- if done correctly. To become financially independent and retire early (F.I.R.E.), you will have to use the four pillars of the [4-50 Retirement](#) plan- retirement income, investment income, rental income, and business income. On top of these four pillars, the most crucial aspect of a healthy, financially viable retirement is your mindset.



Today, I want to focus on the business pillar and the mindset to go along with it. Before you start a home business, you will want to take an overall glimpse of your retirement system. Everything works together and viewing it all as one big puzzle can alleviate a lot of stress in the future.

**Mindset.** For example, if you want to earn a total of \$8,000/month during retirement, you can divide it up via your four pillars. When you start your business, you may only need to bring in \$1,000/month. Instead of thinking that you will need a large company, you can focus on building a small, tight business that works around your retirement schedule.

**Two Types of Business Income.** We want to achieve \$8,000/month- how do you get there? The two types of business income I focus on are royalties and automation. I wrote an article about them called "[Passive Income: Royalties vs. Automation.](#)" I recommend everyone start with creating royalties first. Here is why.

**Start with Royalties.** Most people do not want to start with royalties because it takes some time to generate income. Royalties come from creating art, music, videos, or books. To make any money via these forms of media, you will need to build an audience around your content. The idea of growing an audience is what throws most people off. However, an audience is also a base of customers. All businesses need customers or clients.

Growing an audience will be necessary no matter what form of business you start. Therefore, royalties are more effective at gaining momentum for your business. By creating free content about a topic, you are adding value to your audience. They begin to know, like, and trust you. When it is time to launch a product, of course, you have the audience ready for the purchase. They like to call these "warm leads."

I also like royalties because you can monetize your content in hundreds of different ways. For instance, I write books for Amazon Kindle. Most of my readers use the [Kindle Unlimited](#) program to read my books; therefore, I can use affiliate marketing to sell other products such as courses, writing seminars, and merchandise. I can combine my books and sell the more oversized book for a higher profit. I can translate my text or convert it to audiobooks- for more sales. The possibilities are endless.

**Royalties are passive.** Once I get everything set up correctly, royalties come in passively. I am doing the work on the front-end. You have to find a way to keep them advertised, but other than that, you can move to the beach. I am building a base of books that will fund a small part of my lifestyle for the rest of my life. Again, that is why I love royalties- you can spend a couple of years building up your base of royalty income, then wholly move on to something else. I like to remind people that the first time I bought "[Rich Dad Poor Dad](#)" was in 2020. The book was released in 1997. When you earn money 23 years later, that is what I call passive income.

**Automation can be equally significant.** Just because I am a fan of royalties doesn't mean that automation doesn't have a place in my heart. Before you jump into starting a home business, I



want you to picture yourself on a beach. You are sipping on a margarita, and you get a text alert from your bank- \$2,000 had just been deposited from your business. You should love the idea of earning passive income. Creating passive income is why I started writing and blogging- everyone should know what passive income is and how to build it.

**Think beach, start a business.** Yes, before you start a business, think about being on the beach. If you don't think of your business as a source of passive income, you will end up creating a job for yourself. What do I mean by "creating a job." When you do a business where you are the sole source of income, you just created a job. If you stop working and the money stops coming in, you build yourself a job. Sadly, most people create jobs for themselves.

Growing up, parents teach us that hard work pays off in the long run. To some extent, this is true. However, there is a difference between working to build systems and train employees; and hard work doing everything yourself. I like to divide [automation](#) into three separate categories- automated, out-sourced, or manager.

**Example.** Let's take an example of a food truck. Most people will grab a food truck and start driving it around themselves. I think this is a good idea for everyone to start out doing. Understanding your business is key to success. However, most people will stay at this level for the entirety of their careers. It is mentally comfortable. "Thinking is hard; that is why most people chose not to do it."

Using our automation template, we can take a step back and think of ways to remove ourselves from the equation of making money through our food truck. We can hire people to run the truck for us. Our profits will decrease however our available time will increase. Now we have the time to manage two to three trucks. If we can create systems that smart people easily digest, can we remove ourselves even further?

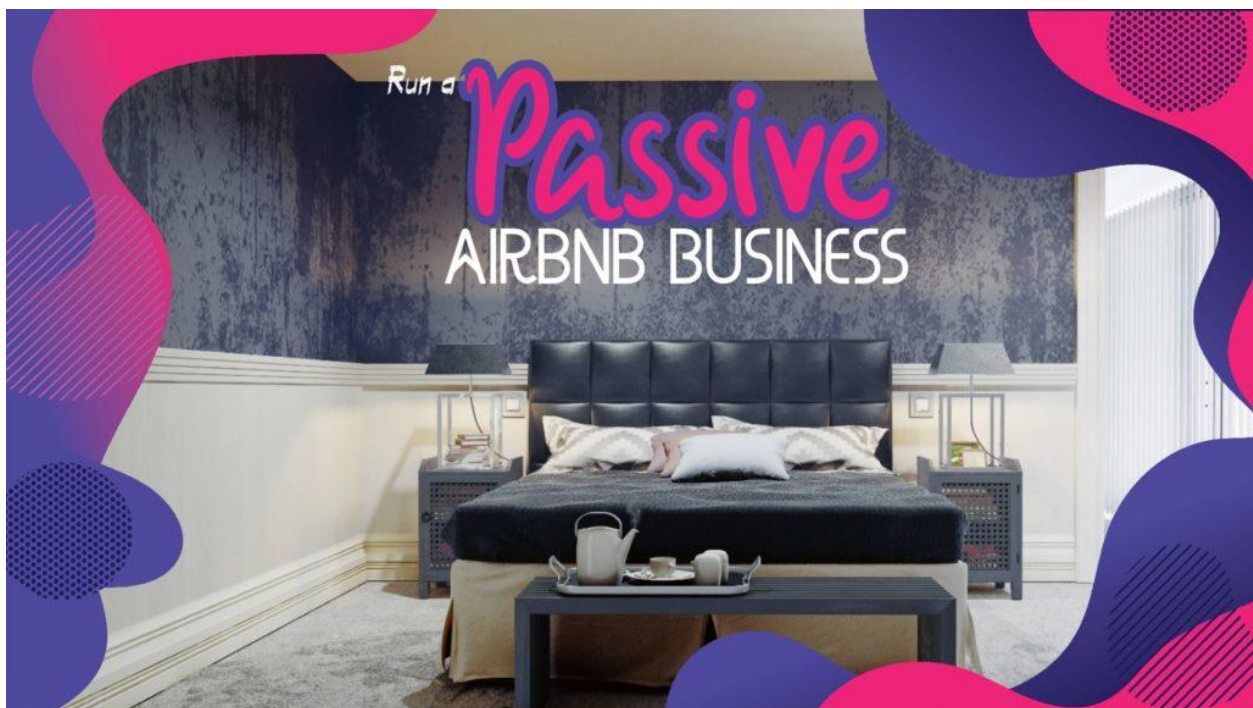
Now that we are running two to three trucks, we can create reliable operating procedures. Once those are in place, we can hire a manager to run our food business. Of course, our profits would decrease because of the manager's cost; however, our time would increase. Time is the most valuable resource on Earth. Buying your time should always be your top priority. You can use this time to spend with spouses, children, family, and friends.

So I implore you to take a step back before you start any home business. Put yourself on the beach, make time (not money) your top priority, and take steps to automate your business- you should plan your business's outcome from the start.

As you can see, starting a business will take some thought. Do not take the easy money upfront. Easy money usually calls for you to exchange time for money. "The rich do not work for money." What this means is that they do not trade time for money directly. They spend time creating royalties or building business systems, but then they remove themselves from the equation of making money.

If you spend 50 hours writing a book, you probably didn't make any money per hour. Once you release the book, it is out on its own, making you money. After a year, if you make \$5,000 from your book, you made \$100/hr. Two years \$10,000 is \$200/hr etc. Each year, your payment per hour increases. You did all the work upfront and are reaping the benefits. Most people would rather take \$50/hr for those 50 hours on the front-end. The problem is that now you will need to keep finding work after those 50 hours.

Before you start a home business, there are a couple of books I would recommend reading. These will prepare your mindset for creating great systems that will set you free. They are "[Company of One](#)" and "[The 4-Hour Work Week](#)." With that, I am signing off. I hope I gave you a little pause before you jump into your business. Taking a step back, reflecting on time, and dreaming about the beach is just what the doctor ordered.



### 30 Run a Passive Airbnb Business

Airbnb can be pretty polarizing. On the one hand, people love intimate settings; on the other, they don't offer as many amenities as hotels and are starting to cost just as much. Whether you are team Airbnb or team hotel, there is passive income to make, so let's learn something.

Airbnb can be an excellent source of income, especially if you take the time to [automate your business](#). If you don't know what Airbnb is, here is the quick rundown. A host offers his or her house or room up for daily rental.

Everything is done on the website or phone app. It is very streamlined. I used Airbnb when I traveled to New York. We had many guests traveling, so we got a decent-sized brownstone in Brooklyn.

All in all, it was a great experience, and I ended up returning to the same Airbnb a couple of years later. Now, let's get to the good part—how can we make money?

The title says to run a **passive** Airbnb business. I said earlier that you could automate most of the tasks for running an Airbnb rental, but I want to remove myself entirely from the equation of making money.

**How would I remove myself altogether?** I would have someone (a residential manager) run an Airbnb out of my house, and I take a portion of the profits. In my opinion, this is a perfect business for a son or daughter or someone you are very close with—and trust.

**How would a business like this look?** I see two options for running an Airbnb like this—a full home rental or room rentals. Let's take a look at each individually.

**A complete home rental.** A whole-home rental can work anywhere, but I believe it works best outside of a suburban neighborhood. Yes, I know that you can screen guests before they rent, but I do not want to deal with angry neighbors.

You also will want to be in a prime location near some kind of attraction, beach, or venue. Or you can have a secluded hideaway somewhere. Remember, the further you are away, the further your residential manager will have to drive to get there.

Cleaning is also another point of contention. If you rent an entire home, you will have to clean (or have cleaned) the entire house. If you have a high daily turnover, it will be a full-time job to clean the entire house, the bathrooms, the kitchen, etc., in 4-5 hours before a new check-in. You may have to institute a minimum stay of 3+ days just to save on the workload.

**Room rentals.** Depending on the composition of your home, this can also be a viable option. If you have external doors to your master suites, that will lead to a perfect setup for an Airbnb room rental. Other great ideas are a finished basement, attic, or detached mother-in-law suite.

Another excellent idea would be to finish your basement or build an in-law suite and have the residential manager reside there. That way, they are in a prime position to control the home.

Room rentals also will leave you with more options as well. If you have space on your land, you can add a mobile home, an RV, or a tiny house that you can use for the Airbnb program as well.

Cleaning the spaces will also be easier because the guest will be confined to a smaller, more manageable area. I would prefer the room rental idea over the whole home rental. You may feel differently.

**Time for math.** Sorry, but we can't do our prep work for a business without doing some math. For this section, we will have to make some assumptions. In the Marine Corps planning phase, we make assumptions to continue the planning process; this way, we don't stall the process.

For my Airbnb theory, I will use our home in western Florida. It is 2,500 sq ft and sits on three acres of land. It has two huge master suites, a pond, and a creek. It is not in a suburban neighborhood, so noise and vehicles won't be an issue.

After our refinance, we now pay \$1,500/month (which is a steal). Let's add in our utilities, and the total will be \$2,000 that we need to make before we profit. I will have my sons running the business for me.

**My portion of the profits.** The first thing I will want to decide is how much I want to take from the profits. Since they are my sons, I don't want to be too greedy. Once they clear \$2,000, I will take \$500/month. And that is literally how accessible the business is from my end. I have real estate, so I am in charge. Remember, in [Investing Insider vs. Outsider](#), I talked about how the insider can dictate terms—this is a perfect example.

**Can they profit?** Now the question for them is if they can profit after they pay the \$2,500/month. I believe that they could. With the two master suites renting for an average of \$80/night each and assuming 25% vacancy, that would be \$3,600. Remember, I am making assumptions.

Airbnb will take their cut; however, if my sons decide to clean the rooms themselves, they would receive payment for that. Also remember, that they could live in the house for free. After they pay the \$2,500, they will have \$1,100 a month to split. That is not bad at all.

**Increase their profits.** Now, let's increase those profits. Even though I already have my cut, I will still assist them in growing profits. Why? The more they make, the more I take. What are some things that they can do to make even more money from the rental?

**Add another residence.** The kids can add another tiny home, mobile home, or RV to bring in more cash flow.

**Offer car rentals.** Wouldn't it be nice to go somewhere, have someone pick you up, and then lend you the car for your entire stay? Yes! I wrote an article about [starting a car rental business](#). Why not do this in conjunction with the Airbnb business? Makes business sense.

**Offer sports or water equipment rentals.** Along those same lines, wouldn't it be cool to have sports and water equipment, like kayaks and snorkels, at the ready? The boys could have a shed and store all of these things away.

**Open a souvenir shop.** Don't you hate having to buy souvenirs at the airport because you forgot during your trip? The kids can open a small shop with some t-shirts and cups. Nothing too fancy, but it can turn a huge profit.

**Luggage storage.** People want to arrive early but can't necessarily check-in. Offer to hold their storage for \$5-10. Easy money.

**Early check-in, late check-out.** The boys should know their schedules to a tee. If there is room for early check-ins and late check-outs, they can turn a quick profit on an unoccupied space.

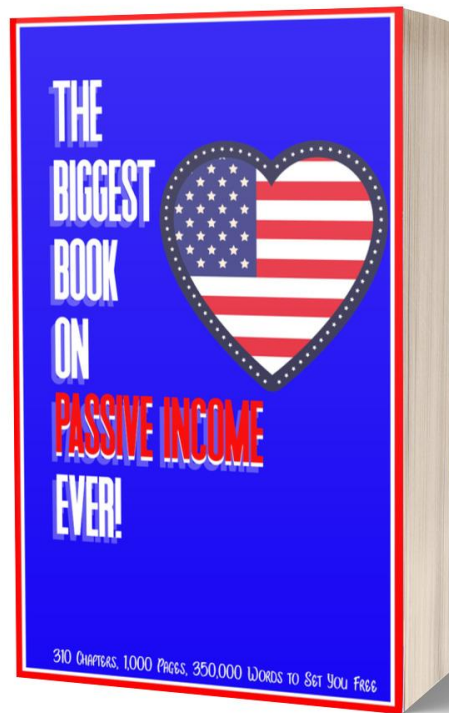
As you can see, there's much money to be made in the Airbnb rental world. I read a book just for this reason. The book was written in the 1980s, and it's about bed and breakfast inns, but the hospitality they offer helps me come up with some of these ideas. The name of the book is "[How to Start and Run a Bed & Breakfast Inn.](#)"

**Is Airbnb a viable passive income idea?** Absolutely. Remember, you will need to understand a [business before you start a business](#). If you just turn it over to your residential manager, it'll be all messed up. You will need to get it off the ground, work together with the manager, and then step away.

**Where do we start in our entrepreneurial pursuits?** First, take your Airbnb ideas and find the proper real estate to run it. As I said, a suburban neighborhood may not be the best location. My [Creative Financing in Real Estate 101](#) series covers how to get financing for your new home. You will want to plug in real numbers before you even attempt to buy a home. Or you can try by renting a room or finishing a basement.

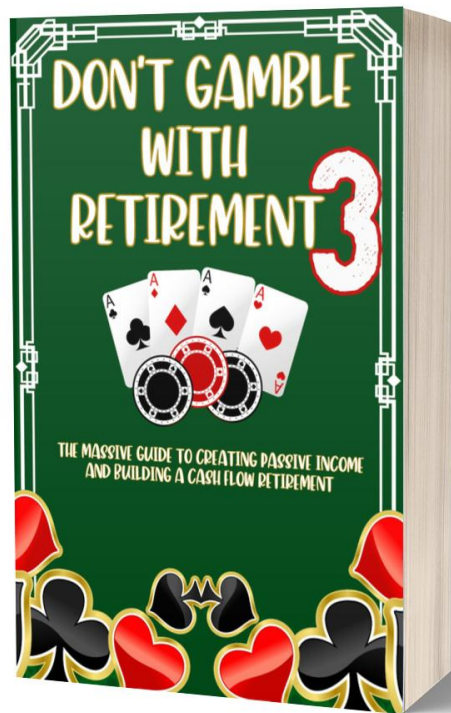
Next, I recommend my business articles "[Retire Rich. Retire Comfortable with a Business \(book\)](#)" and "[Read these 10 Books before You Start a Business \(book\)](#)."

All in all, a good passive income idea. If you already have real estate, you are in a good position. If you do not, you may want to start by becoming a residential manager. If you can bring strong ideas to the table, the property owner may listen to you. Please, build up your business and entrepreneurial knowledge before you pitch an idea. Good Luck!



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