

MASTER WORK-OPTIONAL LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

by Tanja Hester, author of **WORK OPTIONAL: Retire Early the Non-Penny-Pinching Way**

Before you make the leap to your new, work-optional life, make sure you know the answer to each of these 11 questions:

1. What is your money mission statement?

2. How will you derive income in the long term without full-time traditional employment? (Check all that apply.)

- Market-based investments
- Rental real estate
- Part-time work
- Passive business income
- Other:

3. What contingencies do you have in place to deal with unexpected financial hardship? (Check all that apply.)

- Low safe withdrawal rate (<3.5%)
- Two to three years of expenses in cash
- Home you could downsize or sell outright
- Extra rental properties you could sell
- Home equity line of credit (HELOC)
- Funds in Roth IRA
- Other:

4. How will you ensure you always get good health care? (Check all that apply.)

- Buy ACA exchange plan until eligible for Medicare.
- Work part-time to stay on employer coverage.
- Receive military health care (Tricare, VA, etc.).
- Join health care sharing ministry.
- Practice health care tourism for procedures you can plan.
- Practice dental tourism.
- Other:

5. How will you ensure that you stay physically and mentally healthy? (Check all that apply.)

- Set physical activity goals.
- Sign up for events to stay accountable.
- Sign up for classes or training.
- Take on more manual labor at home.
- Cook more meals from scratch.
- Grow produce at home.
- Stay on top of scheduling regular physicals and preventive medical care.
- Commit to learning new skills.
- Take classes in new subjects or skills periodically.
- Stay in tune with new technology.

6. What will be your living situation in each chapter of your life? (Fill in. For example: "Stay where I am, move to a smaller home, move to a new location, travel full-time, RV full-time, etc.")

- Accumulation phase:
- Early retirement phase:
- Traditional retirement phase:
- Late in life:
- Other:

7. What do you want a typical day in early retirement to look like?

8. How will you ensure that you maintain strong social connections? (Check all that apply.)

- Focus on making new friends with similar schedules.
- Make an effort to make younger friends.
- Make an effort to make older friends.
- Make more time for family.
- Sign up for new clubs or community groups.
- Other:

9. How will you and your partner stay on the same page about both life and money goals? (Check all that apply.)

- Start your financial planning by thinking about what you each want out of life.
- Schedule monthly money dates.
- Allow both partners some spending autonomy (trust plus allowance or fun money funds as needed).
- Check in often about life goals.
- Cultivate shared hobbies.
- Know before you retire what you'll do financially in the event you split up or divorce.

10. How will you define yourself without a traditional career?

11. What is your purpose? In what ways do you want to matter to those around you? What do you want your legacy to be?