

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?