

**EPISODE 442**

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:00:35]

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[INTRODUCTION]

[0:01:36.6]

**FT:** Welcome to So Money everyone. We're talking about early retirement here on the show and whether you're 30, 40, 50, 65. My guest today will truly inspire you to rev up your retirement savings. Mr. and Mrs. 1500, they go by an anonymous title, Carl and Mindy are here, husband and wife. They're documenting their journey to financial independence on their blog. Their blog is called 1500days.com. Their goal is to have a portfolio of a million dollars by February of 2017.

I learned in the interview they've actually surpassed that goal early, so how are they doing it? How are they actually saving and making the wise choices to aggressively save million dollars or more in such a short period of time. 1500 days is actually the amount of days they estimated it would take them to save a million dollars, they started the blog, January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2013 but I just said, they have surpassed that in about 1300 or so days.

On the show they talk about how they reached all those goals and what's next? They're both in their early 40's now, what are they going to do? How are they going to define this new chapter in their lives and what can we learn?

Here is Mr. and Mrs. 1500.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:51.9]

**FT:** Carl and Mindy, Mr. and Mrs. 1500. Welcome to So Money.

[0:02:55.9]

**C:** Thank you, it's great to be here.

[0:02:58.5]

**M:** Hi Farnoosh.

[0:02:59.2]

**FT:** Hi, there you go. I was wondering where Mindy went. Hey Mindy. Thank you for being on this show, we love talking to everyday people like yourselves who are on a really impressive mission to, in this case, retire early. That's really taking your money to the max. Your blog is 1500days.com and as I explained in the intro, the 1500 days is correlating to the number of

days since starting the blog in January 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 that you're hoping to accumulate about a million dollars in your portfolio. How is it going? Are you on track?

[0:03:33.6]

**C:** Yeah, it's going real well actually, it's funny you ask, we made our goal in April.

[0:03:39.1]

**FT:** All right, so early early retirement. What was it like? 1410 or something?

[0:03:43.8]

**C:** You know, it's funny, I never sat down and calculated the number but a reader did and it was in the 1300's, it might have been like 1,356 or something, right — the mid 1300's.

[0:03:54.9]

**FT:** What did you do when you hit a million? You have a new goal now to hit maybe a million and a half or you're just kind of enjoying the milestone?

[0:04:04.3]

**C:** Yeah, everyone always asks that and my goal right now is just to tack a little extra on top. My job will probably end later this year so I want to fulfill the terms of my contract and then after that I'll probably depart and start my new life.

[0:04:19.9]

**FT:** We'll get to what that new life will look like in just a moment but some more about the 1,500 day journey. Why did you want to embark on this and why did you give yourself a goal of 1,500 days? How did you measure that, to know that that's actually achievable?

[0:04:34.5]

**C:** Yeah, this is a very recent goal and there's a little story that goes along with it. Way back, I remember this day like it was yesterday, it was November 2012, I was having this horrific day at work. It was one of the worst days of my life to be honest and the thought that...

[0:04:47.5]

**FT:** What do you do for work?

[0:04:49.0]

**C:** I'm a computer programmer. It can be very, very stressful at times. It was a bad day and the thought that came into my head, I was 38 at the time, I'm like, "There's no way I can do this until I'm 62 or 65 or whatever age people normally retire at." So I Googled something like, "How do I retire early?" Or, "How do I quit my job early?" And the first thing that popped up was Mr. Money Mustache, and I had never heard of that before.

I clicked over and started reading through his stuff and my first thought was, this guy retired at like 31 or 32, this has got to be some kind of pyramid scam or something like this. No one retires before they're 62, and then I started reading it and I realize that the guy was legitimate and he put all his numbers out there and he put a clear blue print of how he did it and there really wasn't anything what hat he did that was spectacular or abnormal but on the other hand, it wasn't really. He just constricted his spending and live a good frugal life and was able to quit.

So the first thing I did after that is figure out how much I spent and I did this within like 10 minutes I figured out how much we spend every year. I figured out how much we would need based on the 4% rule, one of his post, how much we would need to retire and it came to about 1,500 days. I ran down to the kitchen and I told Mindy I'm like, "Hey, all the stuff will work I can quit my job in 1,500 days," and she was like, "That's fine," and she was completely on board.

[0:06:12.9]

**FT:** Really? Mindy, what was your real reaction? “Just fine”?

[0:06:17.9]

**M:** I was fine with that. At the time I was a stay at home mom, we had two small children and he was miserable in his job. He hated every minute that he was there — not every minute, like 99% of all the minutes that he was there. He was just — he’s a computer programmer but his job has changed and shifted and now he’s more support and that’s not what he enjoys at all. He works on a medical device. So there’s a lot of stress with the whole, “I could kill somebody” thing.

[0:06:52.1]

**FT:** Right.

[0:06:53.9]

**M:** So he was always stressed out. “You found a way to get rid of your stress? Hooray!” We’ve always been frugal so it wasn’t like we were going from this super spendy life to cutting out everything and living on rice and beans so that he can quit his job.

[0:07:09.0]

**FT:** A million dollars is a to of money but at the same time, to think you can retire in your early 40’s with a million dollars, I don’t think that’s really realistic. You have two kids, you have retirement, real retirement, which is for many people in their 60’s, they’re worried about healthcare and all of the unknowns that may come with aging. With your \$1 million dollar goal, how are you planning to now in your new life, make the most of it?

[0:07:38.3]

**C:** Yeah. Actually I thought our goal wasn’t that crazy at all, there’s a lot of dependencies on that too, there’s a lot of things that go in to it. If you lived in San Francisco or Manhattan, I don’t think

you'd be able to do it but we live in a very low cost area of Colorado. Our property taxes are a thousand dollars a year.

Life is pretty cheap here and we can get by in about \$2,000 a month and we don't live super frugal either, we take nice vacations, we've been to Hawaii three or four times, we travel back to do it but yeah, I think I've got a pretty good buffer. I don't think it's going to be an issue for us, I think we're going to be able to continue to save even after we retire.

That million dollars doesn't count other sources of income, it doesn't count social security, which I think will still be around in 20 years, maybe in diminished form but I think we'll still have it. I think our side gigs are probably going to bring in income too. It might not be a whole lot but when you're not living on a whole lot, when you go for frugal life, you don't need a whole lot to really move the needle.

[0:08:40.0]

**FT:** Right. I mean I guess practically, you have a million in savings now, which is earning interest and then if you bring in some side income to kind of just pay the bills, that's a pretty nice cushion. What are your side gigs?

[0:08:52.8]

**C:** The blog is my main side gig and Mindy actually got a job through my blog, which is ironic because she didn't think the blog was a good idea in the first place so now she has a great job, as a result to the blog. So we're not sure how long she'll stay there, she loves it so it might be for a while but yeah, we're not sure.

So blogging is my main side gig but I do lots of home rehabbing stuff and people have asked me to help out with their rehab, which I enjoyed.

[0:09:19.9]

**FT:** Which Mr. Money Mustache does too and he's of course been on this show, he's a very popular listen. I'm looking at your blog actually, 1500days.com and you are very transparent. You talk about your investments where you started in 2013 with \$586,000 and now today, you have a net worth of about \$1.3 which is you almost doubled where you started. You more than doubled actually. I don't understand though how you went from \$586,000 in year one to \$869,000 a year later.

[0:09:57.8]

**C:** Yeah, that's crazy.

[0:09:58.0]

**FT:** \$300,000 almost, are you making a million dollars a year? How did you save that much money?

[0:10:04.7]

**C:** No, there's two things that really going to it. One of them is, serendipitous, we bought a house, we weren't sure that we were going to buy or rent. We bought a house for really cheap, it was this top of a Fannie Mae foreclosure and a really great neighborhood but for some reason, no one wanted this. Well I know the reason, it was horrific.

So we fixed that up, we bought it for about \$176 and now we could probably get over \$400,000 for it and that was a lot of hard work on us, we're still working on it to this day, all this time and the other thing, which I don't like to talk about but I will because I don't like to give people bad ideas as I've made some good stock picks, I don't endorse it and it's not my new methodology but I bought 2,000 shares at Facebook at like \$30 a share and now it's like \$120 a share. So don't attribute that on some kind of genius, it's kind of locked in my obsession with technology. I'm an index fund guy now.

[0:11:01.9]

**FT:** Your investments when you count your net worth of \$1.35 million, that includes equity?

[0:11:08.2]

**C:** Yeah it does. My pure stock value investment without that is about \$1,120,000 right now.

[0:11:17.6]

**FT:** While you're not a stock picker, can you share your investment strategy as far as aggressiveness versus, you know, now that you're soon to not be working, you're still young. Do you plan to tap this money in the next 20 years still or today?

[0:11:35.7]

**C:** Yeah, I think I'll have to tap my portfolio soon after I leave, especially when Mindy leaves her job. So I'm extremely aggressive, I think I own \$25,000 in bonds and that was a very recent development. The way I look at it is, there's a lot of time to recover if something disastrous happened on day one of retirement. The thing I would do is just go back to work or I could drive for Uber if I don't want to work full time.

[0:11:58.3]

**FT:** Right, you still have your health, right.

[0:12:00.7]

**C:** Yeah, it's not — what I always tell people. People are always like, there's a risk, the 4% rule, it's not the same, the conditions aren't the same and I acknowledge that. I think there's a grain of truth to that, but what I also think is there's a risk to working too long as well. If I die with 10 million dollars in the bank, I'll consider that a failure too because I worked as hard, I worked longer than I had to and weren't doing the things that I really loved.

[0:12:25.6]

**FT:** Are you worried about not having enough to do? Mindy, maybe you were used to being the only one in the house for eight hours a day with your kids sometimes, but now you have your husband which can be great in the beginning but it's important to have a to do list otherwise it's like, you know, are you just going to hang out on Facebook all day? What is your plan as far as occupying yourself? Do you have things that you know for sure you're going to be doing once you "retire"?

[0:12:58.2]

**M:** This is actually really funny question because Carl has actually said a couple of times, "When Mindy leaves her job." I wanted to be a stay at home mom, we planned for me to quit my job which was not all that fulfilling when I was pregnant with our oldest daughter. And I enjoyed being a stay at home mom and near the end of it, our youngest just finished up her first year of Kindergarten and near the end of it, a job popped up that was 1000% perfect and I absolutely love my job.

I don't currently have plans to leave, but it's also a really flexible situation. Carl actually works from home and has worked from home since our daughter was about a month old. So he's always been there and he is the kind of person who never stops. His list of things to do is about seven miles long and from time to time on the blog, I will even say to people, "Hey, if you have a way to get him to quit, let me know. If you know of a way to get him to stop working, I fully support that."

Because he is stressed still at work and he's got a ton of things that he wants to do. He loves to program computers, he has about what? 5,000 things he wants to do in computer world and one of the things that, and another side gig that we're going to do throughout our "retirement" is flipping houses. We've been flipping houses for a while, we've made a fair amount of money flipping houses and it's something we'd like to continue to do. He is really handy, we do most of the work ourselves and so once he stops working at his day job then he can start working for me.

[0:14:49.5]

**FT:** I have to say, you know, what really is impressive is that you made a decision, you stuck with it in such a short period of time, it's so inspiring for everyone listening because I get people calling in or writing in and saying, "I'm in my 50's and I'm worried about retirement. I don't have enough right now. How do I catch up?"

What would be your advice to somebody who is getting the awakening about making sure that they're financially secure in the future later in life? They're in their 50's, maybe even in their early 60's and you were fortunate at 39 or early in your 30's, you had half a million in investments. That's not most people I don't think. So what would be your advice to someone who is getting a later start?

[0:15:35.4]

**C:** Yeah, I want to tell a very short story before I say that. I always tell people the most valuable day in my life when I was 20, my college girlfriend took me to this investment seminar which I didn't want to go to but it turned out to be really great. It was a nonprofit thing, they taught you the basics of investing and that set me on my path. At one point, one of the instructors looked me in the eye and said, "Your advantage is your youth. Start now."

I don't know what happened but it was like, the sky's opened up and a rainbow came out and unicorns jumped over my head. But the thing I wanted to say about that is, I remember that when I looked around the room, everyone there was like 50 or 60. I think there was one guy there who was 80 and so yeah, that's the paradox. A lot of people don't get the message until later in life.

So back to your question. When people ask me that, I tell people, the very first thing they should do is write down every single expense in a notebook because you'll be surprised, we started doing this and we're like, "Wow, we spent that much on groceries? What were we thinking?" After you do that, evaluate every one of those line items and see how you can cut those down.

If you've got some hundred dollar month phone plan, you can be on a \$25 month one of this days. If you're paying \$150 a month for cable, that's ridiculous. The first thing is always to cut

expenses because that's easy and that's something you can do immediately and right now today.

After that, increase in income isn't always as easy but most of us don't work more than 40 hours a week. There's all this new things and this new peer economy that people can do. How about you drive for Uber or Lyft? How about your rent out a spare room in your house through Airbnb? There's all kinds of little tweaks you can do to increase your income. Those are the two things I do. Cut expenses first and try to increase your income.

[0:17:18.5]

**FT:** Yeah.

[SPONSOR BREAK]

[0:17:20.5]

**FT:** I'd like to introduce you to one of our newest sponsors, Igloo, modern cloud based intranet software that's designed for the way your individual business works. What Igloo does really well is connect three things; people, information, and processes. Everyone in your company has access to all the information they need, using tools they already know, all in one place. Dropbox, Cloud Storage, Google apps, Sales Force, Calendars, and more.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:18:27.2]

**FT:** I like that you are emphasizing increased income, I think there's enough that we've said about cutting costs and it's always a good reminder to check your expenses but more empowering I think to start thinking bigger about how you can actually increase your net worth through earning more. And you're right, today, versus 10 years ago, so much easier to start with the advances in the internet and all the technology around us that can help us work remotely or cash in on the things that we have.

Whether it's a home, a spare room, a car, you can rent your car. If you don't want to drive people around, you can rent your car when you're not driving it. There are sites out there that can connect you with people who want to do that. You are anonymous, you are Carl and Mindy at 1500days.com but you are not even sharing this with your family, which I find to be, has its pros and cons. The con being that maybe they could have been a source of support for you and you're missing out on that. What's your take on that? Why did you decide to be anonymous?

[0:19:27.8]

**C:** Yeah, my family doesn't have the healthiest relationship with money. I think Mindy and I both grew up in lower middle class incomes and both our families, money was very taboo. I remember asking my mom one day, "Hey, what does dad make?" Just because I had nothing to relate to. I was in high school and there was this jobs, I can be a pilot, I can be a fireman and like, "How much does dad make?" "That's none of your business!"

It was like I was asking about their sex life or something like that. It was like the worst question. Yeah, Mindy just said it. so eventually I snuck down to the file cabinet and saw what my dad made but yeah, my parents and my family, to this day, don't have a good relationship with money. To emphasize that when my mom was about 50, she bragged to me that she had \$25,000 saved up for their retirement and I'm like, "Oh my god. She's bragging about it!"

And in my head all these alarm bells are going off and the fire trucks are coming. So I don't know, if my family knew about my income, they might have expectations of what I should do for them and what I should pay for. That's why I think I need to be anonymous and the whole transparency thing if my neighbors knew I had that much money, it might inhibit some of my real estate transactions or they might look at me different.

I always say, "I want to define my money, I don't want the money to define me and I don't want people to define me by my money too." I want to be the guy who changes his own oil and mows his own lawn no matter what the nest egg looks like. I don't want people to think of me in terms of money first, so that's it.

[0:21:02.9]

**FT:** How did you two find each other? I think financial compatibility in a relationship is so rare, but it seems like you two are on the same page? Did you know that going in to the marriage or it was just one of those good fortunes, like surprise fortunes?

[0:21:21.6]

**M:** You know, I think that's really to talk about money before you get married and I don't think it's a first date conversation but it's definitely like a third or fourth date conversation. But I'm also not practicing what I preach, I don't think we ever really talked about money. But on the other hand, we've always both been frugal people. When we met, he was driving some kind of old car and I was driving a super old car and we both actually owned our own homes, which was...

When did we meet? We were like 25 or something and at 25, who owns a house? He actually had a physical structure, a house. I lived in a condo but I still owned the condo and I remember going over to his house for the first time and I thought, "Oh, he lives with his parents, I didn't know that? Whatever, we're only 25."

Then he's like, "No, that's my house." I thought, "Wow, that's really weird that you have a whole house," everybody I knew that had like a condo or we never had the conversation but we also didn't have to have the conversation.

[0:22:34.5]

**C:** Yeah, just to clarify, we both had mortgages on it.

[0:22:37.1]

**M:** Well yes.

[0:22:38.9]

**C:** One story, when I was at work, my first job, my boss told me that I had to buy a BMW 3 series or else I would never find a wife because that's how you show women that you're financially — that you're good with money and when she said that to me, I thought the opposite. Like I don't want that because that might attract the wrong kind of person who thinks I have a lot of money and like to spend.

So I kept my old junker and kept my old starter home and it was serendipitous how we found each other but boy am I thankful for that because I think of some other relationships I had and it could have ended up very, very badly.

[0:23:13.1]

**FT:** Carl, I'm curious, you grew up you said not in the most financially literate or even open family, upbringing was a little challenging financially. So where did you get your desire and determination to be financially independent at a young age?

[0:23:33.4]

**C:** Yeah, you know there's two things that go in to that. One is I've always enjoyed working. Even when I was young, I would always be, I'd be the kid knocking on people's front door to shovel their driveway after it snowed, I'd always be wanting to mow the lawn to get my \$2 a week allowance. But yeah, the other crazy thing was, as a kid, even when I was young, I realize

my parents weren't good with money. So I think how I behave now is a reaction, probably the most extreme example was — you can see where this can go, but they're like, "Hey kids. We're going to go to a time share presentation and we're just going for their free Disney tickets." And I'm like, "Okay, wonderful."

[0:24:09.5]

**FT:** The hors d'oeuvres are fabulous at these things by the way.

[0:24:12.5]

**C:** They come back and they're like, "We bought a time share" and I was like, for some reason, I was like 12 or 13 but I knew time shares were a bad idea. I'm like, "Oh my god, can you get out of it? You know that's probably not a good idea."

[0:24:25.3]

**FT:** Abort, abort!

[0:24:26.4]

**C:** Exactly. Yeah, they would do things like that and so the way I behave now was kind of a reaction. They were an example, I feel bad for saying this because they're good people, but in a lot of ways, financially, they were an example for how not to behave.

[0:24:43.0]

**FT:** What are some things, and Mindy chime in here, that you discovered about money that you didn't know before as a result of going on this very focused mission to save upwards of a million dollars in such a short period of time? What did you learn about yourselves, what did you learn about money that maybe was new to you, that was a discovery?

[0:25:01.4]

**M:** I learned that you don't need a lot of money. My life, quality of life, has not changed since we became laser focused on cutting out our expenses. I don't need the cable TV and I don't watch a lot of TV. I don't need a super expensive phone plan, I have the same service with a regular — what is it? Republic wireless we're on. I have the same phone service with them and it costs \$10 a month. I don't miss all this stuff because it didn't really add to my life.

[0:25:42.0]

**FT:** Right.

[0:25:44.3]

**M:** Right before we first decided to do this, we had a house on a lake in Wisconsin and it was this huge house. We decided that the taxes were too much, we wanted to move to Colorado because the weather is so much better here, we bought a similar sized house but since it wasn't on a lake it was far less expensive and paying a significantly smaller mortgage was really nice and it kind of lifted this huge weight off of Carl's shoulders because I still wasn't working at the time.

We discovered that we really didn't like that neighborhood, we moved to a different city and like he said, we got this tiny little foreclosure that was hideous but we live in a neighborhood that we absolutely love and we are a thousand percent more happy in this tiny little house in a nice neighborhood where we can go out and hang with our neighbors than we ever were in those giant houses.

[0:26:45.6]

**C:** Yeah, just for comparison, we went from 5,000 square feet to this was 1,400 square feet when we bought it. Those extra, 3,500 square feet added absolutely nothing to my happiness.

[0:27:00.0]

**FT:** How many square feet?

[0:27:01.5]

**C:** The house we moved from was about 5,000.

[0:27:04.6]

**FT:** Wow.

[0:27:05.8]

**C:** I know right? What were we thinking?

[0:27:07.4]

**FT:** Now, what is it?

[0:27:09.0]

**C:** It was 1,400. I've since put a little addition on it so it's like 1,800 now.

[0:27:13.9]

**FT:** How do your kids like the difference? They don't have an opinion?

[0:27:19.0]

**M:** Yeah, they love this neighborhood. We live on a dead end street and at the far end of the street, at the dead end part, they ride bikes all day long with their friends and they don't have to worry about cars coming through, the parents kind of stand around and chat and the kids get to play and they are a little bit sad in the winter time when they can't ride their bikes.

[0:27:39.8]

**FT:** You have this all equity now in your foreclosure home that you have since probably renovated to make it more to your taste?

[0:27:47.8]

**M:** Yeah, there isn't a room we haven't touched in this house. It was really, really ugly. There was a reason it was sitting on the market.

[0:27:54.2]

**FT:** I'm guessing all those months or however long it took you to renovate and redecorate, that's time invested in your home that you're not spending at the mall or online shopping. I think sometimes when you don't have distractions that are productive and healthy and a smart use of your time. You do the things that end up — boredom leads to a lot of unnecessary spending sometimes.

[0:28:17.9]

**M:** Absolutely. I used to have a friend, well, she's still a friend but she used to say, "I feel bad if I go to the mall and I don't come home with anything."

[0:28:26.4]

**FT:** Do you think that there is a revolution going on and you're a part of it that maybe we're going to rethink the whole idea of retirement in the next 10 years where especially if social security goes away, what's the point right? Of like building up to be 67 and then let go of your job, why not find another path?

[0:28:43.8]

**C:** Yeah, I hope so. I think part of it is because in the old days, our identity was tied to our jobs. I talk about my parents a lot, my most popular post is one called *Death by Retirement* and what happened to my parents is, especially my dad, he lost his job during the great recession and his whole identity was tied up in his job. So I'm not exaggerating to say that when he lost his job, he almost died. He went into the spiral depression and it was terrible and they've since come up a little bit but it was in bed for 12 or 14 hours a day and watching TV for the rest of the time and eating and being unhealthy.

I think things are changing, I think we're less tied to our jobs, our identity isn't so much tied up, there's more of a freelance — there's more freelancing where people jump around. I hope it does change and I think it will because of that. I think the idea of work isn't going to be — it will always be a core component of our life, we need money to live, but maybe we won't be as tied to it especially mentally which will allow us to develop our own hobbies and things like that outside of work.

[0:29:56.5]

**FT:** What's a failure you guys experience? We've talked so much about success and hard work and being diligent with your money and conscious with your money but were there any missteps along the way?

[0:30:07.1]

**M:** No, we were perfect. Next question.

[0:30:10.9]

**C:** Oh geez, there were tons of them. I'm trying to think, I wrote a big list, "All the dumb things I've done". We've bought two new cars which I regret, I wouldn't do that again. We bought that big lake house right before the recession happened, that was a flip but that consumed our life and our money for a long time then we bought that other house.

One funny one that I always think about happened to me in College though. So in College, I was making minimum wage at a job I work for 10 hours a week. So I'd make like \$35 a week after taxes. There was a concert I wanted to go to and the tickets were \$40. I had to send a check in. It was a fan club. I only had like \$35 in my bank account. I'm like, "Yeah, I'll just send the check in, I'll probably get paid."

You can see where this is going. "I'll probably get paid before the check clears." It turned out, that didn't happen, the check cash bounced and I got hit with like a \$40 fee, which was more than a week's income. It devastated me in college because here I am with nothing and then that happens I'm like, "Oh my god, this is ridiculous." What I learned from that was, don't spend money you don't have.

[0:31:17.2]

**FT:** Along the way though, I get that but it's like, you should develop some credit, right? Credit history is important or are you in the camp like the Dave Ramsey camp that thinks, don't ever use a credit card, don't worry about credit history?

[0:31:30.7]

**M:** No, I get where he's coming from but I am not in that camp at all because Dave Ramsey currently has a zero credit score. Well, that doesn't help you get a mortgage. With interest rates at, what are they, 3%? 3.5%? That's practically free money.

[0:31:47.3]

**FT:** Right. If you make Dave Ramsey money, you don't need a mortgage then okay.

[0:31:51.4]

**M:** Exactly. I don't make Dave Ramsey money and I do want to leverage my cash. I don't want to pay \$300,000 in cash for a house. I'd rather get a mortgage and pay slightly more than that over the course of 30 years and rent it out and then it can cash flow and there's another side

source of income. No, we are not in the no credit camp at all. I think you should absolutely start as soon as possible building credit.

[0:32:24.3]

**C:** I mean, with that, I would say don't ever revolve debt on a credit card and use some them wisely. We have loads of credit cards but we know when there are promotional periods come up, we know what our point value is. We use them to do stuff like hotel hacking and travel hacking. You have to be very wise about it and savvy but I fully support the use of credit for the smart person who can keep up with it and handle them.

[0:32:48.7]

**FT:** I think what's great about your story is that it started with inspiration from other fellow bloggers, some of who have been on this podcast. We talk about Mr. Money Mustache. His wife Mrs. Money Mustache also was a guest on the show. We don't often hear from her and she had some really great insights. The Simple Dollar, I believe that's Trent, right?

[0:33:07.2]

**C:** Yeah, Trent Ham from Iowa.

[0:33:09.0]

**FT:** Trent Ham. Let's end on this. You have two kids now and I'm sure there maybe — I don't know how actively you talk to them about money, but they're certainly observing and learning from you passively. What have you seen — how have you seen this play out through your kids? What maybe you've noticed something that they're learning that's really great because I think how encouraging for parents, right? To know and be reminded that I'm on the right track, I'm doing the right thing if my kids are picking up the great lessons too, at an early age. Who gets to learn this at eight, nine years old? What are you seeing through your kids?

[0:33:47.5]

**M:** This is funny, our six years old just the other day saw a pile of coins on the counter and she said, "If I had all of that money, I'd be rich." Well, it's probably like \$4 in coins. She said, "Well, if I had that plus \$100, then we'd be rich and you could buy me whatever I wanted. Well, just one toy, if I gave one away." She was taking this lessons that I've taught her. We're trying to cull the herd, we've got a lot of toys.

We try not to buy more things but we've got grandparents or they've got grandparents so things just come in to the house all the time. That was really exciting that she was taking what I've said, "Hey, we don't need so much stuff, if you want a new toy, you have to get rid of one or two or 10." It was really fun to see her, that's part of her money relationship right now. "Oh, I don't need to buy everything. I could buy one new thing if I gave away one thing."

[0:34:58.3]

**FT:** That's incredible.

[0:35:00.8]

**M:** The older one will frequently say, "Hey, mom, can we buy this if we can find it on sale or if we can find it at a thrift store?" "Sure. If you can find that at a thrift store, you can buy it."

[0:35:11.1]

**FT:** Wouldn't it be great if more adults felt that way?

[0:35:13.2]

**M:** Exactly.

[0:35:15.1]

**C:** We pay them an allowance and whenever they want something they'll say, "I want this at the store." Especially with the older one, I'll be like, "Well how much does it cost?" She'll be like, "Well, it cost \$5," and I'm like, "How many weeks did it take you to earn that?" And she'll be like, well, I make \$2 a week, so over two weeks." And I'm like, "Well, why don't you think about it and see if you really want it." Almost every time, she'll say no, I'll save it. I can't think of a time she's actually bought anything.

[0:35:41.9]

**FT:** Well you know what? She'll hit her million in like 15 days if you did it in 1,500.

[0:35:47.4]

**M:** Exactly.

[0:35:47.9]

**FT:** By the time she's older. Thank you so much Carl and Mindy. Such an inspiring story, I love that we've also been capturing this as you are experiencing it and it would great to maybe catch up with you in a year and see how life's changed or stayed the same. Have a great rest of the week. Wishing you continued success.

[0:36:07.8]

**M:** Thank you so much for having us Farnoosh, this was a great conversation.

[0:36:10.3]

**C:** Yes, thank you.

[END]