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We Bought a Camper!

For the past couple of years, my wife and I have been toying around with the idea of purchasing a camper. We love spending time outdoors and we have fond memories of going tenting and camping as children. So, we wanted to share that experience with our two young kids before they realize they're too cool for us.

Each time we got serious about buying a camper, the financial planner in me started looking at the economic justification, or the lack thereof, in the decision. I seemed to always come to the same conclusion: Buying a camper is a really bad financial decision! I tell people to maximize their retirement savings every day. **How could I justify forgoing saving money for an asset that will almost assuredly be worth less money each day that we own it,** starting on the day we bought it? So, the decision was easy....

We bought a camper! Not a massive, top-of-the-line model; one that fits our budget, and although the quarters are tight, this camper has all the features we need. What's more, if I had a client who was faced with the same decision and circumstance as my family, I'd tell them to buy a camper, too!

What gives? Sure, we'll have less in our savings as a result of this non-essential splurge. However, we didn't break the bank. Plus, when I think about the memories we've already made with our kids camping, and the memories I have growing up camping with my family – fishing with my dad and roasting marshmallows for s'mores – **those moments are priceless.** I want that for my kids, and no investment can hold a candle to the return-on-life that those memories provide.

There are pieces of each of our lives that don't fit neatly into spreadsheets. They have little to no monetary return-on-investment. Yet, I bet all of us have moments in time, or a keepsake that reminds

us of a happy time or person that could never be replaced for all the money in the world.

Now, I'm not suggesting that you completely neglect your savings goals just to maximize your enjoyment today. Nor, would I ever suggest neglecting enjoyment today just to ensure future security. **The key is to find equilibrium and understand that there are two balance sheets that are worthy of your consideration.** One considers your financials and is easy to calculate in your head or on a spreadsheet. The other is emotional and can only be measured in your heart, and how certain things make you feel. Work on improving both. They are both very important.

Find your balance, make some memories...buy a camper!

I hope you have found this educational and/or helpful. It humbles me to have the opportunity to help people I care about make smart decisions about money. If you'd like to schedule a time to talk please contact me at jeffmahoney@hjsims.com or (952) 683-7503.

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