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**Courtney:**To me, that's what fire is, in terms of a definition. But beyond that, it's more of a lifestyle. It's more of understanding that you don't need to keep up with the Joneses. On top of that, you know, you don't need to keep up with all the celebrities out there, who, you know, are showing off this mansion, and this car and whatever. It's bad enough as is, just trying to keep up with the Joneses. But now, you know, with social media, everyone's posting their dream life, and which is not reality. And it's just being aware of that, like being aware of what you value and what brings you joy and focusing on that. It's a mindset shift. It's understanding that true happiness does not have to be expensive.

**Narrator:**You are listening to the Millionaires Unveiled Podcast, where you'll hear the stories and interviews of everyday millionaires. We'll unveil their decisions, their strategies and their current portfolio allocation. Now to your hosts, Clark Sheffield and Jace Mattinson.

**Clark:**Hello and welcome back to the Millionaires Unveiled Podcast. This is episode number 97. On this show we tell stories and strategies of everyday millionaires and unveil their current portfolio allocations. On today's show we have Courtney, Courtney is in her 30's, she lives in Canada with her wife and child. She has a net worth of $1.2 million and is on fire. In fact, she's planning to retire to travel the world within the next year. Last week on the show we had Marco. Marco was the host of a podcast titled Passive Real Estate Investing, he shared his thoughts on all things real estate investing, including his 10 rules of successful real estate investing, including the ability and opportunity to invest in real estate outside of one's principal place of residence. We were on Marco's show recently we talked about our stories and lessons learned from millionaires we've interviewed, that's episode number 172, if you're interested in that. Before we get into today's interview with Courtney, I just wanted to take a moment to thank our sponsor Obsidian Capital for supporting the show. Creating passive income is one of the quickest ways to create and establish wealth. At Obsidian Capital, their core philosophy is to enable qualified investors to create long-term wealth passively, through strategic real estate investments. Their team of experienced real estate professionals identify stabilized and value add multifamily real estate assets that will provide strong financial returns, a healthy risk profile, tax incentives and additional benefits that come with investing in real estate. They pride themselves on a high level of integrity and have experience in acquiring and managing over $300 million in multifamily assets. Furthermore, their leadership has over 45 years of combined industry experience. View their website today to learn more about their streamline investment process at www obsidiancapitalco.com. We appreciate all of you tuning into the podcast week after week. If you enjoy the show, we'd appreciate you leaving a five-star review on either iTunes or Stitcher, it helps us grow the show and reach new millionaire interviewees. If you're a millionaire yourself and would like to be featured on the show, please reach out to us at millionairesunveiled@gmail.com. Without any further delay, let's jump right into today's interview with Courtney.

**Jace:**Welcome to the show Courtney, do you want to just give us a little bit about your background and kind of what you're doing now?

**Courtney:**Sure. So, my name is Courtney. I'm married, we have a daughter, who's one years old. I am 33 and my wife is 31. And I'm originally from the States and my wife is originally from Canada. We met while living down in Florida, and we now live in near Calgary, Alberta. So, we have a bit of a unique position here in that we have accounts both in US and Canadian, various accounts, various taxable and non-taxable accounts. But yeah, we are at the point now where we have reached financial independence for our family of three. We're hopeful for a family of four, hopeful for a second baby. There's no guarantees, obviously with a lesbian family, but that's what we're hoping for. So, I'm still working as we plug away for our fire number assuming a 4% family and my wife is a stay at home mom.

**Clark:**Awesome. And what is your net worth today?

**Courtney:**Just over $1.1 million dollars

**Clark:**And kind of give us the breakdown of the 1.1.

**Courtney:**Sure. So, a majority of it is just in investments we have. Also, we have a house, and some paid off cars. Our investments make up about $880,000. Our house is valued at just over $300,000 but of that, we still have 90,000 of a mortgage remaining, that money is sitting in a high interest savings account, which is part of that $880,000 in our investments. So, we have about 800 net in investments once you take out that mortgage piece. And then we also have two paid off cars that we bought, used, reliable, low mileage cars that each have about 50,000 miles on them, and are valued in total at about $15,000.

**Clark:**Wow, and how did you accumulate all of this wealth?

**Courtney:**So, I'm just-- I've always been pretty frugal, I didn't really know what I was doing after I finished my master's degree in terms of investing. I started off with $70,000 in student loan debt. My wife had $40,000 to her name. So, our first mission out of all of this was to just pay off our student loans. And so, any extra income that we were making out of our first jobs, were just immediately going to the student loans. We were living with roommates to try and cut down any expenses from that angle. I lived right across the street from work so, I didn't really have any sort of high commute costs in terms of gas. And right around when I finished paying off those loans, which, for me for my $70,000 took about two and a half years, I learned about Mr. Money moustache, and that was in 2011. I started my first job at the beginning of 2009. And at that point, I just became hooked and it was just this rabbit hole that I just went down and learned about not just that blog, but many other blogs in the financial independence space. And that's when I got into investing. I guess to backtrack, when I was paying off my student loans, I was contributing some money towards my 401k, I was getting the company match, I think I was putting in about 10% maybe of my income, but I didn't really know what I was doing. It was in a total-- one of those targets 20, 40 funds that my company had through fidelity, which I still have it in today. So, I'm fine with that decision. But I didn't really know what I was doing. And then once I learned about Mr. Money mustache, I learned about the investment side and also the idea of house hacking. So, we did that too, which really propelled us even further to reaching our financial independence number at a propelled rate. So, it's been about 10 years now in total, really started getting into the investing side again in 2011, 2012, and I'm not active by any means. I'm not like a day trader or anything like that. I'm just kind of a set it and forget it, in low fee index funds. Majority are in stocks. Yeah, that's pretty much it.

**Clark:**You know what your savings rates been on this journey?

**Courtney:**Yeah, so, right now it's at 75%, and that's just based off of my one income for a family of three. We're valueless. We'll spend money on things that we value, and we don't spend money on things that we don't. So, right now we spend about $24,000 a year and I currently make about $130,000 before taxes so it's about $100,000 after taxes.

**Clark:**And that's with the paid off mortgage?

**Courtney:**Correct, yes. So, that's with the paid off mortgage so that's, all other housing expenses, property taxes, utilities, home insurance, HOA, repairs, if there's any, we haven't really had any yet. We are in a new townhouse. But car expenses, which you don't have a car payment, the cars were bought used, but relatively low gas. I work from home. So, I don't really have much gas expense but minor repairs there. Our food budget is pretty low, we spend about $400 a month on food between all of us, maybe it's closer to 450 now that our little one's eating and she loves blueberries, which are like the most expensive fruit out there.

**Clark:**I cut my daughter off blueberries a couple times and raspberries like, alright, you're going to the bananas because those are a lot cheaper.

**Courtney:**Exactly. I mean, luckily right now it's season so we're planning to just stock up and buy like, gallons worth and throw them in our deep freeze for the winter or else we'd be going broke just on blueberries alone.

**Clark:**I know exactly how that feels.

**Courtney:**Yeah, and then we value travel. We're into travel hacking. I've been to 25 different countries. We've been all over the US and Canada. We really value that, but we keep it low, low expenses, we like to camp, we'll go to an Airbnb, we like to hike, so which is typically free, we're really into being outside and enjoying nature. So, we'll go for walks all the time, just on our daily routine. We just, those are just things we value, and really, we spend maybe $150 a month on just miscellaneous. I don't-- I keep track of everything since 2009, I've had a super simple Excel spreadsheet that I just made that had one column of income, one column of expenses, put that number down and what it was for and to this day, that's kind of how I track everything. I don't use Mint or Personal Capital or anything. I just I prefer, I just enjoy logging into each of my accounts one by one and being accountable for my spending. I find I'm more accountable that way, than just logging in and everything tallies it up for me. So yeah, I've just been really mindful of my spending and my wife is 100% on board too. When I first met her, I didn't realize this, but she was in school and she was sleeping on the floor, not a mattress on the floor, like she was just sleeping on the floor because she didn't want to buy a mattress. Like that's how hardcore she was. And then the first time I went and visited her, she had bought a mattress right before then, like, I didn't know this for years, you know, if I knew that, I would have proposed right. So, like she's just also like, on board of team intentionality. And, you know, just not going crazy. Like, we don't we don't have TV, we don't value cable or marketing or advertising. Like, I couldn't tell you what the latest trend is in fashion. Like, I don't care about any of that. So, I don't spend my money on that.

**Clark:**Yeah. Would it be safe to say that you're on the fire path?

**Courtney:**Oh, yeah. Yeah. So, our plan is to retire here in the next year or two, I guess I'll say. Originally, I was thinking 2021, but it might be propelled even before that, it could be as early as 2022. As the markets have really improved here over the last 10-year Bull Run, I don't really check my accounts that often. Up until this year, I just-- think it was in December of this year, I started an Instagram account, fire: 2 moms, 1 babe and just maybe a couple weeks ago, maybe a month ago, I launched our blog, which is Modern Family.com. And since doing those two things, I've been tracking my accounts more frequently, which to me is once a month, which I think some people listening maybe like, "that is not frequent". But for me that is, because up until that point, it was just kind of in automation, set it and forget it mode, and I would check my accounts maybe two or three times a year to really see how the overall portfolio is going. I would, again I would log into my expense sheet where I'd put in my income and my expenses each month, but to actually check and see where the portfolio is going, I just let it ride and hopes to be pleasantly surprised and sure enough we were. So yeah, we're kind of on track to reach fire earlier than anticipated but yeah.

Since learning about mister money mustache in 2011, I was hooked into the fire community. I've learned about other blogs, mad scientists, frugal woods, Jl Collins stock series, highly recommend that to everyone who's listening who's never heard of it, or his book The Simple Path to Wealth, Afford Anything with Paula Pant, her blog is great,  Choosify, as well as Early Retirement Now blog has a really great safe withdrawal rate series that really digs into the 4% safe withdrawal rate, which is kind of this unspoken rule in the fire community. And he has a PhD in economics. I'm an economics and math background so I get numbers. And it's really technical and lots of charts, but I really thoroughly enjoyed it. And so, for me, personally, my safe withdrawal rate that we're comfortable with is below three and a half percent. And to dig, I guess even further, so our fire number is based off of an annual spend of $35,000 a year. So, with the 4% rule, that equates to $875,000. So, we have about $75,000 to go until we've reached that in terms of our passive income from our investments, not our net worth, which accounts for the house and the car. I don't include those in my fire numbers, because I don't plan to have a mortgage. And so, I don't include the value of the house because it's kind of a net neutral thing there, and same thing with our car. I don't have car payments in our expense, in our fire numbers, because, not including the net worth of our car in those numbers. So, our fire number of 875 is purely just based off of passive income from our different taxable or tax advantaged accounts that are again, mostly in stocks and bonds.

I think our total breakdown is about, well, you're going to laugh but 63% stocks, 12% bonds and a 25% cash. We have a lot of cash right now, which is kind of multifaceted. There's a total of about $220,000 in cash of that 90,000 is for to take account for the remainder of the mortgage. We house hacked our house in Florida back in 2012, when we bought it, it was during the crazy Florida foreclosure mayhem and I bought a four-bedroom townhouse, rented out the three rooms, made way more than mortgage payments, which supercharged our mortgage. So, we were able to pay that off in two and a half years. And then when we moved to Canada, we rented the townhouse out for another two years, so we gained even more money from that. And then when we sold it, we sold it for $100,000 more than we originally purchased it for. So, those three things combined, allowed us to pay for our Canadian new townhouse. But we decided not to pay it all off upfront in cash. We wanted to have that money in our accounts because the interest rate was quite low, 2.59% on our Canadian mortgage. And so right now we have the remainder $90,000 sitting in a high interest savings account that's at 2.8%.

So, we're actually making money right now by having a mortgage, which is kind of bizarre. And then the remainder, which is about $130,000 in cash is because we're being on the conservative and because we are close to our fire date, we want to have a cash cushion, not the whole 129, that's high. But I am just-- I know they say time in the market is better than timing the market, but I am just waiting. I've been waiting and waiting, which I know anyone listening is like, "you're dumb, don't do that, put it in right now".  But-- and I like smack myself sometimes like saying, "I'm dumb, don't do that". But I'm waiting for this eventual crash to buy, you know, US index funds that we're big into BTSAX, when it's on sale, essentially. So, with that, to go back to the safe withdrawal rate. Sorry, I kind of got off on a tangent there. But a lot of our portfolio, we're using geographic arbitrage. So, we're basing our fire number, that $875,000 that we need, and passive income based off of the 4% rule. But in reality, we're going to be withdrawing less than 4%, primarily due to two reasons. A majority of our investments are in US dollars, about 73% of that total 883 that we currently have. So, if you use the US Canadian exchange rate, it's currently sitting at 1.3-ish. So, if you convert that, that essentially adds in another $200,000 into our portfolio in Canadian dollars, and that's where we live. That's where we plan on staying, that's the currency we plan on using. So, with that, that essentially brings us down to a 3% safe withdrawal rate.

And then the other thing that we're doing is Canada has a child tax benefits. It's subject to whichever party is in play, you know, politically wise. It's always been there, it's just been a matter of how much each family gets. So, we understand what it is today, might not be what it is in the future, we get that. But currently, I wouldn't-- we don't really receive it right now, because I am a high earner. But once we fire and we become a family living on $35,000 a year, we will be able to claim $5,000 per child per year, I believe it's till their 17th, either 17 or 18. It tapers off a little bit, I think it's about 6000 until they're six, and then it tapers off to closer to maybe a little under 5000 from 6 to 17. So, give or take, you know on average about 5000 per child per year. So that's another $10,000 that we would be getting each year from that benefit. And so that brings us down even further, I think close to 2% withdrawal rate and then this of course is assuming that we are never going to do anything again that brings us any sort of income, you know, whether it's a hobby or a part time job, or whatever it may be. This is just assuming that doesn't happen, which is probably unlikely, I feel like the first couple years I want to take off, I want to be around while the kids are young and not in school and have both parents at home, just to be with our kids, 24/7, but maybe once they're in school, do something, you know, part time during the day.

And we're also planning to keep up with our blog too, not that we're planning to monetize it, but maybe it does in the future, who knows? You know, that's not something we're thinking on or planning on, but you never know. So those are how we're being ultra conservative, my wife makes fun of me like, "you could have retired years ago", and I just haven't like, I just can't get myself to do it. So, until these numbers really make sense to me. I just want to be you know, maybe sure we're making the right decision. And again, you know, if we decide to retire in a year, and that's when the market crashes, I have no problem going and getting a part time job to weather the storm, if need be, if it means I need to make $35,000 a year, like I will find something that does that. You know, I don't think that's going to be a challenge. I'm not really, you know, too concerned from that angle.

**Clark:**Yeah. And that's always the concern, right? With buyers, it's, hey, you pick your number and say, 700, 800, 900, you know, 1.5, 2, whatever somebody's number is, and then all of a sudden, there's a market correction. They're banking on this three and a half or four, four and a half, whatever withdrawal rate, right? And then the market drops and all the sudden the 3% of what it's dropped to, you know, if there's a big 30% drop or something, then it's not enough. So, but it sounds like you've kind of thought about that and you guys have kept your options open and it's interesting, all the things that you guys have done to get to where you are today.

**Courtney:**Oh yeah, like I've overthought it because, again, like another layer here is we're trying to plan this with a potential second baby being born, my wife's not pregnant, it's not like anything certain at this point. So obviously, there's no guarantee like for a lesbian couple to get pregnant. So, we know it will take some time. But my ultimate goal is to plan my fire date where I retire early, right? When hopeful baby number two is born, because in Canada, you can get up to 18 months of maternity leave, or parental leave, excuse me.

**Jace:**Which is amazing. Amazing.

**Courtney:**Yeah, it was up to 12 months, and this year, they extended it to up to 18 months. So, you can choose, you have a choice if you want 12 months or 18 months, which is incredible, right? Like, its mind blowing like growing up in the states like to hear that.

**Jace:**Yeah, I'm like, "can I get a month please?".

**Courtney:**Yeah, so with that, we wouldn't get paid, you know our whole salary by any means. But after taxes, we would net about $25,000. So that would definitely help whether any sort of market crash, we` could likely live off of that because right now we're living off of $24,000. And don't see you know, any reason why we couldn't even with another baby, our child now is 15 months old. And I think we've spent about 1400 dollars on her since she's born with including diapers, you know, you name it, like everything, except for the pregnancy costs, which for us, we actually got pretty lucky and it wasn't that expensive but nursery you know, from the nursery decorations to all of her clothes to stroller, you name it, all that sort of stuff. We've spent about 14, 15 something like that 1500 dollars, which some people spend on a stroller alone. So, you know--

**Clark:**Yeah, you can spend as much as you want there, right?

**Courtney:**Right. So, I think realistically, we can still spend around $25,000 when second baby, if second baby is born. So, we can weather any sort of market crash for that first year for sure. And then if my wife isn't able to get pregnant, and we're just of family three, which we're totally content with and understand that, you know, that's totally a possibility, then, you know, we're living like queens, because we're basing this off of $35,000 a year annual spend, and we're nowhere near that. So, it would just be, you know, not icing on the cake, because I obviously want to, you know, to grow our family, but in terms of our sequence of return risk and withdrawal rate, it would be icing on the cake in that sense.

**Clark:**Right. I find it interesting. I know I'm jumping back a little bit, but I find it interesting that you only check your accounts like once a month now or something?

**Courtney:**Yeah, and to me that sounds like frequent, like, "Oh my gosh, I got to log in", now I'm way more into it because I'm so close to my fire number that you know, I'm just inching and inching. But I also find if I obsess about it, I don't see the changes like that big changes, I guess in my mind, where I'm like, "Oh, it moved, you know, $300", like, that doesn't amount nothing to me and like, if I check it every day, like, I don't see the bigger picture when I'm checking it every day. So even month over month, you know, you can see variations through the market, I keep track of how the market overall is doing, so I have an idea, but I don't log into my accounts every day like right now, like I said, once a month and before that, it wasn't even close to that.

**Clark:**Yeah, that's pretty good. Jace, I'm not sure if you or me is whereas maybe we should have $100 bet to see who can't log in to their checking account and the other person owes 100 bucks whoever logs in first. I don't know how long we'd last.

**Jace:**Checking account or--

**Clark:**Anything financially, just leave it.

**Jace:**The other stuff I don't check as frequently as I used to, it's at a minimum or prime maximum monthly.

**Clark:**So, Courtney, the fire, it's become a huge thing, right?

**Courtney:** Yeah.

**Clark:**And we use it, we use the word in all ways, right? Is it a noun? A verb, an adjective? Nobody really knows anymore right?

**Courtney:**Right.

**Clark:**So, I mean what is it? What do you think like what and then along with that, what is fire to you? Is fire to you, you kind of talked about it earlier, is it having an amount where you said 7- $800,000 and having a safe withdrawal rate but living the way you've always lived? Is it you know, and then we have these new terms, right? Like, lean fire and fat fire, but I think fire means something different for different people.

**Courtney:**Sure. Yeah. So, I think for me, like you said, everyone's going to have their own opinion and their own definition, right? But for me, it's a point at which your passive income, whether that's through investments in various stocks and bonds, through taxable and tax advantaged accounts, or real estate or you name it, any way that you're bringing in income, whether it's dividends, doesn't matter, that you can live off of a certain withdrawal amount without depleting your accounts over the course of your life. To me, that's what fire is, in terms of a definition. But beyond that, it's more of a lifestyle. It's more of understanding that you don't need to keep up with the Joneses. On top of that, you know, you don't need to keep up with all the celebrities out there who you know are showing off this mansion, this car and whatever. It's bad enough as is just trying to keep up with the Joneses.

But now, you know with social media, everyone's posting their dream life and-- which is not reality and it's just being aware of that. Like being aware of what you value, and what brings you joy, and focusing on that. It's a mindset shift. It's understanding that true happiness does not have to be expensive. And I'm not going to knock someone who says, Oh, my fire number is $100,000, that's great. You know if that is what it takes to bring you joy, like to spend that hundred thousand dollars over the year on whatever it is that you decide on, that's fine. Like there's no set number to me, that means your fire. It's like some people are like, "oh, we're like, such as Uber frugal Savers, and we don't do anything". And it's not that it's, it's we figured out what makes us happy. And that's what we spend our money on. And we don't spend our money on the rest.

So, for me, I don't care about a fancy car. So, I'm not going to go and get that. If I inherited you know another million dollars today, which never going to happen, but if I did, my first step would not be to be like, "Okay, I'm going to go get", I don't even know what, you name whatever luxury car is out there. That means nothing to me, you know. So, it's just understanding what you value and aligning your actions with your values. And I think that's the biggest takeaway of fire and inherently, it means you end up spending less essentially, because you cut out the fluff, you cut out the stuff that doesn't matter, you're able to increase your savings rate, if you can increase your income too, that's even better. You know, some people are all about side gigs and stuff like that. Personally, I've never worked more than 40 hours a week, I'm all about work life balance. I would, this is not about deprivation. This is not about killing yourself and putting in hundred hours a week. I hear some people in your podcasts who` do that. And again, that's great. Like that's what drives them. But for me, it doesn't, you know, it's not a one size fits.

So, for me, it's all about balance, work life balance, having that family balance, being there for my family, I want to be there every day, every minute of every day. And this is just allowing me to propel that dream to be with my family now and say a year from now, 24/7. So, to me, that brings me the ultimate joy of spending time with my family. If someone doesn't have a family, you know, that's not going to be what they value. If they don't have kids, you know, they don't want to be home, they're not going to put that at their number one for their motivation for fire. So, it really just depends on the person and their situation. Some people want to travel the world, that's great, like I want to travel too, and we have that baked into our travel numbers. But it's not our ultimate goal when we reach fire to go travel for, I don't know, 10 years or as long as we can. That's not us. I want to travel a couple times a year, but so, it's not a one size fits all. It's a lifestyle. It's a change in your mindset and figuring out what makes you happy and inherently you grow that gap and are able to invest more, which propels you to reaching it even faster.

And I just want to over emphasize, like just becoming involved in the community has been so great for me. I've been kind of living in the closet like, so I already had to come out of the closet once as a lesbian, and that was fine. You know, like I was terrified of it, but it was fine. But now like, this year, I basically came out of the closet again and started opening up on my Instagram account and my blog, like, "hey, here we are", and like here on this podcast, right? Like, it's kind of scary to talk about it because mainstream doesn't get it. But like you said, it's growing like this is a movement and people are understanding it and more people are getting hooked and, like really grasping the positive sides to it because really, there's only positives here. It's like get out of debt, save money, do what you want then once you're free. It's freedom, you know? So, that was a long answer. Sorry. But that's, my answer.

**Clark:**No, I think you're spot on in the sense that it's different for everybody. And, oftentimes, right and for you, it sounds like money is kind of a tool to get you where you want to go, right? And it might not be $10 million. But for you, what's balance for you is spending time with your kid or kids. And, money is kind of a tool that will help you do that. And you don't need $5 million to do it. So, that's what fire is to you and I totally agree. I think it's different for very person. So yeah, good point. Just to close, I want to end with some rapid-fire questions here and then go into some last piece of mistakes and last piece of advice. So, what's the most expensive jeans or pair of pants you ever purchased?

**Courtney:**I want to say they're about $45 on sale from the gap. And funny enough they were about I think there were one size small and I was like, "Oh you know I'll fit in them one day and that day has never happened, my weight has stayed the same forever. So, I don't even think I've ever worn that. But that was my expensive pair.

**Clark:** Okay, most expensive shoes.

**Courtney:**Probably my winter boots now that I'm in Canada, you need good outer gear. I have a pair of Pajar which is a Canadian company, got a pair of boots that I think are like 250 normally I got them on sale for $100.

**Clark:**Okay, most expensive car.

**Courtney:**That would be the car we're driving now, the cars we're driving so I have a 2009 Toyota Corolla bought it for $7,000 in cash and my wife has a 2011 Chevy Equinox that she bought for $8700 and again, they both have, now they have about 50, 55,000 miles on them.

**Clark:**Okay, most expensive meal out that you've personally paid for.

**Courtney:**Our wedding. I'm surprised no one has said this or at least I haven't heard it on your podcast.

**Clark:**Yeah. Maybe because their parents pay for it or something.

**Courtney:**Okay, we funded our wedding 100%, we kept it very DIY. I think in total, it was about $9,000 for 90 people. So, we did good in terms of budget, but we spent about $3,000 on food and another $2,000 on drinks and alcohol. So, that's definitely the most expensive meal we've ever paid for. After that, maybe $100 for my wife and I to go out on a date. Yeah, maybe.

**Clark:**I think you kind of talked about this, items or item, or items or experiences spending more money on, is that travel for you?

**Courtney:**It's experiences, you know, whether it's travel or doing things outside, whether it's hiking or skiing or playing hockey, we both grew up playing hockey. So, skating on an outdoor rink, which is free but like you know, other things listed costs money. We also really value like annual expenses to, whether it's a national park pass, or a zoo pass or the Science Center, or our sports center, you know different things like that, that we can really utilize and get our money's worth from. Also, quality food from the grocery store. So, we don't really eat out much, we eat out maybe once a month, like we're not big into going out to eat. But we really do enjoy cooking. My wife's a really great cook. So, we are always looking for local food, whether it's from the farmers market, or just the local section of our grocery store and just getting to try out different things there.

**Clark:**Awesome, any favorite books or tools or websites? You said you don't use the budgeting apps or anything, so any books that have been influential?

**Courtney:**Yeah, a couple books. The simple path to wealth, as I mentioned before, if you're new to investing, don't know what to do, highly recommend that. Your money or your life, amazing book for anyone kind of new to fire or even if you're into fire and haven't read it. It's basically figuring out how much time are you spending for whatever it may be. It's just like a really great way to think about things like how many hours are you spending for those pair of shoes, things like that. Playing with fire, again, this would be great for anyone new to the whole fire concept. Meet the frugal woods. I love the frugal woods blog, and Liz came out with that book. In terms of minimalism, I really liked the book, Goodbye things. And I also really liked the book, The Story of Stuff, which is more on the consumer marketing overpraise that we are dealing. You know, that was a really great book too.

**Clark:**Yeah, it's interesting. That one hasn't been mentioned on our show. Last question here, range of household income through your working life.

**Courtney:**So, my income, I started off at $69,000 with my first job after my master's, that was in 2009. I stayed with this company primarily, I left and now I'm back with them. But my income has just slowly grown over the years. And now with my bonus, I make about $130,000. My wife, she's a nurse, and she worked for about four years after school before going on parental leave. And don't quote me on this, but I want to say she was making about $45,000 she was a casual nurse, so she wasn't working full time. So, I think that's about what she was making.

**Clark:** Awesome. And then last question, if you could just give, you know, two tips of advice, in a minute an elevator pitch to somebody on fire. What kind of would that elevator pitch be?

**Courtney:**Start early, like get into this, like fire is so amazing, if you're in school or just getting ready to finish school, and don't really know anything about the real world because school doesn't really teach you about that and what to do with your money. But again, this isn't just for young people like it's a path that takes about 10 to 15 years depending on your income, depending on your savings rate, that anyone can do. So, if you're in your 40's, and you could still retire early, you could still retire earlier than the typical 65, or even beyond that, at this point, typical retirement age. Advice that in terms of what I didn't do that I wish I could have done looking back, is I didn't max out my tax advantages, tax advantaged accounts early on. Again, I didn't really know what I was doing, but take advantage of those whether it's your 401k and IRA in the States or RSP, and TFSA in Canada, max those out.

And another thing that's not really fire related, but job related, is you need to look out for yourself in terms of your income and promotions. You need to promote yourself to your boss or your employer, when you think you have reached that point where you've earned a promotion. You know, they have so many things going on that, yes, you are important to them, but your promotion is probably not number one on their line item. And so, if you, not in an annoying way, but if you appropriately bring it up, chances are that promotion may come sooner rather than later. And that's something I didn't realize until later on either. And again, like you got to be careful with that, right. You know, you need to look out for yourself.

**Clark:**Yeah, great advice. And I think great interview and great story. I love how you guys have kind of figured out what works for you. You've realized what fire is for you and you've kind of gone full-fledged and attacked it. So really admirable story for you and your family. So again, that's Courtney with a net worth of $1.1 million. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

**Courtney:**Yeah. Thanks for having us. Appreciate it.

**Jace:**Thanks, Courtney.

**Courtney:**Thanks.

**Narrator:**Thanks for listening to the Millionaires Unveiled podcast, with Clark Sheffield and Jace Mattinson. For more stories, investment opportunities and information, check out our website at millionairesunveiled.com. See you next time when you'll hear from another everyday millionaire.