Brittany Lynch: Hey, everyone. Brittany Lynch here. Today, I have 2 great guests with me, Jeremy and Winnie from GoCurryCracker.com. It's their personal finance blog that they run while traveling the world during their early retirement. Winnie is actually with their son Julian right now, so it'll primarily be Jeremy on this interview, but there are 2 main reasons that I wanted to interview the both of them. First, they were able to retire in their 30s and become financially independent, which is an incredible accomplishment, and for listeners who are striving for financial independence, this is a really great opportunity to learn from someone who has achieved this goal at an early age.

The second reason that I really want to interview the both of them and their new baby is that they actually are living internationally, so I'm really intrigued by how they made the move out of the US and how that impacted their goal for early retirement, whether they were able to retire earlier as a result of the move, and in what other ways moving internationally impacts their personal finances. Jeremy and Winnie, I know she had to step away, I really appreciate you being here. Thanks for coming on.

Jeremy: Hey. Thanks for having us.

Brittany Lynch: No problem. That's Winnie in the background. No problem. Let me dive in with my first question. My first question is really a broad level question for someone who's maybe just getting started with, or even just getting familiar with the concept of financial independence. For someone who is interested in reaching financial independence, what are the high level steps involved?

How do you reach financial independence?

Jeremy: The idea of early retirement, when you boil it down to its [inaudible 00:01:36], it's really quite simple. It's, really, don't spend very much money. If you can live well on a middle to lower middle class cost of living while earning something higher than that, instead of spending things on [lifestyle inflation 00:02:00], buying bigger houses, bigger cars, you then instead invest that money so that instead of you working for dollars, your dollars start working for you. Then you let compound interest work for you, and then over a relatively short period of time of 10 to 20 years, your portfolio can start to generate more income than you actually spent.

Brittany Lynch: Right. The key concept there is really living below your means and, as you mentioned, don't spend a lot of money. I guess a lot is relative. It's all relative to what you make. Early retirement, financial independence, you really look at a percent of your savings, so you're saving right. When you were working, what percent were the 2 of you able to save of your take-home income?

Jeremy: Average, over the 10 years that we were really doing our heavy saving, was over 70%.

Brittany Lynch: Wow.

Jeremy: The last 3 years, Winnie had stopped working at that point, and we were really depositing my whole paycheck into our brokerage account. Really, we're already living off of investment income and saving my whole paycheck.

Brittany Lynch: Wow. Did your friends and family in your life, did they think what you were doing was crazy? What were their reactions?

Jeremy: Well, even though we told people that that's what we were doing, it wasn't really obvious from the outside. People at the office saw me ride my bike to work, and sometimes they think that was a little strange when they were driving their big SUVs, but for the most part, people didn't really comment or notice. We did things that none of our peers were doing. They just didn't necessarily see it.

We lived in a small apartment near the university in Seattle, and so our rent was a small fraction of what most people were paying or what they were paying on their mortgage. We didn't have a car. The neighborhood we were in was very walkable. We were a block from a grocery store, a few blocks from a library, a few blocks from a large park with old growth forest and a creek. That's where we spent our time. Between a bicycle and our feet and low rent and taking our own kitchen as a source of amazing food, we didn't really have to spend a lot of money. Most people spend 80% of their total cost of living on housing, transportation, and food, and we spent quite little on all of those areas.

Brittany Lynch: Did it feel like you were missing out on anything or cutting back? Did it feel like you were making a huge sacrifice while you were doing this process?

Jeremy: Well, any change feels a little weird when you first start it. We had to find the balance between minimizing spending and maximizing happiness or quality of life. At one point, we moved into a really small apartment in Chinatown. It's a newly refurbished building. It was 300 and some square feet, and anytime that you'd cook anything in the kitchen, the smoke alarm would go off. You'd walk down the hallway and it was everybody cooking with their doors open, and occasionally you'd see some old guy there in his tighty-whities cooking.

That wasn't a great environment for us, so after 2 months of trying it, we moved up, but we're able to test our boundaries by how little can we spend on housing, what percentage of our transportation can be from a bicycle. We just pushed those boundaries until we found a balance that worked for us. If we would have forced ourselves to stay in that Chinatown apartment, that would have been a sacrifice, but the place we ended up near the university felt massive by comparison. Everyday, we were like, "Maybe this place is too big." We found a happy balance.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, I think that that's a really good way of putting it, is testing your boundaries. People are really trained to spend a lot of money, but there are a lot of ways that you can cut, and so push in different areas to see what makes you comfortable while still saving more is a really great way of putting it. In the first question I asked you, you went over the high level steps of reaching financial independence. One of them, and the biggest one perhaps, is saving so you could put money aside for investments, but on the flip side of saving or another area of saving is shrinking your paycheck. Really, tax reduction in order to increase your savings. This is something you talk a lot about on your blog. Can you share some of the strategies you implemented to reduce your taxable income?

Jeremy: Sure. While you have a W-2 income or while you have a job, there's actually very little you can do. The things that you do have available to you are tax deductions from retirement planning vehicles like a 401(k) or an IRA. If you can put the maximum amount of money into those type of accounts, you can take an immediate tax deduction, and then all of the tax savings that you receive, invest that as well. That's about the limit of what you can do while working. Most of the tax advantages come later. As a working couple, if you're making median level US incomes or above, you can be saving 15% to 25% immediately, and then typically, you'll get a 401(k) matching, et cetera, employer contributions, and so you can get immediate returns from the tax and the matching of 50%+.

Brittany Lynch: Which is far more than most people are saving already, so looking into the tax reduction strategies is definitely a great place for someone to look for places to find savings.

Jeremy: Absolutely.

Brittany Lynch: In one of your points, you spoke about income with preferential tax treatment. Can you tell me a little bit more about what type of income this would fall into?

Jeremy: Sure. In the United States since 2010 or so with, first, the Bush tax cuts and then the extension from Obama, all qualified dividends and long-term capital gains are taxed at 0% as long as you're within the 15% marginal rate. What that means for a married couple filing jointly, you can make about $100,000 in investment income and pay zero tax. All other income sources, income from a job, income from interest, income from short-term gains, those are all taxed just like your paycheck, and you have very little control over the taxation [in the case 00:09:54].

Brittany Lynch: Got you. Would this include the investments you made into your 401(k), your IRAs as you were working?

Jeremy: Because you have annual contribution limits to the 401(k) and the IRA, you can really only save maybe about $20k a year per person in that case, and so you end up with additional savings in just a standard brokerage account. Any withdrawals from the 401(k) in the future are considered income and are taxed at that time, but all of the dividend and gain income would be tax free.

Now as long as you have no working income, as we have for the last few years, you can do withdrawals from your 401(k), and as long as those are small enough that your standard deductions and personal exemptions will wipe them out, that's about $20k a year for a married couple, you can move money from your 401(k) into a Roth IRA at

0% tax, and then now those gains will be tax free forever. If you look at our overall 401(k), we paid zero tax [inaudible 00:11:27] in, we transfer some off every year, we'll do that for the next 40 years, and so by the time we hit normal retirement ages, we'll have moved all of our 401(k) into a Roth IRA, zero tax in, and zero tax in the transfer, zero tax out.

Brittany Lynch: Getting smart with tax strategies is definitely an important strategy when it comes finances in general [for 00:11:53] early retirement. What did you spend time reading, what resources did you look at when you were becoming knowledgeable on tax strategy?

Jeremy: When I started looking, there was very little in the way of blogs. There's a lot of the useful information on the Bogleheads Forum. It's a web forum where people talk about investments and taxation. Then the rest of it is just I did my own taxes every year for 10+ years. Each year, I would come across things I didn't understand, and so I just start to read the IRS documentation and then seek out additional answers from there. It was a slow learning process. Now, I summarized all of that on our blog and make it a little easier for people, and I publish our tax returns so people can see it in practice.

Brittany Lynch: That's really nice benefit. For everyone who's listening, definitely go check out the blog, GoCurryCracker.com. It has so many great resources and information on the site, especially when it comes to taxes, which is typically something that people don't get excited about, but when you can find tens of extra thousands of dollars of savings in your taxes, it makes it a little more exciting, so check that out.

Another thing that I want to talk about is debt. A lot of other personal finance blogs that I've come across, they start their path for financial independence after they've gone out of debt, or many of them were never in debt in the first place. You spent your first 5 or 6 years on your path to financial independence just getting to zero, working to get out of your debt. What was your strategy for getting out of the debt? Were you putting money into your investments account at the same time, or were you just 100% focused on paying that off?

Jeremy: Yeah, just let me comment on the debt piece. When I graduated from college, I had about $40,000 in student loan and credit card debt, and the credit card debt was primarily to pay for food and gasoline to get to school. If you were to put that in 2015 dollars, that puts me in like the top 5% of all student loans, so we were deep in it. I grew up super poor, and everybody I knew who had debt was in a lot of trouble, and so debt terrified me.

Every possible dollar went towards paying off that debt. I did contribute to the 401(k), the minimum amount to get the full match because I was getting this short-term tax reduction and the match that was me giving me an immediate 30%+ return on the money, which is way higher than the student loan interest, but after that, if I had $5 left at the end of the month, I paid an extra $5 to the student loans. That went on for roughly 5 years.

Brittany Lynch: Did you just focus on paying off your highest interest loans first, or did you tackle an avalanche of the smallest debt amounts first to motivate you? Was there any specific strategy within prioritizing debt?

Jeremy: Yeah, math is your friend in this case. Just pay off the highest interest loan first. If you need the motivation, you can just look at the amount of interest you paid monthly going down. That number will shrink much more rapidly if you pay off the highest interest loans first.

Brittany Lynch: Absolutely. Paying off debt was a priority. Once you paid it off, you got to the point where you were at financial zero, so to speak, and you could start your path to financial independence. We've talked a little bit about saving your income, but what happens when you get to the point where you want to make these investments? Asset allocation. What is your asset allocation strategy?

Jeremy: I have one of the most simple strategies out there. We have nothing but index funds, and most of that [inaudible 00:16:30] 100% of it is invested in the stock market. No bonds. None of the other categories that people target. We just invested in the total broad market so we own everything that the stock market holds.

Brittany Lynch: When you make these investments, is it within a Vanguard ETF?

Jeremy: Yeah. Either Vanguard ETFs or mutual funds, whichever is more convenient for you, but they have the lowest fees which gives you the lowest burden on your portfolio, as well as the most efficient tax burden. Therefore, it gives you the greatest long-term growth. Yeah, all Vanguard all the time.

Brittany Lynch: That does make it easy. Are you investing in a number of their ETFs or are you just investing in the one ETF?

Jeremy: Let's see. We have 3. We have the Total US Market which is VTI.

Brittany Lynch: VTI.

Jeremy: [Which 00:17:43] is the ETF ticker. We also have the Total World ex-US which I have VEU as the ticker, but if I were to do it again today, I'd use VXUS as it holds more small caps. Then we have a little bit of VNQ which is [our

REIT 00:18:12] fund, and I'll probably be selling that in the near future and just putting it into VTI.

Brittany Lynch: Those 3 funds primarily at the moment.

Jeremy: Correct. Yeah, it's very simple.

Brittany Lynch: That's nice because I think investing in the stock market is often overwhelming for people. I do want to touch on that in just a second, but before I move on, do you allocate 33%, 33%, 33%, or do you prioritize one over the other?

Jeremy: I prioritize VTI. Because the price has changed drastically, and I never really look at them, I think we're about 70% VTI, about 20% VEU, and 10% or maybe less than 10% VNQ.

Brittany Lynch: While you ... Sorry, go ahead.

Jeremy: There are some things to think about because usually, the question people have is around international. "As we live abroad, do we want more international funds?" The reason we're heavily weighed towards the US corporations, US stock markets, is about 50% of the revenue from US companies is earned abroad already. We already have great international exposure through that, and then because accounting principles and regulations are much more transparent in the US, fees are lower. Tax burden is lower. That's why we focus on the US.

Brittany Lynch: I'm glad you mentioned that. Is it the strategy, the same strategy, that you more or less had over your 10 or 12 years of working, or was it refined over time?

Jeremy: It definitely was refined over time. At one point, I thought I was smart. "Oh, I can pick stocks, and I can read analyst statements and figure out how am I going to get the greatest return by investing in specific companies." It seemed like a good idea, but it never worked. The overall index always, over in a few years, outperformed anything that I did, so I just ended up putting it all in the index. It's just a lot easier and ends up getting better results.

How to Get Over the Fear of Investing

Brittany Lynch: I'm glad you mentioned that last part about investing in individual stocks because growing up in school, it's not like there's a personal finance class. At least there wasn't for me, which is really too bad, but a lot of people start out in investing by just selecting one stock, and then it doesn't work out, and they develop a fear of investing. What would you say to someone who does have a fear of investing and maybe has concerns that they'll lose decades of growth overnight? For example, what happened to you and your personal finances in 2008 when the market crashed.

Jeremy: Yeah. [Interesting thing 00:21:32], 2008, we lost about $400,000.

Brittany Lynch: Wow.

Jeremy: Yeah, that seems like a big number. I was really, really angry at the time, but the reason I was angry was because we didn't have any cash to buy more stock.

Brittany Lynch: Right.

Jeremy: When there's a 50%-off sale on shoes, like Black Friday or something, people fight and trample each other to get in the door to get these great discounts, but when the same thing happens in stocks, the stampede is in the other direction. We were definitely buying on the way down in 2008. I even debated taking out a margin loan to just go in even bigger when it was way down. [It was played 00:22:28] too conservative at the time. I didn't do it, but the stocks have tripled since then.

When you have these big, every 15-, 25-year events where everybody is panicking and the market is down, you only lose if you sell. The principles are still sound. The companies, if you look at the companies that make up the stock market, Apples, and Googles, and you got Tesla, and you got these amazing innovative companies out there, and they're still doing business. They're still making income. They're still innovating. That cycle of innovation is going faster and faster every year. 30 years from now, you'll look back at the overall stock market growth and you'll be like, "Well, I can see 2008 in there. It's like a little blip, but it seems like a big deal at the time." It's not.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, and if you look at historical stock market performance, especially in the US, US businesses are growing year after year on average, and so that's really what you're buying. When you're buying a stock, it's a portion of the US business or whatever country that stock is from. Would you say that ... Go ahead.

Jeremy: A lot of people, when they say, "Oh, isn't investing in stocks risky," everything in life is risky. We can't control risk. We can only choose how much of it we take up. If you [say 00:24:19], "Oh, stocks are risky, so I'm going to put all of my savings under my mattress," just to pick a weird extreme, it's like, well, yeah, you've eliminated stock market risk, but you've taken on inflation risk and currency risk.

All you've done is change the problem a little bit, and now you've added an even larger risk of you're not going to get any growth, and so in 30 years, are you going to have enough money to eat? You absolutely need to understand the philosophy of the stock market as individual companies that hire the best and brightest people that focus on innovation and market growth, and you're basically owning a fraction of those companies and hiring those people to work for you.

Brittany Lynch: Right. In the case, just stepping back a second when we were talking about selecting an individual stock, that's where risk is really higher. You're more exposed to risk because investing in one company, it could go really well or it could not go well, whereas, for those who are maybe not as familiar with investments, mutual funds, ETFs, this is a collection of lots of different stocks. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the idea behind them is that maybe you don't have the same possible returns of investing in one stock, but your risk exposure is less.

Jeremy: Yeah, I guess your overall statistics of the return will be significantly different, but the thing to think about is if you owned Enron, our global [crash in 00:26:10] 1999 or something, when something went wrong, you lost 100% of your money. Those companies no longer exist, but if you owned it as part of, say, VTI which owns over 3,000 companies in different [ratings 00:26:26], you are maybe affected by 1%. 1% is not a big deal when you're looking at a long-term portfolio. 100% is, of course.

Brittany Lynch: Right. The concept of risk exposure, and just even understanding the stock market in general, it's really important as you start your path towards financial independence and pursuing that path. As you were going through your path of learning all of this information, were there any books or resources or websites specifically outside of your own personal finance blog that you would recommend to our listeners?

Jeremy: Sure. Just from a life philosophy or a relationship with money standpoint, the book, "Your Money or Your Life," is amazing. It has like a 7-step result program in there to help you track your spending, and then evaluate if that spending is actually maximizing your happiness. Does buying a latte give you the happiness you think it does when you realize that it takes you 4 hours of working to pay for it after taxes, after your cost of your commute, and et cetera? It helps people really develop a beautiful relationship with their money.

Beyond that, there are an amazing number of books on investing. Most of them, I don't like because they tend to be overly complex. They use like 20 acronyms and assume you know things, and so it's hard to get started as a beginner, but there's one site that I really like. It's a blog by Jim Collins. The URL for that is JLCollinsNH.com. He has something called the Stock Series which a series of like 30 blog posts. It starts out very simple, the philosophy of investing and the mechanics of the stock market, and then it builds up from there into how to build your portfolio and choose asset allocation and so on, but a couple of hours of reading through that site and you probably know more than 90% of the people out there.

Brittany Lynch: Awesome. Can you repeat that URL one more time?

Jeremy: JLCollinsNH.

Brittany Lynch: .com.

Jeremy: .com. Jim Collins is his name and he lives in New Hampshire. I think when he started his blog, it was just meant for a few friends, and so that was easy for them to know. "Hey, Jim lives in New Hampshire. Jim Collins." When his site took off, yeah, [a nuance to 00:29:31] URL, but it's fun.

Brittany Lynch: All right. That sounds great. I'll definitely include that link below this interview in addition to the link to Jeremy's blog as well. Moving on a little bit from specific investment strategies, I want to talk about your move overseas. Specifically, why did you decide to leave the US and what are the benefits for someone who are maybe looking to retire overseas financially?

Jeremy: Yeah. The why is pretty easy to answer. It was one of our motivations for saving. It was just that we love travel. You get to immerse yourself in unique cultures. Every new culture you would come across is like a reflection of yourself. You see all of the things that you assumed in life were true are now thrown into question, and so you get to learn about yourself and learn about other cultures at the same time. We've been to over 40-some countries. Our son is 8 months old now. We're in Thailand right now. This is his third country.

The motivation was largely just the travel, like you will see unique places, experience new cultures, but when you look at financial advantages of it, we're in Chiang Mai, Thailand right now and we're renting a one-bedroom apartment. It's a modern building. It's got a secure entry. They clean the whole building, including our apartment, twice a week. We got a rooftop infinity pool, a saltwater pool with beautiful views of temples. There's a great gym. Central location. It's like we could not find a better place, and it's $375 a month.

Brittany Lynch: Wow.

Jeremy: That's what people pay for parking in San Francisco. It's pretty incredible. When you are able to pick and choose your location, you can substantially reduce your overall cost of living. We're going to spend something like $2,000 a month for the 3 of us living here, and that's just because we spend ridiculous amounts of money on eating out, and there are people who live here for 500 [inaudible 00:32:18] a month.

The beautiful thing about this is because our portfolio can support much more, we're basically continuing to live below our means and our portfolio continues to grow. This was a deal while we were working. When we look out 10 years from now, our portfolio will probably at least double or probably triple. Then maybe we'll move on from there into a penthouse, living in Manhattan or something.

Brittany Lynch: That sounds good, too.

Jeremy: By basically instead of viewing yourself as, say, like a citizen of the United States, you can view yourself as a citizen of the world. We're all in this together. People everywhere have similar goals in life. They want their children to be healthy and happy and have a better lifestyle than they did. We have something in common with people everywhere. By exploring that, you can make great friends, you save a little money, you make the world a better place. When the stock market goes up, say it doubles this year, we can choose like, "Hey, maybe we'll go live in Paris for 6 months, or Tokyo," some of the more expensive areas, and if the stock market drops 30%, it's 2008 all over again, we love living in Guatemala and it only costs us like $1,500 a month to live very large there.

Brittany Lynch: You have a really global perspective of your neighborhood essentially, and you can adjust it based on your preference, as well as what's going on with the market.

Jeremy: Absolutely.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, and just from my perspective as well, I grew up in Indonesia when I was younger, so I'm sure it's just a really great experience for your son Julian to be able to see all of these countries and travel all around the world with you guys.

Jeremy: Yeah. He's 8 months now, and I don't know how much of it he'll remember. I don't remember anything from before 3 or 4 years old, but he's getting great socialization opportunities. The people of Thailand are incredibly warm and friendly and love children. He gets picked up and held by probably 30 people a day. Now, people come up and he just reaches his arms out like, "Okay." He's getting this incredible, warm, social environment that he's learning. We had a similar experience in Japan, a similar experience in Taiwan, and I'm sure that will continue as we move through Malaysia and Singapore [and on 00:35:18].

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, no, that's definitely a really nice aspect of the experiences that you guys are able to afford as a result of the decisions that you made over your working career, and ever since then, too. This has been really, really great information so far. Just, I want to recap a little bit for everyone who's listening what we've talked about so far. Jeremy and Winnie's approach to financial independence was really living below their means. Living below the amount of money that they were earning.

You mentioned that you had an average saving rate of about 70% during your working years, which is definitely a lot higher than the average person is saving, but it's really quite amazing when you look at your saving rate and the relationship that that has to the speed at which you'll retire. When I realized the relationship that saving rate had to the speed at which you're going to retire, it just really puts it in perspective that the decisions you're making today, the trade off is it can literally mean, overtime, years of extra work. If there's one thing I'd say, is definitely spend your time taking a look at how your saving rate does impact the speed at which you'll retire because that might just be the wake-up call you need to save a little bit more.

Jeremy: I think the average saving rate in the US right now is a little below 5%.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah.

Jeremy: If you're saving 5%, that means you're spending 95%. On that track, even investing in the stock markets a lot, it's going to take you 60 years to reach a point where you can live off your portfolio, but if you save, say, 50%, after one year of working, you could take a year off. If you save 90% after one year of working, you could take 9 years off. In just a few years of working and saving a very high percent than just 50%+, it doesn't take very long for your portfolio to just grow into massive sizes.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. To that point, one of the things I thought was interesting that you mentioned earlier was that your portfolio is actually still growing while you're living off of it. Not only that, it sounds like you're actually ... Has your spending increased since you stopped working or has it decreased?

Jeremy: Well, it's increased. We spend roughly twice as much as we did when we were living in Seattle.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, so I think that that's really interesting, too. I think a lot of people think, "Well, if I am making these sacrifices right now, does this mean I have to live like this forever," and you're a great example of that not having to be the case.

Jeremy: Yeah. Because our portfolio continues to grow, we could essentially inflate our lifestyle overtime. That reference of living in Paris or Manhattan or whatnot. We consciously started traveling in lower cost of living countries, Mexico and Central America and now Southeast Asia versus, say, Western Europe and so on, specifically for that reason, that we're continuing to live below our means. We're still saving 30% to 50% of our income, so our portfolio is going to continue to bloom. As a result of that, all the things that people think, "Well, I want the car, I want the big house, et cetera," we can go buy all that right now and still be retired purely as a consequence of not having those things for a period while we were saving 70%. We just don't want them.

Brittany Lynch: Right. Maybe in the future, you'll decide that that is something that you prioritize, but for now, it's not. Maybe it's just because of what you'd like, but also, there was some strategy involved in not just saving to reach retirement, but also your post retirement strategy. There was a strategy there, as you mentioned, starting in the lower cost countries first.

Jeremy: Yup. That's correct. We're spending a little more now because we have a bunch of medical care for ... We had IVF in order to have a baby. We now have child expenses, although they're basically zero right now. Formula and diapers don't cost very much. In 5 years or so, we need to decide what we're going to do as far as education. We think we're going to homeschool and roadschool, but that'll be a whole new experience for us. We're not sure what that means yet. If we try it and when we try it and we decide this isn't really the best thing for his future, then we can settle into a great school or district. Live the normal life.

Brittany Lynch: I was homeschooled for a number of years, and one of the coolest things about the lifestyle you're living right now and Julian's future as far as schooling goes is when you're being taught about volcanoes, you can be sitting on a volcano and you can have a much more interactive learning experience because the world really is your classroom, which is really cool.

Jeremy: Yes.

Brittany Lynch: With that said, there has been a lot of really great information in this interview so far. I really appreciate it. Is there any last piece of advice you have for our listeners as they continue their path to financial independence?

Jeremy: What I think is probably the number one wealth-building tool out there is the bicycle. Even for like a temporary trial, find a place close to work, rent a place that's smaller than you think you need, ride your bike everyday. You'll discover that without even really trying very hard, that your savings rate can go from US averages to 50% just by cutting off those, that big place you live in, the car, and then start to make meals at home. With some practice, you'll make better than a restaurant quality food at home for a fraction of the price, and now you're suddenly saving 50%+.

Brittany Lynch: I think that that's a great [inaudible 00:42:11] advice, is testing out your comfort zone. Try biking to work, try moving close to work, try cooking at home and improving your cooking skills to see if that can increase your savings rate. These little changes can make a huge, huge difference in your savings rate. Literally, one change like biking to work could shave 15 years, 15 years, off of your retirement date. I just pulled that number out of there, but it's probably something like that, isn't it?

Jeremy: Yeah, it's up there. I've been asked several hundred times over the last several years, "Is there anything about your old life you missed?" The answer is basically no, but if there was one thing, it's my bicycle commute to work.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. Maybe that's not something you would have realized before, so it's a good thing to test out and to try to make these changes in your life on your path to financial independence. Thank you so much for being here. I really appreciate it. This is really great information. Again, for anyone who's interested in learning more about Jeremy and Winnie and their strategies and path to financial independence, definitely check out their blog, GoCurryCracker.com. Jeremy, that's the best place for them to learn more about you, correct?

Jeremy: Yeah. There's a "Start Here" page on there. I read every comment and every email we receive, so if anybody has questions, we're here for you.

Brittany Lynch: Awesome. Well, we appreciate that. All right. Well, thank you so much. I appreciate you guys taking some time out of your morning to speak with me and provide this information for our listeners.

Jeremy: Thank you, Brittany.

Brittany Lynch: All right. I just stopped that recording. Again, I appreciate it. That was great.

Jeremy: My pleasure. Thank you for having us.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah.

Jeremy: I love the idea that people can have an easier start than we did.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. Me, too. I just think it's crazy that ... Did you have a personal finance class in your school?

Jeremy: I think in like 8th grade or so, we had a class that involved [inaudible 00:44:35] like how to balance a checkbook. We did some competition where we had $100, virtual dollars, to buy stocks, but with no idea of what that meant. It was just like, "Hey, who's going to get the best return," and everybody just picked a random ticker. [Over the semester 00:44:53], it's, "Oh, I doubled my money," or, "I got zero." There's no life lessons there. That was it. The rest was just School of Hard Knocks.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, I guess there are. The great thing about the internet now is we can learn from everyone else's experiences as well. That's really what I'm trying to do, is interview as many people who have personal experience in not just retiring from investments, but also maybe setting up side businesses and anything that has to do with reaching financial independence. Distilling that information so that they can have a easier time of reaching financial independence, or just having less financial stress in their life.

Jeremy: Yeah, just even doing better than average.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, which doesn't take much.

Jeremy: Right. Yeah, unfortunately, that's true, but, yeah, it doesn't take much.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. Yeah, so I appreciate it. I ultimately will pull a blog post out of this and I'll send you a copy over. Like I said, if you guys have any questions about Indonesia at all, especially about Bali or Flores, definitely reach out because I'd love to help you guys out at all if I can.

Jeremy: Okay. Great. Right now, we know we're going to be in Singapore in early March just for a few days. Then we have like 3 weeks, so we're still trying to figure out where we go.

Brittany Lynch: Okay.

Jeremy: We just know we're in Taipei in early April, we're in Singapore early March. Somewhere in the middle, we're going to do something else. When you mentioned the Komodo island, I think that'll be very cool.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. It's ... Sorry, go ahead.

Jeremy: If you have some favorite places that you think are just ... because we've been to Bali, and I know it's super Western touristy. If there's a little more ...

Brittany Lynch: Off the beaten path?

Jeremy: Yeah, where it's not 90% Americans and Australians. I would love, yeah, to go somewhere a little more off the beaten path, yeah.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. Well, I'll send you an email with just off the top of my head. My mom, she used to live in Bali. She just moved to Flores. It's in a little town called Labuan Bajo, and it's the town that you have to go to in order to go to Komodo island because obviously, you [inaudible 00:47:30] Komodo dragons [live on 00:47:31] Komodo island, so it's where all the boats come in. This part of Indonesia is [inaudible 00:47:38]. The island [is 00:47:42] really different than I've ever, ever seen. They're pretty crazy. She actually has a little bed and breakfast there, or a hotel, so to speak. I can send you the link. It's right in the center.

Jeremy: Yeah, that would be great.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah. She'll actually be there. I'll be in Bali and Flores at the end of March and early April, so there's a chance we'd even overlap, but I'll send you some information because it's definitely worth going to.

Jeremy: That all sounds awesome. Absolutely, if you're in the area, let's meet up.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, that would be really great. I'd like that a lot. Even, I can send some recommendations for less touristy areas of Bali, too, because it's a big island.

Jeremy: Yeah. Okay. Thank you so much.

Brittany Lynch: Yeah, no problem. All right. Thank Winnie for me, too, and say hello to Julian for me.

Jeremy: Okay. Will do.

Brittany Lynch: All right. Take care. Thanks again.

Jeremy: You bet. Bye-bye.

Brittany Lynch: Bye.