

Up until recently, my retirement plans involved daydreaming and no serious thought. Just like anyone else, I relished the idea of one day living in some tropical paradise, but I had never seriously thought about how I was going to accomplish that goal. Retirement planning is a pretty easy thing to put off, after all. For many people, money is tight on a day-to-day basis. Why think about the future when you are having enough difficulty coping with the present? In reality, however, a little bit of extra planning can help you prepare for a secure future without making things too much more difficult in the here and now. Put away a little money here and a little bit of money there as part of a coherent retirement plan, and soon you have a fortune growing.

Of course, the first few steps of retirement planning can be pretty difficult. When it comes down to it, there is a lot more to planning your retirement than saving small change in the piggy bank! There are different long-term investment options, retirement benefits from employees, and of course health and life insurance to consider. I'm not saying that planning a retirement is one of the most difficult challenges you will face in your life, but it does require sound financial advice. Hiring a good retirement planner is well worth the cost. No matter what you think you know about investment, unless you have advanced credentials in it, you had better leave it to experts.

When I first started working on my own retirement planning, I didn't really know what I was getting into. I made some medium risk, medium-term investments with my wife. Some of them did well and others did poorly. We made a little bit of money, but we were no closer to having our futures planned out than before. There was no coherent strategy to it all.

Fortunately, we have a close friend who is a financial planner. Over drinks one day, he casually asked about our retirement planning, and we told them. He was pretty surprised that we had not been more serious about the whole thing, and offered to work as our financial advisors. We took him up on it, met formally the next week, and began to iron out the details. It took time, but eventually we were able to work out a real, viable plan for the future.