

How Hash Assad helped Monique Foltinek plan for an early retirement and feel a sense of freedom and security





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MONIQUE FOLTINEK

HIGHLIGHTS

Monique Foltinek is a 56-year-old single professional in the oil and gas industry in Calgary.

Growing up seeing her parents living paycheque to paycheque and relying on only their pensions in retirement, Monique knew she wanted a more stable financial future. She wanted to retire early to enjoy life while she was still active. She dreamed of “Freedom 55” and her retirement was always very important to her.

Through implementing solid financial planning and investment strategies working with Hash Assad, Monique is now almost at her target and is looking forward to retiring on her own terms.

Challenge

Plan for early retirement and reach a retirement income level that will give her security, freedom and peace of mind

Solution

Personalized advice from a Certified Financial Planner with insightful retirement and investment strategies, along with a deep understanding of her needs and goals

Result

Well on the way to achieving her retirement goals, feeling excited and has a sense of security about her future



Growing up, Monique had seen her parents living paycheque to paycheque, with things like big family vacations and other lifestyle choices always being out of reach. Even in their retirement, she saw her parents living from one pension paycheque to the next. She knew she wanted more when she retired. She wanted health, happiness, and comfort. She yearned for a sense of security.

So, when she was in her 30s, Monique seriously began looking into investing.

“I said to myself: I need to start investing. I need to start saving for my retirement because as good of a life my parents had, I don't want to just rely on my paycheque to paycheque.”

The Challenge

Putting in place a retirement plan that would allow her to live comfortably without having to rely solely on pension income

Prior to working with Hash Assad at Assad Wealth Management, Monique had worked with two other investment firms but wasn't quite satisfied with the results she was seeing. She was putting in money and paying for the advisory fees but wasn't seeing any favorable change in the advice she was getting or in her investment portfolio.

The “Freedom 55” dream was instilled in her mind from a young age and that was a dream she held on to. In her 30s, the golden number that banks and financial institutions tout as the wealth target Canadians need to retire comfortably seemed unachievable. A long road of investing and wealth management lay ahead of her.

With the first firm, her portfolio was moving very slowly and she wasn't seeing the growth she wanted. At that rate, she would be at least 65 by the time she could retire. Monique decided it was time for a change and moved to a second advisor.

“I told them how drastically important my retirement funds are and

how possessive I am of my money because I work hard for it and I've saved my entire life," says Monique. "I haven't lived an extravagant life."

However, Monique did not see the results she wished to see with this second company she worked with.

"I wasn't getting out of it what I was putting in."

The Solution

A proactive financial advisor who understands Monique's goals, has knowledge of the market and is able to give solid financial planning advice and strategies

In 2015 when the oil market crashed, Monique was laid off from her job. Being laid off for the first time was hard, but Monique soon got a new job and it was there that she met Hash.

When Hash suggested that she work with him to meet her investment goals, Monique - already dissatisfied with the results she was seeing with her current investment firm - decided to give it a try. She saw that he was smart and well-educated.



"In no kind words, I told him 'Don't mess with my money!'" she says with a chuckle. "As I'm getting older, I'm getting more careful with my money."

Hash started working on creating Monique's IG Living Plan™. This involved putting together a comprehensive plan that explored all aspects of Monique's financial well-being and integrated her values and goals with tax-efficient strategies and individualized investment solutions. While designing the



But soon she saw that Hash was well-versed with the market and knew what he was doing.

“He does more than the surface type of research,” says Monique. “He does his analysis and I can just imagine what kind of Excel spreadsheets or programs he runs. Any type of question that I would have about what his suggestion was, without a hesitation he could answer any of my questions. Not once did he ever say, I have to get back to you on that.”

Monique found Hash’s suggestions and strategies personalized and insightful.

“He knew more about me than I did about myself - about what was good for me.”

Slowly, Monique’s trust in Hash and the process grew.

Monique’s portfolio went through periods of market volatility like most did, but unlike her previous advisors Hash was always there to reassure her and advise patience.

“We’re always in it for the long-term,” he would say.

plan, Hash kept these key dimensions of her financial life front and centre: managing cash flow efficiently; preparing for the unexpected; planning for major expenditures; optimizing retirement; and sharing wealth.

In the beginning, Monique was skeptical of the success she could have with Hash and was more frequently involved in reviewing her statements to make sure they were going in the right direction.

“I've had a couple falls in my portfolio during my term with Hash, but he's always been there to help me up and brush me off and say, ‘Hey, don't worry, we got this, it'll come back’.”

Hash’s advice has helped Monique go in the direction she wanted to, in addition to being able to pull through the falls.

“He's been very active in my investment where he will see that we've ridden the wave of a certain stock and will inform me that we've got out of it what we wanted,” says Monique.

Working with Hash, Monique was able to learn about new ways of investing and new equities. He has taught her what to look for in a stock and how to assess its history. Hash taught her about the Tax Free Savings Account (TFSA) and helped her stock that up. The companies she had worked with earlier had not told her anything about it.

“He tells me what to expect. He is the uber professional in his field.”

Among all the firms she worked with, Monique credits Hash as making her feel the most confident and exceeding her expectations. Hash always asks her what level of risk she is comfortable with.

“We’re not going on the risky end anymore,” is Monique’s answer. “I’m comfortable just to go on the slow and steady now.”

Monique loves that Hash has always treated her as more than just a client number. Their relationship is much more than professional and she sees him as a friend.



“He makes me feel like I'm his only client.”

Over the years, Monique has become much more confident about the process of financial planning and investing and has learned to trust Hash and his advice. She no longer feels the need to tally numbers and micromanage her investments. Now, she only goes into her spreadsheet once every four to five months just to bring it up to date.

The Results

Almost at the finish line and looking forward to security and freedom in retirement



After seven years of working with Hash, Monique says she is feeling pretty good and is looking forward to her retirement.

“I can see the end of the rainbow,” she says.

Monique has done her research and made a plan with Hash predicting how much she would require to retire comfortably, what her needs are and a general roadmap for life after work.

“I've worked my entire life, both looking after my parents and myself and whatnot. So retirement for me is the beginning of a new life, It's when I get to have fun.”

Monique says without Hash she would be working till 65 and still worrying and stressing about money.

When she told her father who is used to the old-school way of working and retiring that she was planning an early retirement, Monique got a bewildered “You can't do that!”

“I said, but dad, you got to understand, you got to hit the sweet spot. There's no point retiring when you can't walk anymore. There's going to be 10 years of fun, bike riding, activity, travel. We work to retire. That's the golden ticket, the golden ticket, man.”

Monique is excited about the future and is looking forward to “every day being a Saturday” and the “freedom to do” whatever she wants to.

“I don't want to work till 65 and then die at 70 and not have lived for it.”

Monique credits Hash for helping her reach her retirement goals and helping her grow her portfolio.

“And as much as I believe that I am responsible for a huge part of my investment success...I'd have to say that I owe a lot of it to Hash.”

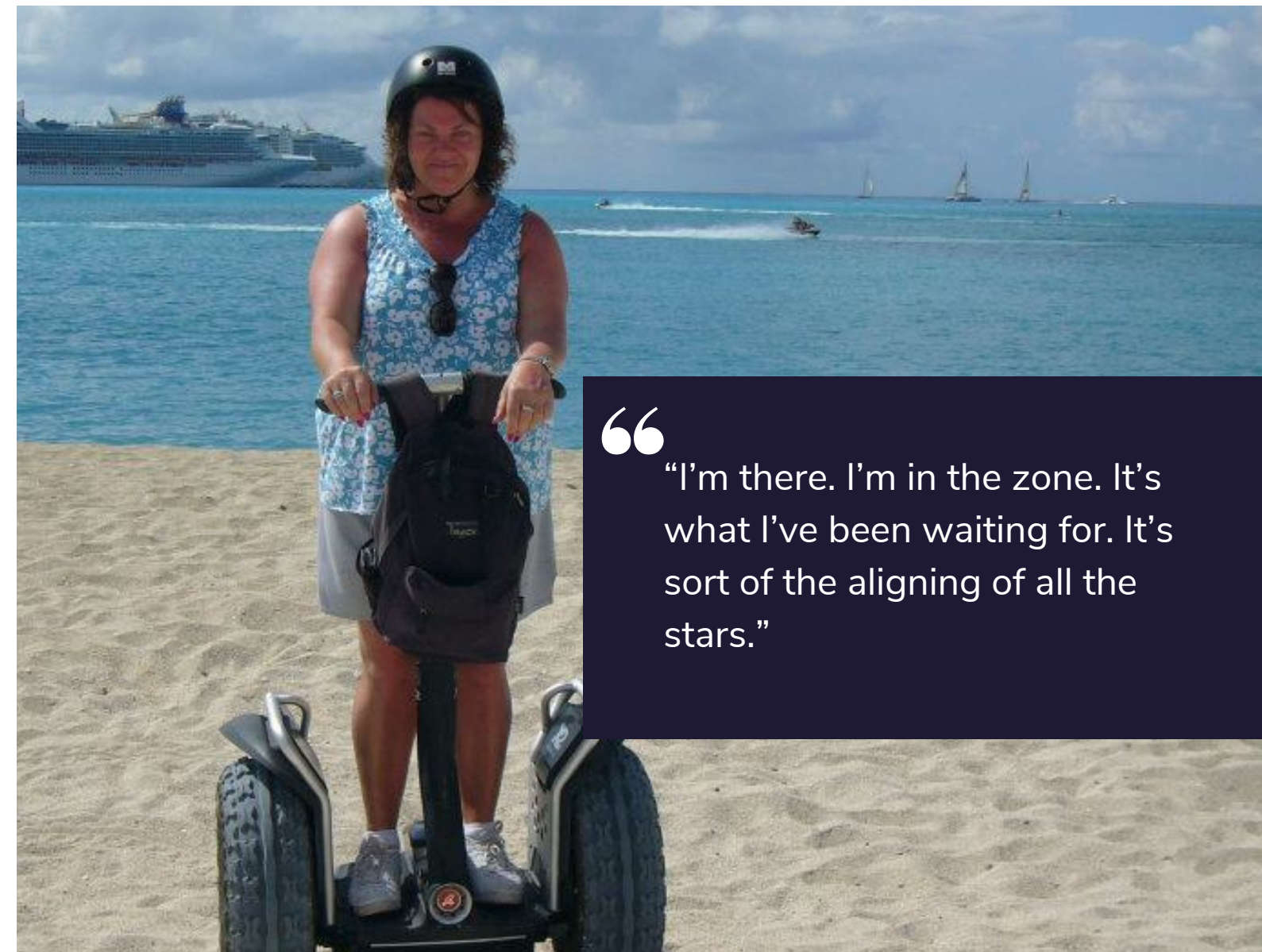
She is thrilled that she met Hash and invested with him.

“If I'd only met Hash 20 years ago, I'd be on a beach somewhere right now.”

For the last five years, Monique says her biggest concern has been trying to understand that number that would let her retire comfortably.

“What's the number?” she recalls herself asking.

She remembers seeing news reports giving estimates about the golden number Canadians need to retire comfortably. And based on their discussions, Hash would plug in numbers into his computer program to come up with correct estimates. This year during their annual review, Monique saw those exact numbers being reaffirmed. She finally feels she is there.



“I'm there. I'm in the zone. It's what I've been waiting for. It's sort of the aligning of all the stars.”

“If the government says it's okay, and Hash and I have said it's okay and his program says it's okay, I think it's okay.”

“I guess it was just, it was time. It was Kismet. It was whatever you want to call it,”

Monique says meeting her goal has given her a sense

of security.

“It’s given me peace of mind,” she says. “It’s given me relief.”

Retirement has always been very important to her since she has worked hard towards it for so many years.

“I really put a lot of value in the money that I earn and save. It's all I have. So, to finally be at the finish line and be able to sit back and reap what I've sowed is overwhelming. I mean, it's a dream come true. I really can't believe that I've made it.”

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Monique says she would definitely recommend others to work with Hash, adding that it is essential they have some knowledge about the market as well.

“You have to have some experience or understanding of what goes up, what goes down. As good as Hash is, you know, he's not infallible. So, as long as you're able to take a hit - and

Hash has always been so reassuring about those - I would tell them: know what you want, know what you need, trust Hash and go from there.”





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