

Hi, this is Wayne Rivers at FBI, and *We Build Better Contractors*.

4th of July is coming up, so I want to bounce off an article by our friend Arlin Sorenson. You've heard Dennis and I talk about Arlin so many times. He does a daily written blog. I don't know how he does it. Just doing a once-a-week blog is challenging enough for us. I can't imagine doing it every day. But Arlin's stuff is gold.

If you haven't subscribed and you want to, let me know, and I'll request that he add you to the list. But this was from October of '21. But I think it really applies when we start to think about July 4th and freedom and the freedoms that we enjoy in our countries, in the US and Canada. Arlin says there's lots of different types, states, and levels of freedom. These are the five freedoms that he came up with. What about this is important to you? I'd like to hear what your definition is. How do you define freedom? All of us have different things that we measure, whether overtly or covertly. I'd like to hear what you guys think when it comes to freedom. Put that in the comments, please.

All right. The five freedoms. The first one is financial freedom. I mean, that's an obvious one, isn't it? You don't have to be rich Arlin says, and I agree. But you do have to have enough money to take care of the basic necessities of life and maybe a little bit more so that you have freedom from worry about money. Plan and budget. I know I'm preaching to the choir. Most of you already do this. But especially younger folks who get the blog... Save money because, without financial freedom, it's impossible to have the next four freedoms on this list.

The second is location freedom. Freedom to move about the country, as they say at Southwest Airlines. There is a tremendous outflow in our country right now from certain states and certain cities. That's because people have the freedom to change their location when it's no longer satisfying. People are voting with their feet. I mean, that's what it amounts to. You want to spend your time where you find quality in your life. Freedom of location is awfully important.

The third is health freedom. The worse your health, the less free you are, the more tied to one place you are, the more tied to even a tiny footprint of a place you are. Better health equals more freedom. Nobody thinks about retiring at age 65 and not being able to travel and doing all the things that we dream of our whole lives. Poor health means forget all that stuff, and you don't want to be there. Get plenty of exercise, eat right, and get plenty of rest. That's a tough thing for contractors who are often driven with really, really, really hard ethics.

The fourth is lifestyle freedom, deciding what you want to do when you want to do it and where you want to do it. Lifestyle freedom... very important.

The fifth freedom is, I guess, maybe the way... Maybe this is the most important. You can't do any of these things without financial freedom. But if you think about time freedom... We talked about The Happiness Equation, Neil Pasricha's book. He's got a beautiful way of breaking down the week.

There's 168 hours in the week. Neil says 56% of those hours, one-third... It breaks down to third increments. 56 hours is work in construction. I think, in construction, the 60-hour work week is the norm. I know sometimes it's much tougher than that. But 56 rounds out pretty closely to 60. If you're healthy, you sleep about eight hours a day. Again, some of us sleep a little less. But that's another 56 hours a week. That means you have 56 additional hours a week to do stuff. That might be riding your bicycle. It might be taking a vacation with your kids and grandkids. It might be just enjoying nature and going for walks with your wife. It could be a number of different things. But that third 56 hours a week probably contributes more to the quality of our lives than anything else.

Maybe the work week does, depending on the culture of your company. But assuming it's a healthy company culture and you love what you do, that part is taken care of. The third 56-hour chunk, I think, is what people really need to be focusing on. Now, if you're working a hundred hours a week, that chunk is horribly compressed. It's also affecting your sleep. Try to balance your time out: 56 hours at work, 56 hours of sleep, 56 hours of doing the things you love to do.

We'd love to hear what you define as freedom and what you're doing to increase the quality of your life. Happy July 4th in the USA. This is Wayne Rivers at FBI, and *We Build Better Contractors*.