

# Breaking Free: Embracing Nomadic Minimalism with Brendon and Karson Stinson

## LESS HOUSE MORE MOOLA

We help the tiny house community use their lower housing costs to build financial independence.

With Laura Lynch



Full Episode Transcript

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# Breaking Free: Embracing Nomadic Minimalism with Brendon and Karson Stinson

Are you ready to break free from a conventional life and achieve financial independence through your version of tiny living, but you're feeling stuck trying to figure out the money part? Does the pressure to conform to societal norms make it even more difficult to embrace an unconventional lifestyle?

Well, you're in the right place.

I'm Laura Lynch, host of the Less House More Moola Podcast, where every Thursday, I'll bring you captivating interviews with individuals who have successfully made the transition to tiny living. They defied expectations and are thriving in their unique lives.

We'll also dive deep into industry resources to address common financial concerns on your tiny journey. Together, we'll explore the emotional and practical aspects of pursuing an alternative lifestyle. I'll describe a clear framework for project planning and cash flow management. Our goal is to intentionally build financial security and make a positive impact through our alternative American dream.

So, gear up for an exciting and empowering journey to create a life that truly resonates with you. Let's dive into today's episode and take the first steps towards financial independence and purpose through tiny living.

Alright, well, Karson and Brendon, thank you so much for joining me. As I said to you a minute ago, it's kind of terrifying, I have to admit, I'm quite nervous because you just don't know where things are going to go when you first start them, and yet at the same time, you're so scared of screwing up.

So, I'm sure that all of our listeners will know that if they're thinking about heading off in this tiny direction, how scary it is to start something new. So, thanks for being scary in the newness with me today.

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Brendon: Absolutely.

Karson: Excited to do it.

Brendon: Yeah, happy to be here and thanks for having us on.

Laura: So, I just first started following you guys because I saw you interviewed in a tiny house expedition, I think it was video, and I found your story really fascinating. And also, I found it great the way you went into some of the deeper parts of it.

Sometimes, it's always easy for us to talk about maybe the build or the logistics, but when people are trying to figure out their tiny life or how they might transition, there's a lot of other pieces to that, and it's relationship pieces, and it's emotional pieces, and it's family pieces, and all those things.

So, I'm so glad that you all were vulnerable enough in your earlier video to share some of that, so thanks for doing that for the community. So, you all are the flyaway effect, so I'm going to ask you about your history.

So, tell me a little bit about what home was like to you growing up, your physical home and where you came from.

Karson: Sure, so we are from pretty small suburbs outside of Kansas City, Missouri. We come from pretty different backgrounds, even though we were like 18 miles apart. I came from a more cows than people kind of town, at the time there were two stoplights.

And our weekends were spent more like driving four-wheelers around and having bonfires. And Brendon was more of a city guy and had more access to fun things to do than we did.

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Brendon: It's funny that she says I'm a city guy because it was half-an-hour drive outside the city, but I guess from her 10,000 population to my 90,000 population, I guess that would be a city from her perspective.

Karson: He had malls and go-kart riding centers, and mini golf, we didn't have any of that.

Brendon: But as far as the home, I lived in growing up, my dad was a firefighter, my mom was a waitress. We lived in a pretty quiet, safe cookie-cutter suburban area. And parents worked really hard for what they had, and we were just really happily middle-class.

So, not that we were skipping meals, but not that we had eaten out every other night, very glamorous. It was we had food on the table every night and it was a comfortable life.

Karson: I think both of our families were very blue collar, middle class, like work for everything that you have, no matter what it is. If it's leisure, play or money in the bank, you worked for it.

Laura: I grew up like that too in rural Virginia, and my parents were always working, and we went out to eat when I was a kid once a month, and that was like a big thing. Both my parents were teachers, and so to get to go out to eat was a big deal. And just pretty standard, kind of American dream.

We had built a house when I was a kid, that's where I fell in love with blueprints of seeing that house being built. And yet here we are in a different time thinking about alternative ways of living.

So, how did you all think at first that you might want to renovate a bus and live in it full-time?

Karson: Yeah, what a scary decision. For some people it's like, that's exactly what I'm going to do. For us, during COVID, we were very fortunate

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enough to keep our jobs because we weren't doing really anything else at the time. You couldn't do anything else.

Brendon picked up an extra job as a Domino's delivery driver, and so we were working constantly. We were having no fun, pretty secluded, we were just very ready to travel again.

And before this bus trip, we actually did like 18 months travel around the world in a backpack. So, we already had been bitten by the travel bug and we knew we wanted to go again. But I think this time, we intended to travel with a little more comfort as opposed to the 45-pound backpacks on our back.

Brendon: Yeah, that's kind of where the idea of the bus came from, was how could we seek a new adventure, but more comfortably. It was, don't regret anything about the backpack, but if we would change something about that, we'd sleep in other people's homes, on their couches and having to ask, "Where's your bathroom and can I use your kitchen?"

And so, to have our own little bubble where it's our bathroom, it's our kitchen, and we can rely on ourselves to get to where we want to be.

Laura: So, let's talk a little bit about your build. Did you all have any experience with the trades prior to this or was this all learning from scratch?

Karson: We had no experience in anything, at all. We always laugh and tell people that maybe we built a birdhouse like sixth grade art class.

I personally had no idea that there was an entire aisle in Home Depot designated to screws and they all have a specific type of metal or wood that they can go into, that was so bizarre to me.

I just always remember my grandpa having a big coffee tin full of screws, and like when you need one, you just pull one out. Like sheet metal screws,

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there's self-drilling screws. And so, we were so far in over our head when we started it.

Brendon: I mean, I can't stress enough on how much, I had no clue with plumbing, electric and solar, everything about that, but that is just a build. And now, that we've built the — I have no idea, like mechanical work and cars and how engines, how they work. I have very little outdoor experience and survival, camping. I don't even know how to start a fire.

I mean, everything about this was very terrifying to me. But honestly, that was part of it, we wanted a challenge. We wanted to put ourselves outside our comfort zone and push ourselves to learn some of these things and ultimately become more comfortable with them. And yeah, that's been nice to see ourselves overcome some of those challenges and come out on top.

Karson: Yeah, during COVID, I mean the routine was set. We couldn't go anywhere, you couldn't do anything. So, it was like we knew exactly what we were going to do every day when we woke up. And so, we wanted a challenge, and a challenge is certainly what we got.

Ignorantly, we quit our jobs and we thought that it would take us six months to do this. With YouTube, we can learn, we'll have some help, we'll do this in six months, and it took us 14.

But that being said, we're not perfectionists, but we're pretty particular. And so, I think we redid a lot of things that maybe didn't need to be redone. So, it definitely took longer than we expected.

Brendon: The weather in Missouri was a challenge. It's winter and you're struggling to find the motivation to get out of bed and all you want for it to be is summer, and then summer comes and it's so hot that all you want it to be is winter. And it's just a constant struggle there, living with our parents again and trying to coordinate, personal work on the bus and stuff like that.

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There was always challenges, and especially when you don't know what you're doing, you're like, "Oh, I'm just going to go and do this task real quick." And then you forget, "Oh yeah, I have no idea how to do that, I now need to watch a 10-minute YouTube video." And they did it in 5, 10 minutes, but now, it takes me all day.

Karson: That was the most frustrating, it's like you get on YouTube and these people would do it in five minutes. You're like, "Oh, this is such an easy thing." You need to drill in, drill out and it's done.

And then we would go do it and it would take three hours, we'd break four drill bits and now, we're watching videos on how to get drill bits out of the wall. So, it was comical. Like now, we can laugh about it, but we were not laughing about it.

Laura: So, you all must have had a such a strong why behind this to keep going, because you got to be pretty gritty to do something that's so outside of your comfort zone for so long and see it through to the end. So, what the heck is the why for you guys?

Karson: Yeah, good question. Some days, it didn't seem like there was a why, to be honest.

Brendon: Maybe it was just stubbornness of one, to start a project and see it through. Obviously, we've made it and we're here and I'm glad we stuck to it. You learn a lot when you come face to face with some of these challenges.

And are you going to back away and maybe let the challenge get the best of you or are you going to get the best of that, then come out on top and self-reflect on what you gained from that.

Karson: Yeah, and at the time, we still thought the Pan American was on the table and so we'd look at our bucket list and say, "I know we broke 12 drill bits today, but like, Day of the Dead in Mexico is going to be awesome.

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Or like the Caribbean is going to be so worth it, or like coconut straight from the tree, we got this.” And then yeah, life happens.

Laura: Yeah, I think that our tiny house build was such a lesson for me, and you can pretty much accomplish anything you want if you just take it one little piece at a time. And that just has really infused everything in my life.

Was that build process taught me, you just chunk away at something, for us it was every Saturday for a year, and then all of a sudden, we're doing the thing which was kind of audacious that we said we were going to do. On my 40th birthday, we towed that thing across the country. By the way, we were over the legal height limit by accident.

So, like every single wire that was draping down a little too low, we were like white knuckle.

Brendon: Oh my gosh.

Laura: But as it turns out, when you build a gooseneck on the ground and then you put it up on a truck, it happens, the front end tips a little bit up. So, it was a little higher than we had built it for.

But in any case, like, gosh, such a life lesson that you can do pretty much anything you set your mind out to if you just stay disciplined about it and you stay focused on it.

So, how has your family and friends reacted to this crazy thing that you all did and how have you all processed that?

Brendon: As we mentioned before, we've done some backpacking before, and we've thrown our parents for a loop on some of those international trips. And I think at this point in time, everybody is a little numb — numb to the idea now, is not surprising that we were going to do such a thing.

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I think a lot of their concern comes from traveling to maybe poor third world type countries, and ultimately, their concern comes for our safety. So, hard to blame them there.

Karson: Yeah, and to be completely fair of them, I don't think any parent ever dreams of their kid growing up, selling everything they own, downsizing, going completely off grid, not following that great American dream.

And especially too, like in very small-town communities where everybody knows everybody, and they watch your kid's success. Like in the newspaper, it's everywhere, but I think to us, what is the definition of success? And I think that's different for everybody.

And is it the amount of countries traveled or the number of bucket list things you've crossed off, or the amount of money you make? Like it's different for everybody, and for us, it's the amount of experiences lived.

And I think that our parents are finally on board with that, and I think they're seeing some of the amazing things we're doing and they're pretty happy about that.

Laura: I love that, and I think that that is a new opportunity that we all have now, is to define what success means for us. And you have to be a little rebellious in the way that you approach the preconceptions of how you're supposed to live your life, but what a great freedom to have where we do have the freedom to express ourselves in our definition of what success means. And I love that for you all and for everybody else trying to do this thing, defining your own success is really key.

So, you mentioned the Mexico border crossing failure there, so that sounds like a pretty crazy situation, but I did mention that I was going to ask you about the craziest. So, is there something crazier than that?

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Brendon: I mean, I think life in general, has its ups and downs, and its crazies and challenges, but when you're traveling, some of that gets condensed into a short period of time and you run into a little bit more of that more often. When we were backpacking, I think I was nearly robbed in Sri Lanka.

We were often stuck in bus stations and train stations, missing buses late at night in a foreign country. We can't speak the language, you're tired, missed a flight that cost us a couple grand that we never got back before our trip even got started. That threw things in whirlwind.

As far as the bus and tiny home living more specifically, I think there's just the general idea of sometimes trying to find a safe place to park and we've occasionally run into some issues there.

We were in Albuquerque one time and just couldn't seem to find a way to get out of the not so good areas in the city, and it's getting late. Our headlights are really bad, we're getting tired, we feel like it's getting dangerous to be on the road, and we're trying to call stores like, "Hey, do you mind if we just crash into the parking lot for the night?"

And they actually said, "It's not that I'm not allowing you, you could, but I actually don't want you to because I don't feel a safe thing in my parking lot, and I would actually rather you not stay here out of your safety," holy smokes.

Karson: They're like, "You're not from here, are you? I can't stay here if I were you."

Brendon: We also had issues in Los Angeles that was a very kind of a city unfriendly towards homeless or nomads. One night, we had somebody ... was a couple nights in a row pull up next to us in the middle of the night and just start laying on the horn and yelling profanities out at us.

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Karson: We were in the middle of nowhere, we were in the Santa Monica Mountain, we were not blocking a driveway, we were not on a neighborhood street, we were on a dirt pull off in the middle of nowhere, and this guy pulls up next to the bus and lays on the horn for like 10 minutes at two o'clock in the morning.

Brendon: Very unprovoked, we're just minding our own business. I think just the side of our bus kind of tends to have one of two feelings, like amazement. Like, "Wow, that's so incredible, you guys did that, and it looks so cool you guys," or it's like disgust and it's like, "These homeless people, they need to get out of my neighborhood or whatever."

So, that does kind of provoke a fight or flight type scenario. But ultimately, we have not had any harmful experiences that have ruined the trip, but some of those things, the thing they have in common is densely populated areas. So, this could be a ...

Laura: Sounds like you all have some anxiety tolerance, you have some ways of dealing with that you must. And of course, having somebody there with you, I'm sure — having your partner with you is probably key to that, right?

Karson: Yeah, it's one of those things that kind of like, back to your last question, maybe you earned the approval of those around you, maybe your parents are like, "Okay, yeah, cool, whatever. "Your friends are, like that's a little weird, but great." And you're like, "Okay, I've won the approval, I'm going to go do this."

And then you go out into the world, or you drive to California and all these people that you've never met, literally hate you and you're like, "I'm sorry, what?" Sounds like somewhere deep down inside you have some self-assurance of like, "You know what, that guy's got other problems, he needs to go home, take some night coat, go to bed. Whatever that is, because maybe it has nothing to do with us at all. I'm like, yes, dude.

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Laura: Yes, definitely traveling around is not a way to avoid social anxiety.

Karson: That is true, or just more of the city, like that's kind of what we started doing. As much as we want to go Albuquerque and San Francisco and see these beautiful places and do the bucket list things, like you don't run into that in nature.

Like you've got the hummingbirds and the squirrels, and you don't have those problems. And I think that's kind of where our trip is, like molding to just staying away from those situations.

Laura: Well, good, so let's talk about minimalism a little bit and how you all think about it today and for your future. You've definitely taken up that minimalist lifestyle, and how do you view it and how do you see it in forming your future plans?

Karson: One of our bus life friends posted something the other day about minimalism. And I think that she said it really well in that, "Minimalism is not a one-time thing, you don't just go from an apartment, or a house and you downsize into a bus, and you're like, great, I downsized, I'm a minimalist now, like, I have nothing," because it takes a very conscious effort no matter what you do.

Like things accumulate, whether it be like let's grab some more firewood and then all of a sudden, you've got so much firewood in the trunk but I don't even know when we're going to use it. Or I think I need another jacket or all of a sudden, we're collecting souvenirs and it's like where does all this stuff come from?

So, it is a constant battle and something that we're always going through, but I think he was not a big minimalist, but you had the idea of mine before we even started this. And I despise clutter, I hate things being piled in a corner. So, downsizing for us wasn't really that hard.

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Brendon: I think it can tend to have almost a claustrophobic type feeling when your store is overflowing to the point where it's going into your walkway, you're tripping over things in your walkway or you just want to sit down on your couch, but you have to move five things before you sit down on the couch.

And with that, it adds a lot of stress, I think, when you have so many more things to be responsible for, to look after. If you have a whole outdoor setup and you're camping and then you want to go travel the next day, you got to pick all that up and maybe that changes your decision to travel the next day: "That sounds like a lot of stress and work, I'm not going to do that."

Or you have like three of the same items, like three skillets for example and you use them all at dinner, now you have a pile of dishes in the sink. We actually only have one skillet, and it forces us to cook an entire meal on one skillet and we're making rice and fish and vegetables and ...

Karson: The fish is sometimes cold by the time the rice is done on the same skillet, but we only have one skillet to wash.

Brendon: Generally speaking, I think it's less stressful to just have less things.

Karson: Definitely, and if you look at what we are carrying on our backpacking trip as opposed to what we're carrying now, like we've actually not downsized. We've actually gathered more things, which is nice in some ways, that we have more entertainment options, we have more books to choose from, we've got cards or maybe some board games this time.

A whole lot more clothes to choose from this time around as opposed to like one pair of pants in our backpacks. But I think with those options comes a little more stress, like you said, because now there's more that can get stolen, there's more value in the bus.

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There's more that we feel like, "Okay, we're going to go on a three-hour hike, but maybe there's more we need to protect." Whereas when we were backpacking, like if somebody stole my backpack, they got a grand total of like a \$4 value, like congratulations.

But I think one way that we supplement that idea is we do a lot of our shopping at thrift stores right now and Goodwill, and that way, inevitably when a plate breaks or something falls, it was a dollar or \$2 and not something like ... I stand too close to the fire, and I get a hole in my shirt. Okay, well it was like a 50-cent shirt from Goodwill and not something from Kohl that was 40 bucks. And that takes a lot of stress out of it, I think.

Laura: Yeah, how do we not be owned by our stuff?

Karson: Yes, exactly.

Laura: So, what other of the values that are required for the tiny life resonate with you?

Brendon: I really appreciate the simplicity of tiny home living. I think that kind of back to the minimalism and just having less going on. I think some people in the traditional lifestyle, they maybe are unaware of the amount of stress that their body consumes.

You wake up and you're scrambling to get breakfast ready and then you get out the door and you hit rush hour traffic, and you got people cutting you off and honking their horn, and you show up to work and you've got 15 emails waiting in your inbox and then your work wasn't good enough for your boss that day.

And then when you go to drive home and you're in rush hour traffic again, and then you get home and your dog's barking his head off or your kid is ... you got to look after them and by the time you cater to everybody else; the dog, your kid, all you have time for is to have a chips and dip dinner, like a snack. And then you go to bed. You wake up and do it all over again.

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It's just a lot of stress that comes with that. And when you can just kind of slow your life down and maybe be in nature a little bit more and just relax, I really appreciate that aspect of the tiny home living.

Karson: And we've cut out a lot of not having as much enough. We've cut out a lot of the options to have to choose from, for the simplicity part, that like when you've got five pairs of pants, and not seven skirts and shorts and it takes a lot of the stress out of it throughout the day.

Same with food, like we don't have an entire walk-in pantry, so it's not like look at all these options for dinner. It's like we've got fresh produce, the apples are going off, looks like we're having oatmeal. Decision made and that makes a lot of things pretty easy, pretty quick, and then we just move on with our day.

Brendon: I really appreciate the freedom aspect, at least our time in the bus. When you have a job and you're in a home, you're limited I guess to your radius of ... if you have two days on the weekend, there's only so far you can travel outside that radius, it's like a 20-mile radius.

But here in the bus, the radius is always moving, and we can always be in a very nice new, cool area and be able to choose where we want to go when we want to go.

Karson: That's our biggest stress every day. Is it north, south, east or west or none of the above.

Laura: Yeah, I make a joke about that, I had this dog who passed away on me years ago who would get bored with the paths that we would walk, and so he would kind of drag behind, and I'm like that. I get bored seeing the same things all the time. Like I want to see new things, my eyes crave new things.

And when you're living the traditional life and doing your daily commute and going to the same places all the time, it gets really boring. And so, you all

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are the ultimate of getting to see new things because you're doing that all the time.

Brendon: Yeah.

Karson: The problem is there's so much to see. So, like, we want to go west, but we want to go east at the same, and it's so much.

Laura: So, it sounds that you all are settled in this, you've been doing this for six months. What do you think is the duration? How long are you going to keep traveling around, it seems like you've got a lot yet to see?

Karson: Yeah, I think I love the career that I chose and unfortunately, it's not something that I can do from the bus.

I would love to if I could, but it's just not, so I don't think when we started this that we thought it was going to be a lifelong thing. Like this wasn't a forever home for us, this was another adventure. A let's go as long as we can, as far as we can, let's see everything that we can.

And then I would probably pick up another job for another couple years, make some money back, get that, scratch that itch for me, and then maybe look into another adventure of some kind.

But I think at six months in right now, we've just about got all the things figured out. So, now, that we got it figured out, we want to keep going for at least a little bit longer. I don't know, maybe we've got like six months to another year in it before we look at something else.

Brendon: Yeah, I think this was intended to just to be a chapter in our life, but getting a taste of this nomadic mobile home, tiny home type lifestyle, I think it's definitely planted some seeds and it's realized that we really don't need that much to live off of and it is nice to be in nature and live off the land a little.

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While this is just a chapter, it is interesting that maybe down the road maybe it would be something when we really settle down, but yeah, maybe we would replicate a similar experience, a tiny home of some kind.

Laura: So, it sounds like it's given you some values that you want to carry forward with you no matter where you end up.

Karson: Absolutely.

Laura: So, how has the rest of the tiny home community treated you? What great people have you met? What have you learned about the community at large as somebody who's looking to jump into this? What can they expect from other people within this space, do you think?

Brendon: I mean, this community's been incredible. We went to school Skooliepalooza this year for the very first time, and that we met a lot of people there. Everybody was super positive and open-minded. We keep in touch with a lot of those people to this day and we're always looking to meet up with them when we can.

I think the thing I appreciate the most is that they are very empathetic, and they understand, they've been there before. They built out their rig and we've built out our rig, and so we can share those stories and we can laugh about those times.

Karson: Open a couple beers and drink our woes away together, the fingernails we lost.

Brendon: I think some of the people from the traditional lifestyle, they just don't get it and they don't understand and maybe they try to sympathize, but it's different. And so, it's really nice to meet up with some of these like-minded people and it's a really good feeling to be understood.

Karson: Yeah, and it's just like scratch each other's back community. We've met up with a couple of people multiple times now, and it's like, "I

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heard when you started your engine yesterday, it sounded a little weird, you want me going to take a look at it?”

And I'm like, “Yeah, that's great. What kind of dinner do you like? Do you eat chicken? I can go make dinner while you look at the engine,” and all of a sudden, everyone's coming over, we're having this massive potluck, and it is such a nice community to be a part of.

We haven't met a single person in this community that were like, “Whoa, that's an outlier,” because everybody is just so inclusive and fun and open-minded and welcoming really.

Laura: That's so awesome, these days it's hard to find connection. And it's hard to be heard and understood because everybody's in there little segmentated places with their opinions about things. And so, if you can find your tribe, how great is that.

Karson: Yeah.

Brendon: Yeah, absolutely.

Laura: Such a good gift. So, is there anything that you all wanted to share today that I haven't asked you about?

Brendon: Generally, as you said it earlier as well, if there's something you want to do ... it sounds cliché, but if there's something you want to do, then do it. If you put your mind to it, you can do it.

And there's creative solutions to finances or like we said, we didn't have any idea what we were doing and there's creative solutions to that and everybody makes a choice.

Laura: So, you would encourage people to get out there and get started and to be brave and do the thing that they feel uncomfortable about.

Brendon: Absolutely, yeah.

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Karson: If we can do it, anybody can do it. That's a fact.

Brendon: I think some people, they look at us and they say, "Oh, well, you're lucky to be able to do that." And we kind of struggle with that because we worked really hard to be able to get to where we're at, save up the money, and make the right choices.

I think people forget that they're making a choice and just as much as they're making a choice to buy a home, get the house, whatever, we made a choice not to. So, if this is what you want to do, make the choice to do it and you can make it happen.

Karson: I would also say that if you're planning on going into this with a partner, you've really got to love your partner. It's a very, very small space and you do everything together, and even if you're not doing something together, you're always within earshot and in a bus, the bus moves.

So, I can feel him get up in the morning and I can tell by the steps that he's like opening a drawer, he's putting his clothes on. I know consciously where he is every minute of every day.

And I also just want to say that there's this connotation or people put this face on in the U.S. or maybe everywhere, that couples don't fight. When you're asked it's like, "No, we don't fight ever." And it's like in tiny home living, that is absolutely false, that is not true.

We will come out and be the first to say like we bickered, we argued, building the bus was very, very tough. We were mentally simulated, we were physically exhausted.

So, that just leads to some tough times in your relationship. And I don't want people going into building a tiny home or tiny home living thinking that nobody else is fighting, why are we fighting?

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Because it happens and it will happen, and at the end of the day, it brings you so much closer together and we're having so many experiences together, like 24 hours a day as opposed to working nine to five and having four hours together in the evening. We're really enjoying that time.

Laura: Yeah, my husband Eric and I reached a moment where we had laid our flooring down in our tiny house and we were almost finishing the flooring, and we realized that the pocket door in the bathroom was not clearing the floor even though it was already installed.

So, the door was in its pocket, and it was not coming out. So, we had to pull all the flooring back up, and I don't like to do things two times, I want to like measure twice and cut once.

And so, anytime we had to redo anything, I just was loosening my, you know what, and so ... but we definitely have learned a lot about working together over the many projects that we've had, that being one of them. and learned about focusing on each other's strengths and if you're really good at that, I'm not going to question how you're going to do it because that's your strength and vice versa.

And that's a hard lesson to learn because we all want to be knowers rather than learners. And so, you have to kind of overcome that. But definitely good practice for building a strong relationship because in life, we're going to have many more challenges through the decades.

And so, learning how to build a place together is just an exercise, and how are we going to deal with the other challenges that we'll face in life.

Karson: I truly believe that if you can go through the process of building a tiny home together, you can survive anything.

Laura: Awesome, so you all mentioned your financial decisions that put you in a position for this. And since the focus of this podcast is always

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going to come back to how does tiny home living help build financial independence.

How do you all think about this community and this option as a way to build financial independence instead of spending, 427,000, the average cost of a home in the U.S. right now? How do you all think about those two things tied together?

Brendon: I think it's absolutely an opportunity to achieve that financial independence in the tiny home direction. We were charging a lot of appliances off of solar. I think there's even new buses out that run off of solar, and while those are new, maybe more expensive, I'm sure they'll come down over the years.

But I mean to think that you could run your bus on solar, to drive it on solar, to power your appliances on solar, I had even thought about putting gutters along the side to catch rainwater or something like that, and that's another free resource.

We'd seen somebody traveling with chickens and a goat. And so, if you really get clever and creative, you can save a lot of money and keep a lot of that in your pocket, and yeah, there's enormous amount of potential for that to be achieved.

Karson: And I think not only are you not buying into a \$425,000 house, but then you got to fill it. It's got three bedrooms and mattresses are not cheap and headboards are not cheap. You need rugs, and you need toilet paper, like three bathrooms. And it's like that gets out of hand so fast.

Whereas, our guest bed is also our couch, and we have two sets of sheets, and it took nothing to fill a hundred square feet easily. So, there was no cost in that with stuff that we already had.

Brendon: For sure.

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Karson: And we can still entertain, I think that's a common misconception that like, oh, when we go tiny, we can't have people over, we can't do this, but you can.

The square footage is all outside, but we do have places to sleep, like a guest bed and we've got a stove and we've got enough coffee to go around, and we just set up all the chairs outside and the awning and we've got a perfect entertaining space for four to six people.

Brendon: Yeah, that's right.

Laura: We had almost my entire family in our tiny house when we towed it out there, people flew out, they got an Airbnb. It was my 40th birthday, my parents were there, and my husband's family was there, and we all just sat around in the tiny house and you just sit wherever you can and out on the deck and the doors open and it was just magical.

Karson: That's awesome.

Laura: Yeah, awesome. Well, thank you all so much for joining the Less House More Moolah Podcast. And I really appreciate you sharing your story and encouraging others and being very practical about it.

It is hard work certainly, and it is about decisions and discipline, staying committed to something, but it can be super rewarding. You all have pointed out many of the great things that you've taken away from it, so I'm sure that everyone will really enjoy hearing your story. So, thanks for joining.

Karson: Yeah, thanks for the opportunity to share.

Brendon: Yeah, we're excited to share and as we said earlier, we kind of took a lot of information from the community, and so we're super happy to give information back and hopefully, somebody can benefit from things we've learned.

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And yeah, I really appreciate you giving us the opportunity and the platform, and we had a good chat, we loved chatting with you.

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Well, that's it for today's episode of Less House More Moola. To access valuable financial tips and resources tailored to your tiny living journey, join our exclusive community at [thetinyhouseadviser.com](https://thetinyhouseadviser.com).

Here, you'll find a supportive network of like-minded individuals committed to helping each other navigate the challenges and celebrate the victories of embracing a minimalist lifestyle.

So, don't miss out on the opportunity to be part of this empowering tribe. Be sure to tune in next Thursday for another insightful episode of Less House More Moola, where we'll continue to explore practical solutions and inspiring stories to help you create the life you've always dreamed of.