

Welcome to the Less House, More Moola Podcast!



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Laura Lynch

Less House More Moola with Laura Lynch

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Hey everybody, welcome to Less House, More Moola. I have such a treat for you today. I have recalled the elusive Eric Fendrick back to Less House, More Moola podcast. Eric, you haven't been here since November of 23, it looks like. Really? Yeah. Time flies. Long time. So for listeners who weren't listening to the podcast back then, this is Eric Fendrick, my

husband, my partner in crime and my co-builder of our tiny house, which we're standing in our kitchen today. if you haven't watched Less House, More Moola on YouTube, today's a great day. are standing in our fairly dirty kitchen and recording this podcast today, right here so that we can talk about where we've been and what's coming next.

So, Eric, it's been eight months in this tiny house. It's crazy, right? Full time. know. Eight months, full time. Yep. time flies, like you said. Yeah. So we are eight months into our tiny house, full time. We are eight months in a new town. We are eight months into your new business. We are eight months in a new climate.

a lot of change. lot of good stuff. lot of good stuff. Change is good. It's been delightful. Well, we picked our change. We did. Yes. You planned it. So let's flash back since you haven't got a chance to share your experience with the change and let's go back in our mind to January of 2024, one year ago.

we were putting our big house on the market. Right. And that was kind of like the final step of all the prep work that we had been doing. We had already taken several trips out here to move stuff this way, equipment and tools and things. And then we had to put the house on the market in January. And at that moment it was kind of like, okay, this is it. Yeah. All of a sudden the rubber hits the road.

And you're doing the thing. Yeah. And at that moment, like we had kind of a final party with our friends. We had a big bonfire. We had finished doing all the repairs to the house that we wanted to do before we put it on the market. We had it cleaned multiple times. We had had the realtor over. The photos were up and gosh, it was like really like a pause moment to reflect.

And also maybe to get a little scared. Yeah. At that point you were like, there's no going back. Yeah, for sure. So as you were sitting there on the porch with me in January of 2024 and the house was on the market and we were just sort of waiting to see how that panned out. What were some of the concerns that you had about making this big change? I guess, uh, you know, we had, I had been in Florida for

30 plus years and, you know, just in losing the network of people that I had built, friends and coworkers and family. just, I guess that probably was the biggest thing in my mind and how,

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my son Garrett was going to adapt to, you know, such, such a big change. about all the talk of the weather? The weather? Yeah. Initially, you know,

Moving back to a cold climate was both exciting and maybe like a little like, don't know how I'm gonna fit into that, right? But it's been a refreshing change. Yeah, because you had reached a point where the hot was getting to be too much. Too much. Yeah, for me too. Yeah, so let's talk about that a little bit More. You had worked in the...

You had had your own business and you had been working as an electrician and as a general contractor and basically doing many parts of the trades and had relationships and, numbers, right? You had like a Rolodex on your phone of people that called you up and needed you. All the time. And then all of a sudden to just say, Hey, I'm leaving. And there's nobody on the other end that necessarily needs you. How did that feel?

You know, maybe in some ways it was a little refreshing because, you sometimes it gets to be a little too much, but scary because, you know, I still need to continue to work and didn't know what I was getting into, you know, or if people would be calling me. as it turns out, the transition's been great and I've had pretty much just the right amount of work.

right amount of number of people, you know, contacting me, reaching out just from word of mouth. Yeah. So a big part of our financial independence transition of selling the big house was to be able to slow down and maybe work a little Less for both of us and have a little bit More time to work on projects that we wanted to work on. Since we don't recreate a lot, but certainly we wanted to do More hiking and More jeeping and

and create a little bit More spread of the activities that we do in the course of a week instead of it being so much focused on work all the time. Yeah, definitely. That's allowed us to have More freedom and More of our own control over what we want to do with our day. Sure. It's been nice. And then one of the other things that was kind of a big change for us too was to go from a high wealth, densely populated area to a More rural place where

there isn't as much wealth or as many people and what was that gonna be like for us going to a smaller community? And I remember talking about this a lot in terms of how we were going to get to know people and work on our connections in the community and what it was gonna be like to not be anonymous anymore. Yeah, everybody knows your name in a town of 300 people.

Well, they don't all know us yet. Not yet, but it won't take long. It's catching fire. right. Yeah. So, yeah, so that was kind of a little bit of an unknown too. I grew up in a small town. You grew up in a big city. And so it's been, it was something that we were thinking about. For sure. And we

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were also thinking about, you know, what opportunity prospects maybe we're going to, how they were going to change.

for your son kind of moving away from a place where there was great education and so many privileges that come with that wealthy area and how he was gonna fit in. And so I'm sure that was on my mind, on your mind a lot. Yeah, I think though our transition has been good because there was so much thought

and planning on the front end, right? We thought about all these things. We talked about all these things. We had lists and calendars and you know, that all probably has allowed us to make the right decision. And I think we have. And it was slow too. I think one of the primary lessons that I've learned about massive change is really just to slow down and let things

sort of mull a lot. And if you can just keep mulling things over, eventually you'll come to your, you know, the best option. And, you know, sometimes we rush into things and we don't give ourselves enough time to really work out all the kinks or all of the run through all the possible scenarios. So I think that was one thing I really learned through this transition was just to slow down.

be in the change and let yourself really think through things. Sure, sure. But at the same time, we always kept moving forward, right? We didn't just stop the plan and say, well, let's wait a year, right? We always kept moving towards that goal. And, you know, it might may have changed along the way a little bit, but we didn't, you know, we kept

kept doing the thing. Yeah. And in fact, we moved the date up because originally we had planned to wait until 2025 this year. And then you had that, you know, incident on the interstate that made me like shift us into fifth gear. Like we are going to do this and we're not going to wait any longer than what's required. cause I want to get away from.

the risk of just that traffic and how much driving you did. Yeah, yeah. It is nice to not be in a frenzy driving down an interstate most mornings. Yeah. So definitely some intention there. Yeah. So certainly this was a major shift for you. You

moved to a place where you'd never lived before, you left behind connections, you've even left behind family. So change had been something that maybe you weren't as into as I was. And so what lessons have you taken away from all of these changes? that it's going to work out. It's going to be okay. And if you've thought about it long enough and

you know, used your best gut on what feels right. I think you should just do the thing and you know, not, not stay in one place or stay in one job or, know, if, if it's not ideal for you and it's not what you want out of life, make the move, you know, it's hard, but it's worth it. Yeah.

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And is there anything that you have learned about that loss of connections that you experienced? I think you find out, you know, who your friends are and what connections are really valuable to you because you keep those regardless of geography. And, you know, I've had friends visit us already and family visit us already. And, you know, once a week or a couple of times a month, I'll reach out and have good conversations and

actually have something new and exciting to talk about, right? So yeah, it's a, it's a change, but it, it also allows you to probably understand what's important to you and who's important to you. remember you telling me or having expressing your doubts about being able to even to find work here. Yeah, sure. But you know, you come to an area and little by little, sometimes

More rapidly than that, you know, people, your name goes around and you do good work and people reference you and everybody knows everybody in a town of 300 people. And that's not been a problem. Yeah. Yeah. It's been, you know, good to see that there's a lot of deferred projects that people are anxious to get to, know, especially for folks in the trades, they're

is always a need for that because there haven't been enough people going into the trades and all the trades people have been retiring. you know, handy skills are valuable, probably pretty much anywhere. And they definitely showed up as being valuable here. For sure. Yeah. I'm fortunate in that way. Yeah. So, and you mentioned this a little bit, but for Garrett, how it seems like that the transition has, you know, kids are adaptable, right? And it seems like that he has

Even I would say, you know, coming out of high school, he had maybe lost a little bit of motivation and momentum and it seems like he's really picked it up with the change. Yeah. College has been, you know, exciting for him and interesting. And, there's job prospects on the horizon for him. And, again, just like us, this place affords us a lot of,

opportunity to do what we want to do, whether it's, you know, dirt bikes or jeeps or rock climbing or hunting or all those things. So pick your place, right? Carefully because it matters. Yeah, does. Yeah, we did a lot of analysis of place. Remember I had that whole spreadsheet running of practically every state and analyzed it based on, you know, number of sunny days a year and how much rainfall and

what was going on with, you know, weather changes and how much public land was available. And so we went, we talked about this a lot because we could have moved anywhere. And yet this seemed to always, even though we had sort of bought this land, which was 10 years ago this year, we had bought this land sort of on an impulse. turned out to be serendipitously a really good fit for what we were trying.

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the lifestyle that we were trying to create for ourselves. Yeah. The financial freedom. We already had the property. We had the tiny house. We built a shop. You know, we bought some More property. We've expanded a little bit, but yeah, it checked all the boxes More or Less. Yeah. Yeah. So anyway, good, good progress. So

It can't all be upside, right? There has to have been, you know, life is about choosing your hard right? So what about it has been hard? What about it has been hard?

you know, I guess in the back of my mind, I have some parents who are aging, you know, they're in their late seventies now. And I wonder how that's going to play out for them. But my mom came out for a visit and my dad, you know, would love to get out here again as soon as he can on his motorcycle. that's been a little tough in the back of my mind, but other than that, it's really, it's really been good. And like you said, because

We've been coming to this place for 10 years and because your plan had laid it out, mean, we just kinda, think that took anxiety away from it and unknown away from it and fear and it hasn't really been that difficult at all. Logistically moving all the junk across the country has been a challenge, but it's here.

You heard it here first listeners. I got credit for all of my change planning all those years ago. Because when I first put the calendar up on the wall, yeah, Garrett and I freaked out. Awesome. So, here we are. We've been here for eight months. definitely selling the house, ate up a lot of space in our head for a good chunk of the, you know, the first months that we were here.

And then kind of once we reached that mortgage-free moment, right? October the 4th, that sort of allowed us to pivot our view. Like where are we going next and what are we trying to create here and what do we wanna work on together? I've often told the story about how that as soon as we finish the tiny house.

and put it out here in New Mexico, I was like, okay, what's our next project? Because we always need something to be working on together. Otherwise we will kind of spiral off into our separate lives. And so we did, we took up another project since we have been here. Yeah, so now we have 40 acres in Colorado and a little cabin and we are doing our thing there.

So adding another pretty small space, though it is bigger than the tiny house. So a better fit for three dogs, perhaps. Probably. So we've been working on that project. Today we're going to be working on siding on the shop. So getting back out in the sun and getting out the nail guns and doing some board and batten, which will be a new experience for us.

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and we have a horno project that we wanna do in the tiny house. I'm gonna be working on my rock masonry talent and starting to close in the tiny house with the beautiful river rocks that we have here. let's see, you've got your business that you're working on. I've got my business that I'm working on. We've got the podcast that we're working on.

Gosh, it's a lot of pots that we are stirring. we've got Skoolie Palooza coming up. We've got tiny house festivals in the summer. Van-o-ween towards the end of the year. So we've got some travel in the camper. Cool. We got a lot going on.

And? And sometimes we feel a little bit overwhelmed, you know, with all these things. But I would say that we do a pretty good job of trying to balance and always talking about on our walks, like what is most important to us right now? What are we going to back burner for a while? And what are we going to focus on? And using our Google Calendar to structure our focus to make sure that we are working on our personal projects.

along with working on other people's projects because sometimes it's easy to get focused on client projects and to forget personal projects. So we have that nice calendar structure, which we've been adapting as things seem to make sense, right? If it doesn't make sense for us to.

Roar into the day on Monday morning because we're still, you know, making calls or what have you. kind of created a flex day there and we work on our personal projects on two consecutive days and we have a rest day that we've been pretty good at like actually taking a day off and resting and only doing recreating activities on that day in order to allow us some time off from work. Yeah, it's been good. It works. Yeah, I think it's good to balance.

So looking forward, we've got 14 acres total here in New Mexico. We have projects that we're working on here. We've got the 40 acres in Colorado that we're working on up there. And obviously all the pots that I just mentioned that we are focused on. What do you see as being important for you and aligned with what you wanted to be or the life you wanted to have in this tiny lifestyle?

freedom and flexibility. And I've got those things. So yeah, it's good. It's exciting. And speaking of our land, right? Are you leading into some More ideas? Sure. I mean, I think it's kind of a exciting announcement to share this news with folks. so here we are. We've got

these beautiful spaces and we've been really thinking for a long time how we can continue to add value to all the folks in tiny living and how we can, bring people together and how we can share and how we can continue to help people in this lifestyle. And it seems like one of the primary challenges is parking. Right. And we have, we have the ability to provide that in two different States.

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Yeah. So here in New Mexico, down by the shop, there's seven acres and there's infrastructure. And we think that we could provide parking for two or three people to come and stay, you know, meet some new folks. And what's really cool about that being near the shop is that in the shop is basically every problem solving tool known to man. And you know, a person with

a ton of problem solving trades experience. So I would imagine there's a couple of vans or schoolies or tiny houses out there that have a burner out on their stove or they have a wheel, you know, hub that's leaking or maybe there's some lights out or some sort of plumbing, kerfuffle or a dripping faucet or,

lots of different things that can go wrong when you're towing your house around behind you. And sometimes it's hard to find a place where you can, you know, park and work on repairs. And so I think the idea of parking and problem solving is a really cool. Sounds fun. Sounds fun. Yeah. So, for folks out there that are looking for a legal place to park, we are opening up our New Mexico property.

to take reservations for folks that want to come and stay with us and maybe have some work that they want to do while they're here. So the place to send us a note about that is to use the parking page on altamericandream.com / park. And we will be taking reservations for those limited spots and helping you figure out what

little glitches that you need to work on while you're here. And we'll talk More about Colorado as that project progresses. But for right now, we are offering this in New Mexico. Abiquiu, where we are, we're parked up in a beautiful white rock canyon. So we have a great walk right up the box canyon right outside your door. And of course, there's the lake and there's endless forest and a million miles of

ATV trails or Jeep trails, lots of hiking, skiing, rafting, biking, continental divide trail, fabulous food, very creative people, very artist community. So a great place to spend some time. So if that sounds good to you and you're working on your planning for parking in the future and you want to solve some problems while you're at it, then definitely look us up on

altamericandream.com backslash park. Cool. So we're going to be here. We're going to be working on some events coming up. We're going to be headed back up to Colorado to keep working on that project. And you and I are now casting our vision forward to maybe a future day where we dial it back and recreate even More. Yeah. At some point in the future. It's exciting to not know where we're going. Not know where we're going.

Awesome. Well, Eric, thank you so much for sharing your perspective. know that you felt every little detail of the change that we've undergone in the last year. And it's been an

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amazing experience to go on. And I'm glad we're here together and we're working on these projects. Together. Together. Me too. Well, thanks for having me in my kitchen. In your kitchen.

Yeah, I will work on, I should do a tiny house tour. Yeah, people might like that. But I'd have to clean the house.