DR. FRED ROUSE — SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

The REAL Money Doctor

Choose the set that fits your audience.

I want your listeners to get the best possible conversation, so rather than hand you one generic list, I've written three question sets, each shaped for a different kind of audience. Pick the one that matches your show. Each set has 12 questions, in conversational order, that flow from top to bottom if you'd like a ready-made arc, or you can pick any that fit and skip the rest.

1. THE MONEY & MARKET-ALTERNATIVES SET

For shows about retirement planning, income, taxes, and stock-market alternatives. Your audience is running the numbers and wants to know whether there's another way. This set goes at sequence-of-returns risk, the 4% rule, the 401k experiment, healthcare costs, inflation, and the public trade record.

2. THE COMEBACK SET

For shows built around story, resilience, and reinvention. Your audience connects with the human arc. This set goes at the $2 million loss, the decade of rebuilding, what search and rescue taught me about process under pressure, and why I built the program small by design.

3. THE PURPOSE SET

For shows about retirement living, identity, and life after the paycheck stops. Your audience wants meaning, not just money. This set goes at the half of retirement no one in financial services talks about, the morning that belongs to you, the lessons that came from my father, and what changes in people when income is finally solved.

How to use the questions: The first four questions in each set are the ones I'd hate to leave a conversation without. The remaining eight are the audience-specific beats. A typical 30-to-45 minute interview tends to land in the 6-to-8 question range. Use whatever fits.

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SET 1 — THE MONEY & MARKET-ALTERNATIVES SET

For shows about retirement planning, income, taxes, and stock-market alternatives.

The Core Four (the questions worth asking in every interview):

1. You went from $5,000 to $2 million in two years and then lost every dollar of it in six months. What did that loss actually teach you that your CFP credential didn't?
2. You say the standard retirement plan is missing one variable that quietly decides everything. What is it, and why doesn't anyone calculate it?
3. You've posted every single trade publicly since 2022. Wins and losses both. Why do that, when nobody else in this industry does?
4. After running this program since 2010 and working with over 1,012 students, what's the one thing nearly every single one of them had in common when they showed up?

The Audience-Specific Eight:

5. Most retirees have been told the same thing for 30 years. Save enough, diversify, ride out the crashes. Why do you think that advice falls apart for the people in the last decade before retirement?
6. Can you explain sequence-of-returns risk in a way the average listener actually feels? Why does a bad year at 65 do permanent damage that a bad year at 35 doesn't?
7. The 4% withdrawal rule has been the industry's gospel for decades. Why is that math weaker than people are told?
8. You hold a PhD in Taxation. What do most retirees miss about how taxes quietly erode the income they think they're going to have?
9. Your program uses corn futures and 30-year Treasury bonds, not stocks. Most people hear "commodities" and immediately think risk. Why are those two markets actually a safer foundation for retirement income than the stock market?
10. Healthcare costs, inflation, and the bridge years between retiring and Medicare or Social Security. These are the expenses people don't budget for. How do you think about them with your students?
11. You've said the system is designed to keep people out of bad trades, not to find good ones. What does that actually mean in practice, and why does it matter?

12. **For listeners who recognize themselves in what you've described, where should they go to start?** *Dr. Fred's answer ends with: a free guide at DrFredRouse.com/time that walks through exactly why the math gets harder after 50 and what to do about it.*

SET 2 — THE COMEBACK SET

For shows about story, resilience, and reinvention.

The Core Four (the questions worth asking in every interview):

1. You went from $5,000 to $2 million in two years and then lost every dollar of it in six months. What did that loss actually teach you that your CFP credential didn't?
2. You say the standard retirement plan is missing one variable that quietly decides everything. What is it, and why doesn't anyone calculate it?
3. You've posted every single trade publicly since 2022. Wins and losses both. Why do that, when nobody else in this industry does?
4. After running this program since 2010 and working with over 1,012 students, what's the one thing nearly every single one of them had in common when they showed up?

The Audience-Specific Eight:

5. The night you realized you'd lost everything — what was that moment actually like? And what did you do the next morning?
6. You spent ten years and $350,000 of your own money rebuilding. Most people would have walked away. What kept you in it?
7. Before any of the money story, there were five years in the Coast Guard during the Vietnam era, running small boats for search and rescue. What did that work teach you that you carried into everything after?
8. You've said search and rescue taught you that "process either holds under pressure or it doesn't hold at all." How does that show up in how you teach people now?
9. You run this program small by design. You could scale it significantly and you've deliberately chosen not to. Why?
10. There's a story you tell about a couple with a $400 monthly gap who'd been paralyzed for three years until somebody finally named the number. What does that story teach about how people get stuck?
11. What's the difference between the Dr. Fred who built the $2 million the first time, and the Dr. Fred who built the system that actually worked?
12. **For listeners going through their own version of starting over, what would you want them to take away from your story?** *Dr. Fred's answer ends with: a free copy of his book Retirement Isn't Optional. Enjoying It Is. at DrFredRouse.com/RIO.*

SET 3 — THE PURPOSE SET

For shows about retirement living, identity, and life after the paycheck.

The Core Four (the questions worth asking in every interview):

1. You went from $5,000 to $2 million in two years and then lost every dollar of it in six months. What did that loss actually teach you that your CFP credential didn't?
2. You say the standard retirement plan is missing one variable that quietly decides everything. What is it, and why doesn't anyone calculate it?
3. You've posted every single trade publicly since 2022. Wins and losses both. Why do that, when nobody else in this industry does?
4. After running this program since 2010 and working with over 1,012 students, what's the one thing nearly every single one of them had in common when they showed up?

The Audience-Specific Eight:

5. You've said money is only half the picture of a good retirement. After 40 years in financial services, what made you start saying the other half out loud?
6. You've watched people retire with full accounts and empty days, and others retire with far less and a life that genuinely lights them up. What's actually different about the second group?
7. Your father was a carpet layer. Korean War veteran. Four kids in a two-bedroom house. What did watching him work teach you that you didn't fully understand until decades later?
8. You tell a story about a student who said the thing he'd actually gotten back from your program wasn't the money. It was the mornings. What does he mean?
9. There's a woman in your program who learned the system, and a year later was sitting at her kitchen table teaching it to her daughter. Why does that one stay with you?
10. You talk about retirees who can technically afford the boat or the trip and still don't take it. What's actually going on there, and what changes when income is finally solved?
11. For someone listening who feels stuck, behind, or like they missed the window — what would you want them to hear?

12. **For listeners who want to start thinking about the second half of retirement differently, where should they begin?** *Dr. Fred's answer ends with: a free copy of the Reinventing Retirement guide at DrFredRouse.com/reinvent.*

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