

Guide to discussing end-of-life wishes

Having a conversation about your wishes will give you and your family the peace of mind to ensure that you'll honour each other's legacy, and be empowered with the key information and decisions you need after someone passes away. Here are our tips to successfully having these conversations:

01

Spark the conversation by sharing your own wishes

As the person initiating the conversation, you may find it's easier to break the ice by sharing your own wishes first!



02

Take time to listen and show respect

It's important to give your loved ones time to express their own feelings and wishes. You may be surprised at the things they'd like to share with you.



03

Share an anecdote

Anecdotes can make the topic less scary and overwhelming. Here's one you can start with:



Did you know that Prince passed away without a will? Even though it's been several years, his estate is still moving through the court system.



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Prepare a list of prompts and questions

A conversation around death and end-of-life wishes isn't cookie cutter. However, coming prepared with key questions that can help ensure that you don't miss the important details. Some easy questions to start with include:



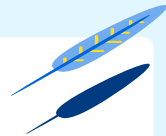
- *Do you have a will? Where is it stored?*
- *What are your burial wishes?*



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Start with lighter topics

Open ended questions like *"What do you want your legacy to be?"* or *"What are some heirlooms that are important to you?"* can help open the conversation on a lighter note.



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Break up the conversation

Consider breaking up the conversation into bite-sized chunks so it's more approachable and less overwhelming.



07

Explain how having the conversation can help you

Help your family understand that sharing their plans now can help you long-term by reducing stress and cost at a time you'll already be grieving. For example, if you're speaking to a parent, it may be helpful to highlight how knowing their wishes will help you wrap up their affairs as their executor.



08

Share the consequences

While we don't suggest scaring anyone into this important conversation, many individuals may benefit from understanding what happens if they pass away without an estate plan. For example, you can let them know that courts will use default rules to distribute their assets if they pass away without a will - often these rules will differ from their actual wishes.



09

Create a comfortable environment

Take the time to figure out where everyone who is participating in the discussion would be most comfortable. For some people, this is in the comfort of your own home with a beverage of choice, but for others a neutral environment may be more agreeable, such as taking a walk or hike.



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Be patient

You may not get all the answers you need right away. The most important thing you can do is take the first step to indicate that you'd like to have this conversation.

