

THE ROLE OF LEGACY PLANNING

"Your estate plan is important, but your legacy planning is an important element of passing down what really matters."



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Family is the driving force for the human condition. Mothers and fathers work to provide for and keep their children safe, healthy and ideally, motivated to keep their bedrooms picked up. Granted, for many, the whole “How about you actually drop clothes in the basket versus a pile next to the basket,” argument rarely garners an acceptable answer for any parent, yet we push forward, determined to remain focused on keeping the bases covered.

This is exactly the kind of mindset our clients have when they begin their estate planning efforts. But what about a legacy plan? How does it differ from an estate plan and is it really necessary?

LEGACY PLANNING

Legacy planning is less about the material things: cash, real estate, stocks, etc. and more about the soulful and meaningful aspects of what family means. Our



estate plan includes documents such as our wills, any trusts we've established, powers of attorney, medical directives and insurance policies. The legacy plan might include the memorialization of a family's mission statement, Grandma's stories of her childhood in France, old family recipes, Bibles, journals, photographs, your father's Purple Heart he received decades earlier and much more.

It's the sentimentality; the intimacy of family. One family has three generations of adopted children. Within their legacy plans, the couple has opted to include details

about the adoptions, the terms they agreed to at the time of the adoption and even photographs of the birth parents. They also believe that the children are entitled to the same sense of where they came from.

While there's certainly a place for legacy planning in your overall estate planning efforts, the differences are important. If estate planning is about distributing

one's assets, then legacy planning is about telling the story of how those assets came to be.

FAMILY BUSINESS

We know that small businesses are the heart of this country and in fact, without them, the economy simply could not sustain itself. For many of these businesses – most are family businesses – they want the journey forever documented. They



want to know that their story could mean something for the next generation. Many clients have ensured those family stories are handed down by including them in their legacy planning. Those

businesses that have been in the family for generations are the ones that show their pride with the framed photographs and their first dollar earned above their cash registers. It's the American way. It stands to reason, then, that many would wish to have those stories saved and shared.

In fact, this is where many of those family recipes come into play. Whether it's Aunt Dora's red velvet cake or Grandpa's potato salad recipe that people drive for miles to enjoy, this is just another form of legacy planning.

CHARITY FROM THE HEART



Most of us have those charities that mean something to us. Whether it's the Disabled Veterans or the annual Toys for Tots campaign, it's important. You may have a trust that will provide for your local animal shelter, but have you told your grandchildren why you're so drawn to this particular charitable effort? You may have been raised on a farm, complete with chickens, hay and horses.

After you graduated college, got married and had a family of your own, you may not have as much time as you'd like to visit the family farm. Including the animal shelter in your giving efforts each year makes you feel like you're making a difference.

THE MATERIAL THINGS

Your wedding gown. The family Bible. Your son's lock of hair from his first



haircut. Your grandfather's passport: all of these are material, but their value comes from the sentiment they represent. These are significant trinkets that define a small part of your family's love and respect for one another. As such, it should be part of your legacy plan.

Legacy planning has gone mainstream and the best part is that no two are ever the same. It's about your family, your hopes for your family's future and creating a vision that will someday inspire a great, great granddaughter to open her own restaurant. Your estate plan is

important, but your legacy planning is an important element of passing down what really matters.

About the Author



Daniel A. DeBruyckere

Attorney DeBruyckere approaches each challenge not just with solid expertise, but also with a passion for helping others plan well for the future. As a husband with three children and two grandchildren, it's his own family experience that provides the motivation to ensure all of his clients are well protected. Besides his extensive background in the issues he specializes in, Dan's clients find that he genuinely cares about them, and that he pays attention to the details that matter to each person and their families.

EXPERIENCE

Attorney Daniel A. DeBruyckere has been practicing law in New Hampshire and Massachusetts since 1998, and has helped hundreds of clients with their estate planning and elder care issues. He is very well respected in the area of estate planning, probate, trust administration, elder law issues, and business planning.

Admitted in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, Attorney DeBruyckere is a former adjunct faculty member of the Massachusetts School of Law and is a member and past president of the Greater Salem Bar Association. He is also a member of the Essex County Bar Association, Massachusetts Bar Association, New Hampshire Bar Association, as well as a member of the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys.

EDUCATION

Attorney DeBruyckere is a graduate of Southern New Hampshire University, summa cum laude, and Massachusetts School of Law, cum laude. He served as editor of the Massachusetts School of Law's Law Review and was a regional finalist in the American Trial Lawyers' Association Trial Advocacy Competition.

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