



# Sharing Your Plan - Conversation Helpers

## Sharing your important decisions with your loved ones.

Sometimes having end-of-life conversations can be difficult – but we promise you it will be worth it. Share your final needs and make sure your loved ones understand and have access to them. These are critical steps in end-of-life planning that are often overlooked. You can do all the careful and detailed planning in the world, but if your loved ones don't know about it or have access to your plans, your wishes may never be honored.

## These tips can make it easier.

- Think about the important people that need to know about your plan and put this list in writing. It will be a nice way for you to keep track and get that feeling of accomplishment as you move through your list. Find the right opening for each person; starting the conversation is the hardest part. Just by bringing it up, most of the heavy lifting is already done!
  - Don't forget to include your children, parents, and siblings as part of the conversation.
- Think about the important topics that you want to cover in this conversation. Planning the talk and putting the main points in writing will allow you to be well prepared. The conversation may become emotional, so having a written list will help you cover all of your topics. Start with your highest priorities first.
  - It is a good idea to also have your completed guides with you.
- Choose the right time to have the conversation. It's best to have the conversation early. Serious accidents and illnesses can happen at any age.
- Pick an appropriate time and location to have the conversation – keep in mind that a quiet, comfortable place is best, that is private and free from distractions.
- Be open and honest about inheritance or the division of estates. This can avoid hurt feelings and surprises down the road.
- Be as clear as possible when it comes to important decisions like end-of-life medical care. This can be a particularly difficult role to assume for your loved ones.
- If the emotion of the conversation is too difficult, focus on the details and get more factual instead. Once this conversation is over, you can get back to living your life.
- Use an important life event as an occasion to have the conversation. For example, the birth of a child, retirement, or marriage.
- Keep the conversation going if you update your plans later.
- If you encounter resistance when you bring up the topic, know that this is normal. Be understanding and try again another time if things do not go as planned.
- Remember, you may be leading by example and inspire others to do the same!