

END OF LIFE PLANNING GUIDE



Introduction



Hello,

I have created this little, friendly guide as a helpful companion to help you prepare your end-of-life plan. It is one of the legacies I choose to leave behind in the world.

It is not intended to cover all the legalities around death in the country where you live, because each region and country have different laws, and these may change from time to time.

I hope this little guide helps to make dying a more conscious process for you. By following it, it will make things much easier for those you leave behind.

With much love,
Jennifer Ramsay

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Basic Personal Information



- ▶ Full Name:
- ▶ Full address:
- ▶ Passport number, where issued etc.
- ▶ Social security number:
- ▶ Driving license number:
- ▶ Date of Birth:

Friends and Family



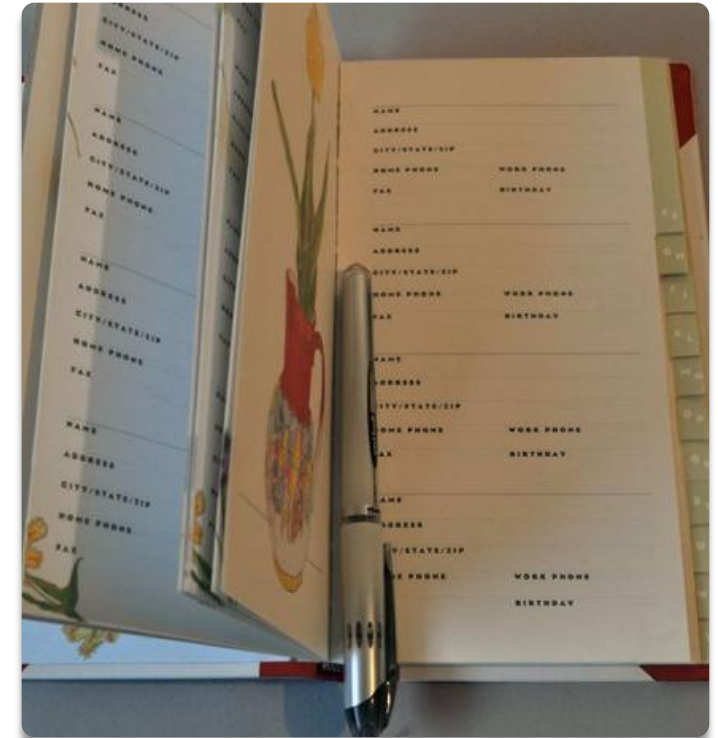
Make a list of people you would like to be notified of your death. Write down their contact details and how you would like them to be notified. Be sure to keep it up to date.

You may want to divide them into specific groups:

- ▶ Childhood friends
- ▶ Business acquaintances
- ▶ Friends who live in different counties etc...
- ▶ People you don't want to be notified

You could prepare a message for each group beforehand

CaringBridge is a free online tool for sharing health updates when you are on a health journey. It is an easy way to communicate health news to family and friends.



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More Than Human Friends



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- ▶ Who will look after the animals that accompany you in this life, when you are no longer around to care for them?
- ▶ Do your pets have any medical conditions or special dietary requirements?
- ▶ What food do your pets eat and at what times? What is their daily routine?
- ▶ Where are the papers for your pets? Insurance details etc.

This organization in the UK helps take care of pets belonging to dying or deceased people:

<https://cinnamon.org.uk/>

What about bigger animals like horses and farm animals?
Who will take care of them when you are gone?

Household



- ▶ How do household appliances like the TV, washing machine, heating, oven and alarm work?
- ▶ Where is the fuse box, the water tap etc.?
- ▶ Where are the papers kept for the house insurance and electricity, gas, water bills etc.?
- ▶ Where are the keys for the garden shed?
- ▶ Where is the food for the pets kept?
- ▶ Where and when is the rubbish collected?
- ▶ What are the combination codes for suitcases?

Car



- ▶ What is the matriculation number of the car?
- ▶ What garage do you take your car to for maintenance?
- ▶ What is the ideal pressure of the tyres?
- ▶ Where is the handbook for the car?
- ▶ When is the car insurance due?

Death Cleaning



2 Books can help you with Death cleaning and decluttering before you leave:

The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning: How to Free Yourself & Your Family From a Lifetime of Clutter by Margareta Magnusson

Kicking the Bucket List: 100 downsizing & Organizing things to do Before you Die by Gail Rubins.

- ▶ Begin with clearing out the clutter, the things you have in storage, hidden away in attics or garages.
- ▶ Have a declutter party: give your things to friends and family.
- ▶ Clean out your wardrobe. Which items do you no longer wear? Which things that just don't fit anymore.
- ▶ Do you need so many things in the kitchen?
- ▶ What things can you sell second hand? Which things can you donate to charity
- ▶ Consider downsizing your house
- ▶ It's the perfect time to start organizing important documents and perhaps sharing passwords with a trusted one.
- ▶ Leave your photographs and personal items until last. It's all too easy to get stuck in a vortex of nostalgia.
- ▶ What do you want to do about journals, diaries and letters? Do they hold any secrets you prefer not to be revealed?

Work: Business as usual?



- ▶ If you have a small business, does somebody know the details of your business?
- ▶
- ▶ What should be done with your business assets and liabilities after your death?
- ▶ If you have premises, who else has the keys for the building? Who has access to the safe?
- ▶ If you have an online business, what will happen to the webpage and products?
- ▶ If you are a therapist, does your supervisor know about your clients? Who will inform them that you have gone?

Legal: An up-to-date-Will



- ▶ It is important to have an **up to date will**, to help make things easier for those left behind. Perhaps revise it on your birthday each year.
- ▶ A will is a legal declaration by which a person appoints another person to manage his or her estate and organize the distribution of his or her assets after death. This could be a lawyer or another person.
- ▶ Estate includes finances, property, possessions of monetary value and intellectual property such as music, books and digital documents.
- ▶ There are free templates to do DIY wills on the internet, but it is advisable to do seek legal advice.
- ▶ Prepare your visit to the lawyer well. Make a list of your assets. Are some things jointly owned?
- ▶ Who will inherit if you don't have a will? If you in a civil partnership, perhaps your partner will not inherit your estate, it would be best to investigate this.
- ▶ What is the tax inheritance threshold in your country? Seek legal advice if other countries are involved
- ▶ Add an attachment that allows you to update you will from time to time as your circumstances change.
- ▶ If you have children who are under 18, you may want to appoint a guardian. In some countries all your children have a right to claim part of an inheritance, in Scotland you cannot disinherit a child.
- ▶ If you have a blended family, you may want to seek expert advise.
- ▶ If you have Intellectual Property or copyright, you will need to explore the law in the country where you live.

Power of Attorney (POA)



- ▶ The power of attorney is a legal document that states the name of the person(s) who is appointed to take action on your behalf, if you are incapacitated. Each country is different.
- ▶ A health POA comes into effect when the person is mentally or physically incapacitated, to make decisions over their welfare.
- ▶ A financial POA has the power to administer your financial and property affairs.

Advance Directives (AD)



- ▶ Advance Directives (AD) is also known as Advance decision, Advanced healthcare directive and a Living will.
- ▶ The AD document outlines the treatment that you wish or do not wish to have towards the end of your life, in the case that you are unable to communicate this for yourself. In some countries it is legally binding, in others not, although the doctors would try to respect your last wishes.
- ▶ An advance statement is an informal document explaining the reasoning behind it.
- ▶ These documents help relatives to know what decision you would like to make, if you could and gives them peace of mind.
- ▶ What is a 'good death' for you?
- ▶ Would you want CPR? (Cardio pulmonary resuscitation) if you were terminally ill?
- ▶ What is your opinion about voluntary euthanasia, suicide or assisted dying?
- ▶ You can do you AD directly online at <https://compassionindying.org.uk/library/advance-decision-pack/>. Or ask for advice at: <http://adassistance.org.uk>
- ▶ You may want to consider making a video testimonial

Financial Affairs



It's a good time to order financial affairs and have all the information in one place. This will save time for everyone and make things easier for your family at such a delicate time.

- ▶ Include all bank accounts, life insurance, salary, stocks and shares, benefits, pensions etc.
- ▶ If you don't have assets, write that down too.
- ▶ Also record any debts you may have.: personal loans, credit cards etc.
- ▶ Include your wishes in an up to date will, otherwise the state will determine where it goes.
- ▶ You may want to assign a financial power of attorney (POA) especially for this

Other things to consider:

- ▶ Mobile phone company, utility companies: electricity, gas, water, deeds or rents of property(s), stock and share certificates
- ▶ Other costs: Zoom, memberships...

Digital Legacy Plan



1. Make a list of all your digital assets:

- ▶ Social media accounts
- ▶ File sharing site like google Docs, Dropbox
- ▶ Spreadsheets files, document files.
- ▶ Media sites: Netflix, Spotify, You Tube
- ▶ Gaming accounts
- ▶ Online cloud systems
- ▶ Medical, private health insurance
- ▶ Website or blog
- ▶ E mail accounts, Zoom account,
- ▶ Bank accounts, credit cards
- ▶ PayPal, Transfer wise
- ▶ Photo sharing accounts
- ▶ Amazon, E bay, Etsy ...other shopping sites
- ▶ Travel sites – frequent flier
- ▶ Utility bills,

2. Appoint a person to take care of your digital assets

3. Leave clear instructions

4. Find a safe place for this. Do you prefer to use an online service or keep paper copies? You may consider using a password manager or a digital executor.

5. Review and update your Digital legacy plan at least once a year.

You may want to stay alive through the use of an online avatar. Some social networks have a way to deactivate accounts.

Password and privacy sites:

<https://lpassword.com>

<https://lastpass.com>

<https://keepass.info>

Creating a Living Legacy



A living legacy is a gift you create when alive, to be appreciated after your death. A part of you would live on after you die and express the essence of who you are. It enables you to create the story of your life as you are living it.

- ▶ What would you like to be remembered for?
- ▶ Who would you like to leave a legacy box to?
- ▶ What would you like to leave?
- ▶ Your box could include memories, photos, hopes and wishes, advice and words of wisdom and even your favourite recipes, jokes, stories, music, your creativity.
- ▶ You could add a personal letter and audio or video recordings
- ▶ Is there anyone you would like to leave something for, to close 'unfinished business'?



Loose Ends: Finishing Textile Projects

Loose ends: Started with Love by them. Finished with care by us.

When a crafter dies mid-project, or is no longer able to do handwork due to disability or illness, they will likely have unfinished items they were making for friends and family. These handmade expressions of love could get lost, donated away, or thrown out.

Loose Ends matches unfinished projects to volunteer finishers who complete and return them to the deceased loved ones.

Anyone with textile handwork skills may sign up at to become a finisher.

Projects and finishers are welcome from anywhere in the world.

<https://www.looseendsproject.org/>



Your Last Days



Location

- ▶ Where would you like to die? Home, hospital, hospice, somewhere else?
- ▶ Where is 'home' for you? Write the address clearly.

People

- ▶ Who would you like to have around you in your last days?
- ▶ Who would you NOT like to have around you in your last days?
- ▶ How would you ideally like to say goodbye?
- ▶ Is there anyone else you would like to accompany you? A minister, priest or druid? a soul midwife/ death doula? Nature? Pets?

Atmosphere

- ▶ Are you happy having flowers around you?
- ▶ Do you prefer silence, nature sounds, music? What type of music? You could perhaps prepare a playlist.
- ▶ What about smells? Would you like candles, incense, fresh herbs?
- ▶ Anything specific you would like to share?

The Body



- ▶ Where would you prefer to die?
 - ▶ If at home, would you like the body to rest there for some time?
 - ▶ Do you want to be embalmed?
 - ▶ Are you happy to be viewed after you die? How would you like to be dressed?
 - ▶ If you are willing to donate some of your organs, you should have this in writing and die in hospital.
 - ▶ How would you like your body to be disposed of? By cremation or burial? A burial at sea?
 - ▶ What would you like to take with you in your coffin?
-
- ▶ Natural Death Centre (UK): <http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk>
 - ▶ Good funeral guide (UK): <http://www.goodfuneralguide.co.uk>
 - ▶ Home Funeral Network (UK): <http://www.homefuneralnetwork.org.uk>
 - ▶ Celebrancy (UK): <https://thecelebrantdirectory.org>

End of Life Celebration



- ▶ Do you have funeral insurance?
- ▶ Would you like to have a funeral? And a memorial service?
- ▶ Where would you like it to be?
- ▶ How do you want your body to be transported?
- ▶ What do you want to wear on your last journey?
- ▶ Who do you want to conduct the service? Inter faith celebrant? Minister? Family? Storyteller?
- ▶ What readings, music, poems, hymns, offerings would you like?
- ▶ What would you like people to do afterwards? Have tea and sandwiches, a drink?
- ▶ Do you want an obituary or eulogy? Would you like to prepare this in advance?
- ▶ Do you want a funeral director, or do you prefer DIY?
- ▶ What kind of atmosphere do you want? If you'd like to have a more festive ending, leave clear details.

References & Further Reading



Books:

- ▶ “Before I go. The Essential Guide to Creating a Good End of Life Plan” by Jane Duncan Rogers
- ▶ [Subscribe](#) to get access to her guides in pdf format
- ▶ Books and [YouTube channel](#) of Caitlin Doughty.

Audio visual:

- ▶ Dying Wish: <https://www.dyingwishmedia.com/>
- ▶ Departures [trailer](#)

Associations:

- ▶ [Loose Ends project](#)