

Tips for Creating an End-of-Life Plan

Putting together a good end-of-life plan long before you need it can both ensure all your wishes are honored and protect your loved ones from the emotional hardships that could accompany any difficult decisions they're forced to make. Even if some of your end-of-life plans are never used, the comfort of knowing they're ready if you ever need them far outweighs the bit of time and effort put into making them. With the exception of financial documents that pass on your wealth and assets, there are three important arrangements that seniors should include in their end-of-life plan:

- 1. Advance Directives** – An advance directive, also called a [living will](#), is a legal, written record of your preferred methods of treatment to be used if you are dying or permanently unconscious. A living will communicates your decisions about how you'd like to be cared for, even when you cannot communicate at the time. In this document, you can either accept or refuse certain kinds of care, including:

- Dialysis, breathing machines, resuscitation, tube feeding, organ donation

Another advance directive, a durable power of attorney for healthcare, names a trusted family member or close friend as your healthcare proxy. This person will be expected to make decisions on your behalf when you are medically unable to do so.

- 2. Physician's Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)** – A [POLST form](#) supplements a patient's advance directives by detailing his or her wishes for life-sustaining care. A POLST form is intended to be used for those who are seriously ill or near the end of life.

A POLST form includes medical instructions based on your preferences regarding:

- Receiving CPR or allowing natural death (Do Not Resuscitate) when you have no pulse and aren't breathing
- Intubation or mechanical ventilation
- Artificially administered fluids or nutrition
- Future hospitalizations, transfers and treatment guidelines
- Other instructions for life-sustaining care when you are unconscious

- 3. Ethical Wills** – Rather than passing down heirlooms or assets, an ethical will passes down a person's values, beliefs, hopes for the future and other sentiments to those they love. An ethical will is not a legal document. Instead, it is a heartfelt statement that you can give to those closest to you in order to leave a legacy of what mattered most in your life.

Some suggestions for inclusion in an ethical will might be:

- Beliefs and opinions you hold to be true
- Wisdom learned from life experiences
- What certain people meant to you
- Things that you are grateful for
- Your hopes for the future and wishes for your loved one
- Messages of forgiveness or apologies

An ethical will can be one of the greatest gifts you could give to your family and close friends. It's also a powerful way to leave a legacy of the parts of life that you feel are most important. An ethical will could inspire family members to carry on your beliefs and keep your memory alive through your example.

The Art of Living

At Tuscan Gardens[®] of Venetia Bay, we've mastered the art of living. We've perfected the balance of personalized support and an uplifting lifestyle, helping our residents experience independence, joy and meaning every day.

Offering [supportive independent living](#), [assisted living and memory care](#) services for families in Venice, Florida, Tuscan Gardens of Venetia Bay was founded with one simple, yet profound goal – to create a community worthy of our parents. In all we do, we are guided by the principles of family, [culture and engagement](#), working to represent the remarkable way of life our families deserve.

The essence of our community is made up not only of mere aesthetics, but an artfully designed lifestyle to bring out the best of what each day has to offer. From dedicated care that respects residents' individuality and dignity to a [lifestyle that nurtures their love of life](#), Tuscan Gardens was built to be more than just a residence, but a place to call home.

To learn more about our comfortable, elegant community, [contact us](#) today!