



# Legacy Society

## East County Senior Center

### *How to get started on your Ethical Will?*

Over time, write down ideas --a few words or a sentence or two about things like:

- My beliefs and opinions
- Things I did to act on my values
- Something I learned from grandparents / parents / siblings / spouse / children
- Something I learned from experience
- Something I am grateful for
- My hopes for the future
- Write about important events in you life
- Imagine that you only had a limited time left to live. What would you regret not having done?
- Review what you've collected after a few weeks or months
- Clump related items together -- patterns will emerge
- Revise and expand the related categories
- Add an introduction and conclusion
- Put this aside for a few weeks and then review and revise

**If you do not want to do all this then lets sit down together and talk and record your Thoughts, Memories and Values on a DVD**

### *What the Legacy Society would like to do for you*

#### **We want to put your Ethical Will on a DVD**

Our ancestors had only one way of recording their Ethical Wills – the written document. Today, you also have the option of a video. In a recorded interview, we will ask you questions that will help you to think aloud about the topics you have chosen.

We will provide you with a record of the interview.

An video recording can complement your written Ethical Will by preserving your unique presence.

The cost of your Ethical Will the time required for interviewing and editing. We are currently offering our basic package at \$75.00.

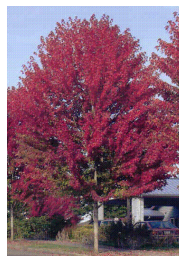
**For Legacy Members this service is Free**

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# *Ethical Wills*

## *Preserving A Legacy of Values for Your Family and Community*



## *What is an Ethical Will?*

Most people are familiar with the concept of a "last will and testament". It is the means of distributing our accumulated assets to our loved ones and favorite charities, and to effect other important decisions at the time of our death.

### **But...have you ever considered writing and or recording an ethical will?**

An ethical will is a way to share your values with your family in the same way that a will of inheritance provides instructions for bequeathing your valuables.

Ethical wills are not new. The Hebrew Bible first described ethical wills, which were transmitted orally. Later they were written and attached to legal wills and shared after death.

Today, they are most often written as a separate document and shared with family members while the writer is still alive.

## *Why create an Ethical Will?*

There are many personal reasons for writing and or recording an Ethical Will. Here is a partial list:

- We all want to be remembered, and we all will leave something behind
- It helps you identify what you value most and what you stand for
- By articulating what we value now, we can take steps to insure the continuation of those values for future generations
- When you write and or record an ethical will, you learn a lot about yourself
- If we don't tell our stories and the stories from whom we come, no one else will and they will be lost forever
- It helps coming to terms with our mortality by creating something of meaning that will live on after we are gone
- It provides a sense of completion in our lives

## *When Might You Write an Ethical Will?*

Ethical wills are being written by people facing challenging life situations and at different life stages.

Some people find it easier to write a legal will or living will once they have written an ethical will.

They are also being written as a foundation for estate planning to help articulate goals that are important to us.

Here are some people who could consider writing and recording an Ethical Will:

- Betrothed Couples--for establishing a common base of values
- Expectant and new parents--to provide a framework for child-rearing
- Growing families--for teaching values to our children
- Middle age and beyond--converting life experience into wisdom and passing this on to future generations
- End of Life--adds the transcendent dimension to our lives