

These are my wishes:

How to talk to your loved ones before your own death

1. Decide who are your closest, most trusted family or friends, 3 maximum. These may be the executors of your will or have power of attorney.
2. Prepare the way, by letting them know there is something important you need to discuss, best not to give details, but give assurance there is no need to worry.
3. Be sensitive when talking to your choice of person/persons, they may become very upset by this conversation.
4. Choose an appropriate venue, comfortable and private, where and when you are unlikely to be disturbed, maybe at your home or theirs over coffee, lunch or dinner.
5. Choose a good time when they are not rushed or put under pressure.
6. When you judge that the time is right, bring the subject up gently and say why you have chosen them as your trustees.
7. Provide a file you have produced containing your wishes on the event of your death, or you become incapable of expressing your wishes due to mental or physical illness.
8. Make sure to tell them where you will keep the file safely and for them to find easily.

What your file should contain

1. Who is your executor and where is the will kept
2. Where are the deeds to any property and where keys are kept
3. Where important documents are kept - insurance, bank details, credit/store cards, etc.
4. Who will take care of any dependants and pets as you have previously arranged.
5. A list of usernames and passwords for all technical devices and social media, etc
6. Your wishes on organ, tissue or full body donation.
7. Your wishes in the event of terminal, mental or physical illness leading to incapacity to make your own decisions. Eg, on life support machine, dementia, brain damage.
8. Details of your wishes for funeral arrangements, burial or cremation, natural or traditional
9. Distribution of your assets and belongings.

Your specific wishes for your funeral and celebration of life

1. Where and what type of funeral you would like.
2. How would you like your body transported to the venue. Traditional hearse, horse and cart, motorbike and sidecar, van, etc.
3. What would you like to happen to your body, burial, cremation or other.
4. What you would prefer to be dressed in.
5. What you would prefer family and friends to wear.
6. Your choice of coffin and/or urn
7. Where you want your ashes scattered or body laid to rest
8. Any specific wishes regarding flowers or donations

9. If you want a headstone or remembrance plaque, and where you want them placed.
10. What specific music you would like, songs, religious or non-religious.
11. What readings or inspirational words you would like.
12. Anyone you would particularly like to be responsible for your eulogy.
13. Anyone you particularly do not want to attend your funeral.

After Gathering

1. Any particular choice of venue.
2. Any specific requests for food and drink.
3. Any wishes for the type of music or no music.
4. Any messages or thoughts, you may wish to leave for your family and friends.

Web: www.joysackettwood.com Email: joy@joysackettwood.com

Joy Sackett Wood

Psychotherapist, Counsellor, Grief Transformation Coach & Author