

CHAMPS

Center for Healthy Aging Ministries, Programs & Services

Important Life Planning: Where Are the Documents?

(Honoring My Wishes Workshop - Article 1 of 5)



“Honey, where did you file last year’s tax records?” may sound like a simple question, but often the answer is far more complex. “I’ll get back to you

tomorrow” will buy you some time to dig through that mountain of filing you were going to get to—you know, the ‘tomorrow to do list’ that never gets done. Or, you may have a drawer or cardboard box you throw everything in to take and dump on the tax accountant’s desk for him or her to sort out and file the tax returns. These poorly

organized ‘system’ don’t work when the person who ‘handles everything’ is incapacitated. The point is, **do you and your mate know everything there is to know about your finances?** Or, is your filing system and/or lack of communication a major impediment to your ability to function one without the other? The sudden illness that leaves everyone in the dark about the location of health, long term care or home health insurance policy information is an example of the turmoil that failure to communicate verbally and in written form can create.

Key Questions to Answer:

- Can both you and your mate balance the check book, execute financial decisions and do you **BOTH** understand where all the bank account , mutual funds, stocks, IRA , 401 K, pension plans and other sources of your wealth are?
 - What monies are available for meeting the immediate emergency or day to day living expenses over the next three to six months until the estate is processed through probate; or in the event of an incapacitating illness what legal documents have been executed?
 - Have you notified your investment counselor of the name(s) of the individuals who will manage your estate?
 - In the event of a death or incapacitation, does the other partner have an established individual credit history?
 - Have you ever talked with an investment counselor about how to best withdraw investment funds from your account(s) once you retire?
 - Where are all the insurance policies—home, life, health, etc?
 - Have you made a listing of the names and telephone numbers of your attorney, tax account, insurance agent, pension plans, mortgage/loan holder(s), investment counselor, etc?
 - Where are all the numbers and locations of your bank accounts, wills, trusts and other documents kept?
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These are a few of the areas one needs to share with your mate and the person who will manage your estate. Keeping all this information in a total state of disarray or secret will not help your family in the event something adverse occurs! Preparing each other and your family for the unexpected is truly an act

of love. It is part of your valuing them and their needs for the unforeseeable future. Planning and investing wisely today can help ensure you're having enough monies to live on in later life. It is in your best interest to prepare adequately today for the tomorrows ahead!

A booklet designed to track valuable documents is available from the CHAMPS office or online at www.champsonline.info under *Valuable Documents*.

The Valuable Documents booklet will be distributed at the Workshop noted below:

HONORING MY WISHES

We know all of us will die, but many of us prefer to avoid conversations about life-altering events or dying; which is ironic since we have the promise of eternal life from our Lord. ***Honoring My Wishes*** is designed to encourage Christians to engage in such conversations long before we need to make the decisions. The *Honoring My Wishes* Workshop is designed to:

- help people think about the kind of health care they will receive in their final days
- help people prepare for their death, and make plans for their funeral celebration
- help people make needed decisions to ensure that their wishes are carried out
- help people complete needed paperwork and communicate their decisions with loved ones
- help families know they are honoring God and their loves ones as they carry out those plans

In addition to the *Honoring My Wishes* Workshop Booklet, there are additional resources to help with locating valuable documents, making funeral plans; a sermon with outline, and five publicity articles to help people begin to think about these important matters prior to the workshops.

(NOTE TO WORKSHOP COORDINATOR: Insert date, time and location of workshop here)

We especially encourage grown children to attend with their parents so these important matters can be discussed together. Specially trained **Encouragers** will be available to assist each family to walk through these important decisions and conversations. You can obtain more information by contacting the church.

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