

LIVING WILLS - AFTER TERRI SCHIAVO

BY STEVE PAGE

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Science says, "We must live," and seeks the means of prolonging, increasing, facilitating and amplifying life
Wisdom says, "We must die," and seeks how to let us die well.
Miquel de Unamuno

Regardless of how you felt about the Terri Schiavo feeding tube controversy, the case was tragic. Especially tragic because the whole episode could have been avoided if only Terri Schiavo had prepared a Living Will. The lesson is that if you want to direct what should happen to you in the event you become incapacitated, then enact a Living Will.

A Living Will, or Advance Directive, is a legal document in which patients express their wishes about the kind of health care they wish to receive if they become unable to make their own treatment decisions. In Kansas and most states, there are two types of advance directives and you need both: The Living Will and the Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care.

The Living Will is a legal declaration that states in advance your wishes to receive or withhold life-support procedures. It is placed into use when a

patient becomes irreversibly unconscious or terminally ill, and is unable to make decisions about his or her own health care. So long as the patient is able to make health care decisions, the Living Will cannot be used. When it is used, the document directs the withholding or withdrawal of any treatment that might be considered life prolonging or that artificially extends the dying process. The Living Will and the Durable Power of Attorney address specific issues, e.g., those involving the administration of nutrition and hydration in these circumstances.

Anyone over the age of 18 who is of sound mind can complete and sign a Living Will. The signature must be either witnessed or notarized. The document may be revoked at any time by the patient so long as he or she is of sound mind.

The Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care is a document that allows patients to specify in advance



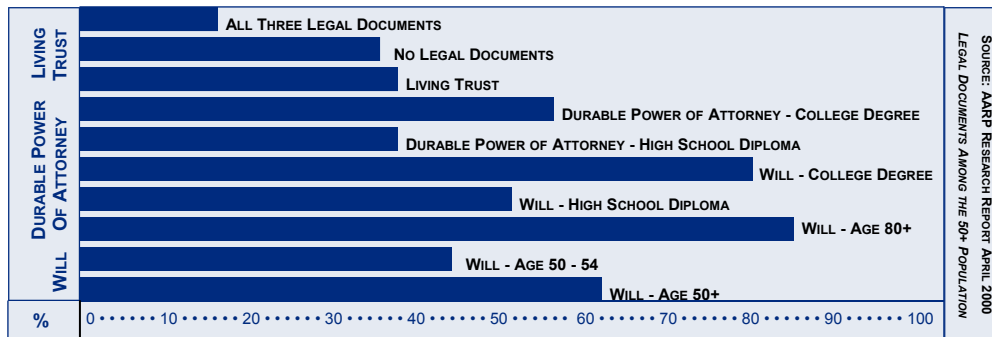
If you are 18 years or older and want to direct what should happen to you in the event you become incapacitated, then enact a Living Will.

who should make health care decisions for them in the event they become unable to do so. Like the Living Will, this document becomes effective when the patient loses the ability to make his or her own health care decisions. But - unlike the Living Will, the patient need not be terminally ill or in an irreversible coma for the Durable Power of Attorney to become effective. The Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care grants broad or specific powers to consent or refuse any type of treatment. These are very flexible documents that name someone to make decisions when the patient is unable to do so and also

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INCIDENCE OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES IN AMERICA IN THE 50+ POPULATION

SOURCE: AARP RESEARCH REPORT APRIL 2000
LEGAL DOCUMENTS AMONG THE 50+ POPULATION

It's imperative that family members, friends and health care providers are clear about our personal expectations and beliefs.

The Butler Community College Foundation has grown from under \$800,000 in assets in 1985 to more than \$5.5 million today.

LIVING WILLS

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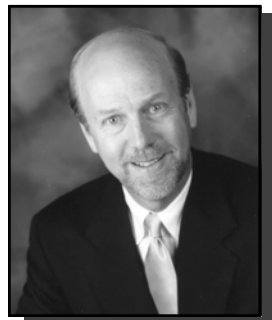
defines the treatments the patient wants or does not want to receive.

Anyone over the age of 18 (except for the attending physician or those employed by him or her) can be named in the Durable Power of Attorney document. Again, any person over the age of 18 and of sound mind can complete and sign a Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care, and witnesses or notarization is also required. More than one person may be named in the document to act for the patient. This may be advisable to ensure that someone will be available to act when it becomes necessary. The Durable Power of Attorney may be revoked at any time by the patient so long as he or she is of sound mind.

Once the Living Will and Durable Power of Attorney have been completed and properly signed, it is important that they be furnished to health care providers when needed. Hospitals and clinics often ask for the documents at the time of admission. It is advisable that whoever is named to make health care decisions possess copies of the documents.

Remember that advance directives only take effect when the patient loses the ability to make his or her own decisions. Before that time, the patient's wishes should be followed and active communication with patients and families is vital.

Congratulations Steve Funk and the Butler Community College Foundation



Steve Funk

Steve Funk learned early in his professional life that giving back to the community is an important aspect of personal development. Steve comments, "My mentor, Cliff Stone, former Chairman and CEO of Walnut Valley Bank & Trust in El Dorado, spoke often of the need to volunteer and help those who are helping us be successful in business. I took it to heart."

Over the past twenty five years, Steve has volunteered his time and energy to a variety of causes. "I have worked through the leadership of many organizations from the Chamber of Commerce to the El Dorado School Board," Funk said. Today he leads one of the organizations that have been closest to his heart, the Butler Community College Foundation. Steve has been involved with the Foundation since 1985. He has worked with seven Foundation Executive Directors and three College Presidents during that tenure. He was elected President of the Foundation in June, 2004.

Stacy Cofer, current Executive Director of the Foundation says, "Steve is a remarkable leader. He has the vision, passion and commitment to ensure Butler Community Foundation will continue to serve students by providing greater scholarship opportunities and enhanced physical facilities. He has effectively shared his vision with donors, trustees and the community, and made the College stronger as a result of his involvement."

The Butler Foundation has grown from under \$800,000 in assets in 1985 to more than \$5.5 million today. The Foundation manages almost 200 scholarship funds and works closely with the Butler Athletic Department and Alumni Association. The Foundation is also working closely with the college in planning for a capital campaign. Steve has been instrumental in the planning process with college President Dr. Jackie Vietti, Stacy Cofer and the College Board of Trustees. "These are wonderful people to work beside," commented Steve. "They have exceptional talent, creativity, and resourcefulness that I find energizing."

His major payoff, however, is seeing the progress of students who are assisted financially by the Foundation. "Both of my sons graduated from Butler and my younger son was on a full scholarship," Steve says. "I know first hand the good work the staff and volunteers of the Foundation do every day, and it is gratifying to see the students we help succeed in life." **GTrust** congratulates the Butler Community Foundation on its fine work in south central Kansas and Steve Funk on his leadership as President of the organization.

Should You Pay Off Your Home Mortgage Early?

by Richard Salmen, CFP®, CFA, CTFA, EA

As a Fee-Only Financial Advisor, one of the questions I am most frequently asked is, "Should I pay off my home mortgage early?" Like most financial questions, this one has no easy answer and many factors to consider.

Most of our fear of home mortgages stems from stories of the Great Depression when our parents and/or grandparents may have lost their homes to the bank. Many people do not realize that during the 1930's banks were permitted by law to cancel mortgage loans at any time. During the Depression when banks ran out of cash and needed more, that is exactly what they did. Homeowners had 120 days to pay off their mortgage or face foreclosure. Congress has since changed the rules. If you have a mortgage, you have no risk that the bank will force you to pay off the loan any quicker than is demanded by your regular payment schedule.

I can describe two situations where paying off your mortgage early *does* make sense. The first is what I call the "Sleep at Night" factor. If you are lying awake at night worrying about having a mortgage loan, then for the sake of your health, you need to pay it off early.

The second situation where this makes sense is when someone spends every dollar that runs through their checkbook and cannot seem to save any money. Ideally, this person should get professional help with managing their personal finances. But if they choose not to do that, at least they can build up somewhat of a nest egg by making extra mortgage payments to more quickly increase the equity in their home.

The following example will help you understand when you should NOT pay your mortgage off early. A young couple just recently refinanced a 30 year mortgage down to a 15 year mortgage. This same couple carries approximately \$30,000 of credit card debt with a very high interest rate - a whopping 20%, on average! Neither one of these young people are contributing to retirement plans at work or through IRAs. This couple asked me if they should go to "bi-weekly" payments on their new 15 year mortgage to pay it off faster!

The answer to this question was not just "No," but "Absolutely NOT!" The after tax cost of their mortgage was about 4.5%. Paying extra each month on their credit cards results in an interest savings of 15.5% per year! Where else can you guarantee that kind of rate of return?

So - if any of the following apply to you, give serious consideration to paying the minimum payment on your mortgage each month:

1. You have high interest credit card debt or car loans.
2. You are not contributing to your flex plan at work for medical care or dependent care.
3. You do not have short term savings equal to 3 - 6 months spending needs.
4. You are not maxing out your deductible retirement plan contributions (401K, IRA, etc.).

GTrust Launches New WebSite!

GTrust proudly announces the launch of its updated website at www.gtrust.com. The redesigned site reflects the talent of Webmaster Paul Bush of OneSource Technology, Inc., in Derby, Kansas, and collaboration among the offices of **GTrust** in Topeka, Overland Park, Wichita and Larned. Initial planning for the redesigned site began last fall and work was begun in earnest last March. Please visit the site and forward your comments to any of the contact addresses on the home page. We are genuinely interested in your opinions about the ease of use and look of the new site.

*Two situations
where it makes sense
to pay off your
mortgage early:*

1. *The "Sleep at
Night" Factor*
2. *The "No Savings"
Circumstance*

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GTRUST ADDS TALENTED TEAM MEMBERS

Teri Byrne is the Client Coordinator for our office in Overland Park.

She was born in Tacoma, Washington, but considers Manhattan, Kansas, her home after residing there for 30 years, graduating from Manhattan High School and Manhattan Technical College. She moved to the Kansas City area in 2003 to marry and worked for Gap, Inc., as a client coordinator with Banana Republic prior to joining the **GTrust** team.

Teri's background includes a 23 year career with a national publisher producing a variety of in-service material for teachers, administrators and support staff. She was the graphic/prepress coordinator and production advisor for the printing division of that company. Her experience allowed her to work with a diverse clientele base and utilize a wide range of technology. During that time, she was involved with the American Heart Association, The Boys and Girls Club and the Graphic Arts Advisory Council.

Teri has one son and three grandchildren (one boy, two girls). She and husband Kevin, who is employed by Bank of America, bought a new home in Shawnee last fall. Her hobbies are weight training and golf.

Barry J. Lewis joins **GTrust** as an Assistant Advisor in Overland Park.

Barry holds a Bachelor degree in Management and Human Resources from Mid America Nazarene University and has attended Ottawa University to study Management and Business Ethics and Johnson County Community College to focus on Business Administration, Economics and Business Law. He has also completed the Financial Planning Certificate Program at the University of Missouri, Kansas City, School of Business and Public Administration.

Barry has broad occupational experience including United States Army, law enforcement, retail management, business equipment sales, print production-marketing manager and sales executive with a strategic focus in the financial and insurance markets. He has been a long time member of the National Direct Marketing Association.

Barry is married to Karen, who has spent 23 years in the field of human resources. They have a son, Michael, who is a chemical engineer; and a son, Phillip, who is in law enforcement.