

Foreword

Many songs have been written about the joys of life and living—and the tragedies of losing someone we love. When you listen to those sad songs, you understand that death is indeed universal; it will happen to all of us. Death is in fact part of life, ordered and inevitable—but we human beings much prefer the joyful sounds of life and put off thinking about its end. Nevertheless, those we love and wish to nurture and protect will have to deal with the fallout should we predecease them. This book is an excellent “first step” on the road to peace of mind for you and your families as you make your lifetime plans.

Wants, Wishes, and Wills is written by two people who have intimate knowledge and experience in counseling and helping those who are left behind or may be dealing with the imminent or sudden death of a loved one. Throughout many years as a medical oncologist, teacher, and advocate for patients and legislation to protect and advance their care, I have seen firsthand the devastation that strikes a family who has just heard the diagnosis of “cancer.” Though each decade brings new advances in treatment of cancer and other life-threatening diseases, the journey can be exhausting—physically, emotionally, and financially. Being prepared is the best first step to arming yourself, should you or your family face the decisions that must and will be made. And in today’s legal and regulatory maze regarding the rights of individuals, your best defense is a good offense. Get ready. Think about what you want, what you wish for—and help make sure that those things will happen—even when you are no longer here to make sure they do.

As you read the sound advice from Wynne Whitman and Dr. Shawn Glisson, think about your own life circumstances. Think about

your family, friends—and yourself. Remember that thinking about its end may be the most eloquent way to celebrate your life.

—Dr. Joseph S. Bailes, M. D.

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