

End-of-life planning

\$7,640

Average cost of a funeral¹

2 out of 3

Americans who don't have a will²

37%

Americans whose burial plans have changed as a result of Covid-19³

One of the most important life planning issues we all face

As much as we might like to avoid thinking about it, our lives will end someday. And while that is something you cannot control, there are things related to the end of life that you can and should control.

What are your funeral plans? Who will pay for it? Who should handle the arrangements? Who would you like to attend?

Left unanswered, many of these questions will only add to the stress and grief that loved ones will face. And by planning for your future needs, you will not only be making their lives a bit easier, but you will be giving yourself something you can enjoy right now: peace of mind.

As you begin the planning process, it is important to understand that we now have many choices – choices about how we want to be remembered, and in some cases, how we want to die.

It is also important to know that you have choices about who will provide the services required and how much you will pay for those services. You should feel free to shop around.

Luckily there are many good sources of information that can help you in the planning process. And if you have recently experienced the loss of a loved one, there are ways to help you deal with your grief.

Here are a few of these resources.

Websites

aarp.org/home-family/friends-family/info-2020/funeral-planning-tips.html - Many useful tips from the folks at AARP

joincake.com - A website that offers tools for estate planning, health care decisions, aging parents, and coping with grief and loss

funeralwise.com - A site that contains complete planning guides

compassionandchoices.org - An organization dedicated to empowering people to choose end-of-life care that reflects their values, priorities and beliefs

Books

Finish Strong: Putting Your Priorities First at Life's End

by Barbara Coombs Lee

Bearing the Unbearable: Love, Loss, and the Heartbreaking Path of Grief

by Dr. Joanne Cacciatore

Being Mortal: Illness, Medicine, and What Matters in the End

by Atul Gawande

A Beginner's Guide to the End: Practical Advice for Living Life and

Facing Death by Dr. BJ Miller and Shoshana Berger

Choosing to Die: A Personal Story by Phyllis Shacter

Cruel Death, Heartless Aftermath: My Family's End-of-Life Nightmare,

and How to Avoid It by Barbara Mancini

The Divine Art of Dying: How to Live Well While Dying

by Karen Speerstra and Herbert Anderson

Grieving Us: A Field Guide for Living With Loss Without Losing Yourself

by Kimberley Pittman-Schulz

Knocking on Heaven's Door: The Path to a Better Way of Death

by Katy Butler

Modern Death: How Medicine Changed the End of Life

by Dr. Haider Warraich

Film

Alternate Endings: Six New Ways to Die in America (an HBO documentary)

And if you have any questions about life planning, including end-of-life planning, please contact your Edelman Financial Engines planner.

We are experienced professionals who are here to help you plan for and face whatever life has in store.

¹ Borrelli, L. (2021, July 12). *Average funeral cost*. Bankrate. Retrieved September 9, 2021, from <https://www.bankrate.com/insurance/life-insurance/average-funeral-cost>

² Cobb, D. (2020, December). *2021 Wills and Estate Planning Study*. Caring.com. Retrieved September 9, 2021, from <https://www.caring.com/caregivers/estate-planning/wills-survey>

³ Martin, A. *Life (and death) after the pandemic: 37% of Americans' burial plans have changed as a result of COVID-19*. Choice Mutual. Retrieved September 9, 2021, from <https://choicemutual.com/funeral-preferences>