

# ***THE ULTIMATE GOAL SETTING SESSION!***

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As a speaker who has a background in the financial services industry for over three decades, it has been our practice to advise our clients to not only prepare *financially* for their future but to also prepare *philosophically* as well. Two powerful tools that we use aid our clients are the use of an Ethical Will and the preparation of your own Eulogy. That's right – your own Eulogy.

I call it the ultimate goal setting experience. What do you want them to say about you after you're dead and gone? I believe the future you perceive will dictate the way you live your life today. Let's look at these two exercises and try to understand their application to the professional speaker, consultant, trainer or keynoter.

## **Writing Your Own Eulogy**

A number of years ago, we began a leadership program that was designed to get our life insurance clients to look at where they wanted their families to be when they moved on to their great reward hereafter. We called it "Legacy Planning." Yes, it did include them visiting their insurance needs, but more importantly, it got them to raise philosophical questions.

One of the most intriguing questions we would pose was: "*If money was not an issue, how much would you want your family to have when you die?*" The answer had to be very specific. Answers like "as much as possible" or "enough to take care of them" or "enough to live comfortably" were unacceptable. In other words, we forced them to get to the "why" part of the question.

Bill Gates, who is unquestionably one of the richest men in the world, is said to have provided his children with a modest \$10 million trust, enormous by the humble standards of most of us but hardly a drop in the "Gates" bucket. He was very specific in the amount.

The question is about “*why*” not “*how much*.” The why part can best be answered by you writing your own Eulogy. What do you want people to say about you after you are dead and gone? Writing your Eulogy can be one of the most cleansing experiences you will ever go through. I call it the ultimate “*goal setting session*.”

## **Ethical Wills**

The second part of the exercise is something called an Ethical Will. Ethical Wills are a way to share your values, blessings, life’s lessons, hopes, dreams for the future, love and forgiveness with your family, friends, community and business associates.

Ethical Wills are not new. The Hebrew Bible first described Ethical Wills 3000 years ago (Genesis Ch. 49). References to this tradition are also found in the Christian Bible (John Ch. 15-18) and in dozens of other cultures. Initially, Ethical Wills were transmitted orally. Over time, they evolved into written documents. While they are not legal, they may be one of the most cherished and meaningful gifts you can leave your family and community. Ethical Wills visit a number of issues:

1. How do you want to be remembered?
2. How will your story be told and remembered if you do not tell it?
3. How will you identify what you value and stand for?
4. How will your great, great grandchildren know who you were and what you stood for, how you got here and how you came to be and do what you do?

Ethical Wills are a healthy way to bring closure in life, both for those of us who survive the loss of loved ones and those of us who want to say goodbye to those we love. Many people in the medical community now recommend that the terminally ill author such a document. It helps them with many issues:

1. Coming to terms with our own mortality.
2. Providing as sense of completion to our lives.
3. Saying goodbye to those you love and those who love you.
4. Forgiving others and asking forgiveness of others.
5. In short, completing the circle.

For more help on understanding Ethical Wills, go to <http://www.ethicalwill.com> and you will be able to actually witness sample Ethical Wills written by people from all walks of life.

Why bring up these issues to aspiring or even accomplished speakers and trainers? The answer to that question is a question itself. How do you know what you want to be when you grow up if you don't know *how* and *why* you wanted to be it in the first place? Solve the second part and the first part comes much easier.

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