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IT IS ALL ABOUT YOU!!

By: Sabrina Winters, Attorney at Law

I over-heard something while attending a health fair the other day at a retirement community. An older adult child was attending the fair with her older parents; if I had to guess they were in their early 70's. Mom stopped to talk to me about why she needed a will at her "old age" (her words not mine!). When we were finished talking she stopped to look at some information that the funeral home had on display at the table next to mine. At the same time her daughter walked up to her mom and said "Really mom? Do we have to talk about this now? I purposely walked past this table." To that mom said, "We are all going to die someday!" The daughter wouldn't even look at the brochures on the table or go anywhere near the table for that matter.

My father lost his brother years ago and I held my father's hand from the moment my uncle took his last breath through planning the funeral right up to the day the last relative left to go back home. I also sat with my husband and his sister four years ago when they lost their dad. We were by mom's side making heartbreaking decisions at the funeral home. It was obvious (to me anyway) that the daughter didn't really know how difficult the experience of planning someone else's funeral could be. If she did, she would have been encouraging her mother and not discouraging her.

Did the daughter really know how difficult these decisions would be to make, especially during the time in which she is grieving their loss? Would she know her parent's preference on burial or cremation and could she ultimately make this decision easily? Does she realize that she would

have to pick the casket? That this would entail either walking through a room or view pages and pages of pictures of caskets and decide on type of wood, color, interior finish and handles? Did she really understand that she would have to make all the decisions on which thank you notes to use and what saying to put inside, and mass cards, and limos, and viewing dates and times, and head stones? Who is going to pay for this? If she doesn't have the money could this affect the way in which she makes her decisions?

I don't want to think about my parents dying or getting sick and having to make the decisions for them, I don't think anyone really does. But, if she could step back and see the bigger picture of why her parents want to plan, then I believe she would have been grabbing those brochures off the table.

Sometimes our parents know best and maybe when it comes to difficult decisions we as children need to act a little more -grown-up and deal with reality. It's not easy- it never is but when making a difficult life decision we must remember that it is ultimately ALL ABOUT YOU! It is about making these decisions today so that your children and family don't have to.