



Excerpts from a contemporary ethical will

From the introduction:

The legal and financial documents may imply our values, but they do not provide a clear explanation of our motivations or a sense of the path we have taken to get to this point. Please read this document as a conversation between the two of us and the two of you. Some of it will make more sense at other points in your lives than it does now, so we hope you'll keep it in a safe place and refer to it often in the future. Herein you will find information about our families and the ways our values were shaped, the financial planning that we've set up for your and your children's benefit, our non-financial assets, our intentions as they relate to charitable giving and advice on avoiding some potential pitfalls. We love you both unconditionally and want you to have a complete picture of our thinking and an explanation of the plans we have made.

On the subject of money:

We want our money to help you and not hurt you. It will help if it grants you access, flexibility and opportunity; it will hurt if it provides an easy exit from challenges and dilemmas that you need to face in order to grow into strong, successful adults.

The most important matter is not how you got your money or how you are going to spend it. It is how you are going spend your lives and what kind of people you are going to be. It is about finding your passions and pursuing them. It is striving to be excellent in whatever you do. It is also about your moral authority. We hope that you will always look outside yourselves and consider the perspective of others, that you will not get so wrapped up in your own lives that you miss the people that are around you that are in need. We hope you will be aware of what is going on in your community and how events are affecting people there and all over the world. Try to take in the stranger - both physically and in your heart.

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