

## *No One Plans to Die Unprepared But Most of Us Do*

By Jeanne K. Smith



**Oh, some of us have met with our attorney to do the legal estate planning and some of us actually got around to signing the documents. We might also have met with our financial advisor to do some financial planning for our later years and our heirs.**

We all want to make certain that our family is protected after we are gone and we think we've taken care of this with the financial and legal estate planning.

However, imperative as these advisors and this planning are, it's just the tip of the iceberg of the mass of information your family needs to have immediate access to when someone becomes incapacitated or dies.

The baby boomer generation and our aging parents are also "empty nesters" and no longer have the children living at home. Often our children do not even live in the same geographical area. They're not familiar with our habits and systems and how often we have let things go because we just don't have the energy or time to keep up with the paperwork, etc.

**Now imagine your children or heir having to go through your files and piles, drawers and more looking for the information that they need most to handle your home and financial affairs and/or settle your estate.**

Not knowing the necessary 100+ categories of information can cause great frustration and loss of time for your family when they're extremely stressed and in grief.

For example, does your family know:

- **Who to call at your work or at your volunteer "job"?**
- **What final arrangements you've made and where you keep the paperwork?**
- **Where you keep your extra car key and who has an extra key to your home?**
- **What neighbor normally picks up your mail and paper if you are gone?**
- **What bills are paid automatically from your checking account and when this routinely occurs?**

- **What deposits are automatically made to your checking account and when?**
- **When and where to put out the garbage?**
- **The combination to the lock on the garage or storage shed?**

And the list goes on...

Organizing this basic, but essential, information is exactly what ESTATE ORGANIZATION is all about!

Most estate administrators (executors or trustees) are overwhelmed with the extent of their duties. Experienced professional organizers offer hands-on assistance with the contents of the home, finding and organizing the important papers and assets and support the administrator with their process.

There are over 100 professional organizers across the United States who have received personal training by the originator of the fields of "Estate Organization," helping families get their affairs in order and "Assisting the Estate Administrator," after a loss.

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*Jeanne K. Smith of Exit Stage Right offers keynotes, workshops and consults on the importance of families having "The Conversation" about getting their affairs in order. For more information, visit: [www.exitstageright.com](http://www.exitstageright.com). or call 650.493.3948.*

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