

Choosing the best administrator for your estate or trust

It has been nearly two years since singer-songwriter Tom Petty died at age 66. Tom's daughters and their step mother are battling over control of the late singer's estate and musical legacy, estimated to be worth \$95 million. Their disagreements have culminated in the filing of multiple court proceedings.

Sadly, trust and estate fights over the financial legacy of deceased loved ones are far from uncommon.

Tom had the foresight to create a Living Trust, but appointing his second wife Dana as the Trustee has resulted in deep conflicts with his children from his former marriage, who are also beneficiaries of the trust.

The Petty family dispute brings into focus the importance of choosing the right person for the job of administering one's trust or estate at death or disability.

Your Trustee or Executor is going to have to navigate the sale or liquidation of your assets, file income tax returns, and make reports to your beneficiaries. Some questions to consider when picking your administrator should include whether the person can:

- *Separate personal feelings and



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"Free Fallin" the Tom Petty estate battle...

interests from those of the beneficiaries?

- *Exercise good judgment and be trusted with your assets at all times?

- *Treat all of the beneficiaries impartially?

- *Have the time to do this job while balancing family and career?

- *Understand your beneficiaries' needs?

- *Act as peacemaker amongst your family?

Also consider choosing an independent third party as an administrator and draft into your documents a method of resolving disputes.

While the Petty family dispute will likely languish for years there are lessons to be learned from the "free fall." When setting up or reviewing your trust or will, carefully consider and discuss the options for your administrator with your attorney. Talk candidly about your family dynamics and relationships amongst your heirs so that you can have made the best choice possible for avoiding conflict with your loved ones.

MEAL

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family meal journey.

- You are not a failure if your children don't eat what is on the table. Celebrate that you got something, anything, on the table and that your entire family sat down at the same time.

- Include kids in meal routines. They don't need to be involved the entire time, as some days you just need to quickly prepare a meal. However, something as small as setting napkins out, adding veggies to a salad, or taking rolls to the table helps kids feel important.

- Work at making meal times peaceful. Forcing kids to eat or rewarding/bribing with food only ends in unproductive power-struggles and increase tantrums around food. Instead, allow your child to choose what and how much he eats from the options you provide for dinner. If he doesn't eat or try everything on the table (e.g., vegetables) don't stress. The more exposure he has to a food, without pressure to eat it, the more likely he will start eating it on his own. Though this may take months, don't give up.

- Have a preferred food (e.g., bread, undressed pasta, tortillas) on the table with all meals, especially when serving something new or not liked by your child. This will give her a safe food

she can eat while allowing her to get used to new or less favored foods. Furthermore, don't pressure her to try the new food, while letting her eat as much of the safe food as she wants.

- Provide a good example for you kids by sitting down and eating dinner with them. Some days it may feel you have very little time to eat, if you can just get the kids fed and off to soccer you will be doing good. However, spending five to 10 minutes eating a quick family meal is important; as time spent eating together can help you and your children bond and increase positive conversations.

No one's meals are ever truly perfect and that is OK. Some days dinner may be simple, unbalanced, or involve tantrums. Don't be hard on yourself; instead find a positive side of the meal. Additionally, it is reassuring to remind yourself that you are working toward having regular family meals by taking it one meal at a time.

Kimberly Funk, MS, RDN is a registered dietitian nutritionist who has a passion for helping people make healthy and enjoyable food choices. She believes that healthy eating does not need to be rigid and that all your favorite foods can fit into a healthy lifestyle. You can find her working at the Kearns Oquirrh Park Fitness Center or at kimberlyfunk.rdn@gmail.com

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