

CHOOSING GUARDIANS

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Instructions: This worksheet is here to help you make a thoughtful decision about who would take care of your kids if something were to happen to you. Take your time with each question and if you have a partner, chat about your answers together.

1. Personal Values and Beliefs:

- What values and beliefs are important to you in raising your children?
- Are there specific religious or cultural practices you want your children to be raised with?

2. Relationship with Potential Guardians:

- Who are the potential guardians for your children?
- How close are your children to these individuals?
- How strong is your relationship with the potential guardians?
- If you are choosing a married couple, how would you feel about them splitting custody if they were to get divorced?

3. Parenting Style and Philosophy:

- What parenting style do you follow, and how closely does it align with that of the potential guardians?
- Do the potential guardians share similar philosophies on discipline, education, and lifestyle choices?

4. Financial Stability:

- How financially stable are the potential guardians?
- Are they responsible with money management?

5. Emotional Stability:

- How emotionally stable are the potential guardians?
- Can they provide a nurturing and supportive environment for your children?
- Do they have the capacity to handle the emotional challenges of raising children?

6. Physical Health and Lifestyle:

- What is the physical health of the potential guardians?

- Do they have any lifestyle habits or health conditions that may affect their ability to care for your children?
- Do they have the energy and stamina required to keep up with children?

7. Location and Environment:

- Where do the potential guardians live, and what is their home environment like?
- Is it important for your children to remain in their current community, or are you open to them relocating?
- How do you feel about the neighborhood, schools, and overall safety of the potential guardians' location?

8. Support System:

- What support system do the potential guardians have in place?
- Do they have extended family or friends who can help them with childcare?
- Are they part of a community that can offer emotional and practical support?

9. Communication and Decision-Making:

- How effective is communication between you and the potential guardians?
- Do you trust their judgment in making decisions for your children?
- Are they willing to involve you in major decisions regarding your children's upbringing?

Naming Guardians Officially:

- **Talk to the potential guardians about your decision**
- **Name your choice in valid estate planning paperwork, telling someone you choose them will not hold up in court.**
- **If you do not make an official, legal decision, a Judge will make that choice for you.**
- **Your choice will not void out someone's parental rights. A living parent remains the responsible legal Guardian until there is no living parent able to do so.**