

Everyday Scenarios

and sensible solutions

Preserve Protect Simplify

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My father just passed away – I want to protect my mother's estate and ensure that the assets provide her with a regular income.

"Make no mistake, Dad would do anything for his family—especially my mother," Ben assured us. "Nothing but the best for his Rose, but . . ." Ben's pause told us this was a significant "but". "The thing is," he explained, "when it came to family finances Dad was definitely old school. *He* handled everything. Period."

It's not an unusual story for many in Ben's parents' generation. Problems can occur, however, when the one in charge is no longer in the picture.

"Dad kept a lot of important details in his head. As a result, we have no idea exactly what there is, or even where it all is. Even if we could sort it out, Mother has no experience handling financial matters. Can you help us?"

Yes, untangling complex estate matters and providing expert financial oversight for older relatives are core functions for us. Because of our independent structure—with no vested interest in any product or service—we have the scope and flexibility to create custom solutions focused exclusively on the client's best interests. For Rose, that meant assuring a financial future as care-free as when her beloved husband was alive.

We began by locating and gathering assets—widely scattered, indeed, in multiple bank and brokerage accounts and her lock box. Ben was relieved. Rose was amazed. "So much . . . I had no idea."

Because there were significant stock holdings—many in certificate form, accumulated over the years—researching and updating cost basis information was our next priority. That process revealed that some stock certificates were missing. Fortunately, there is more than one way of establishing asset ownership, something we took care of for Rose.

One nice surprise was a fixed annuity Rose's husband had established for her some years ago. Since there are now no fees on withdrawals—and considering interest rates elsewhere—it proved the ideal source for covering monthly living expenses. We naturally will continue to closely monitor rates and other factors to assure the most advantageous use of all her resources.

As advisor—at Rose's request, with Ben's enthusiastic approval—for all her assets, our broad overview of her total financial picture assures efficient response to changing conditions in order to preserve and maximize the value of her holdings. So that Rose needn't have a worry in the world about finances—and Ben can rest easy about his mother's long term security.

In the interests of client confidentiality—which we take very seriously, Rose and Ben are composite examples. The services described, however, are real, and represent just some of the ways we help clients preserve, manage and transfer wealth.