YOUR LIFE. YOUR PEOPLE. YOUR LEGACY.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Working Your Whole Life for Other People's Smiles While Losing Your Own



LIVING WELL WHILE YOU PREPARE WELL

Family | Veterans | Business Owners | Creators

Rev. Dr. Gerald F. Poe, Jr., PM

POETECH GLOBAL | poetechglobal.com

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO FAMILY AND BUSINESS LEGACY

Before You Leave

Working Your Whole Life for Other People's Smiles While Losing Your Own



30 core steps | 10 relationship steps
Dedicated veteran and business handbooks
Private worksheets for wishes and practical action

Rev. Dr. Gerald F. Poe, Jr., PM
GpII

PoeTech Global | poetechglobal.com

MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

A note about this edition

Copyright 2026 Rev. Dr. Gerald F. Poe, Jr., PM. First edition. Published by PoeTech Global at poetechglobal.com. Original reflections in this book were commissioned for this work and attributed to the author. Biblical excerpts are from the King James Version, a public-domain translation in the United States; rights can differ elsewhere. This publication is not endorsed by VA, any government agency, a Grand Lodge, or the providers listed.

This is a United States-focused educational planning guide. State law, personal circumstances, policy terms, clinical judgment, and current benefit rules determine what a valid plan requires. Use qualified local legal, tax, insurance, and medical assistance for individual decisions. The workbook pages are preparation records. They are not executed wills, trusts, powers of attorney, medical orders, insurance applications, or court filings.

The author supplies the vision, themes, and publishing direction. Text and original illustrative artwork were developed with generative AI assistance. Publication platforms may classify portions as AI-generated and require disclosure. No living artist's work was copied or reproduced. The redesigned artwork combines historical painterly lighting, neo-expressionist gestures, original contemporary collage, and multicultural figurative treatments. Figures are illustrative, not portraits of actual family members.

Do not sign a planning worksheet believing it creates the legal authority discussed in the book. Transfer relevant choices to the correct official or professionally prepared document, follow its execution instructions, and confirm the appropriate people have it. A personal intention can be meaningful without being legally enforceable.

Resources and program descriptions were checked on October 8, 2026. Follow the live official source for current forms, rules, rates, deadlines, and eligibility. Commercial service descriptions are starting points, not endorsements or promises of free services. Keep completed pages private. Store credentials and sensitive identity records separately in a secure system.

This edition carries no assigned ISBN in its front matter. A publisher can assign an ISBN through the appropriate publishing workflow. A blank barcode area on a print cover is not an ISBN assignment.

MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

To the people who will open the binder

Dedicated to the people who carry families, serve communities, and make others smile, and to the loved ones who deserve clear instructions instead of avoidable confusion.

If you are reading this beside someone you love, begin gently. You are not being asked to rehearse losing them. You are being invited into a conversation about care. Preparation can say, "I trust you enough to explain what matters, and I love you enough to reduce what you would have to guess."

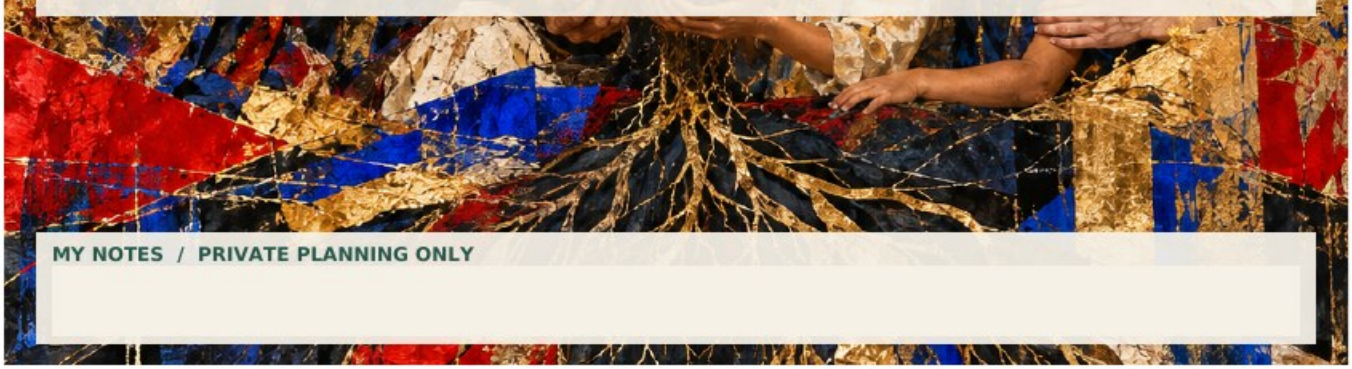
If you are reading alone, your preparation still matters. Chosen family, friends, professional fiduciaries, clinicians, and community connections can help build a workable support network. A spouse or child is not a prerequisite for dignity. Make your wishes known to the people and institutions that can lawfully act on them.

If your family relationships are complicated, do not postpone every practical task until affection becomes simple. Your treatment preferences, documents, contacts, and obligations can become clearer even while a relationship remains unresolved. Seek safe support. Do not surrender boundaries to create an appearance of harmony.

If you are a caregiver, this book recognizes your limits as well as your love. You deserve information, training, respite, and an honest division of responsibility. The person you care for deserves an accurate plan rather than a promise that depends on your exhaustion.

If you are a veteran, your service is honored here, and your living future is honored just as fully. Your next mission need not be another burden carried alone. Receiving help can be part of the work of protecting your life and the people who share it.

Let this book become a tool within reach. Write in it. Ask questions from it. Use it to begin appointments and conversations. Keep a secure copy of the completed pages. Then return to the table, the porch, the work, the laughter, and the people who made preparation worth doing.



MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

Before you leave begin living

You can work your whole life for other people's smiles and gradually lose access to your own. You become the one who handles the problem, absorbs the cost, makes the call, and keeps the family moving. There is honor in service. There is also danger in forgetting that you are a person, not only a resource.

I want this book to place preparation back inside a living life. Make the will. Ask about the trust. Tell someone what care means to you. Review the policy. Write the apology. Then keep living. Preparation is an expression of love, not a reason to withdraw from the people you want to protect.

There are two kinds of unfinished business in these pages. One sits in files: unsigned documents, outdated beneficiaries, missing records, an unfunded trust, or a business that depends on knowledge nobody else has. The other sits in the heart: a truth never spoken, gratitude never offered, harm never acknowledged, or a boundary never respected. Both deserve attention, but they require different tools.

An attorney cannot apologize for you. An apology cannot transfer a deed. A prayer cannot replace an emergency call when someone is in danger. A family meeting cannot create every legal authority it discusses. Wisdom is learning which action belongs to which problem, then taking that action with care.

The aim is not to control grief. People will miss those they love. The aim is to prevent avoidable confusion from becoming another injury. A clear role, a reachable contact, a valid document, or a truthful letter can spare a loved one an unnecessary search or argument.

You do not have to become famous to become part of history. Families remember the person who told the truth, passed on a skill, corrected a wrong, kept a promise, or prepared a home for the next generation. Let the record of your life have room for those acts.

Begin where you are. Ten honest minutes can produce a name, a number, an appointment, or a question that moves the plan forward. The next small step is enough to begin. You are preparing because you love. Include yourself among the people worthy of that love.

Rev. Dr. Gerald F. Poe, Jr., PM
GpII

MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

If distress enters the room

This book is about responsible preparation during life. It is not a guide to ending life. If thinking about death intensifies despair, take a break from the worksheets and connect with support. You can return to practical planning later, ideally with someone who helps you stay grounded.

In the United States, call or text 988 for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, or use 988lifeline.org for chat. Veterans, service members, and anyone concerned about them can call 988 and press 1, text 838255, or chat at VeteransCrisisLine.net/Chat. VA enrollment is not required. If an attempt is underway, there is immediate danger, or serious injury or overdose has occurred, call 911 or seek emergency care. [1,2,61]

Say directly, "I am thinking about suicide and need help staying safe," or, "I am worried about someone who may be at risk." You do not have to give a polished explanation. If possible, contact a trusted person who can remain with you or stay connected while help is arranged. Move toward a safe shared setting when appropriate. Do not put yourself or a helper in danger.

For family and friends, ask plainly when you are concerned: "Are you thinking about suicide?" Listen, help the person connect with support, and follow up. Do not promise secrecy about immediate danger. Do not argue that their pain is selfish or ungrateful. Compassion and practical help are more useful than a moral lecture. [73]

If you are supporting someone after a suicide loss, avoid assigning a simple cause or blaming a single person. Grief can include sadness, anger, confusion, guilt, and numbness. Professional and peer support can help. Children need honest, age-appropriate explanations and a trusted adult who remains available.

The damage suicide can leave is real. So is the possibility of treatment, connection, and recovery. Faith and professional care can stand together. Your immediate task in a crisis is not to finish the binder. It is to get through the next moment with support and a safer path.



MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

How to use forty small steps

The first thirty chapters cover practical preparation. Ten bonus chapters focus on relationships, repair, and living legacy. A separate veterans handbook covers service records, VA care and benefits, insurance, survivor planning, burial, and suicide prevention. The workbook turns reading into action.

Each core step has two pages: an explanation and an action page. Read both. Use the microsteps, completion check, caution, and question to decide what to do next. Choose one action small enough to complete. An appointment request counts as progress even when a valid document requires a longer professional process.

Use three statuses in the tracker: confirmed, pending, and needs professional review. Confirmed means the necessary action actually occurred and the evidence can be found. A downloaded will is pending. A signed but unfunded trust may still be pending. A health directive hidden from your agent and clinician needs further work.

Start with urgent safety and continuity needs: emergency contacts, a willing health care agent, a records locator, essential household information, and dependent care. Then work through legal and financial coordination. Do not delay a clinical conversation or expiring insurance deadline just because its chapter comes later.

Use the writing spaces to record questions and location references. Avoid full account numbers, passwords, recovery codes, and Social Security numbers. The reading PDF has typeable workbook fields; save a private copy after entering information. The print edition keeps the same writing spaces for handwriting. Some phone PDF viewers have limited support for form fields, so use a compatible PDF reader if necessary.

Resource numbers in square brackets lead to the directory at the end. Links in the reading edition are clickable. Print readers can type the listed address or search the organization's official site for the named page. If a page moves, begin at the official root domain; do not send personal information to an unverified imitation.

You may repeat the workbook pages for your own household planning. Keep the original book unchanged as a reference and use a secure completed copy. Return yearly, and after major life changes. Your plan is allowed to grow as your life grows.

MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY

Courage courtesy and a useful faith

The stoic attitude in this book means attending to what you can do, accepting uncertainty honestly, and choosing a principled next action. It does not mean suppressing emotion, denying illness, or refusing assistance. You can feel fear and still make an appointment. You can feel grief and still tell the truth.

Chivalry is used here as a practical ethic of courtesy, courage, restraint, and protection of vulnerable people. It is not limited by gender or social status. A chivalric act can be preserving a dependent's routine, refusing to humiliate a relative, or making sure a caregiver can rest. Respect includes consent and boundaries.

Biblical passages accompany the chapters as reflection, not as proof of a legal, financial, or medical claim. Scripture can encourage diligence, reconciliation, generosity, and hope. It should not be used to shame a person experiencing mental illness or to replace professional treatment. The interpretation offered here is devotional and belongs to the authorial voice of this book.

Masonic principles appear as public moral themes: brotherly love, relief, truth, integrity, charity, justice, and disciplined conduct. This is an independent work, not a ritual manual or an official statement of any Masonic jurisdiction. Readers do not need membership to practice the virtues discussed. No private ceremony is reproduced.

These traditions meet in action. Be truthful about an account. Be just in a distribution. Relieve a caregiver's burden. Be courteous when asking a person to serve. Show courage by repairing what can be repaired. Use restraint when anger invites a cruel final letter.

An original reflection runs through this work: "Let your love become instructions someone can use." Its practical meaning is simple. Put the number where it can be found. Put the authority in a valid document. Put gratitude in a living person's hands. Put the next small action on the calendar. Let faith strengthen the work of care.

A thought I want to carry into action



MY NOTES / PRIVATE PLANNING ONLY