

GUARDIANSHIP EXERCISES

Instructions

- 1) Use these exercises to help you decide between two or three potential guardians for your children.
- 2) Print out one copy for each spouse.
- 3) Each spouse will complete steps 1 to 5 individually. Step 6 and 7 will be completed together. The entire process should take 30 or 40 minutes.

Step 1 – Set a five-minute timer. Use the space below to make a list of all of your values that you would like to pass on to your children (e.g., religion, spirituality, love of nature, athletics, work ethic, compassion, music, arts, etc.). Don't be shy; if something pops in your mind, write it down. At the end of the five minutes, you should have a list of 15-20 values.

Step 2 – Set another five-minute timer. Review the list from step 1, combine any values that are really the same thing, and cross off any that don't belong. Re-write the list in the space below. This is your finalist list.

Step 3 – Take 10 or 15 minutes to review and reflect on our finalist list. Choose your top five values and write them in the space below.

- 1) _____ 4) _____
- 2) _____ 5) _____
- 3) _____

Step 4 – Using the chart below, evaluate each potential guardian with respect to your top five values. For each value, ask the question “How often does the potential guardian exemplify this value?” Scoring: never = 0; sometimes = 1; always = 3

Value	Potential Guardian(s) 1	Potential Guardian(s) 2	Potential Guardian(s) 3
TOTALS			

Step 5 – Set a five-minute timer. Reflect on the results. Does the highest scoring guardian from step 4 match your initial preference (or gut feeling)? If not, what's the reason why? Can you articulate it?

Step 6 – Discuss your results with your spouse. Show them how you rated each potential guardian in step 4 and listen to their feedback.

Step 7 – Make a choice. Write down your choices for long-term guardians for your children.

1)

2)

3)

Making a choice will help resolve this issue. Once you've made a choice, you'll then be able to reflect on it. After a day or so, your gut will guide you. If you're at peace with the decision, then you've made the best choice. But if the decision is still gnawing at you, then you probably should make another choice.