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MESSAGES from the Masters

RESOLVING CONFLICT by Les Brown

I've done a lot of research on the topic of conflict resolution, and here are a few tips I've come up with for resolving conflict:

Don't be afraid of conflict. Too many of us become agitated when we encounter conflict or disagreement out of concern and fear. It's odd when you think about it, because conflict is a part of nature, a part of life. And so, you need to approach conflict calmly, as an expected part of dealing with others. Consider conflict a way of learning to see things more clearly.

Abandon the concept of winning and losing when faced with conflict. Instead, adopt a strategy of resolution.

Be flexible. When the other side senses that you are interested in finding a solution, you likely will have created an ally where a potential adversary once stood.

Avoid negative or confrontational language. Rather than "buts" and "you're wrongs," try using

positive language that disarms rather than confronts, such as "I understand your position and..." or "I can see your point and here is where I'm coming from..."

Talk through the situation with a neutral party to gain perspective and clarity from that person, and also to better understand the conflict through talking it out. It is always helpful to get a problem out in the open and to get input from people you trust.

Rather than approaching the conflict with the attitude of stopping it or overcoming it, think of redirecting the energy toward a common target. Look for similarities in your positions rather than focusing on your differences. When a common goal is made obvious the natural reaction is to put differences aside.

Make a mutual commitment to the greater good. There is undoubtedly a common focus in your lives that should be the center of your attentions.

Find something to distract you from the conflict. Take off on a vacation or weekend getaway, a new project, or a family outing, so that you can clear your mind, reevaluate your position, and perhaps come back to it with a fresh vision of what needs to be done to resolve the matter.



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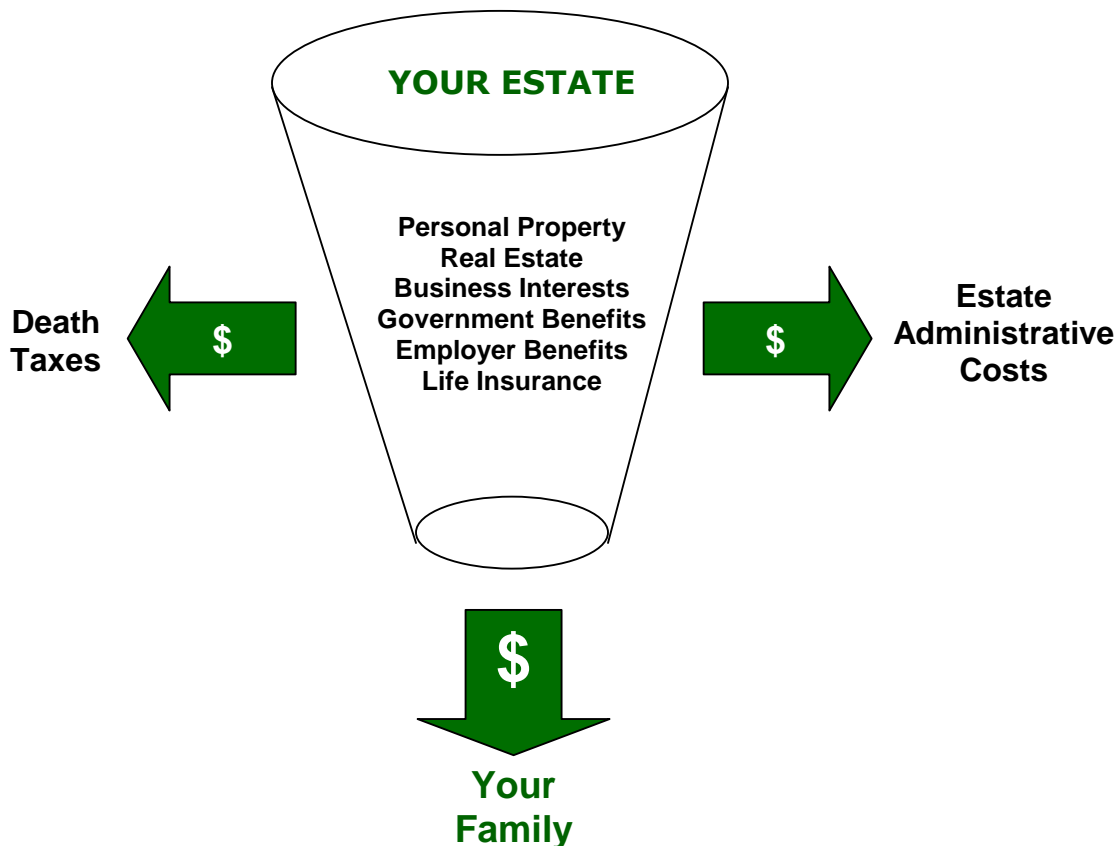
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The **good news** is that with proper advance planning, you can make sure that more of your estate ultimately passes to your family!