

# LEGACY OF WISDOM

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**Team & Sponsors: Ram Dass, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Roshi Joan Halifax, Harry Moody, Dr. Sarita Bhalotra, Dr. Rodolfo Musco, Mickey Lemle, Judy Goggin**

## Wisdom Area: Finance and Legal

Few people have a detailed, planned pathway for their later years. We just try to keep going. One classic, but somehow sad concept has been the one that says you work your whole life to own a house, sell it when you have to go into an old age home and hope you die before the money which you received for the house runs out! We need to review models of aging that will allow us to manage this phase of life better.

Complete with all of the psychological & physical issues that can accompany such a picture, it remains a fact that the majority of older people today are simply living alone.

**Question: What kind of financial and legal documentation would be useful to prepare in advance?**

**YouTube Video: Legacy of Wisdom - Al Kaszniak - Financial and Legal Documents**

**YouTube URL: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTI\\_uAZ5GZg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wTI_uAZ5GZg)**

**Length: 3:33**

## Interviewee: **ALFRED W. KASZNIAK, Ph.D.**

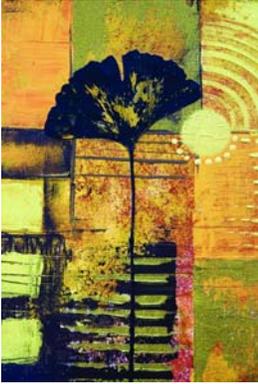


Head, Department of Psychology, University of Arizona since 2002.

Al Kaszniak, received his Ph.D. in clinical and developmental psychology from the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1976, and completed an internship in clinical neuropsychology at Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago. He is currently Head of the Department of Psychology, Director of Clinical Neuropsychology, Director of the Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium Education Core, and a professor in the departments of psychology, neurology, and psychiatry at The University of Arizona.

His research, published in over 150 journal articles, chapters and books (including edited volumes on consciousness and science), has been supported by grants from the NIH, NIMH, and several private foundations. His work has focused on the neuropsychology of Alzheimer's disease and other age-related neurological disorders, memory self-monitoring, the biological bases of emotion, and emotion response and regulation in long-term Zen and mindfulness meditators.

He has received more than a dozen awards for his scholarship, teaching, and professional service in the field of aging.



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### **Question: What kind of financial and legal documentation would be useful to prepare in advance?**

**AL KASZNIAK:** I think it is very important to consider making sure that, at a point in life when we ARE able to make decisions, when we ARE able to know and indicate what our preferences are, that we codify those, so that there is in fact a something that allows, whether its our family members or health care providers, to in fact follow what it is that we wish to have happen. So everything from wills to medical power of attorney – very, very important.

In my own work I see examples - I've worked a great deal with individuals who have Alzheimer's disease – and so many families really at a loss to know what to do because they never had the conversations and the individual reaches the point where they are no longer able to express or perhaps even know what their preferences are. And the maintenance of life through extraordinary technology becomes something that is not only a source of suffering for this individual but the family members agonize as well because I think they are in a real ethical dilemma. So that kind of planning is very, very important.

I think also important is the coming to terms with the fact that things change. And what at, in my middle 50's, might have been my desire for what I want to have happen in my health care or my estate may be rather different in 10 years from then. So I think it is also important to revisit these things periodically and ask the question “is this still what it is that I would like to have happen”? Built into that inquiry I think is also the acceptance of life is finite and that reflection needs to happen now – I may not have another 10 years to take my time to decide then.