

# Schiavo Lessons Learned – Protect Yourself TODAY

*Source:* <http://sci.tech–archive.net/Archive/sci.med/2005–03/1813.html>

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Schiavo Lessons Learned – Protect Yourself TODAY

By Jason Smith

Generation Why?

Thursday, March 24, 2005

If there is anything positive that can result from the avalanche of media attention on the case of Terri Schiavo, perhaps it's that more people will become educated on the importance of Advanced Directives.

There are several types of Advanced Directives that can be constructed.

Living Will

A living will only comes into effect when you are terminally ill. Being terminally ill generally means that you have less than six months to live. In a living will, you can describe the kind of treatment you want in certain situations. A living will doesn't let you select someone to make decisions for you. Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare

A durable power of attorney (DPA) for health care is another kind of advance directive. A DPA states whom you have chosen to make health care decisions for you. It becomes active any time you are unconscious or unable to make medical decisions. A DPA is generally more useful than a living will. But a DPA may not be a good choice if you don't have another person you trust to make these decisions for you. Living wills and DPAs are legal in most states. Even if they aren't officially recognized by the law in your state, they can still guide your loved ones and doctor if you are unable to make decisions about your medical care. Ask your doctor, lawyer or state

representative about the law in your state.

### Do Not Resuscitate Order

A do not resuscitate (DNR) order is another kind of Advance Directive. A DNR is a request not to have cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if your heart stops or if you stop breathing. (Unless given other instructions, hospital staff will try to help all patients whose heart has stopped or who have stopped breathing.) You can use an Advance Directive form or tell your doctor that you don't want to be resuscitated. In this case, a DNR order is put in your medical chart by your doctor. DNR orders are accepted by doctors and hospitals in all states. While most Advance Directives are written by older or critically ill people (ie. someone with terminal cancer might write that he does not want to be put on a respirator if he stops breathing), you might still want to consider writing an advance directive if you're young and in good health (Terri Schiavo was 26). An accident or serious illness can happen suddenly, and if you already have a signed advance directive, your wishes are more likely to be followed.

Advance directives do not have to be complicated legal documents. They can be short, simple statements about what you want done or not done if you can't speak for yourself. Remember, anything you write by yourself or with a computer software package should follow your state laws (here's a list of forms by state).

<http://www.uslivingwillregistry.com/forms.shtml>

You may also want to have what you have written reviewed by your doctor or a lawyer to make sure your directives are understood exactly as you intended. When you are satisfied with your directives, the orders should be notarized if possible, and copies should be given to your family and your doctor.

Let's make a difference. Once you've completed your Advance Directive, go to Generation Why?

<http://texasrainmaker.blogspot.com/2005/03/lessons-learned-who-will-speak-for-you.html>

and leave a comment telling others just how easy it was and together we can make sure that others don't have to go through what Terri Schiavo and her family are going through.

<http://texasrainmaker.blogspot.com/2005/03/lessons-learned-who-will-speak-for-you.html>

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Posted on 3/25/2005 11:26:08 AM PST by TexasRainmaker

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-To: TexasRainmaker

My husband and I have discusses this. Due to the Terri case, he is concerned that a doc will tell him I have no chance of recover, and be LYING. He feels he would have to fight for my life no matter what, because he wouldn't trust the doctors.

SO many different doctors have said so many different things about Terri.

Posted on 3/25/2005 11:33:05 AM PST by housewife101

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-To: TexasRainmaker

National Right to Life has Advance Directives available by state to download for free. Forget Living Wills. There was an earlier article that has made me believe these are designs of the death cult.

<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/news/1370458/posts?page=1>

Posted on 3/25/2005 11:38:34 AM PST by PistolPaknMama  
(Will work for cool tag line.)

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-To: housewife101

You mean, you're concerned that the doctor would intentionally misdiagnose? What's his motivation?

Posted on 3/25/2005 11:40:34 AM PST by billybudd

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-To: billybudd

The misdiagnosis can come from a personal philosopphy of what kind of life is worth living, or from a triage-like consideration that others are waiting for an empty bed. It is hard to keep philosophical and economic considerations from a medical diagnosis in extremis.

Just for the record, if I were in Terri's condition, I would like to be fed and given water.

Posted on 3/25/2005 11:54:13 AM PST by Marylander

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-To: PistolPaknMama

You're right about living wills. Do you know how much legal weight the Right To Life Directive might have. The options listed in the article all seem to have down sides. I wonder if just a straightforward power of attorney would carry more weight. I'm not even sure someone can have your power of attorney unless you're deemed incompetent.

I really wish there was a way to guarantee your protection.

Posted on 3/25/2005 12:07:05 PM PST by isrul

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End of forwarded messages

Jai Maharaj

<http://www.mantra.com/jai>

Om Shanti

Hindu Holocaust Museum

<http://www.mantra.com/holocaust>

Hindu life, principles, spirituality and philosophy

<http://www.hindu.org>

<http://www.hindunet.org>

The truth about Islam and Muslims

<http://www.flex.com/~jai/satyamevajayate>

The terrorist mission of Jesus stated in the Christian bible:

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not so send peace, but a sword.

"For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

"And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.  
– Matthew 10:34–36.

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