

Ellen Makofsky:

People often come to me for estate planning, to help them figure out how they should be leaving their assets to others. I spend a lot of time with my clients looking to make an estate plan. I need to learn all about their families. I need to understand how they feel about their children, about their in-laws, about their grandchildren. I need to understand if there are any medical problems in the family that in the future might need to be addressed.

I need to understand the family dynamics, and I need to have a full understanding of the finances, so that I can assess whether the client has any tax issues that need to be addressed. Once I have all of this personal information about the family, which sometimes takes an hour, an hour and a half to elicit, I really understand that family and I can help them make choices, in a thoughtful way, in their wills or their trust about how to leave assets to others.