

MARK CASELLA

LIVING
A LEGACY
THAT
LASTS



**Using the Success Mapping Process to Pursue
What Matters Most to You and Your Family**

Preface

“There’s more to life than making money” is an accepted truism. I didn’t always see life that way, though. Throughout my career as a financial advisor, I focused on making money for my clients and for myself. This is what I thought success meant to them. This is what I thought success meant to me.

Oddly, the more money my clients had, the less they wanted to talk about investing. It seemed my wealthiest clients were more interested in the success of their families, their communities, or their philanthropic pursuits. Of course, I was most interested in talking to them about how they would succeed by investing in my latest and greatest ideas. Why was making money so “unimportant” to them?

What was important? What did success mean to them? And what was it that kept them awake at night? This is what I wanted to understand. I wanted to help my clients and their families pursue what really mattered to them.

I was also waking up to something else. The people I wanted to talk to weren’t all that interested in investing in the stock market in the first place. They were busy attending to their family enterprises. This is what they were invested in. This was their livelihood; it defined them. This was something they *did* want to talk about.

For 25 years, I’d provided private wealth management services as a financial advisor to individual investors. And during those 25 years I came to the realization that I wanted to be able to do more for the clients I served, especially those who owned an enterprise that was viewed as a multi-generational legacy

asset for their families, such as a family business, vacation property, family foundation, or family office. And I wanted to be able to do more for my own family and the family business my father founded over 40 years ago.

If these people I admired and respected didn't want to talk about money, then neither did I. But what could I talk to them about? What did they want? How could I help them?

It was time for a change. I enrolled in Notre Dame's MBA program, left my job as a financial advisor, and in 2005 opened the doors of Coppertree, to help families focus on their journey and their legacy rather than their investments.

If success is more than just having a lot of money, then what is success? Success for families can mean many things. While contemporary American culture often equates success with winning, it's really much more. A life well lived could be the broadest measure of success. But what does a well-lived life look like? How do you live such a life?

So what does success mean to you? Like the families we serve, success for you is surely more than having a lot of money. What it is for you is what matters to me. If you ask most families what success means to them they will frequently mention ideals such as:

- Happiness and contentment for all family members
- Fulfillment for all family members in their life pursuits
- Connectedness to the family journey while supporting and celebrating each family member's unique life path
- Rewarding life experiences reflecting each family member's personal circumstances

This book was written to share what I've learned on my own journey. From my 35 years of professional experience and my personal perspective as a second-generation member of a business-owning family who's married to someone from the third generation of such a family, I'll show you what you can do to help your own family create a legacy that lasts.

This book will be a wake-up call for some. Sadly, we've seen amazingly successful family enterprises crash and burn because the owners didn't think they needed to do the hard work of planning for the future. Perhaps the lessons herein can change the outcome for families who haven't yet thoughtfully considered what needs to be done to be successful in pursuit of what matters most to them and to perpetuate their legacy for many generations.

What will your legacy say about you? Will your legacy last? Will you succeed in living a well lived life? If you are willing to invest the time and effort to use the success mapping process in your pursuit of what matters most to you and your family, then your prospects for the future are bright in living a lasting legacy.

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Introduction

What does success mean to you? What does it mean for your family?

Imagine that you're in the twilight of your life, surrounded by all the people, past and present, who are important to you. You're sharing the accomplishments you're most proud of. Someone asks you, "What about your family? What are you most proud of about your family?" How would you answer that question?

By what gauge would you measure your family's success? Money? Power? Contributions to the world? Or would it be something less tangible?

A Google search for the question "What does it mean to be family?" returned 954 million search results (hits). A search for "What is success?" returned 1.7 billion hits. A search for "How do you measure the success of your family?" yielded exactly *zero* responses. Apparently, no known methodologies exist for measuring the success of your family. Until now.

At Coppertree, we've developed tools that are making a big difference in the lives of the families we serve. The success mapping process in particular has tied all of our work together. It's the key to pursuing what matters most for families and individuals who understand the value of the journey itself.

Success mapping prompts you and your family to think about everything that matters to you, when you need to think about it. I want to help the people we work with to open their minds and really dream about *everything* that matters to them. So often, successful people are head down and dashing forward as fast as

Part One

Getting to What Really Matters

Chapter 3

Family Mission and Your Legacy of Five

As you think about your family story, who had the most influence on who you are today?

During your life journey you will probably connect with five generations of your family: grandparents; parents, aunts, uncles; brothers, sisters, cousins, spouse; children, nieces, nephews; and grandchildren. These family members will have the greatest impact on who you are and what you contribute to your family legacy. And we each have our own personal legacy of self that has a role in how the family story plays out. We call these generational relationships your Legacy of Five.

The Legacy of Five rolls one generation forward as each new generation is born and joins the family. Through this process, the family legacy is changing and evolving as each generation's Legacy of Five unfolds.

Your family's legacy may also be defined by the ancestral generations that date back centuries. Those generations can be important factors to your family legacy. But none are more relevant to present generations of your family than those of the Legacy of Five. These are the generations that you were personally involved with throughout your life.

How do each of these Legacy of Five generations affect you and your family? It depends on where you are on your life journey – the story of you. It depends on whether you are receiving from or giving to your Legacy of Five.

The Legacy of Five gives us an understanding of what our family stands for; our mission. Then we in turn become the teacher as we pass on our values to our children and grandchildren. We each contribute to our Legacy of Five through our own values and beliefs that are unique to us.

Within my Legacy of Five, my grandfather Vito initially defined our family legacy by having the courage to pursue his dream. He wanted to provide a better life for his family than the life of poverty he experienced as a boy. Vito was the oldest of more than 20 children. (We don't know the total number of his siblings since he left Italy before his parents ceased having children.)

At the age of 24, he immigrated from Italy to the United States. He left his family and ventured halfway around the world all by himself to pursue the American Dream of being able to provide that better life for his family.

After passing through Ellis Island he stayed with friends of his parents who had come to the United States a few years earlier. They helped him find a job with the B&O Railroad. He soon met his wife, Bambina, who had emigrated to the U.S. with her father and mother. She was 10 years younger than Vito. Shortly thereafter Vito was promoted to a yard foreman. The railroad moved him to Dayton, Ohio where they raised their six children and lived for the remainder of their lives. My grandfather lived to be 86 years old. I did not know my grandmother because she died when I was a baby.

My grandfather contributed to my Legacy of Five through his journey to America. He believed in pursuing his dreams, living in accordance with your faith and beliefs, hard work, perseverance and ambition. These values live on in me today.

His son, my father Frank, also valued having the courage to pursue his dream. He wanted to be his own boss. He gave up his job as a tool maker to start his own tool company. And he kept Grandpa's American Dream of providing a better life for our family alive. There were many more Legacy of Five family members whom I interacted with and received from that helped shaped who I've become today.

Grandpa's and Dad's dreams live on in me: I had the courage to leave a lucrative career in investment counseling to create my own company so I could pursue my dream of helping our family and other families perpetuate their legacy for multiple generations.

As Mary and I brought our four daughters into the world my Legacy of Five evolved. Now I was as much a giver of the legacy as I was a receiver in my younger days. Legacy is always about giving and receiving. We brought into our home the values and beliefs we received from our ancestral Legacies of Five. We gave our children the values of love, family, education, hard work, dedication, patience, perseverance, courage, faith, and unity.

The fifth generation of Mary's and my Legacy of Five is now a reality. We have three grandchildren and counting. Now in turn, we are the first generation of their Legacy of Five. Our dream for them is that they stay together, love one another and always put family first.

Can you have a connection to the family legacy beyond your Legacy of Five? Yes. This connection most often comes in the form of a family asset such as a family-owned business, resort property, or foundation, perhaps dating back

generations. Because some family members may see this legacy resource as a burden that has been placed on them, connecting each generation to the family story is crucial.

Helping everyone understand and, ideally, appreciate what their ancestors had to do to be successful increases the potential for each new generation to be responsible stewards of the legacy for future generations. Legacy assets can very well be the bond that keeps a family together for many generations.

How will your Legacy of Five impact what your family stands for, both today and in the future? We all will leave a legacy. You have the power to decide what that legacy will be. What are you doing to shape your legacy?

The Miller family is a case in point.

An Entrepreneurial Legacy of Five

George Miller became a financially successful entrepreneur late in life. After working for a large manufacturer of household products for most of his career, George was hired by a fast-growing consumer electronics company to be the VP of product development.

A private equity investor bought the company from the founders and promoted George to president. As an incentive, he was given an interest in the company for his sweat equity in running it. This proved to be a lucrative opportunity.

George quickly improved the company's financial performance. As a result of his efforts, the business was sold to another private equity group a few years later

for a substantial profit. George had hit the jackpot. He used some of his proceeds to reinvest in the company alongside the new ownership group. He was asked to continue doing what he had done before, and lo and behold, the company was sold once again. His managerial genius had translated into another cash windfall.

George came to Coppertree because he was looking for help managing his family's affairs. We agreed to develop a legacy strategy that reflected what he wanted for himself and his family. We would also work with his other advisors to coordinate the myriad of transactions and activities necessary to meet his family's needs.

The first step was to get to know the Miller family. We wanted to hear their story and, specifically, about their Legacy of Five.

At our first meeting with George and his wife Lindsay, we asked them to tell us the story of their families. We learned that George was 58 and Lindsay was 53. Their son Peter was 24 and their daughter Michelle was 22.

We learned about their experiences with their grandparents, parents, aunts, and uncles. We also learned what their parents and grandparents told them about their earlier ancestors. Their ancestors each contributed in some way to the family legacy and helped form who George and Lindsay had become.

Lindsay's grandfather was an important influence on her Legacy of Five. He gave up his dream when he dropped out of medical school to take over their struggling family farm after his father had passed away. He told Lindsay that

nothing was more important than family and that we needed to do everything we could to help each other out.

This Legacy of Five experience lived on in George and Lindsay as they wanted to help their son and daughter pursue their dreams. Their ancestral generations had taught them that family resources were to be used for the good of the family during their lifetime rather than after they had passed on.

The Family Meeting

During a subsequent family meeting, George and Lindsay told their kids that, as was tradition in their families, they would support them in pursuing their dreams by providing the financial resources they would need. Their son had been talking about starting a furniture company and their daughter had indicated she might want to go back to school.

George and Lindsay told Peter and Michelle what their expectations in sharing their wealth with them. George said he wanted them to be serious in their undertakings. Lindsay added that she wanted them to be committed and carry through to the end.

They went on to say that if their son wanted to start his own company, they wanted to see a business plan. If their daughter was going to embark on a new field of study, they expected her to complete the program and earn her degree.

We counseled George and Lindsay to fund significant ventures their kids wished to pursue by lending them money rather than giving it to them outright. In this

way, as the ventures became successful, the kids could repay the “bank,” thus replenishing the family’s pool of legacy wealth.

We asked Peter and Michelle to talk about their dreams.

The Legacy of Five Rolls On...

I asked Peter what was important to him about starting his own business. He said that he wanted to be a wealth creator in his own right. With that said, Peter then asked his parents if they were willing to help fund the start-up costs associated with launching his furniture company. They both said yes.

Peter believed he would pay his parents’ investment in him forward to future generations. The influence of his parents’ willingness to share their wealth with him became a part of his Legacy of Five.

Peter was also influenced by the time he had spent with his grandparents. His paternal grandmother was a schoolteacher for many years. He never forgot what he learned from her: “Education is the lifeblood of freedom and prosperity. Never squander an opportunity to learn more. This is important not only for you but for your family.” She asked him to promise her that he would heed her advice and he did.

Peter married a few years later. The Millers’ granddaughter, Carrie, was born the following year. Peter and his wife started planning for their daughter’s education as soon as she was born. Peter is fulfilling that Legacy of Five promise he made to his grandmother every time they add money to their daughter’s education fund.

...and On

The Millers' daughter Michelle, who lived on the West Coast, was following in her mother's footsteps performing and choreographing shows for the local community theater as part of her own Legacy of Five. Following in grandparents' footsteps, she told her parents that she could see herself enrolling in a doctoral program in the performing arts and eventually becoming a university professor as another contribution to the family legacy. George and Lindsay told her they would gladly pay the expenses associated with her doctoral studies.

Michelle married recently and is now working her way through her doctoral program in California. Her husband is exploring business ventures. The Millers said they'd help him if he needed money to pursue one.

Michelle also learned from her parents that each new generation should work to replenish and expand the family's resources to help their children and future generations find their own success in life. To her, this meant that each generation needed to contribute to the family legacy through wealth-creating ventures, whether owning a business like her brother's or hiring financial advisors to select wealth-creating investments on her behalf.

Michelle and her husband chose to contribute to the legacy by overseeing the family's financial assets as passive investors. As such, they have agreed to serve on the family investment committee where they are involved with supervising and evaluating the family's financial advisors to ensure they are meeting the

family's expectations and fulfilling their needs. This is another way they contributed to the family legacy based on their Legacy of Five experiences.

Tying It All Together

Each generation's Legacy of Five impacts the family legacy. George and Lindsay's Legacy of Five included the wise advice of Lindsay's grandfather to put family first and to do whatever you could to help your family thrive. That became a part of the family's legacy and values that would shape the family for generations.

The Millers' children, Peter and Michelle were influenced by their grandparents, who encouraged them to obtain the highest degree of education they could.

The personal experiences of your Legacy of Five and the legacy values that are passed on from previous generations form and shape who and what the family is today and who you are today.

The challenge for you as you give to your Legacy of Five, your family legacy, and your legacy of self, is to understand how you can shape your legacy. How will you know if you were successful? It starts by understanding what you define as success.

Jenny's Perspective: What Happened Here?

George and Lindsay took the time to communicate with their children about what most people think of as a difficult topic: money. It was no secret to Peter

and Michelle that their parents had created financial wealth for themselves, but no one up to this point, had talked about what it meant for them, the children. It's not that they expected anything, they just didn't know.

In the Millers' case, their goal was to 'help our children achieve their dreams while we're still alive.'

This was something both George and Lindsay felt strongly about. They knew that when they died, their kids would be wealthy. Their desire was to have the family wealth benefit Peter and Michelle now so that Peter could start his furniture company and Michelle could continue her education. What they didn't want was for their children to open the mailbox one day, receive a big check, and not have it attached to what they wanted the money to mean.

What also happened, however, was a thoughtful and heartfelt conversation that affirmed this was not only financial, but emotional. This gift to their children was from their heart. Having this conversation gave all of them the chance to fully discuss and be clear about what the gift meant. They became part of a team, all on board to help each other achieve their goals.

For many families of wealth, especially those with multi-generational wealth, talking about how much, who gets what, and other topics surrounding money is considered tasteless and often avoided. These conversations are also hard for many people to initiate.

When parents begin these conversations by expressing their heartfelt hopes for their children rather than focusing on the family's financial wealth, the discussion becomes easier and more meaningful, unencumbered by things that

sometimes get in the way of the best intentions.

What happens when an individual learns of their inheritance through the reading of a will? As a legal document, wills usually describes the amount, but not the intent of the benefactor. That is a lost opportunity to put meaning into why the gift was made. In this case, heirs are usually left with no idea of what their parents wanted for them.

One of the most frequent reasons Coppertree is called on is to help the family, the giver and the receiver, sort out what the gift means. At this point, the family has recognized that a financial gift, without explanation as to what it means, has or will soon become a burden to the receiver.

Something we hear often is, "I don't want this money to ruin my kids, and I don't want the kids to feel entitled to the point that they never find their own passion." Or lurking just below the surface is the idea that the parents usually want their children to be self-supporting beyond what they will inherit or have already been given. Self-confidence, personal responsibility, and the great joy of learning from failing and eventually succeeding are all things a trust fund or a large financial gift cannot buy.

The true gift is when the giver has taken the time to have a thoughtful conversation with the recipient(s) that includes:

- This is what we are gifting to you but, more important, this is why.
- This is what you can expect from us and this is what we expect from you.
- We will all work on making this succeed and here is the plan.

What This Means For You

From grandparents to grandkids, this is the span of generations that will most likely influence who you are and what your version of the family legacy means to you. These are also the generations who will be most impacted by you.

Your family's legacy may span beyond your legacy of five. It may include older generations and it may last well into many future generations. Your legacy of five and your family legacy may be similar or quite different. Both may have an impact on who you are.

Who's impacted your legacy? Whose legacy will you impact?

Onward!

This book is about finding success for you and your family and living a legacy that lasts. My wish for you is that you are able to find what success means to you and that you can experience that success on your own journey and that you too, are able to live a legacy that lasts.

I began this book by asking you to imagine you were having a dream that takes place well into the future. In the dream you are sharing with all the people past and present that were important to you about the accomplishments you were most proud of. The topic of your family comes up.

I then posited a question for you, the reader of this book, "How will you measure the success of your family in living that legacy?"

In closing, I need look no further than my own family' success. The Casella family is a longtime client of Coppertree. We have worked with my family in shaping our legacy including the creation of a family charter, family council and advisory board for our business. We are also working with the 3rd generation of the family to prepare and position them for their eventual involvement as owners, beneficiaries, and/or employees of the business.

We have helped my family put in place what we needed to pursue what matters most to us while we enjoy the journey. I believe our family vision says it best:

The Casella Family
Will protect and nurture
The Family's sense of harmony

For all generations.

The success mapping process and the legacy strategy can be valuable resources for you and your family. Are you ready to live your legacy?