

The Best Emotional Wills

We thank all who sent in entries for the Lien Foundation's Emo-Will contest in NEXT Special Edition 4. Here are excerpts from the winning entries. From the financially-strapped mother who penned words of encouragement to her children to a sensitive 12-year-old, each they would share with their families.

This is for my dear children, from Mom
My sweethearts, I always wanted to tell you that who I love most are the two of you I don't think you would understand the real depth of love that I have for you now, but I do believe that when I am no more, it would mean a lot to you I don't have much wealth to bequeath to you, but lots of love and that is what I want to express. Mum has been through hard times and I don't want you to go through the same. I struggled to raise both of you. Living in a single room rental flat and trying to meet ends meet with my meagre earnings was not easy at all. I want you guys to study hard and have successful lives. Now, that is what is going to make me happy. This will is not only for you, but also for your children. Tell them about grandma and about our happy moments.



\$500 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Navarathinam Veera Singam, 55, retail assistant

Dear beloved family,
I would like to share with you a poem by Isla Paschal Richardson first...

Grieve not,
nor speak of me with tears,
but laugh and talk of me
as if I were beside you there.

Do you know what the happiest moment in my life was? When we set off to China for our first overseas family trip by plane during autumn! We had such a great time there. I still keep the maple leaves that I picked up over there in my nature scrapbook. You can have a look if you find the scrapbook! Of course, I wouldn't have gotten through the lowest points of my life if not for you...

Sis: Your consolation and gentle pats on my back helped a great deal!
Mom: Your warm bear-hugs and consolation helped to soothe me!
Dad: Your wise advice and consolation taught me how to overcome my down feelings!

Did you know this?
The most important thing in the world to me is... my family! I sincerely wish for you to stay happy, healthy, lively and positive in life!



\$200 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Teng Chu Yu, 12, student

To my dearest mom,
My father died when I was seven. I saw how you had to hold two jobs in order to support my three brothers and me. As an exemplary role model, I remember how you told us that we had to be self-reliant and determined when it came to achieving our goals. Thanks to your continuous encouragement, all of us managed to attain our goals. Your eldest son graduated with a degree whilst I have two degrees. You were like a bright beacon in our lives, showing us the right path to succeed honestly.

To my sons,
I will support you in your academic quest because I share my mother's belief that an education is the best investment for responsible parents. I know the both of you will learn and pass this lesson on to my future grandchildren.



\$200 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Seck Pow Foo, 57, part-time teacher/tutor

To my son and daughter,
We may not always have seen eye to eye, but we ask that the two of you try to understand that we might have had bigger problems. After all, your parents are human too. Thank you for helping out with the household chores - it took a load off your father who always tried to manage everything himself. He has been working hard for many years, and deserves a chance to rest too.

We want you to know that we are proud of both of you, and we hope that you will always give the best of yourselves in all that you do. That's the difference between someone who merely trudges through life doing a job and someone who makes a difference to all he/she comes in contact with.

Don't be afraid to fail and never feel inferior as life is a learning process; just be brave and learn to laugh at your mistakes. As long as we learn from our mistakes, we will not be fools.

Finally, take care of each other and your Dad when I am gone. There is nothing more important than family and we hope that you will continue to be there for each other. We love you.

\$200 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Chung Suet Heng, 59, nurse



To my daughters
I leave you with nothing much at this point of time in my life as in material possessions. Life has dealt me some pretty hard knocks in the last 10 years; all my years of being on top of my game, climbing the corporate ladder and having sound investments have taken away so much precious time.

\$200 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Soh Guan Kiat, 64, self-employed

Therefore, the very least I can leave you with are the words I've always wanted to say but never found the opportunity or courage to.

Live life courageously. If there is anything that Daddy has learnt, it is that sometimes we let opportunities slip by because we are too comfortable with our way of life. Don't be afraid to quit your job if you feel like your dreams are within your grasp. Of course I want you to be sensible - but sometimes we need to let sensibility go just for a few minutes, and dream.

Love ferociously. Don't hold back and reserve those feelings in fear that you will be hurt. You know me - I am not the most expressive person, and when I realised that the both of you were growing up so fast, I retreated into my quiet, dignified father persona even more - not because I didn't love the both of you, but because I didn't know how, and didn't dare to express myself further. So take it from me - you don't want to be at the end of your life thinking back on all the times that could have been. Give love, show love, and embrace each moment to the fullest.

To my daughters
Remember how I had to leave you and your sister in a childcare centre when the both of you were in primary school? I wish I could have stayed at home to prepare nutritious meals for and look after the both of you. But you know how tough it was then when your dad and I were still trying to find a foothold in our careers and had to rely on a dual income to support the family. I am glad though that this experience has trained the both of you to be more independent and street-smart.

On a lighter note, I must say that my happiest memories are of the carefree days we spent in the United States when your dad was posted there for work. I remember how you and your sister use to croon to Michael Jackson and Madonna's 80s hits and prance around the sofa. It was funny watching you and your sister imitating the characters in the 80s movie, The Mannequin too. It is beautiful memories like that which never fail to put a smile on my face.

\$200 Raffles Hotel dining voucher to Ng Siok Chin, 56, administrative assistant

live well
LAUGH OFTEN
love much