

***THE SETTLEMENT GAME***

***How to Settle an Estate Peacefully and Fairly***

By Angie Epting Morris, \$14.95 original trade paperback,  
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## **Preparing for the Inevitable**

BIG CANOE, GEORGIA—As Benjamin Franklin once observed, nothing is certain “except death and taxes.” The inevitability of death may hardly be a pleasant subject to contemplate—especially the death of a parent or other loved one—but by the same token, one always needs to prepare for the inevitable, because it’s a lack of preparation that often causes the worst problems. But how do you prepare for something you’ve never had to deal with before? Often the best thing to do in such cases is to get advice from someone with personal experience. In the best of all worlds, this advice would come from someone who not only had dealt with the situation before but who had also thought it through systematically and whose ideas had been tested successfully by others. That’s just the kind of advice Angie Epting Morris provides in her compact, enlightening new book, *The Settlement Game: How to Settle an Estate Peacefully and Fairly*.

Morris’s is the kind of obviously useful book that will make you wonder why no one had thought to write it before. It deals, in a practical and straightforward manner, with all the major issues one is likely to confront in dividing an estate, including what to do about unredeemed life insurance policies and other loose ends associated with the deceased. The main problem the book addresses, however, is how to divide an estate equitably. That may sound easy, but in fact very few people know how to do it. Because of this, an event that should be dedicated to remembering good times and paying honor to the deceased often becomes a time of strife and divisiveness, resulting in bad feelings that can sometimes last a lifetime.

Angie Epting Morris and her siblings—inspired by the advice of their father, who as an attorney had dealt with many settlements—developed a straightforward and fair method for dividing their parents’ estate that has come to be known as “The Settlement Game.” Morris shared her ideas informally with many people over the years and was eventually prevailed upon to set those ideas down in writing. Now, *The Settlement Game* is available for everyone and has the potential

*(more . . . over)*

not only to avert headaches and heartbreaks but also to turn one of life's most trying moments into a celebration of strong relationships and "all our yesterdays."

One strength of *The Settlement Game* is its use of specific examples, particularly to illustrate how even the best intentions can have negative unforeseen consequences. By following the simple "rules of the game" one can easily avoid such problems. Morris also addresses how conflicts arise among those with very different personality styles. Guided by the work of noted psychologist Dr. Robert Rohm, Morris analyzes four different basic personality types so that readers can assess the people they are dealing with and take appropriate steps to avoid unnecessary conflict. Morris highlights this crucial issue: "Over the years I have often been asked what I believe causes conflicts more than anything else. I am now convinced that personality differences are the primary cause of conflict during an estate settlement. Without understanding these differences, the process of keeping the peace and avoiding conflict will be much more difficult."

In an appendix, Morris provides templates of forms that will be very useful for "playing the game" properly. These include an appraisal sheet, an interest list, a distribution sheet, a tally sheet, and a household account and bill record. Readers can photocopy the sheets directly from the book. *The Settlement Game* is truly a practical and an invaluable resource for those who are dealing with one of life's most difficult yet inevitable moments.

*The Settlement Game* can be purchased in bookstores, online at [www.thesettlementgame.com](http://www.thesettlementgame.com), or by sending \$14.95 (plus \$4.95 shipping and handling) to BookMasters, Inc., 30 Amberwood Parkway, Ashland, OH 44805. Call credit card orders to (800) 247-6553.

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