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Let's talk March Madness. Bubble Teams, Bracketology? Oh no, think Britney!

Sorry guys. You were probably expecting some hoop talk during this season of March Madness. However, we're going to touch upon a different kind of Madness...the court-ordered variety (and we're not talking basketball court).

If you heard about Britney Spears, Amy Winehouse, and other famous rock stars having conservators, you may be wondering: What on earth is a conservator?

A conservator is the person appointed by the court to handle your personal and financial affairs when you are no longer able to do so. That means that a court has declared you incapacitated for all purposes (and by some public standards, you have gone a bit MAD). You are no longer allowed to vote, enter into contracts, or write checks. The conservator steps into your shoes and is granted the power to make these decisions for you. A conservatorship proceeding is expensive and time-consuming. And, for Britney and Amy, a conservatorship may be a (perhaps necessary) obstacle to independence and freedom.

But did you know ...

You can avoid a court-appointed conservatorship in most cases if you designate an agent under a power of attorney and health care directive (or living will). Instead of the court stepping in and racking up costs, you decide who will represent you in the event that you are no longer able to handle your own affairs. Proper estate planning is key.

Hope you enjoyed this spin on March Madness!

About Tali Klapach

Tali Klapach is a partner at Klapach & Klapach. She graduated from Princeton University and Yale Law School, and clerked for the Chief Judge of the United States Second Circuit Court of Appeals. After practicing law for seven years at two prestigious law firms in San Francisco and Los Angeles, Tali started her own practice in trusts and estates. The goal of Klapach & Klapach is to combine the high quality service of a big law firm with the personal attention and affordability of a family lawyer. Tali is committed to building long-term relationships with clients, and to serving as a source of ongoing assistance and advice. To schedule a free estate planning consultation or to receive Tali's free monthly e-Newsletter, please visit www.KlapachEstatePlans.com or call (310) 424-3144. Estate Planning for a Lifetime.

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Newsletter Designed by Neala Steury, justneala@yahoo.com