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Florida Funeral Services Inc Joins Argent Financial Group

TALLAHASSEE, FL— Funeral Services, Inc (FSI), the leading deathcare trust administrator for preneed and perpetual care trusts, announced that it has been acquired by Argent Financial Group (Argent), a leading deathcare trustee and fiduciary wealth management firm.

Under the agreement, FSI will keep its name and leadership team and maintain local decision-making in Florida while continuing to operate independently in Tallahassee. FSI president/CEO **Bill Williams**, who joined the company in 2001, will also remain as executive management for FSI operations.

“This acquisition is an exciting opportunity for continued partnership between FSI and Argent,” said Williams. “We’ve worked closely with Argent in the past and know the benefits of building a modern-day trust program to ensure greater service and success. Though there will be no immediate impact for clients of FSI, this new partnership will allow clients of both companies to have access to even more seamless and efficient service delivery should they elect to do business with us both. Importantly, FSI will continue to serve multiple trustees.”

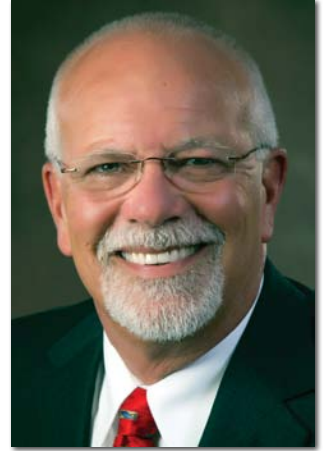
Founded in 1978, FSI is a trust-administration and record-keeping company providing trust solutions to funeral homes, cemeteries, industry associations and financial institutions. For 44 years, FSI has been working to lift the burden of establishing and maintaining trusts off the shoulders of its clients. FSI serves both private and publicly owned clients in 24 states.

Through its subsidiary Argent Trust Company, Argent has provided the deathcare profession with trustee and investment management services for 32 years. The firm is qualified to serve funeral homes and cemeteries in 41 states.

“Argent’s acquisition strategy has consistently been about aligning with the highest-quality companies



Kyle McDonald

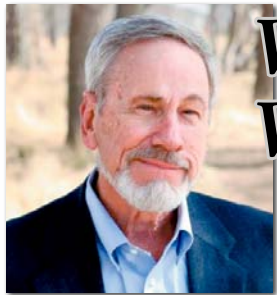


Bill Williams

for continued growth,” said **Kyle McDonald**, CEO of Argent Financial Group. “We are committed to growing in ways that allow us to better serve our clients, including those in the funeral and cemetery profession. For decades, FSI has demonstrated its leadership in trust-administration and record-keeping in the deathcare industry. Combining their expertise with that of Argent’s deathcare services team, led by **Mark Milton**, senior vice president and institutional services manager, and **Steve Jackson**, senior vice president and funeral services group manager, will provide current and prospective clients with the best of both organizations.”

FSI ensures trust and sales programs are operating at maximum efficiency through unmatched security, convenience, speed, compliance and cutting-edge technology. FSI has grown to serve over 1,200 individual firms located in 24 states and administers more than 300 deathcare trust accounts across the nation for publicly and privately-owned entities. For more information, please visit www.FSITrust.com.

Argent Financial Group (Argent) is responsible for more than \$35 billion in client assets. Argent provides individuals, families, businesses and institutions with a broad range of wealth management services, including trust and estate planning, investment management, retirement plan consulting, ESOPs, funeral and cemetery trusts, charitable organization administration, oil and gas (mineral) management and other unique financial services. Headquartered in Ruston, LA, Argent was formed in 1990 and traces its roots back to 1930. For more information, visit www.ArgentFinancial.com.



Working With Widowers

By Fred Colby

Do I Need Counseling, Therapy, or Coaching?

If you already have all the answers, don’t waste anyone’s time by asking for help... because you won’t be able to hear any advice that is offered, no matter how good it is.

However, if you feel lost and are ready to hear what others can share with you, then by all means ask for help... and the sooner the better.

But what kind of help? Each of us has our own unique way of learning. For some, it may be very verbal (a spoken exchange of ideas), while for others it may be reading ideas by ourselves, while still others may only learn by doing. So, it helps to be aware of how we learn so we can make the most of what is available to us.

Some may choose to go completely with the self-help methodology. This might first include the reading of books, blogs, and articles. It might also include listening to podcasts, TED Talks, meditation talks (e.g. Eckart Tolle), or just researching online until we find something that resonates for us.

Others may dive into therapy or counseling, which can include grief groups or individual therapy sessions. Therapy is particularly effective in dealing with a variety of psycho-emotional problems which can emerge during deep grieving. Merely talking through your challenges during this period can relieve some of the stress you are dealing with and help you to begin to feel more normal again.

Good therapists help guide you through opening up and talking about what you are experiencing, let you know that what you are going through is normal, and help prepare you to better discuss things with your family and friends. (I always stress *grief* therapy not general therapy, as grief therapists are better prepared to help us with our issues.)

Peer Coaching is another alternative that widowers often find on their own. This can be a group of guys who started out in a Grief Group, which then evolved into a mutually supportive circle of new friends who are there for each other through all the ups and downs of the grieving process. We all can learn from the experiences of our fellow grief travelers who may have found a way through the same challenge that we are now facing. And because they have survived the same awful journey, we can expect non-judgmental support rather than condemnation or belittling of your experience.

With a therapist, you might focus more on the past or present (e.g., the death of your wife), while with a coach you might give more attention to the future (e.g., should I sell my house or take a trip). This evolution to turning your attention from the past to the future is a natural part of the healing process. Additionally, while the therapist helps us to better understand the “why” of our grief journey, the coach may be able to better help us to think about “where do I go from here.”

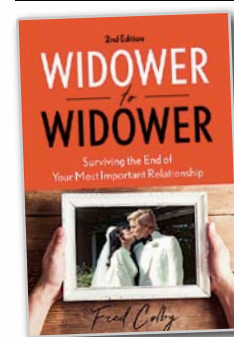
Overall, the most important step we can take is to allow others back into our lives as we progress in our healing. If we push people away after the first 2 – 3 months, they are likely to turn away from us for good. Our family and friends are by far the best resource we have that can help us through this painful experience.

I realize that there are times when a family can seem to implode after the loss of a wife, mother, sister, and/or daughter. Some may be angry, others depressed, and some even fearful for their future. There may have been longstanding differences between family members that were suppressed while your wife was alive but are now out in the open for all to see.

When this happens, you have a choice. You can either contribute to the problems by joining the fray (this

usually ends badly for everyone), OR you can refuse to accept the negativity and be a force for reconciliation. This can take great patience and a willingness to turn the other cheek, but when it works it is 100% worth the effort. We will all need to find the path that works best for us individually and then dedicate ourselves to it. Good luck!

Fred Colby has served as a director, board member and consultant for nonprofit organizations in California and Colorado. After his wife, Theresa, died in 2015 Fred shifted his focus to writing and leadership roles to help his fellow widowers heal and re-engage with life. He co-founded the Pathways Hospice Men’s Grief Group and an online grief group. He resides in Ft. Collins, Colorado. For more information go to: www.fredcolby.com.



WIDOWER TO WIDOWER Surviving the End of Your Most Important Relationship NEW SECOND EDITION

Fred Colby’s new 2nd edition blends his own story with research, observations, and experiences during the first year of grieving the loss of his wife, plus what he learned after his first edition was printed. The book is in part a result of his frustration with the lack of other in-depth or quality materials available to help fellow widowers. His search for answers took him to group meetings, individual counseling sessions, writings by fellow widowers, and discussions resulting from hap- penance meetings with fellow travelers on the grief journey.

To see what others are saying about **WIDOWER TO WIDOWER** go to <https://www.fredcolby.com/media>

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