

Caring NOT Killing!

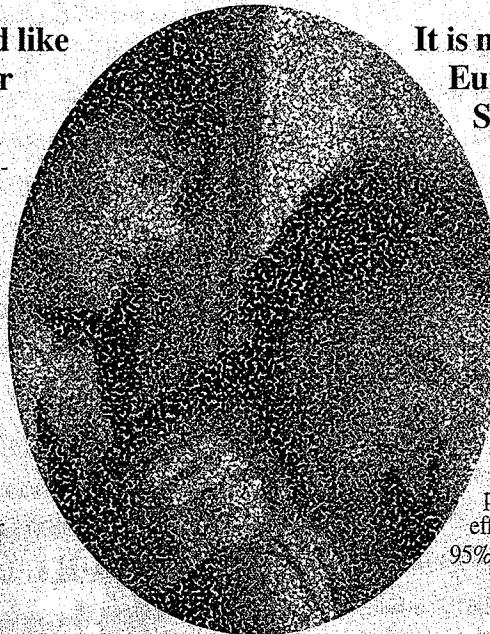
Tomorrow, you might be faced with cancer, heart disease, or a life threatening illness. Many people believe that when they are experiencing serious health problems or nearing death that Assisted Suicide or Euthanasia should be an option for them. Before Canada considers decriminalizing Euthanasia or Assisted Suicide you should know these facts...

Euthanasia is an act or failure to act which intentionally causes a person's death.

Assisted Suicide is providing the means for someone to kill themselves with knowledge of that person's intention (ex. providing drugs for a person knowing that the person intends to commit suicide).

Why some people would like to legalize Euthanasia or Assisted Suicide:

- 1) They fear experiencing uncontrollable pain.
- 2) They fear becoming a burden upon family members and others.
- 3) They fear becoming abandoned or being left alone in their last days.
- 4) They fear receiving extraordinary medical treatment without their consent.
- 5) They fear living with terminal illness and losing their abilities or personal autonomy.
- 6) They fear death.



It is not necessary to legalize Euthanasia or Assisted Suicide because:

- a) You already have the legal right to remove or refuse medical treatment.
- b) To withdraw or withhold treatment when the risk or burden of that treatment is greater than its benefit is a legal and common practice.
- c) Pain management drugs and palliative care methods are capable of effectively controlling pain more than 95% of the time.

We are opposed to Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide because:

- It undermines the truth that intentionally killing a human being is always wrong.
- It erodes our respect for human life and establishes killing as an acceptable solution to problems that are best solved through caring options.
- It changes the trust relationship between the medical professional and the patient. At what point will people fear for their life when they are in need of help?
- It would probably begin as a "choice" for those people who are suffering and near to death. Once killing becomes an acceptable solution for one problem, what other problems will killing become an acceptable solution for?
- It is a threat to people experiencing depression which is the most common factor in suicide attempts. Depression is usually a cry for help. How many request for assisted suicide would be granted rather than the required help?
- It is a threat to the weak and defenseless people in society (the mentally and physically challenged, the elderly and the chronically ill) who might be vulnerable to family members and medical care givers who already question their right to live. These people might either be pressured into "choosing" an earlier death or killed without their giving consent. One person's freedom to "choose death" might be the only "choice" offered to someone else.

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Palliative and Hospice Care:

Is the supportive care of a person's symptoms and not the curing of the person's ailment. Palliative care is concerned with relieving a person's physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual suffering. Palliative or hospice care is a service that involves a team of health professionals and volunteers who provide care and support for patients and families.

Palliative care drugs and techniques oriented to the management of physical pain are capable of effectively controlling pain 95% of the time. The problem is not that we are unable to control pain, the problem is that too few medical care givers are properly trained in palliative care. *If you know of someone who is experiencing uncontrolled pain, you need to ask WHY?*

Consider becoming a palliative care or hospice volunteer.

To oppose assisted suicide, we are challenged as a people of life to give of ourselves to others in the service of life. **Consider becoming a palliative care or hospice volunteer or simply consider visiting those in your community who need your presence.** By giving of yourself to others, you can give new meaning and purpose in their lives. There are volunteer training programs in every community where you can be trained and supported in the service of life. By serving the lonely, the sick and the chronically ill people in our community we become builders of a new culture of life.

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The fears that lead people to consider assisted suicide are real and legitimate. We know that every fear has a corresponding life affirming answer. For many people who are lonely, suffering and possibly dying the prospect of assisted suicide might grant them the feeling of control over an otherwise helpless situation. The reality is that in our society there is no reason for people: to suffer uncontrollable pain, to be a burden on family members, to be abandoned in their time of greatest need, or to fear receiving medical treatment without giving consent.

What you can do to make a difference.

- Become informed and be willing to inform others.
- Oppose any political action aimed at legalizing euthanasia and assisted suicide.
- Know your rights as a patient, especially your right to: considerate and respectful care and information. Designate someone to speak for you when you can't.
- Respect those who are mentally or physically challenged, elderly, or chronically ill.
- Remember that our choice of words can dehumanize, devalue and discourage others.
- Show concern for those in your community who are elderly or chronically ill. Often these people are isolated and lonely. It doesn't financially cost anything to offer compassion and concern to someone in need of your presence.
- Support palliative care and hospice programs.

Written by:
Alex Schadenberg



If you feel the call
to help, please
answer.
You are needed.
Contact us at
(519) 439-3348

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Euthanasia Prevention Coalition • Box 25033, London, Ontario N6C 6A8 • (519) 439-3348