

# Example of ethics essay

[Health & Medicine](#), [Euthanasia](#)



Introduction: Ethics is a philosophical approach that is concerned with defending, systematizing and recommending concepts of wrong or right conduct in the human social arena. The approach addresses disputes that arise from moral diversity. Being an ethical person involves doing and conducting oneself in an acceptable manner according to societal behavioral standards. Various ethical theories have been put across and are applied in our lives to address various ethical issues like cloning, abortion, legalization of drugs and euthanasia. The theories include emotivism, utilitarianism, moral rationalism and eudaemonistic virtue ethics. This paper will discuss the ethical theory of utilitarianism and how it addresses the ethical issue of euthanasia. Utilitarianism theory states that an action is right if it delivers happiness and unacceptable if it brings the reverse of happiness. This is not only to the doer of the action but also to all those who are affected by the action. Euthanasia is the action of killing a sick person who is in pain to ease the sick person's pain. The key point or thesis of this paper is to show that by applying the ethical theory of utilitarianism, euthanasia is an acceptable practice that should be embraced in the society. Body: The utilitarian theory states that any action is right if it provokes feelings of happiness, and an action is wrong if it evokes feelings that are opposite to happiness. This is in regard to the doer(s) of the action and everyone else affected by such an action. The theory considers the feelings of both the doer(s) and the recipients or those affected by the action in question. This theory opposes the view that people should satisfy personal needs in disregard to other people (Stuart, 1863). This view that puts personal interests above the interests of others is known as egoism. The utilitarianism theory also

opposes any other theory or approach that regards acts as being wrong or right independent of the consequences that they carry. The theory also opposes any other theory that determines the justification of an act depending on the motive of the agent. This is because according to utilitarianism, a person can do a right thing with a bad motive (Stuart, 1863). The nature of utilitarianism is that a person should do anything that he does with the aim of producing the best results and consequences possible. In regard to the consequences of an action, a Utilitarian considers all the bad and the good that arise from an action whether arising during the act, or when the performance of the act is over. If the consequences between an alternative act and the act do not differ in a major way, the choice between the acts is not considered as a moral issue. Whether the consequences of an act are not major in a manner that requires the agent to be compelled not just exhorted and persuaded to act in a certain manner, is what should be considered to determine whether an act is wrong or right. The theory views happiness a delicate balance between pleasure and pain. Pleasure is the value while pain is the disvalue. Utilitarians consider the intrinsic values that are produced by two alternative actions and estimate which of the two actions would have more satisfying and better consequences to the person affected by the action. They also consider the people around the person who is directly affected by the action. Euthanasia is the act of intentionally ending the life of a sick person's life who's in pain to terminate their physical suffering. Although there are some people who may simply want their lives to be brought to an end, euthanasia is normally carried out on people who have a disease that is not curable. The decision to end these people's lives

may be made by the sick people themselves or medics or relatives if the sick person(s) are incapable of making the decisions due to their condition. The issue of assisting people to end their lives has been a hot topic of discussion for several years. Practical, religious and ethical considerations have been analyzed. In countries like the United Kingdom, it is illegal to assist a person to end his or her life, and it can lead to imprisonment if convicted in a court of law. There are several moral dilemmas facing the issue of euthanasia. These dilemmas include: 1) When is euthanasia justifiable? 2) Is there a morally acceptable difference between letting a person die and killing a person? 3) Is it acceptable to terminate the life of a terminally ill patient? Based on practicality, some individuals argue that the practice should not be allowed because criminals may use it as a cover for murder. There is also a dilemma in making a decision whether people should be allowed to have control over life considering that religions regard God as the giver of life. If life should be taken away, then it should be done by God who gave it to the person in question. The act of euthanasia can be executed by taking certain actions like poisoning a patient or by failing to do certain things to the patient like feeding him or her. If a patient dies as a result of refusing to take his or her drugs, this is not considered as euthanasia. The theory of utilitarianism views happiness as a state of balance between pleasure and pain (Stuart, 1863). Pain is the disvalue while pleasure is the value according to the theory. If an action or lack of doing an action leads to more pain, then according to utilitarianism, that is wrong. If an action leads to the end of pain which the value in consideration, then the action is right. Therefore, the theory of utilitarianism agrees and fully supports the euthanasia as a method

of ending pain. Since the dead person won't experience further pain, the act of euthanasia is acceptable. The utilitarian theory also considers the happiness of not only the affected person but also the happiness of those around the person. Therefore, if the relatives of the sick person support the act, then the utilitarian theory will support the act. Conclusion:

When considering whether to end the life of a terminally ill individual, a person should consider various factors like the current law of the land, religious beliefs and the wishes of the sick person. In countries like the United Kingdom, it is illegal to execute euthanasia. Religions like Christianity do not support the act. If a patient is ready to endure the pain that comes with a terminal illness, he or she should not be killed against his or her will.

## **Works Cited**

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