

# Legalizing physician assisted suicide

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



As I stand in front of you, my thoughts go to thousands of patients in the world today that are undergoing intense suffering and tormenting experience for they have been denied to exercise that one great decision regarding their life. My thoughts also go towards hundreds of medical practitioners charged with the responsibility of caring for such patients.

To what length should I go to save this patient's life? For how long can this patient hold on to life and is the pain worthy it?

It is more than certain that almost each and every medical practitioner has ever mulled over these two questions alongside many others. In the same breath he or she has also thought of the ethical dilemma involved should a rash decision be made on the issue. The debate on whether physician assisted suicide should be legalized has raged on for sometime now and has taken an emotion twist (Cook, Earleen H., 1982). It is my opinion that this debate should be put to rest. A look at the positive side of legalizing physician assisted suicide leaves no doubt that it is the only way to go. It is the only way to relieve a patient who is undergoing a moment of immeasurable suffering and whose end is certainly nigh (Beauchamp, T. L., 1989).

There are a number of reasons why physician assisted suicide should be legalized. The most basic reason is mercy. As human beings, we are endowed with loads of emotions and a conscience that cannot allow us to sit back and watch as our beloved ones wallow in a miasma of suffering, especially when we have the ability to end such suffering. It hence would be inhumane to watch as patients undergo a slow and painful death.

Secondly, we talk about individual rights and freedom, what more freedom would there be than allowing a patient to make that crucial decision in determining his/her hour of death and quell the bouts of pains tormenting him/her. Finally, the huge cost of maintaining life in the face of sure death cannot be rationalized. Why should we spend millions in taking care of people in a vegetative state while million others are dying due to lack of basic drugs? (Kenneth Cauthen, 1998)

The opponents of legalizing suicide are only afraid of change. Their arguments do not hold any water. They talk of difficulties in regulation, sanctity of life and further state that sometimes miracles do happen. These arguments are just but empty words and cannot be compared to the suffering our beloved ones go through as they try to grapple with the last painful moments of their lives. It is the high time that bold steps are taken. It is the time to bend the Hippocratic oath, at least for a just cause. It is the time to “change the rules” as Jack Kevorkian, an American pathologist and the pioneer of the latest debate of legalizing physician-assisted suicide, puts it. (Ed Newman, 1996)

## References

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