

Donor card



" Sleep after toil, port after stormy seas, / Peace after war, death after life, / does greatly please. " This is a phrase by Edmund Spenser, a 16th-century poet. He asserted death to be a " pleasant" thing. But it is not the case for many of us. Death is not so easy. In fact, we are afraid of its pain. In fact, we are afraid of its loneliness. In fact, we are afraid of its irrevocability. And it is much more scary if we feel all those agonies even " after" our death. I am not going to write about horror movies however, but a true story of brain death.

And through the arguments, I want you to realize the significance of the decision: whether to own a donor card. Donor card... I guess most of you already know about it. Thanks to that card, you can save other people without any special skills by providing your organs. That is wonderful. When you watch a moving story of transplantation on a TV program, you may have a feeling that you, too, want to be like that " warm-hearted" donor.

Especially, in case of heart transplantation, the donor must be a " brain-dead" person, who can no longer maintain life but still has a beating heart.

If you are wanted and cannot live anyway, you may think you have a clear resolution. However, remember that you always have to pay something if you try to save others. So let me remind you that the " warm-hearted" donor is a " warm-blood-running" dead body. Into a soft and warm body, a knife cuts in, and organs are taken out. If that is all, it may not be a problem. But, the body moves, sheds tears, and even has a possibility of feeling pain. That is the reality. It may be only a spinal reflex, but may not be, too.

And it may be only a possibility, but may not be, too. The diagnosis by doctors may be done in a right way, but any human-made criteria and human-performed examinations must not always be perfect. There is a fact that the donor is often anesthetized during the extraction, so that the body will not disturb doctors by moving around. Once we are misjudged in the court of death, we can never be allowed to appeal again. And even if the judgment is done in justice, the prosecution itself is fatal in this court.

Once doctors start to examine if you are brain-dead or not, they will try it again and again literally till your death. Needless to say, during that testing, you cannot receive appropriate treatments for your recovery, which means, you are locked in the death court until your tombstone gets upon you. In old days, death was something absolute. We got it suddenly by divine will and we could easily tell if someone was dead or alive. However, today human beings refuse the will with their well-developed technologies. As a result, now they have got an extremely significant role of defining " death.

If someone's brain is dead but heart is alive, is he or she totally dead or not? At what point do we regard the brain to be " dead? " More fundamentally, what is death indeed? Actually, we can never be sure of the answers. They are beyond our capacity. But we have decided to make the answers. So, today our death is human-made. Contrary to such an obscure definition of death, I have an obvious vision for death. I do not want my last moment to be in an agony of organ extraction. I do not want to admit myfamily's death when they are still moving.

I do not want to leave my death to anyone's discretion. I want nobody to face any unexpected misery. And I am sure that I am not the only one. I know that I am a human being who should equally be saved as the recipients. To make my death like peace after war, I do deny writing my will to be a donor. But still, that is my opinion. The important thing is that you get interested in the issue. Today, you can easily get a donor card. But the action must not be easy. To be a guarantor of life, you must take the risk it deserves.

And after distress and uneasiness, torment and bewilderment, if you still reach a conclusion of saving others, you should be proud of your devotion. If you reach a conclusion of saving yourself, you should be proud of your cautiousness. If you do not reach a conclusion, you should be proud of your sincerity to life. If you have never thought about this issue, you can start thinking from this moment. Do you really want to help others? Can you be responsible enough for your decision? How can you make your death after life most pleasant?