

I am in support of Voluntary Euthanasia.

I believe that in current times, Australia should keep up with other enlightened countries that allow people who choose, to die with dignity.

The practices that we currently experience in the matter of end of life practices have evolved from two very ancient origins:

1. The Hippocratic Oath, (there have been many revisions), taken by most new doctors as they have emerged from their training since 500BC. The Oath is not a legally binding instrument.
2. The Christian Commandment 'Thou shalt not kill', given to Moses more more than 3000 years ago.

The blind adherence to these ancient laws does no justice to the people who require and demand change, as far as it affects their choice in the matter of their own deaths.

Whilst I respect both institutions in principle, time and particularly the medical sciences, have brought about an exponential increase in information, and with it therefore, a change of attitudes and expectations in people in general.

In 2015, I, along with most of my friends and relatives, believe that we have absolute dominion over our bodies, and our lives/deaths. We believe that no other person has jurisdiction in this personal domain.

In Australia, **fewer people believe in the existence of any god**, and therefore do not believe that 'only God gives life, and only God takes away life'.

As religion is a very private and personal thing, it is not for any religious group within our community to dictate life situations for others, and therefore any argument from these groups to the contrary should be given no credence by your committee.

This does not mean that the sanctity of life is diminished in any way.

Indeed, those terminally ill people **who wish for death**, can feel little respect or desire for the life they are forced, by our current system, to endure. There is no sanctity in suffering, except for the very religious who see their suffering as a purification before they enter their so called eternal rest, and they are few by comparison, and are usually in monasteries.

Choices available to us now are either indefinite palliative care, or suicide, and choices in suicide are horrendous by any standard with traumatic consequences for all: carbon monoxide poisoning, artery cutting, drug overdoses, strangulation by hanging, etc

There are other countries which, through a legalised system of counselling, consensus and psychological and medical verification, allow a person to determine the time and manner of their death.

Australia is an advanced nation, and it needs to move into the twenty-first century in the matter of dying with dignity. It needs to make available to its people the choices of how and when they can die. To deny this right is an abrogation of the responsibility given to our leaders.

Dying with Dignity is happening in other places. It should be allowed to happen here.

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