
From: Ronda McCarthy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 30 July 2015 12:48 PM
To: LSIC
Subject: VOLUNTARY EUTHANASIA SUBMISSION

Wayne and I had been married for 44 years when he was diagnosed with the brain disease Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. The prognosis was anywhere between 3 to 8 years of progressively not being able to walk, talk, write, eat or see properly followed by a death usually by choking. He was 64. We were devastated. There was no cure. One day Wayne told me he'd have to take his own life eventually. I understood perfectly. He had been such a physical person - doing annual triathlons, running marathons, heli-skiing. Now he was falling over, feeling disoriented, choking on his food, losing his ability to write and, as he eloquently put it towards the end - had lost his repartee. It must have been humiliating.

Wayne didn't believe in God. I'm a practising Catholic and it went against everything I'd been taught - but I really believed he would be doing the right thing for him. He had joined Exit International and we both knew he'd have to do it entirely on his own. When I mentioned to the specialist that Wayne had talked about taking his own life, he replied that I was not to worry as by the time he wanted to do it, he wouldn't be able to. Wayne also understood this.

The PSP progressed and a year later, and after many attempts, Wayne managed to obtain the medication. His relief was palpable. But he wasn't ready just yet as there were a lot of family occasions coming up which he didn't want to spoil. He told me he would not do it at our apartment as that would spoil our home for me. Instead we would go to a hotel. His plan was that I would leave in the morning to go to church and he would do it then. We told nobody. He made a video to the police explaining what he was going to do, and why.

The dreaded weekend came. I was on auto-pilot as we had a surprisingly wonderful dinner at the hotel. We talked about our life together and how lucky we'd been. We agreed he'd done much with his life and he said he had no regrets. The next morning I was numb and felt ill as we hugged and said goodbye. I went to church and then began the terrible walk back to the hotel where I found Wayne dead on the bed.

If Wayne was alive today he would be in a terrible state. He would be in a wheelchair, unable to speak and see properly, and being fed through a tube. Just waiting for a long, lingering death.

If it had been legal for Wayne to seek assistance from a doctor, he would not have had to do it so early and we would have had him longer. Our family and friends would have been able to say goodbye. And it turns out goodbyes are important. We would have been able to be with him and be a comfort in his last moments. It would have been hard, but not as terrible as having to leave him to do it on his own.

Please, PLEASE, make Voluntary Euthanasia legal.