
From: Sherri Weinberg [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 13 August 2015 2:48 PM
To: LSIC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Victorian Inquiry into End of Life Choices

Submission: Victorian inquiry into end of life choices.

My submission is **in support** of a change in law regarding end of life choices.

I am an ordained minister in the Christian Church with over 29 years experience in an ordained capacity and over 10 years as a committed Christian prior to Ordination. Over this time and because of the experiences I have had throughout my ministry, my own rigid opposition to assisted dying, voluntary euthanasia and exercising personal choice regarding the manner of ones death, has changed. I was vehemently opposed to anything but dying in God's time. I am no longer.

Recognizing that death can be a beautiful experience if its a "good" death, not every death is. A "bad" death is a process that holds no peace, is fraught with anxiety, is generally pain filled and very traumatic for the person in the throes of dying, and for family and friends. On many, many occasions I heard the dying cry out that surely a loving, compassionate God would never allow such suffering and, profoundly, have had people begging me to help them die. It was my personal experience of being a part of such acute trauma people that finally forced me to change my very entrenched view.

It was impossible to remain 'convicted and resolute' against having personal choice regarding ones manner death in the face of such experiences.

In recent years I have also been shocked at the cavalier manner whereby "living wills" where terminally ill people have made their wishes clear and have requested not to be resuscitated nor have other medical intervention should they cease breathing, disregarded. This does not constitute euthanasia and should not be treated as such.

I will not relate specific experiences because they are private to the families I have supported and it is up to them to tell their own stories of their experiences accept to say my experience in not limited to the elderly and includes people of all ages experiencing either terminal illness or unrecoverable injury. However, on a personal level, I have seen both my parents die awful, painful, dehumanizing and drawn out deaths. My father eventually starved to death and my mother died in absolute agony. The manner of their respective deaths has made a deep and lasting impression on me and were also instrumental in my change of stance.

My ministry and subsequent experience has been gained in pastoral ministry; as a military chaplain; as a police chaplain and by working as a chaplain in an excellent Hospice.

Therefore I urge the Inquiry to please improve current medical practices at end of life by **including the legal option of choice for a medically assisted death or voluntary euthanasia.**

Reverend Sherri. J. Weinberg,
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