

3-17-2015

This is my testimony, in support of Aid in Dying.

My name is Donna Scanlon, of East Hampton. I have been a nurse for over 30 years, so, as you can imagine, I've seen the pain and suffering and indignity so many people have endured at the end of their lives. And the pain to all the family members.

My friend, for over 30 years, was also a nurse. I worked with her and loved her like a sister. She was one who suffered an unbelievably horrid death, two years ago. I could go on and on about all our discussions about Aid in Dying, and that we both wanted a GOOD DEATH!

This did not happen for Gail. Two years ago, she died of a liver transplant that developed into graft-vs.-host disease. The donor liver killed her.

And from the first day of this diagnosis, she began her journey to hell! She suffered excruciating pain; at times the morphine helped her fall into a brief nap; at other times she lay in bed crying and yelling aloud to die. This went on for one full week! Then she went into unconsciousness for another two weeks, lying there, with her spirit and pride gone.

She died alone. She did not have a good death.

She believed in Aid in Dying and this did not happen for her.

May everyone have a CHOICE for their end of life.

I recommend that everyone read the book, "The Conversation", written by Dr. Angelo E. Volandes. This is a short excerpt from it:

"There is an unspoken dark side of American medicine – keeping patients alive at any price. Two-thirds of Americans die in health institutions, tethered to machines and tubes, even though research shows that most prefer to die at home in comfort, surrounded by loved ones."

Dr. Volandes believes that a life well lived deserves a good ending.

I agree.

Thank you.
Donna Scanlon