End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill

Deborah F Luke

I wish to express my intense unease at the implications of the above Bill. The whole premise of assisted suicide and euthanasia is that the lives of some people have little or no meaning, value or worth. I would not feel safe in any society based on such ideas. The Bill itself is very vague as the term “intolerable” is not defined and very many people can and do find themselves dependent on others.

I have been living with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) and also Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) for fifteen years. In all of that time, I have been dependent on others for various things. I need help everyday things such as making meals, household chores and getting around for shopping etc. I am also dependent on others for much of the “fun” parts of life as I am unable to drive now and have little energy for the social interaction many take for granted.

For someone who was 31 years of age when my illness started, it came as a big shock and I am sure clinical depression was a part of what I experienced, especially for the first three winters before the SAD was diagnosed and treated. During that time, before organised home care was in place and life was literally a matter of existence, I could quite easily see how someone else in my position may have found life “intolerable,” in fact, most winters there will be days when I feel like that but I have learnt that they will pass. It has taken me a long time to adjust to my situation and I am sure other people will need quite some time to do the same.

Someone trying to cope with the loss of their health needs to be helped to find a way to make the most of what they still have, not persuaded they have nothing left to offer and are no longer a productive member of society. Unfortunately, this is precisely the message this Bill sends out to people all ready struggling.

Deborah F Luke
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