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Life Support or Death Support

Humans are arguably the best animals to be. They live, love, but at some point it has to come to an end. As time processed, though, humans have found ways to prolong live. This is seen with immunizations, transplants, and more recently life support. Contrary to popular belief, prolonging life does more harm than good. Keeping an unsalvageable patient on life support should be impermissible because it is an unconstructive use of time and money.

A harm of keeping someone on prolonged life support is that people become objects used to satisfy their loved ones. In an article from The New Yorker titled, *What Does it Mean to Die?*, Rachel Aviv tells the story of a young girl, Jahi Mcmath, who became brain dead after complications with her tonsil removal surgery. After that, her family proceeded to demand that she be kept on life support and even took her home where they inserted a feeding tube. (6). Jahi cannot choose whether or not she'd rather be removed from the ventilator because she is not responsive and never will be. With this in mind, it doesn't make sense that they are keeping her on life support for her good because she is not consciously benefiting in any way. In this case, the McMaths, especially her mother Nailah, are using Jahi as an object for their own comfort. They were, and still are not, ready to let go of Jahi and so they are keeping her around purely because of the fear of losing her.

They are not only mistreating Jahi but they are also neglecting their other child in the process. The same article reports, “Jordyn was unruly in school, and Sandra worried that her misbehavior was an expression of alienation at home... Jordyn has learned that if she wants to have a conversation in her sister’s room she needs to stand on the same side of the bed as her mother.” (29). Jordyn, Jahi’s younger sister is basically ignored. Her well being is put second to that of Jahi even though only one of them can be affected by the care of their parents. This information makes it clear that Nailah’s insistent care of Jahi is taking away from her motherly duty to Jordyn, her younger daughter.

The suspension of life support is also supported by the fact that life support is expensive. A study by the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health concluded, “Adjusting for patient and hospital characteristics, the mean incremental cost of mechanical ventilation in intensive care unit patients was 1,522 dollars per day,” (USNLM). All of this coupled with the fact that people rarely get better reflects that life support is a waste. The US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health found that life support does not substantially change the outcome of people’s health. They state in their conclusions, “ The addition of advanced-life-support interventions did not improve the rate of survival after out-of-hospital cardiac arrest in a previously optimized emergency medical services system of rapid defibrillation,” (USNLM). Rather than thinking of how keeping their loved one around would benefit them, they should consider how letting them go will benefit the lives of people who are still salvageable.

It is plausible to think that many believe that this issue is only applicable to patients and their loved ones. These people fail to acknowledge what this says about humans. If humans

continue to make these selfish attempts to prolong life, life itself will eventually mean nothing. People should instead look to live their best lives while looking to improve the lives of others even when it all starts coming to an end.

My Best Possible 2Fer:

This is my best possible 2fer because I really tried to focus on connecting my quotes back to my analysis directly to my thesis because that is something I am often critiqued about. For example I used a specific case of what I believed was a an unsalvageable patient and carried this case throughout my thesis. This also makes this my strongest thesis because it connected to a real world case in a way I've never done before.

Works Cited

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