

From: James

Sent: Saturday, January 30, 2016 1:44 AM

To: Physician-Assisted Dying Committee Comité Aide médicale à mourir

Subject: PAD for the Mentally Ill and Chronic Pain Sufferers

To the Special Joint Committee on Physician-Assisted Dying,

I am a diagnosed sufferer of anxiety disorder, clinical depression, and bipolar 2. I remember feeling suicidal as early as grade 2, though I was not diagnosed with any of these illnesses until I began seeking treatment, which was in 2005.

I have tried CBT, medication, day programs, group therapy, and have spent some time in the psych ward. None of this has helped, which has made me feel more hopeless about my constantly deteriorating condition.

To add to this, I have also been living with a chronic pain issue that began when I was 14 (I am now 29). This was diagnosed as fibromyalgia when I was 20. This has always been painful, but as I get older, I find the pain is becoming increasingly disabling. On days where I feel better mentally, the physical pain is still so fatiguing and debilitating that I find myself feeling depressed and nonfunctional anyway.

Like my mental illnesses, I have tried everything to get this under control. Medication, physiotherapy, intramuscular stimulation, chiro, massage, strength training, yoga. I have tried marijuana, and a one-off session with MDMA, to try and find relief. Nothing helps.

In response to the hopelessness of these conditions, I have made two suicide attempts. The first was very nearly fatal. The second was not long after, but there were several issues with the process, and obviously that didn't work out for me, either.

I have lost career opportunities, love interests, hobbies, important relationships, spiritual faith, and quality of life as a result of living like this. I know everyone has disappointments, but this has effectively demolished my life. I am aimless aside from my desire to die. If I had the money, I would've petitioned external organizations for assistance long ago. My life has become very small, painful and terrifying to experience.

I am asking you to seriously consider allowing voluntary assisted-suicide for chronic pain sufferers and the mentally ill. I understand the need to protect people in more vulnerable positions than I, but at the very least, I would hope to see language used that allows people like me a fighting chance at gaining access to this medical procedure. I expect there to be potential complications as with any medical procedure. I expect to be required to administer the medication myself. And I expect to have to fight to find a receptive physician. What I'm asking for is the ability to fight to get this for myself.

Sincerely,

James Hartman