

## **My right to die**

I want the right to die at the time and place of my own choosing quickly and without pain. I want to be surrounded by the people I love, have a last meal, a glass of good champagne, sit in my favourite chair and swallow a fatal dose.

I am not depressed and in no hurry to do this. I have everything to live for, two beautiful children, two gorgeous grandchildren and wonderful friends. I am writing a book, seeing films I love and reading voraciously. My life is full and rich.

The day will come inevitably when my health fails me. I have no desire to sit in a doctor's waiting room, own a Webster Pack or travel the long dark tunnel of an MRI scanner. And if you haven't yet visited a nursing home I urge to go to see the full horror that awaits. I do not want to spend years sitting in a chair peeing into a nappy and being spoon fed. No disrespect for the angels who work here.

Thirty seven percent of the country now has no religious beliefs and therefore no terror of an all punishing god or burning in damnation. We had euthanasia laws in the Northern Territory in 1996 under the stewardship of Dr Phillip Nitschke the most compassionate man I have ever met. Overturned by the Christian right. A pox on Kevin Andrews. A long slow painful death is his democratic right but please keep out of mine.

Society is awash with drugs legal and illegal but it is impossible for me to get the drug I need, Nembutal. I would have to fly to Thailand or Mexico risk being caught and put before a vicious court and may go to gaol.

In the meantime I am cultivating heart disease. A few minutes of intense pain and then the ecstasy a bit like losing my virginity. Pass the salt and double cream please!

– Sarah Taylor This speech is copyrighted by the author.