



### Valuing one's own life

[S]uppose that the bystander ... is among the very few major altruists who would [sacrifice their own life in the three option case]... [A]ltruism that rises to this level is not morally attractive. Quite to the contrary. A willingness to give up one's life *simply* on learning that five others will live if and only if one dies is a sign of a serious moral defect in a person. "They're my children," "They're my friends," "They stand for things that matter to me," "They're young, whereas I haven't much longer to live," "I've committed myself to doing what I can for them": these and their ilk would make sacrificing one's life to save five morally intelligible. Consider, by contrast, the man who learns that five strangers will live if and only if they get the organs they need, and that his are the only ones that are available in time, and who therefore straightway volunteers. No reputable surgeon would perform the operation, and no hospital would allow it to be performed under its auspices. I would certainly not feel proud of my children if I learned that they value their own lives as little as that man values his.

