

Rose's mother and grandmother both had severe dementia for the last few years of their lives, and seeing that made Rose terrified of having to live with severe dementia herself. At the age of 50, after a great deal of careful thought, Rose filled out an Advanced Euthanasia Directive requesting that, if she both has dementia and is on any form of life support, life support be withdrawn and she be allowed to die. She has reiterated that wish many times over the years. At the age of 85, Rose has dementia, which has slowly progressed over the last few years. She has also recently been placed on life support. While her dementia is fairly advanced, she can still respond to questions. When asked if she would like to be allowed to die, she has repeatedly said, "No."

1. In your opinion, taking Rose off of life support is (pick one): morally wrong, morally permissible but not obligatory, morally obligatory. Why?

Assessing answers to question 1

- a. Create a very general conditional that fits the answer
- b. Look for counterexamples
- c. If no counterexamples ...
- d. If there are counterexamples ...

Harris & Woien

“it is autonomy that enables the individual to ‘make her life her own’. Choices are self defining but also they are self creating.... it is only by the exercise of autonomy that our lives become in any real sense our own. By shaping our lives for ourselves we assert our own values and our individuality... Concern for welfare complements autonomy in that it provides the conditions in which autonomy can flourish and our lives be given their own unique meaning. Concern for welfare ceases to be legitimate at the point at which, so far from being productive of autonomy, so far from enabling the individual to create her own life, it operates to frustrate the individual’s own attempts to create her own life for herself.”

2. On Harris’ view, is taking Rose off life support wrong, permissible but not obligatory, or obligatory? Why?

3. On Woien’s view, is taking Rose off life support wrong, permissible but not obligatory, or obligatory? Why?