When you can't express yourself anymore, because of our disease or an emergency situation such as prolonged loss of consciousness, it's vital that you clearly express your wills.

The best way to do so are advance healthcare directives.

It's a written document in which you have to stipulate your wishes if you can't communicate anymore.

According to my personal doctor, everybody should fill one of these and have it constantly with them. No one is safe from an accident.

In short, its purpose is to say what you wish to do in extreme situations, such as deep coma or if some heavy assistance happens to be necessary

In our situation there's no room for elusive explanations. If a cardiac arrest occurs, you'll have to stipulate if you wish to move on to the other side or if you wish to be kept alive by all existing means.

This document is being kept by your doctor, and it's also available on the website of your government (in France, though). It is imperative that you one out if you don't want strangers to make this personal decisions for you. Such a capital choice I believe, is worth losing 10 minutes of your time to complete it.

Most of the time you fill it in the presence of both your doctor and the person you've designated. But if you can't physically complete it, your doctor will do so accordingly to your wishes, which are confirmed and based on the person you entrusted.

This entrusted person will be able to legally express your wishes on your behalf, if any of the aforementioned cases occurs. Yes, it's also possible to express your advance healthcare directives on paper, in the presence of the family doctor and the entrusted person you chose.

What is written in this document *is not definitive*, you can change it anytime you want. Be aware that your *word* – whichever its way of expression – will prevail on the advance healthcare directives.

I've already expressed my view on the matter, and for me it is indeed a personal choice, but since it also affects the entire family, it has to be made considering your closest ones.

A very frank discussion – *no taboo* – has to be introduced in the family circle. Y'all have to

face the situation.

But it's far from being easy. Regarding myself, my wife had this document for a couple of weeks in the office and didn't know how to ask me to fill it out . She was scared of the way I would react to this demand; but she was also scared that I'd chose death over life, because she wished for me to stay here with her, no matter what. There's no way I couldn't take that into consideration.

This advance healthcare directives are sometimes insufficient to convince a medical team; because some of them tend to consider this wish for life as therapeutic obstinacy. Ethically speaking, they're against it.

When I came into the intensive care unit, after I had my respiratory arrest, the doctor in charge of the unit that night did not want to consider any directives at all; he patronized my wife, "Poor one, you do *not* realize".

If my wife hadn't insist very hard to take my will into consideration, I don't think I'd be able to write these lines for y'all today.

Since the last bill (in France though, get to know the juridical situation in your country), keep in mind that this advance healthcare directives are ***opposable***, therefore no one can legally go against them.

On the other hand, I must say that after this "beef", all the unit was lovely, including the doctor I mentioned above.

We have to considerate all medical advices, but past a certain point they don't have any validity, – ***because it's your choices, not theirs***. It is important to keep you well informed, and this is the modest purpose behind the creation of this website.

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