

The Right to *Die*

Keoni Tabido has made a decision. Read the story and find out: Why does he want to end his life?

Keoni Tabido has planned how he will spend his final hours: He will have a party for his friends, with lots of food, drink and music. Later, he will spend time with his girlfriend. And then, at midnight, he will take a deadly mixture of drugs.

Mr. Tabido is not crazy. He is a 33-year-old businessman. He is very successful, has a lot of money and enjoys life.

But Mr. Tabido has a terrible disease. This disease kills the nerve cells in his brain and spinal cord, slowly paralyzing him. Gradually, it will be difficult for him to swallow and breathe. There is no cure for this deadly disease.

So, after a great deal of thought, Mr. Tabido has decided to kill himself. He has told his family and friends about his plan. He has even bought a wooden coffin in which he will be buried.

"I don't want to become a vegetable, kept alive on a life-support machine," Mr. Tabido says. "I can't imagine anything worse. So I have planned my own death. I will do it while I can think and act clearly. I want to go out doing what I love best—having a good time."

In Mr. Tabido's country, it is against the law to help people die. If anyone, even a doctor, helps somebody to die, regardless of how sick or old that person is, they could be put in prison for 20 years.

Mr. Tabido is trying to make sure no one is punished for helping him die. "Two doctors have helped me," says Mr. Tabido. "But I will never tell anyone their names. These doctors have given me the drugs and showed me how to inject myself. I will have only one chance, so I have to do it right the first time."

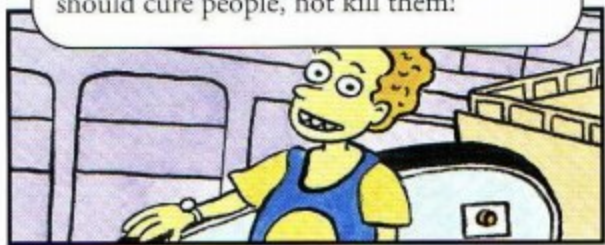
"I know that some people think it is wrong to kill yourself, and for others to help you. But they don't have a disease like mine. For me, there is no choice."



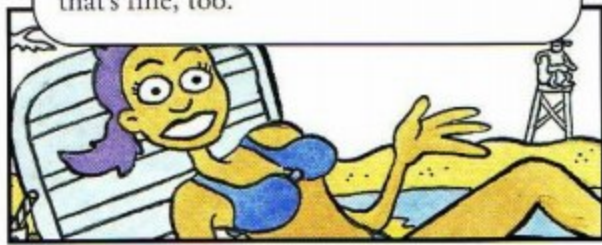
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do you think what Mr. Tabido and his doctors are doing is right? Check your opinion.

In this case, I think suicide is all right. But his doctors should not help. Doctors should cure people, not kill them!



If someone wants to die, that's their business. And if they need a doctor's help, that's fine, too.



Yes. Suicide is OK in this kind of situation. It's cruel to stop it.



No. It's wrong to take your own life. Mr. Tabido shouldn't give up.



Well, we have to respect Mr. Tabido's decision, even if we don't agree with it.



Now exchange your ideas with a classmate.

TURN TO PAGE 86 FOR AN INTERACTION TIP.

LOOKING AT THE ISSUE

Suppose some scientists invent medicine to help people live forever. One day they come to you and say, "If you take the medicine in this bottle, you will never get old and you will never die." Would you take it? Why or why not?

Yes, I would take it because:

No, I wouldn't take it because:
