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Can the compassionate physician kill?

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Alberta Health Services logo
Clinical Ethics logo

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Why this talk? Why this title?

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Slide 3

Why this talk? Why this title?

Compassion?



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Why this talk? Why this title?

Compassion?

- AHS core value



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Why this talk? Why this title?

- Integrity: we do the right thing even when it's hard.
- Compassion: we remember that caring is as important as care; the highest calling is to provide comfort and empathy to those who are in need.
- Respect: we treat others with fairness, dignity, and kindness; we value and honour diversity and demonstrate compassion with all.
- Accountability: we act in an open and transparent manner: we do what we say we will do and 'own' our results.
- Collaboration: we work together with our patients, families and communities, and each other through teamwork and partnerships.
- Safety/Quality: we create an environment that is committed to quality and safety through keeping people as the central focus of our decisions and embracing continuous improvement.




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Why this talk? Why this title?


Compassion?

- AHS core value
- Professional Value




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Why this talk? Why this title?



- Compassion?
- AHS core value
- Professional Value
- Ubiquitous as a value in PAD debate



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Assisted Death Isn't Murder, It's Compassion


Few people probably noticed — what with spring in the air, and the Habs preparing to play a crucial game against the New York Rangers — but Bill 25, an Act Respecting End-of-Life Care, was quietly re-introduced yesterday in the new session of the Quebec National Assembly.

In a rare show of unanimity, the motion was adopted by 115 votes and no opposition.




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Why this talk? Why this title?



Why the term 'killing'?




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Why this talk? Why this title?



Why the term 'killing'?

- Academic literature
- ostensive and value neutral





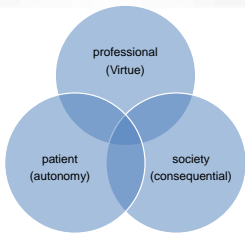
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A limited scope...



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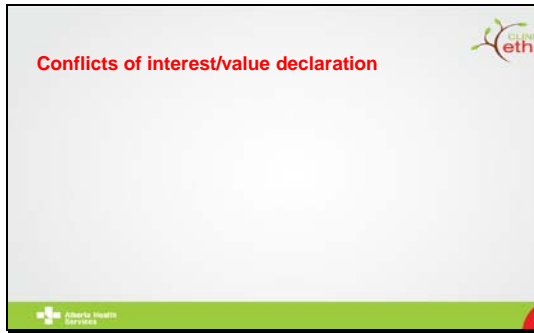
Relationship of this talk to PAD



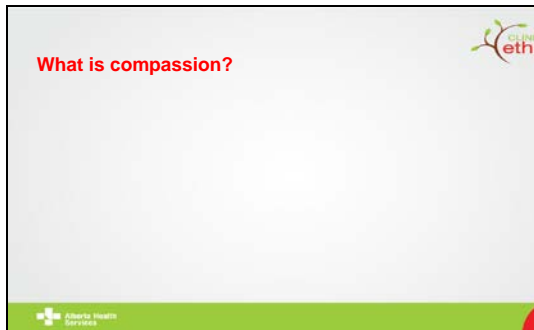
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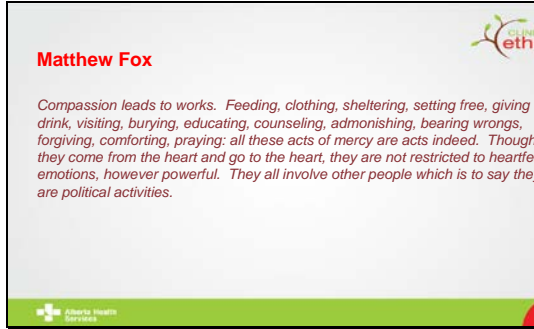
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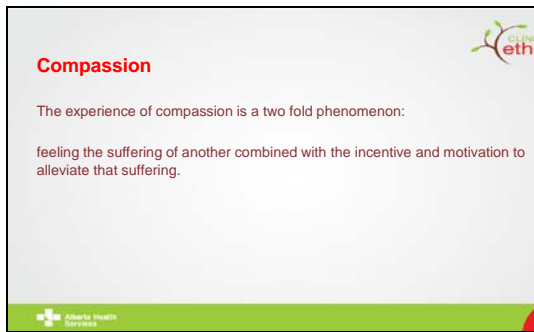
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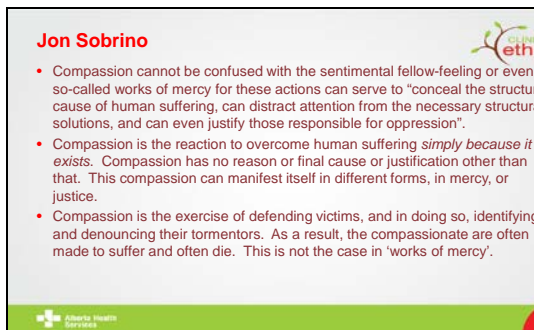
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The slide features a light grey background with a green footer. The footer contains the 'Abia Health Services' logo on the left and a stylized logo with the word 'ethi' on the right. The title 'Matthew Fox' is in red. The main text is a quote in italics: 'Compassion leads to works. Feeding, clothing, sheltering, setting free, giving drink, visiting, burying, educating, counseling, admonishing, bearing wrongs, forgiving, comforting, praying; all these acts of mercy are acts indeed. Though they come from the heart and go to the heart, they are not restricted to heartfelt emotions, however powerful. They all involve other people which is to say they are political activities.'

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The slide features a light grey background with a green footer. The footer contains the 'Abia Health Services' logo on the left and a stylized logo with the word 'ethi' on the right. The title 'Compassion' is in red. The text reads: 'The experience of compassion is a two fold phenomenon: feeling the suffering of another combined with the incentive and motivation to alleviate that suffering.'

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The slide features a light grey background with a green footer. The footer contains the 'Abia Health Services' logo on the left and a stylized logo with the word 'ethi' on the right. The title 'Jon Sobrino' is in red. The main text consists of three bullet points: 'Compassion cannot be confused with the sentimental fellow-feeling or even so-called works of mercy for these actions can serve to "conceal the structural cause of human suffering, can distract attention from the necessary structural solutions, and can even justify those responsible for oppression";', 'Compassion is the reaction to overcome human suffering simply because it exists. Compassion has no reason or final cause or justification other than that. This compassion can manifest itself in different forms, in mercy, or justice.', and 'Compassion is the exercise of defending victims, and in doing so, identifying and denouncing their tormentors. As a result, the compassionate are often made to suffer and often die. This is not the case in 'works of mercy'.'

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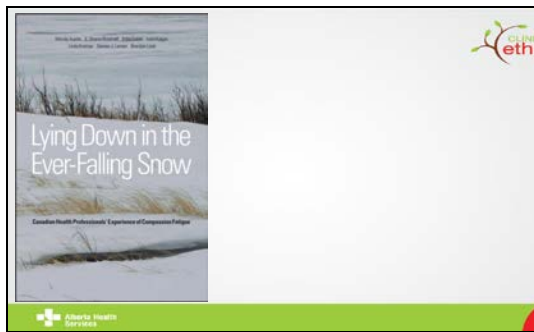


What compassion is not:

- sentimentality
- empathy
- sympathy
- weakness
- costly/fatiguing

Alberta Health Services logo in top right and bottom left.

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Lying Down in the Ever-Falling Snow

Book cover image showing a snowy landscape with grasses.

Alberta Health Services logo in top right and bottom left.

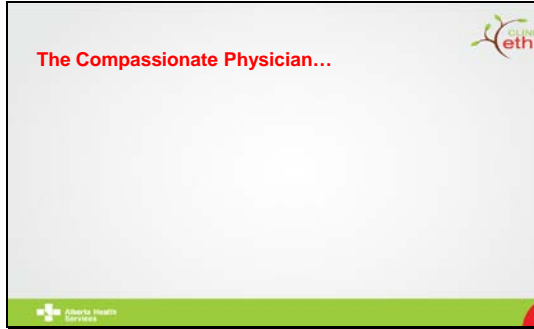
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'fatigue'

we discovered the phenomenon of fatigue was related not to the experience of compassion itself, but failure to satiate the first of the two phenomena. Experiencing the suffering of another while being incapable of, or prevented from, alleviating the suffering was the source of self-identified 'compassion fatigue'.

Alberta Health Services logo in top right and bottom left.

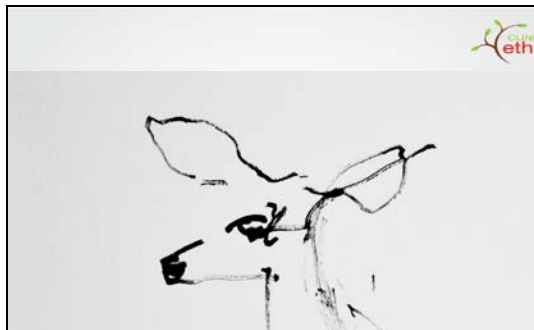
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Can the compassionate physician kill?

Alberta Health Services logo (bottom left)

ethi logo (top right)

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Supreme Court Criteria

'Grievous' is a legal term that applies to serious, non-trivial conditions that have significant impact on the patient's well-being. 'Irremediable' is a broad term capturing both terminal and non-terminal conditions. As stated by the SCC, 'irremediable' does not require the patient to undertake treatments that are not acceptable to the individual.

Alberta Health Services logo (bottom left)

ethi logo (top right)

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Can the compassionate physician kill?

- can killing alleviate suffering?



Alberta Health Services logo (bottom left)

ethi logo (top right)

Slide 34

Can the compassionate physician kill?



- can killing alleviate suffering?
- Is there a medical model to treat suffering?



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Can the compassionate physician kill?

- can killing alleviate suffering?
- Is there a medical model to treat suffering?
- What is a request to die? How does the compassionate physician interpret such a request?



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Clinical Wisdom



Slide 37

Clinical Wisdom



- identification of suffering



Slide 38

Clinical Wisdom



- identification of suffering
- awareness of and sensitivity to iatrogenic burden of illness



Slide 39

Clinical Wisdom

- identification of suffering
- awareness of and sensitivity to iatrogenic burden of illness
- understanding the depth and breadth of both curative and palliative philosophies



 **bibliography**

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