

Discussion Post Prompts: Introduction to Bioethics

Isaac Wilhelm (isaac.wilhelm@rutgers.edu)

1 Why I Hope to Die at 75

Possible discussion post topics

1. What sorts of reasons does Emanuel give for wanting to die at 75? What do you think of those reasons? Should those reasons convince other people that they ought to end their lives at 75? Do those reasons convince you? Why or why not?
2. Why is 75 the age at which Emanuel wants to stop accepting health care, rather than (say) 80? Is there really just one threshold—the same threshold for everyone—for when people should cease getting medical treatment for their health problems? Why or why not?
3. What did you think of Emanuel's discussion of creativity and aging? Does creative production make life particularly valuable? Does the lack of creative production make life significantly less valuable? What sorts of non-creative activities might give value to life?

2 The Badness of Death and the Goodness of Life

Possible discussion post topics

1. What is Epicurus's argument for his view that people are not harmed by their own death? What is Broome's criticism of that argument? Do you think that Broome's criticism succeeds?
2. Why does Broome think that a person does not lose everything when they die? What does Broome think is lost? Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. What is Broome's account of the badness of death? That is, according to Broome, what is it that makes death bad? Do you see any problems with Broome's account? How might Broome respond to those problems?