

Bill: You're just afraid of losing a little money!

Jessica (sister #1): That's not fair Bill. It's not just money. We are all members of a family. Jake missed Michael's hockey game last night and you haven't seen your kids for days. We are all grieving. We need to support each other. We need to help each other through this.

Monica (wife): We need to think about David's wishes. He was always in control of his life, always a part of every medical decision. His advance directive is very clear. He does not want his life to be artificially extended. We need to tell Dr. Alderfer to turn off the respirator.

Amy (sister #2): Just pull the plug? Can Dr. Alderfer do that? I can't believe that someone can be killed just because the right areas don't light up on a brain scan. I want to hear about how other patients have been treated, why some are left on a respirator while others are removed. There must be some guidelines as to how to proceed in cases like this.

Ben (brother): I think we need to meet with Dr. Alderfer. Amy's point is well taken. We haven't been in this situation before; we need some guidance. Before the meeting, however, I want us all to think about what the Cleavers have stood for, we want our actions to reflect the kind of people we are. We must come through this with our respect for one another intact. We need to be open, honest, caring, and considerate of each other's views.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Class Discussion:

- a. Which family member(s) has/have identified the key moral issue facing the Cleaver family?
- b. Do you think that the Cleavers will be able to reach a consensus about whether or not to turn off the respirator?

2. Role Playing:

Choose a student to take the point of view of each of the family members.

NOTE: It may be instructive to repeat activities 1 and 2 after students have studied the remainder of this chapter. This may help students to recognize and come to appreciate the increased sophistication of discourse possible with the precise vocabulary and powerful concepts and distinctions they have learned.

3. Research:

Research one of the following topics and report your findings to your class.

- a. The effects of anoxia on the brain.
- b. Compromised brain states such as PVS, coma, and brain death.
- c. Recent developments in brain imaging and their use in the diagnosis of the brain states mentioned above.