

Yearly report 2017

Dear members of the association lifecircle

During the past year we again have been able to help many so thankful members. Everybody is feeling well in the spacious, bright and colorful apartment in Liestal, even though it is a place of grief, of saying good-bye. I am happy together with the thankful people who are allowed to die, who often say: «I am not afraid of dying, but I am very much afraid of not being able or allowed to die». But I am suffering myself together with the grieving of the family members, who are doing their last act of love towards their loved ones by helping them to die. It is self-understanding, that such experiences are not passing someone without leaving a trace. For that reason, we have started to build up grieving groups in different countries, so people can get information and talk to each other before and after an assisted voluntary death (AVD). Only a person who has experienced an AVD of a family member or friend, can feel what happens within a person who goes into or experiences an AVD. One grieving group is already existing in England, in Switzerland and Germany such a group is just being founded.

Within the past year again a lot of new members have signed in. The number of members has raised from 841 active members end of 2016 to 1130 end of 2017. Something especially positive is that there are more and more groups being founded in different countries who are helping to promote legalization of AVD in their home country. There are big problems within legalization of AVD not only abroad, but also in Switzerland. Especially the most recent situation, that the public prosecutors of my home state have succeeded in making all pharmacists be so much afraid of being prosecuted by handing over the medication for AVD, that no one was willing to sell the medication to us, have clearly showed that even in Switzerland we are having problems within the application of our very open law. In the meantime, we have found a pharmacist who is selling the medication to us even though the state coroners are nasty. We all, self-determined people all over the world, must stand together and defend the right to die.

About the community „Chreemer Kari“ in Biel-Benken: in June 2018 the construction works will begin. End of 2019 all 18 apartments should be ready for moving in. So the project, for which the association has given a loan of 50'000.-, is on a good way. For further support of life quality, «lifecircle» has donated 45'000.- to the following institutions: Insieme Basel, Sehbehindertenhilfe Basel, PluSport Behindertensport Schweiz, Kinderspitex Nordwestschweiz, IVB Behindertentransport Basel, Schweizerische Alzheimervereinigung, Verein ALS Schweiz, Verein Equilibrium Bewältigung von Depressionen, Zentrum für Entwicklungsförderung. The recipients are very thankful for these donations, our treasurer will talk about it on the general assmbly.

In 2017 the association «lifecircle» again was able to organize two highly interesting meetings. We decided to organize a podium discussion about the subject «finding your way at the end of life». We wanted to invite Dr. Albert Wettstein, a medical doctor and specialist in fasting to death. But finding a date was very difficult. So the first podium was held without Dr. Wettstein, but with a nurse from the Clinic Arlesheim. It was amazing how many people were interested in this subject. The room was meant for 80 people, in the end more than 100 people were sitting not only on chairs, but also on tables listening to the discussion. Beside the nurse from the Clinic there was also a doctor from the same clinic telling about palliative care at the end of life. I was telling about all possibilities of the AVD.



So our audience was able to get information about starving to death, palliative care and assisted dying all at the same time. In autumn we organized once more a panel of a similar kind, where also Dr. Albert Wettstein could take part. Fortunately we had rented a bigger room, for we had more than 250 people getting information about this. Especially the questions after the panel were so interesting and intensive, that the moderator had to stop the discussion when we run out of time, so we were allowed to start the well-earned apéro.

Four times a year I am going to a meeting in Winterthur, where there is held a gathering together in the «Café goodbye» every three months. There discussions take place about matters of the end of life. A specialist is giving an interesting speech, then he asks people to discuss one of his questions at the table. So the audience starts discussing in small groups which makes them exchange their views. I would love to have similar events in Basel as the discussions which are held within these small groups are very valuable. As the group of lifecircle supporters has been founded this year, I do hope that we can start such an event beside the grieving group.

What we did not achieve yet is to find psychiatrists and neurologists who are willing to judge our members concerning their mental capacity in case of dementia. I have sent more than 300 of my books to psychiatrists of Basel, asking them for help. Only one, but at least one, has accepted to do medical visits and judgment of mental capacity for lifecircle members.

The Memory-Clinic of Basel has promised to do a session for medical doctors in November last year, to train them in judging the mental capacity of patients. A lot of doctors were present, also people from the authorities. But the information was about living will and other matters of end of life, but there was no teaching at all concerning the judgement of mental capacity. So this was a big disappointment. We will go on putting all our strength into getting the possibility to die in peace also for people with dementia.

Our aids like wheelchairs, walking aids, toilet raisers ect are rarely used. Please get in touch when you need such utensils

I would also like to refer to my last newsletter, in which I have written about other events of the last year.

Kind regards

Frau Dr. med. Erika Preisig, president of the association „lifecircle“