

# Independence to be a Donor

The question, do I have the independence to choose to be a donor is an unusual one, because there are really only 2 answers, yes or no. If I say no, I will be disowned and if I say yes, I will be flooded with several billion pamphlets from generically named organizations like Pancreas Protectors or The Society for Liver, beseeching me to donate all the organs from my broomstick-like body.

The idea of donorship or at the very least, the idea of transfusing body parts isn't some new, Generation Z driven, new age thinking, it's something that dates back to the 1600's, where crazy French doctors thought "What if I put a pig's heart inside a human. What's the worst that could happen?" We all know what happened.

But an idea remains an idea until you give the populace the independence to transform it, to breathe life into it. It's just that we humans, are a very whimsical bunch. Certain ingenious ideas, like printable solar panels are consigned to the ever-growing trash heap of 'could have beens', while half-baked ideas like PVR's acquisition of Sathyam Cinemas have come into fruition and beyond.

So where does our idea of donorship lie on this scale? Very, very close to becoming the latest entrant into the trash heap. Why is this? Why has this act of nobility suddenly been forgotten, suddenly been knocked from its pedestal? Instead of boring you to death with statistics, reports and other such material, I will let an experiment do my work for me.

Go up to 4 different health care workers and tell them 4 different things. Tell the 1<sup>st</sup> one "Hey, I help HIV positive kids in my neighbourhood", you'll be made into a folk hero. Tell the 2<sup>nd</sup> one "I prevented an outbreak of malaria in my area", you'll become a legend. Tell the 3<sup>rd</sup> "I stopped Ebola ", you'll be anointed as a demigod. Tell the 4<sup>th</sup> "I'm donating my organs "and you'll receive a 3-syllabic answer of "Um, great, good for you".

Sure, these are epidemics that have devastated countries and families but the thing is, even Ebola can be stopped with a vaccine but there isn't a vaccine on the planet that can grow back your heart or save your lung. We just seemed to have forgotten that.

But why? The reason for this forgetfulness, the reason for this underwhelming response is lack of Hype. Have you seen a media correspondent covering an outbreak? They would take even the common cold and dramatize to the extent that you would think that the apocalypse was upon us.

Despite what the bleak and hopelessness filled backdrop that I've painted may suggest, I still have the independence to choose to be a donor. How? Because I believe in the adage, History has always been shaped by the power of the youth. Marathons like "Run for Heart patients" are cropping up all over the world, Pressure groups are forcing governments to reevaluate health systems that haven't changed since the WW. I am the COO of a company where we aim to take the tech-based health care industry by storm.

Being a donor is like being a Jedi, for all those who don't know who a Jedi is, one, what have you been doing with your lives and two, A Jedi is a person who protects and promotes the Good side of the Force, this energy that exists in everything in the universe. May sound cliched but it is true. A donor does a similar thing, we spread awareness about organ transplants, we protect life by giving life to others and we foster a new crop to carry on our noble practise long after our time is past. This is a choice we made.

Life gives us choices. You either grab on with both hands and just go for it or you sit on the sidelines. I will not become a page in someone else's history book, I may not be a Malala, I may not be a Barack Obama, but what I am is a 15 yr old with an idea, the independence to choose that idea and a forum to express that choice.

Thank You