

## THE SENSE AND SENSELESSNESS OF DEATH IN THE GLOBAL SOCIETY

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**Purpose** – to discuss the possibility to proceed from the negative conception of death manifested in the fear of death, the emphasis of its senselessness and disregard of death, to the revelation of the possibilities given by death.

**Design/methodology/approach** – the main idea is to describe death from the different perspective and show the hidden positive aspects of this phenomenon. The basis of the search for the positive conception of death is found in the works of the famous German philosopher Martin Heidegger and the health care worker from Switzerland Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, who was working long time with the incurable patients in USA. The comparative literature analysis allows to compare these works with the ideas of the French philosophers Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, who are focusing on the negative impact of the understanding of human's mortality to a life of every human being. The presentation consists of three parts: (1) in the first part the negative attitude to death is revealed (J.-P. Sartre, A. Camus), (2) in the second part a death as a possibility is described (M. Heidegger), (3) in the last part the five phases of the patients' reaction to their disease and coming death are presented (E. Kübler-Ross) and the fifth stage is appreciated as the main objective for every person, that allows to see the wide range of the possibilities given by death.

**Findings** – the comparison of the ideas of the different authors helps to identify similarities and differences between them, and let to the finding, that question of the sense of human's death is the „global“ question, that arises in philosophy, literature and

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medical clinical practice as well. By combining the answers of the different authors to this question, the path from the negative to the positive concept of death is found and the possibilities given by death to every human being are revealed: the possibility to live authentic, to revalue the main values, to create or restore good relations with the beloved ones, to talk about the fears, faith, to realize desires etc.

**Research limitations/implications** – In our days many taboos have been broken, but the theme of death still remains taboo because of the consumer society: the question of death is treated as hard and unpleasant, so the best attitude to this phenomenon is to ignore it. Despite such a disregard many authors are searching for the answer, trying to find sense of death and possibilities given by it. Presentation of the ideas of the authors analysing the questions related to the human's mortality helps to introduce this theme to the wider audience and to reduce the negative attitude to death and the fear to think and speak about it.

**Practical implications** – the one situation, in which the importance to think and speak about mortality and death is evident, is the situation of the incurable patient. Not only his/her relatives, but also medical workers have to be prepared to help patient on the long way for the first phase of his/her negative reaction to the incurable disease and coming death to the last – most appreciated – phase of reconciliation with death. It is very hard to be prepared to deal with death, but every person can learn a bit from the works of the authors who are discussing these questions, and from the representers of clinical practice who have experience to work with incurable patients. The medical workers have to help patients to see the possibilities given by coming death and help to use these possibilities.

**Originality/Value** – the global society is based on the similarities between people of the different origins, beliefs, values etc. For all people one of the most important questions is the question of their mortality and the sense or senselessness of death. Because no one can live without seeing some sense of his/her life, the ideas of the authors mentioned in the presentation are very valuable for every person individually and for the global society as whole.

**Keywords:** death, possibilities, disregard, reconciliation.

**Research type:** literature review.