

NATIONAL VICTORIA COURTS

Elderly man admits trying to kill ill wife

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An elderly man who feared being separated from his wife of 50 years because of her Alzheimer's disease has admitted he tried to kill her.

Joseph Sugar, 88, admitted to the attempted murder of his wife at their Melbourne care home in 2018 before they were due to be separated.

He was unable to bear the thought of living without her and seeing her suffer in that way, defence lawyer Trevor Wallwork told the Supreme Court on Friday.

"He just did not want to be separated from his wife but they woke up the next morning in those tragic and terrible circumstances," the lawyer said.

Sugar injected his then 74-year-old wife Heather with an overdose of insulin.

His wife was due to be taken into a high-care facility days later.

But Sugar woke up the day after he administered the injection and called an ambulance to take his unconscious wife to hospital.

"He has described ... his wife, Heather, as still being the love of his life," Mr Wallwork said.

She survived the overdose and has since recovered, but remains in a care facility.

Their children said their independent mother feared she would suffer from Alzheimer's like her parents.

"I don't feel like mum or I are victims of a crime. We are victims of a horrific illness which impacts entire families," daughter Audrey Marriner told the court.

Her brother David said their father made a terrible decision

~~...SUGAR SAID SHE HAD MADE A TERRIBLE DECISION...~~

"I believe he was at the end of his rope and made a terrible, spur-of-the-moment decision that I am certain he would never repeat," he said.

Their lawyer asked for mercy and that Sugar be spared a conviction.

He will be sentenced later this month.

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