

Good Afternoon,

The words quoted below were written by a woman that I deeply respect and admire. It is everything I would want to say but have a hard time finding the word for.

I find myself right in the middle of the vaccine debate, I am vaccinated myself and am vaccinating my children but would not consider myself pro-vaccine. I, too, am 100% Choice-Affirming and support the right of every parent to choose. I oppose the Mandatory Vaccine Bill, HB 3063.

I follow Dr. Paul Thomas' vaccine plan, which means that my daughter would have most of the vaccines by the time she would start kindergarten. One that I do not plan on giving her until she is a teenager is Hepatitis B. The aluminum (250 micrograms) is much too high for a newborn or young child, and since you catch hepatitis B from exchanging bodily fluids during sex, as well as from IV drug use and contaminated blood, I would want to wait until she is much older (especially since I, as the birth mother, do not have Hep B myself). If this bill was to pass, my choice not to give her this one vaccine would make her ineligible to go to public school, even though she would have the immunization against all of the other, much more communicable, diseases.

All I want is the ability to choose what I feel is right for our family. If one of my children was to have a vaccine reaction (such as an auto-immune condition), I want the ability to choose to not vaccinate her anymore even though I would continue to vaccinate the rest of my children. Even though a medical exemption has been included in the bill, medical exemptions for vaccines in the past have been much too difficult to get for many folk and I don't expect that to change. To have to continue to vaccinate a child who has issues processing the shots would break my heart.

Thank you for reading this and letting me share my thoughts. Much appreciation!

Sincerely,
Cevestiana Kuznetsov

Begin Quote:

I VERY MUCH hesitate to say any of this, because I know that I will immediately be “labeled.” But here’s what I deeply, firmly feel. The vaccine conversation, 99% of the time, comes from a profoundly toxic place. (This group is an exception!) Generally, there is no in-between in the current dominant narrative. There is no “middle ground.” The current narrative allows only for “Pro” or “Anti” and nothing in-between. Either you ARE or you AREN’T.

This view lacks nuance, context, compassion, and often, scientific knowledge. THIS IS BY DESIGN. We are very much being “fed” a narrative of fear, hatred, and often inaccurate information to pit PRO against ANTI. So that awareness comes first (and I think the people in this group are fully aware of this, which is why we can have these conversations here).

I’m going to say a few things here that will FEEL, because of our current narrative, very anti-vaccine. I am NOT anti-vaccine. Not for one second. But I hesitate to call myself pro-vaccine, because of this:

I AM 100% CHOICE-AFFIRMING. I support the RIGHT of every parent to CHOOSE. The current political climate, where bills are being shoved through that strip parents of their rights to opt out of vaccines, is some show-us-your-papers type shit and I am 100% AGAINST it. Full stop.

This is why I'll probably sound a little anti-leaning in this post, but please remember I'm not. I simply have some truly overwhelming compassion for parents who are well-educated, well-read, and still don't want to vaccinate, or who want to do a delayed or partial schedule.

This is in part because I know that vaccinated children are not overwhelmingly "at risk" from the unvaccinated. In fact, the truth might be the exact opposite (see pertussis section below). This is a complex topic, and I don't have time to go into it here. But the logic of that statement, and the oft-used "but what about kids who are too sick to be vaccinated" argument, lack nuance and are at least partially inaccurate. This will be the longest post EVER if I get into that, so I'll skip it here. In short, I AM damn sick of the WEAPONIZED INACCURACIES that are forced down our throats, dividing us, distracting us from the fact that what we ALL want is healthy, protected children. So I think a few things are worth pointing out, because they aren't being discussed in the mainstream. And to get this discussion to a place that's actually CONSTRUCTIVE for families, that sounds more like the conversations we have in this group, that drives science forward, that helps protect children...the conversation HAS to change.

We have to acknowledge the flaws on BOTH SIDES. In fact, we first need to acknowledge one super scary, awful thing:

There is no perfect way to protect our children from this harsh, sometimes awful, unfair world. Even though most of what we've constructed in the world, from healthcare to politics, is an effort to reduce risk. It's deeply embedded in our nature. But the truth is, both choices come with risks.

I think some of the pro-vaccine aggression and lack of compassion that I see amongst some of the scientists I follow is due to the fact that humans want CERTAINTY. (That's sort of the goal of all scientists, right?) We want to take an action (vaccinate or not vaccinate) and have a predictable outcome (child protected). We want one choice to be "right" and the other "wrong." This is normal. But it's not how it works. We have science that makes this very clear.

Truth:

UNvaccinated children contract vaccine-preventable illnesses and die. This is incredibly rare.

Vaccinated children suffer irreparable harm, sometimes death, from vaccine reactions. This is also incredibly rare.

UNvaccinated children also suffer long-term consequences from certain illnesses that might have been prevented by vaccines. This is also incredibly rare.

Vaccinated children suffer long-term consequences from non-life-threatening neurological and autoimmune reactions to vaccines, as well as waning immunity

(more on that momentarily). Also incredibly rare.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28154539>

UNvaccinated children sometimes deal with the inconvenience of certain illnesses that were once considered “normal” - chicken pox and measles, to name a few. Fairly rare.

Vaccinated children might deal with future illnesses like shingles, an incredibly painful condition, due to waning immunity from chicken pox vaccine. Fairly rare. (I could go on.)

Most of us can agree on all this. But let’s dig in with some of what’s often left out of the conversation:

1. Vaccinated children also sometimes still contract vaccine-preventable illnesses. This is because vaccine-induced immunity wanes at different rates in different children. For example, vaccine-induced protection against pertussis can wane after just a few years, whereas wild-type infections (which most people don’t get any more) confer decades of protection for most individuals.

Speaking of pertussis. A HUGE ongoing challenge of pertussis vaccine technology is not just waning immunity, but also that “children who were primed by DTaP vaccines” are actually “MORE susceptible to pertussis throughout their lifetimes” (emphasis mine). As someone who is TERRIFIED of pertussis, it was not encouraging to me to learn that vaccinating might do the exact OPPOSITE of what I want it to do. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30793754/>

It is also known that vaccinated individuals can be asymptomatic CARRIERS of pertussis. A vaccinated child could thus infect an unvaccinated child, never having known they were spreading the illness. In this way, a vaccinated individual could pose a real threat to an UNvaccinated child.

This means that the responsibility of the vaccinating parent does not stop with vaccination. We still need to monitor antibodies, keep children HOME when ill (because “it can’t be pertussis, she’s vaccinated!” Is NOT correct reasoning), and to be aware of the fact that a vaccinated child might be an asymptomatic CARRIER of illness and to stay away from newborns and the immune-compromised.

One advantage of an unvaccinated child in this scenario, is that if they had pertussis, YOU’D KNOW IT and you’d keep your kid home, lessening the possible spreading of the illness.

I personally know the mother of an infant who contracted pertussis a few months back, with a large lag in diagnosis because the entire family, including baby, was vaccinated and doctors “didn’t think it was possible.”

2. There have been no longitudinal studies comparing vaccinated individuals to unvaccinated individuals, and no placebo controlled studies. I believe one doctor in Oregon was conducting this research, but with recent bills introduced in Oregon this may never happen. This bothers me, and it’s a question I believe the vaccine industry needs to address as soon as possible.

We need to know whether naturally-acquired immunity holds any advantages to vaccine-induced immunity so, at the very least, we can make vaccines BETTER. Looking at genetics, the microbiome, and the gut would be a HUGE boon to improving immunity, but I don't think anyone has figured out how to profit from this on a large scale. (IF we REALLY care about health and immunity, there are MANY added ways we can go about it.)

3. Humans have a symbiotic relationship with some viruses.

While some viruses are simply dangerous, there are also cases where viruses are actually CURATIVE. Read this FASCINATING study "Measles to the Rescue."

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5086626/#!po=20.3125> The measles virus, scientifically engineered to literally cause resistant cancer cells to explode and die. (A reaction that is nearly impossible if one has been vaccinated against measles, unless some bypassing technology can be developed). If nothing else, this study proves that this topic, and our relationship with pathogens, is more nuanced and complex than we often believe.

There are other vaccine-preventable illnesses I haven't listed here that are absolutely MORE dangerous should they be contracted. Polio. Diphtheria. Tetanus. HiB. Others. This is what makes this such a gut-wrenching conversation. Many parents would LOVE to vaccinate against MOST illnesses, but unfortunately, trivalent vaccines (DTaP, MMR) do not give that option. I fully understand why a parent wouldn't want to vaccinate for Hepatitis B (an STD vaccine given within hours of birth), chicken pox, rotavirus, and even measles and pertussis.

Unfortunately, because the US government has removed all liability from vaccine manufacturers - meaning NOBODY is responsible if a child suffers a reaction - this also makes it much easier to strip parents of choice. Because there's no liability. I think that's VERY messed up. There have been many points in my journey through the research where I've said to myself "C'MON, MAN! If we want kids to be vaccinated, we've got to quit with this bullshit!"

Back to the scientists I follow. Several of them - and they are "big names" in the scientific community - are doing a delayed or reduced schedule out of concerns for the immune-activating properties of the current vaccine schedule. Yes, vaccines are supposed to activate the immune system. But an activated immune system can also become an OVER-activated, and this is where autoimmune conditions might be triggered. There is scientific literature on this. I personally know of one child who has an incurable autoimmune condition, confirmed by her pro-vaccine doctor, as a result of the MMR vaccine. This is often referred to as "Acceptable Risk," another concept to which I wholeheartedly object. (That's also for another time.)

Again, I'm not against vaccines. But I AM against a dishonest conversation that sweeps these children's stories under the rug, that doesn't seek to understand, as if the mere mention of them makes you "not with us, but against us." THAT is not cool with me.

Unfortunately, there does not seem to be a concerted scientific effort to track this or even ascertain who might be more vulnerable to a catastrophic vaccine reaction. With our expanding understanding and tracking of genetics and the microbiome and epigenetics, this is absolutely bonkers to me. (And vaccine reactions DO OCCUR; this is not up for debate. This is why the United States Congress referred to vaccines as “unavoidably unsafe,” language taken from the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act.)

It is true that I do not publicize our vaccine status OR our healthcare decisions (in fact, I’m going to remove that from the previous post) because I don’t want people to make a decision because of something I did (or didn’t do). I have seen and heard too much heartbreak on BOTH sides to be the deciding factor in a decision like this.

I know this wasn’t really an answer to the original question. But, I felt compelled to say it. Again, I’m sick of the polarity we see (outside this group) and the black/white conversations. If we want to figure this out, and REALLY protect children, more of us need to converse the way we do here. We need more transparency, more answered questions, more compassion, and more acknowledgement that this might just be a scary world no matter what we do - and we need to learn to sit with that.

Love you all!