

IN FOCUS [Brazil election](#) [War in Ukraine](#) [Iran protests](#)

[HEALTH](#) | [GERMANY](#)

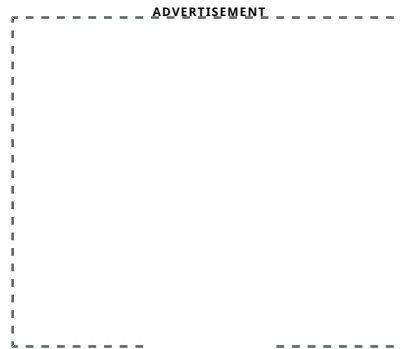
Empathy for unvaccinated



Astrid Prange
Commentary

12/29/2021

DW's Astrid Prange de Oliveira is no longer angry at unvaccinated people. Raw emotion has not saved a single life. This is her plea for more empathy and less division in the pandemic.



We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#)

OK

Germany marks a grim COVID milestone

We'll argue later

What I do know for sure, however, is that when I saw him in the ICU, I wasn't angry at unvaccinated people anymore. That anger has vanished. All I want now is for my friend to get better, to beat this.

I am watching the fight to save him from a distance, and it is terribly draining. There is no energy left for anger or aggression. All that remains are feelings of emptiness, exhaustion, despair and a slight glimmer of hope when his blood work shows improvements or antibiotics seem to be working. Worrying about a loved one eclipses all other thoughts.

To
avoid
any

DW editor Astrid Prange de Oliveira

Image: DW/P. Henriksen

Peter Dabrock on triage ruling in Germany

misunderstandings: I'm **boosted** and grateful and relieved to have the vaccination status I have. I am not only concerned about my own health but am also about the risk of **overstraining our country's medical system.**

Pandemic of emotions

This pandemic has pushed me to my limits. Of course, I would have told my friend to get vaccinated. He never talked about having reservations and to argue now would be pointless.

And, to be honest, I don't feel much like arguing anymore. The nonstop arguments between pro-vaxxers and anti-

We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#)

OK

IN FOCUS [Brazil election](#) [War in Ukraine](#) [Iran protests](#)

break things down into friends and enemies, leaving behind a distorted notion of life that ultimately helps no one.

That's because not everyone who is unvaccinated is against vaccinations. And not everyone who wears a mask under their nose is by default anti-mask. And not everyone who goes to a party during the pandemic intends to be a superspreader.

Though it is hard not to think in these categories, I will try not to. I am happy with each new person getting vaccinated and, at the same time, want to keep the lines of communication open for people who are unvaccinated and neither stigmatize them nor allow them to be stigmatized.

When I think about my longtime friend in the ICU, I am reminded that I need to keep trying. Empathy is far more important than a particular ideology or conviction.

Wave of solidarity

Since the outbreak of the pandemic two years ago, there has been a wave of political radicalization here in Germany. But there has been an even bigger wave of solidarity.

I'm amazed at how strong social cohesion still is despite the enormous strain that has been placed on everything — especially ICUs.

For this, I am deeply grateful. Because, without this solidarity and empathy, there would be no hope in a pandemic that has so far claimed the lives of more than 5.4 million people worldwide.

[Send us your feedback](#) 

„ADVERTISEMENT“

EXPLORE MORE

We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#)

OK