Morals for your story


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Dilemma

I need money. For a variety of reasons that will be boring for you to know: I need some. Bad. I know that sperm donation is an easy thing to do, not unpleasant from what my friends have told me. It seems like a good way to earn some extra cash. So, I've been thinking about donating eggs. This process is supposed to be somewhat miserable, but much better money than the sperm earn. I told my mom I was interested in doing it and she said something to the effect of, "Do you think your obligation to your offspring ends at fertilization? Your genetic code is your duty to preserve, protect, and help to progress in life. That just sounds irresponsible to me."

I hadn't thought of it that way at all. I just thought it could bring me money and help some people who can't have children to have some. What do you think? Would donating eggs be heroic or ethically questionable?

--Wasted Eggs

Responses to Dilemma

Everyone going to school understands the scarcity of funds. We all have to work hard to earn money. As a poor college student, the idea of donating sperm has crossed my mind a few times. However, I agree with your mom about our obligation to our offspring. I believe that I have a duty to father and support my children. Beyond that, I want to know my children. I want to play with them and laugh with them. I would miss out on all that if I were to donate sperm.

As for the heroism of giving other people the chance at parenthood, there are other alternatives. There are plenty of children in the United States and around the world that already do not have parents. Adoption not only reduces the problems of overpopulation, poverty, and starvation, but also brings joy into the lives of everyone involved.

As for your dilemma, there are other options to earn money. Job hunting is not fun, but it pays off. There are always jobs, but you have to be willing to look for them, and be willing to do whatever you can—even if that means taking a job below your current skill set. There is also something to be said about re-evaluating your spending habits—making smart decisions about what you need versus what you want. Personally, I try to avoid "get rich quick" schemes, or fast-cash promotions. There's always a catch. In the case of donating eggs, I think the catch would be not knowing my children. That makes hard work now worth it to me.

--Other Alternatives

From a strictly utilitarian point of view, the most obvious answer would appear to be that you should donate your eggs: you get the happiness of extra cash, and a family gets a child they may not have been able to otherwise. Everyone's happy! Your mother is wrong in saying that donating eggs would make you responsible for how they are used: once they are donated, they are no longer your eggs. However, the ultimate decision here also depends on your personal pain tolerance; is the discomfort of the operation and the discomfort of your mother's disapproval worth the comfort that the money provides? That's only something you can answer, but utilitarianism makes a good argument for donating your eggs and being compensated for it. All that said, I believe you should go for it.

--Grant Walker

From a Kantian perspective, you should not sell your eggs. According to Kant, you must treat yourself and all of humanity with respect, and that includes not objectifying your body. By selling your eggs, you are making yourself an object and as a means for profit, which is unethical. Kant believes that you do not own your own body, thus you cannot do whatever you want with it. Also, even though you may make others happy by possibly helping them have a child, Kant would consider your action to be immoral because not only are you selling your eggs to satisfy your own desires, but you are also satisfying somebody else's desires, which is not a proper way to be using your body.

--Bodies Are Not Owned By Us

Increase the happiness of the majority! I personally think it's a good idea to donate your eggs for several reasons. It'd be a good thing to do because it will make more people happy than upset. Yeah, your mother will be a little upset but she doesn't have to know, right? If you don't tell her that you donated your eggs, you wouldn't necessarily be lying to her. You'll simply be withholding information, which will keep her from being upset. But think of the consequences. Think of how happy the couple using your egg to make a baby will be. The couple and you will both benefit from this situation. A couple will have a new baby and you'll get your much needed money. Everybody wins.

--Julie Thao

There's no doubt that egg donation is good money, and if you're up for the pain that the process involves, like the constant doctor's visits, drugs, and minor surgery, then go for it. It's your body, and if you're okay with donating eggs, there should be nothing stopping you. As far as what your mother is saying, yes, the baby will have your genetic code. But it will also have to very loving and grateful parents. People only resort to in vitro fertilization in desperate situations,
and the happiness that child would bring them is probably more than either you or I could imagine. I find nothing wrong with egg donation, and honestly, I thank the people who do it, because I know they are making people's dreams come true.

--Ms. Needle-Phobic

Although you may be tight on cash right now, I do not agree with the decision to donate your eggs. Eggs should not be viewed as just an object, because they have the potential of being human life, which is sacred. Even though you will not have any legal obligations to the egg or the future baby that may result, you still have a moral obligation since it is from your own DNA. There are other ways of earning money than taking such a drastic step such as doing odd-end jobs for some extra cash or even donating plasma. Life is delicate and should be treated as such, so knowing what will be done with the egg and taking responsibility for it is the right thing to do.

--DNA Obligations

Even though this seems like a reasonably selfless way to get money, there is a conflict of morality. You might be getting paid for your eggs but the situation in which you are choosing to donate, makes it seem rather selfish and wrong. You do have an obligation to your eggs and "selling" them conflicts with your responsibility. Each egg is a potential child that will always contain some part of you, whether you want it or not. That child's future happiness is in your hands and your decisions now will impact that life forever. If you choose to donate eggs and give up the rights to your children, then it needs to be a selfless act based on knowing that they are going to someone more deserving and gifted. I recommend you seek a job rather than selling irreplaceable parts.

--No Price on Life

If you are willing to go through the process I feel that it is a good thing. There are lots of couples out there that cannot have children the traditional way. One thing I would suggest is to check out the company collecting the eggs and make sure that they screen the people looking for eggs because it would be important to me that my genes get passed to a good family.

--Ray Puckett

Next Week's Dilemma

I work for a small engineering firm in the Golden area and I have run into an ethical dilemma. I work as an intern and I am striving for a full time position at the firm when I graduate in May. I am currently assigned to work with a co-worker on a project that requires significant amounts of experimentation and report writing. The co-worker has been with the firm for several years and he is in a position to influence the owner about whether or not to hire me in May.

The dilemma is due to the fact that he does almost nothing but surf the internet during work! There is very little supervision from the owner and because I am still getting all of the work done he does not ask any questions. I feel compelled to talk to the owner about the co-workers work ethic, but I do not want to disrupt my future career possibilities. If I do not talk to the owner about the issue, however, I may be at risk of losing my job due to the fact that I am consciously allowing a co-worker to get nothing done during company time. What do you think I should do?

--Accomplice or Informant