

ADOPTION CIRCLES

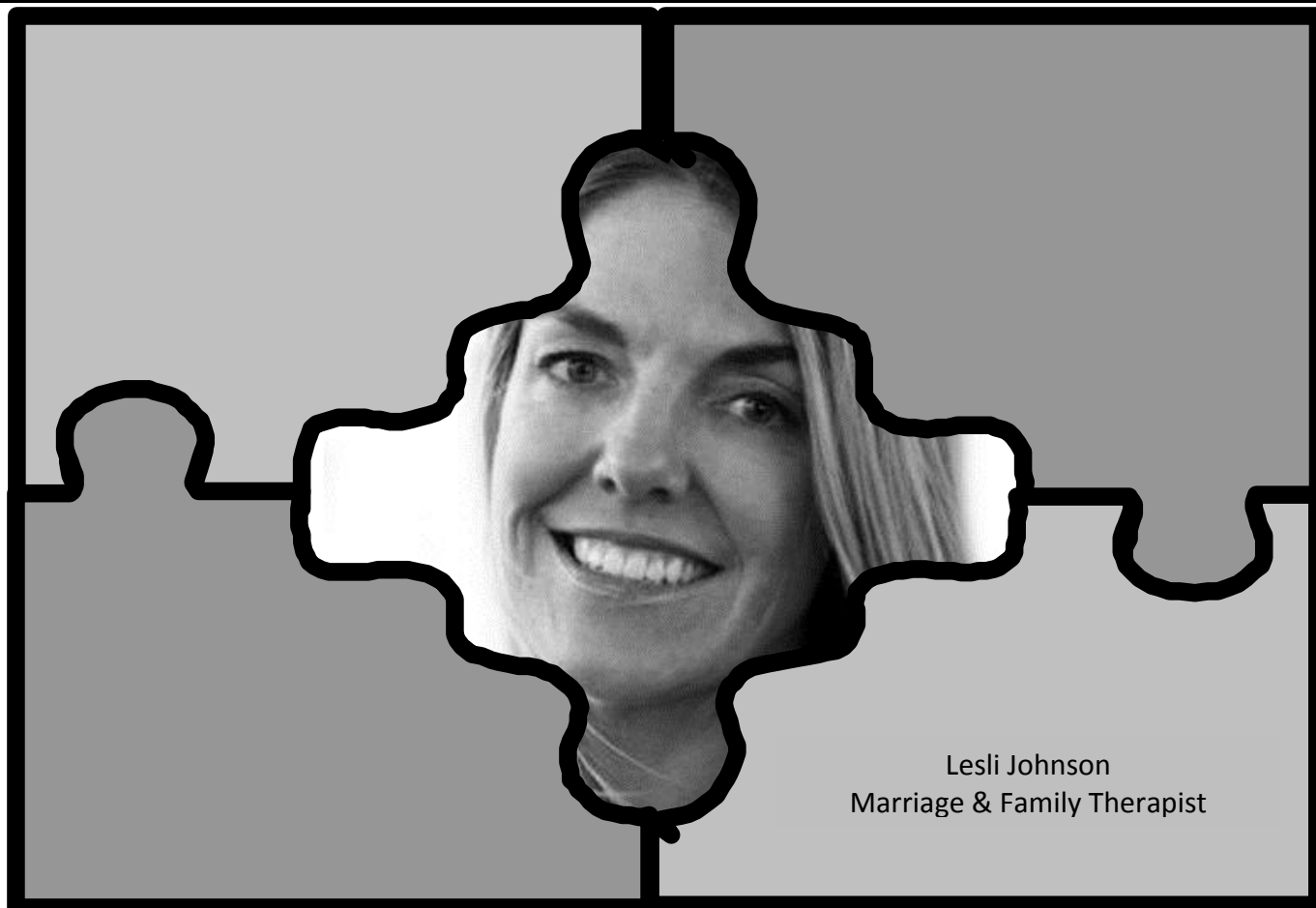
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Adoption: It's Complicated

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ADOPTION CIRCLES



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FMNFS FACTS:

Forget Me Not Family Society is a provincially registered, non-profit society and a federally registered charity (#88908 4869 RR0001.) Tax receipts are issued for donations over \$25.00. Our Society was formed for education, consultation, peer counseling and to offer support to all those touched by adoption: adoptees, birth parents, adoptive parents, and concerned professionals. Our primary source of income is through membership fees. These funds go directly towards printing, postage, telephone expenses and supplies.

WHAT WE OFFER:

Experience shows that at various times in life, the issues and concerns of adoption need to be addressed. We provide our members with opportunities to gain further understanding of adoption issues through:

- Conducting monthly support groups in New Westminster, Cloverdale and Kamloops, B.C.
- Individual peer support
- Resource library
- Referrals to professionals and other service groups
- Speakers Bureau to educate groups on post-adoption issues
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Annual weekend workshops

OUR MANDATE:

- To encourage and develop a recognition of the benefits of family preservation and openness in adoption practice.
- To establish and operate a Post-Adoption Resource Centre providing education, consultation, counseling and support to those touched by adoption: adoptees, birthparents, adoptive parents, and concerned professionals.
- To provide community education programs, panel presentations and workshops on post-adoption issues for any members of the community who wish to learn more about adoption and reunion issues.

ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER:

ADOPTION CIRCLES is published quarterly and is available by subscription to our Society. Membership is open to anyone who is interested in adoption and post-adoption issues. Comments and contributions are always welcome. Please mail submissions to our office or forward to the Associate Editor at: amynewman@telus.net. The Forget Me Not Family Society reserves the right to edit all material submitted on the basis of space, relevance, and suitability.

Please note that the material published in the Newsletter, including the article by the Editor, does not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Forget Me Not Family Society.

President's Message

By Marnie Tetz

Hi All!

What a wonderful summer! We are so fortunate to be having such fabulous weather! Not only have I been able to enjoy our summer, I've been following the weather in the Maritimes as my sister Wendy is there with an RV caravan exploring another beautiful part of our country. They were caught in the tail end of a tropical storm that had started out as Hurricane Arthur! It was more adventure than the 21 RV caravan was looking for!



I could refer to Wendy as my adopted sister, as we were both adopted into the same family. However, Wendy is my sister, plain and simple. She is the only sister I have ever known and the one that I have history with. I also have two half-sisters.

My mother had a daughter before me who was also lost to adoption. I have met [her](#), but we just didn't hit it off, or at least not in the way I had hoped. Our life experiences were different and she didn't share the same eagerness that I did to have a relationship -- she was wary. In hindsight, I came on too strong, and she wasn't prepared for me. I have to admit that even though we aren't in much contact, she was the one who sent the Christmas email last year, and also informed me that she had a new mailing address, which was pretty darn good of her!

My half-sister on my natural father's side is another kettle of fish for sure! My father had a daughter with his wife and I have had no communication with her at all. A few years ago I sent her a letter explaining who I was and also letting her know that if she didn't want anything to do with me that I was okay with that and understood. I am the product of an affair that our father had with my mother, so I could understand if

she didn't have warm and fuzzy feelings for me. I did say I would like pictures of our father if she wanted to share, which I suppose was a bit of a bold request. I enclosed my contact info: address, phone and email and on the envelope I put my return address, M. Tetz, Surrey, B.C.

Lo and behold, one night my brother-in-law called to say he had just received a phone call that he thought might have been meant for me. You see, his initials are also M. Tetz, and at that time he also lived in Surrey, B.C. The caller had ranted and raved about not wanting to be contacted again that that she was giving the letter to her lawyer! If only my dear half-sister had opened and read the letter she would have had the *right* phone number and she could have ranted on the *right* person...and I would have at least heard my sister's voice. Oh well!

“Adoption: It's Complicated”!!!

I'm glad that I have my sister Wendy!

I hope that you are cozy in your favourite chair and also have your favourite drop, while you immerse yourself in this latest amazing issue of Adoption Circles!
~ Marnie ~

Avoiding Complexity

There are many things that are completely out of our control when it comes to adoption, searching and reunion.

Preparation is one of the key things that is within our power. The seeker must be prepared because the other person probably won't be. Adequate preparation, including being sensitive about first contact, will spare the searcher from unnecessary pitfalls in reunion. While we cannot control how another person will react, if we consider various possible outcomes and prepare for them, we have a much better chance of success. Emotional preparation and support will help us handle surprises and disappointments that shatter our

fantasy of a perfect reunion with perfect people.

BEFORE you contact your long lost family: ASK and LEARN from other people's experiences. Find out the point of view of the other side (mom/child). READ books on adoption reunion and check adoption issue websites. WRITE down your expectations and feelings to help you process them and get clear on what you really want. JOIN an adoption support group. TALK about it with people who understand adoption issues. BE OPEN to outcome and not attached to outcome.

Some of us blunder in without preparation and it still works out fine, but the roller-coaster ride of reunion can still catch us off-guard. ~Amy Newman

Nothing is perfect. Life is messy. Relationships are complex. Outcomes are uncertain.
People are irrational. ~ Hugh Mackay

Editorial: Rymer Writes

Adoption: A Most Complicated Concoction

By Bernadette Rymer



Once again I welcome you to our summer issue of *Adoption Circles* in which we explore the theme of Adoption: It's Complicated. This topic was chosen to follow-up on Rich Uhrlaub's article of the same name from our Spring issue (AC#69).

You may be wondering why I am still here after announcing in the Spring issue that I would be retiring as Editor because my husband and I will be travelling more. I received several kind messages from readers which gave me to realize that I really do enjoy this job and how much I would miss not being involved in the creation of the AC when I am home. Also, member Mary Ann Dubeski offered to be a guest editor for a future issue. So with her offer and the expert assistance of our Associate Editor Amy Newman, I am delighted to still be in this position.

So back to our theme and to the wording of my title: *Adoption: A Most Complicated Concoction*. As usual I have been stewing over the theme for several weeks and wondering how I can present it to you in an informed and interesting way. My brain was swishing back and forth between the purpose of

an editorial (my responsibility to our Board and to you) and the two aspects of the theme, adoption and complicated. My research led me in different directions and actually fragmented my thinking rather than focusing it.

I wondered why this theme was so difficult for me to figure out how to present to you. So I decided to begin my editorial with a simple description of the purpose of editorials, and then to provide definitions of the terms adoption and complicated.

The purpose of an editorial is to: 1) provide background and analysis, 2) provoke thought and discussion, 3) influence public officials and 4) suggest a course of action.

Adoption:

- to take a child of other parents legally as your own child;
- to take by choice into a relationship; to take voluntarily a child of other parents as one's own child (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*)

Complicated :

- tangled or difficult to unravel (*Vocabulary.Com*)
- difficult to do, deal with, or understand, especially because of involving a lot of different processes or aspects (*MacMillan Dictionary*)
- made up of many different but connected parts; composed of elaborately interconnected parts; complex; difficult to analyze, understand, explain, a complicated problem. (*Merriam-Webster*)

Now it seemed to me that these definitions in isolation are pretty straightforward. However when I considered them in relationship to each other, I



Tangled rope photo by Charles Rondeau

started to feel very unsettled. The question of WHY kept creeping up. Why is adoption so complicated? Is adoption complicated by its very nature, or do we make it complicated because of our very complicated grief as a result of our adoption loss? Suddenly and quite unexpectedly the word *concoction* jumped into my brain: quickly I checked official definitions of *concoction*, and guess what I found?

Concoction: (*MacMillan Dictionary*)

- something that is made or produced by putting several things or features together;
- a story that is intended to make people believe something that is not true.

With this definition I felt I had hit the jackpot of understanding into our questions. Yes, adoption IS complicated BECAUSE it is concocted! Natural relationships that are sacredly bound together by biology, genealogy, history, etc. are destroyed and new relationships are concocted by mixing a baby with a non-related set of parents.

Without a doubt, adoption intimately and irrevocably affects the lives of at least four people, and in most cases, many more people. Is this not a most complicated concoction?

As editor, I now feel I have provided you with some information that provokes thought and discussion and provides background and analysis. There remains the task of influencing public officials and suggesting a course of action. HMM!

Fortunately the author contributions in this issue add information and insight into these questions and fulfill the four major purposes of an editorial as stated above. Contributions by Lesli Johnson and Joe Soll provide background and analysis, and thought provoking information for our reflection and discussion. Rich Uhrlaub, Mary Ann Dubeski and Karen Lynn (CCNM) model courses of action which suggest ways we can influence public officials.

The end of my editorial is the beginning of your adventure into the whys and wherefores of our theme and into why adoption is a most complicated concoction.

I leave you with two quotes which denote the cyclical nature of healing. I offer them for your information, reflection, healing and hopefully for your action. As always, we welcome your thoughts, comments and responses to any article in this AC.

The Cyclical Nature of Healing	
# 1	# 2
One of the saddest things of all is that so many adoptees and moms are afraid to take the risk of healing which is necessary to pursue one's dreams. ~ Anonymous	Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has. ~ Margaret Mead
 • Fear of risking healing prohibits pursuing your dreams • Inability to pursue your dreams prohibits effecting change • Inability to effect change prohibits healing. 	

10 Things Adoptees Want You to Know

By Lesli Johnson

Marriage and Family Therapist specializing in adoption-related issues

I was adopted as an infant, during a time when adoption was still shrouded in secrecy. My birthmother kept her pregnancy hidden from her family for nearly seven months. Her parents and my biological father's parents agreed she would be sent away to have me. She birthed me in a sterile room, frightened, with no familiar faces and no compassion for her situation. I was taken from her before she even had a chance to see me. Back then, this was considered acceptable. Today, we realize that this separation is traumatic for both the mother and the child, and we recognize that early experiences have a disproportionately large impact on the structure of the brain. I spent 82 days in foster care until I went home with my adoptive parents. My parents felt they were being "open" when they told me I was adopted, but no one helped me understand what adoption was. None of my friends were adopted, or maybe they just weren't talking about it. Adoption was a big secret but I thought about it often. I wondered if my best friend's mom might be my "real" mom. I wondered what was so wrong with me that my birth mom gave me away, and was she going to come back? I loved my family, so this idea caused great anxiety. I struggled to complete family tree and genealogy assignments in school.

I went to therapy for the first time when I was 6 years old because I had begun to suffer from sleep issues and crippling separation anxiety from my mom. I'd begin each day worrying that my mom might forget to pick me up at school. Although she was always there, part of me knew I had been abandoned before and my child-self believed it could happen again. Slumber parties and overnights at grandma's house were fraught with "nervous stomachs" and invented earaches. Were my parents coming back? I desperately needed someone to help

me understand my feelings. Unfortunately, my child therapist was not that person. I went twice. I drew pictures of pumpkins. Adoption was never mentioned.

I returned to therapy in my twenties, fresh out of college and anxious about pretty much everything. It took two years before I even mentioned that I was adopted. It wasn't on my therapist's radar to ask, and I was conditioned to believe it was irrelevant. It wasn't until graduate school that I really began to explore how my adoption shaped me. I began to connect the dots of my story and ask questions. I met my birthmother and her family and two years ago, I searched for and found my birth father's family. He's no longer alive, but I have pictures of him. For the first time in my life, I see someone I resemble.

My experience is not unique, but it is important. I now understand that the main reason adoptees don't talk about their struggles is generally the same. When we are young, we don't have the ability to identify our experience and articulate our feelings. As an adoptee gets older, if no one is talking about adoption, we get the sense that our feelings won't be understood or validated. I'm now a therapist myself and have worked extensively with adoptive families. In my work I strive to help this generation of adoptees, adoptive families and birth parents to have a different experience than I did.

Here are ten of the ten thousand things adoptees want the world to know.

1. Adoptees want their adoptive parents to prepare emotionally and psychologically before they bring them home to become a family.



It's helpful when parents have done their own psychological work before adopting and continue to be aware of their on-going experience as it relates to adoption. It's important for adoptive parents to grieve their inability to conceive a biological child if this is why they chose to adopt. Adoption is not a substitute for having a biological child nor is it a way of "replacing" a child who dies. Adoption IS one of many ways to make a family.

Adoptive families benefit when parents continue to educate themselves on relevant issues related to adoption and access support when necessary. Many communities now have various support groups for all members of the adoption constellation. If your community doesn't, why not start one?

2. The adoptee's experience is REAL.

Adoptees want you to know their experience is real and that no one can "fix" it. It's difficult for parents to see their children struggle with the complexities of adoption. They want to make things better and alleviate suffering. Parents cannot eliminate the pain of their child's past experience. However, they can provide a safe place for their child to explore current feelings about adoption at various stages of life in order to help their child integrate the experience more fully. The adoptee wants and needs validation of their feelings, and a compassionate presence. They want to know it's always okay to talk about adoption and ask questions.

In cases when trickier questions arise, parents might consider waiting to respond rather than being caught off-guard, giving a quick, less thought-out answer that they have to go back and fix later. In a recent episode of "Modern Family," Mitchell is reading a bedtime story to his young, adopted daughter Lily about a "beautiful princess in a faraway land." They are both visibly tired and as Lily begins to nod off, she asks questions about her birth mom. "Was I in my mom's belly?" "Where's

my mom now?" Mitchell replies, "She's in a faraway land." He adds, "Because she's a princess and she's very, very busy." Lily, seemingly satisfied, drifts off to sleep. Mitchell's answer creates a fantasy for Lily and she feels compelled to dress up each Halloween as a princess in the hope she'll find her mommy. Her dads are later able to talk with her and the made-for-TV-moment is neatly wrapped up but sometimes it's wiser for parents to wait to answer questions. Parents can say to their child, "I can see your question is important to you. Let me think about it and we'll talk first thing in the morning." Offer a specific time and follow through. This allows space for parents to consider the question, talk with their partner and seek guidance from a therapist to provide a well thought out answer.

3. The adoptee needs help to make sense of their "story."

Healing occurs with the repetition of a story, especially in the case of children. When a child gets hurt they repeat the story over and over. "I fell off the swing, and cut my knee, it bled, and daddy got me..." They repeat the story to mommy, to the postman and to the cashier at Trader Joe's. This repetition allows the experience to become integrated into their system as a whole. Similarly, young adoptees want parents to be comfortable with their adoption story and repeat it to them so they can know their story and tell it with ease.

Adoption language can be tricky. Avoid words like "chosen" and "special," as they are loaded. The phrase "She loved you so much she wanted you to have a better life" is near impossible for a child to understand. Instead, use language like, "Adoption was a decision the adults made." "We love you and we are a family." Emphasize that your child had nothing to do with the decision and more importantly, did nothing to create the situation. Adoptees need help with specific language and

"The loss for the adoptee is unlike other losses we have come to expect in a lifetime, such as death and divorce. Adoption is more pervasive, less socially recognized, and more profound."

~ Dr. David M. Brodzinsky and Dr. Marshall D. Schechter in *Being Adopted: The Lifelong Search for Self*

"tools" to use when they are asked questions by friends and classmates to eliminate potential shame and embarrassment. I suggest parents and children role-play possible scenarios to find answers that fit. For example:

Q: "So, who is your real mom?"

A: "My mom is at home taking care of my baby brother. I also have a birth mom."

"That's my private business," is always acceptable if the adoptee chooses.

4. Many adoptees struggle with issues of self-worth, shame, control and identity.

Often, adoptees acclimate in one of two ways. Some might test limits, trying to discover if they are going to be abandoned again. Others acquiesce to situations, sometimes to the point of withdrawal. Hoping if they go along, they will keep their place in the adoptive family. The adoptee is forced to develop a "false self."

Many adoptive parents I've worked with describe their children as defiant and uncooperative, angry, testing out and manipulative. I encourage them to become curious about the behavior, rather than judging or naming it. As we utilize the lens of adoption, we can see the underlying experience that's driving the child's behavior and then tend to the raw feelings of fear, grief, despair and anger. Remember, the behaviors are coping mechanisms and not personality traits. Adoptees need parents to be curious and act as compassionate detectives to discover what's going on or seek professional help if it seems too difficult to do it on their own. Because an adoptee's early experience was that of relinquishment, their brain is wired early on to expect more of the same. Sometimes older adoptees unknowingly set themselves up to re-create abandonments, thus fulfilling the sense of shame and unworthiness. Not having access to the original birth certificate adds to the adoptee's sense of shame. Only eight states in the U.S. allow adult adoptees access to their original birth certificates. Adoptees in other states have modified and falsified documents. Where there is secrecy, there is inevitable shame.

5. Adoptees are in reunion whether they are formally searching or not.

I recently presented at an adoption conference and had the members attending my session participate in a quick exercise before they took their seats. I asked them to walk around the room and find the person they thought they most closely looked like. After a few minutes and some nervous laughter, I had them take their seats and we talked about what that experience was like. I explained that this is what adoptees often do. They walk through the world looking for their lost "twin" or for someone they resemble. The author Betty Jean Lifton calls this living in the "Ghost Kingdom." It's the place where adoptees can go and "hang out" with their birth relatives and imagine life if they hadn't been adopted.

Years ago, I worked with a 12-year-old girl who was adopted at birth. Julia's parents described her as "angry, oppositional, and living in her own world." They explained hers was an open adoption and they knew her birth mom. They told me they answered Julia's questions related to adoption when asked but added they rarely brought the subject up. They didn't think she was interested.

I quickly discovered Julia was very interested in who she was and where she came from. She was indeed living in her own world -- the Ghost Kingdom! Julia explained she likely shared her hair and eye color with her birth mom. "She must like to dance because I do," Julia said.

She planned to live with her birth mom for one year when she turned 18. Julia "knew" she had six brothers and "hopefully a little sister." Julia had much to tell and I suspected part of her anger was that no one else seemed interested in her internal world. Kids Julia's age aren't going to initiate a conversation about adoption unless they are 100% sure it's safe to do so. They want their parents to start these dialogues.

6. The adoptee's desire to search is not a rejection of the adoptive parents.

Part of knowing who you are is knowing where you came from. Search is about the adoptee's history

and histories have a beginning. For adoptees, their beginning started before they joined their adoptive family.

Many adoptees deny their desire to search thinking that they are going to hurt their adoptive parents' feelings. This is a common theme, even among adoptees who have their adoptive parents' support. Adoptees want and need assurance and more assurance that parents can "handle" the desire to know where they came from. Adoptees might even want their parents to collaborate and assist in the search.

Because they fear hurting the adoptive parents, many adoptees wait until one or both parents are dead to search. They embark on a search only to discover that their birth parent is also dead. The adoptee then suffers a second loss of the parent he or she never knew.

7. Adoptees want to belong. They want to connect and feel connected.

Like everyone else, adoptees strive to find connection and acceptance. Although this idea of affiliation is sometimes inherent with those we are biologically related to, adoptees can find connection through support groups, interaction with other adoptees or identification with their birth country. Adopted children can be encouraged to develop interests and hobbies in line with their adoptive families. Interests and hobbies that are diverse should also be fully embraced, encouraged and supported.



Sad child portrait by George Hodan

8. Adoption is hard.

When an infant or child is separated from his or her birthmother, it is undeniably a traumatic event. All of the once-familiar sights, sounds and sensations are gone, and the infant is placed in a dangerous situation -- dangerous that is, perceived by the infant. The only part of the brain that is fully developed at birth is the brain stem that regulates the sympathetic nervous system, that is, the fight, flight or freeze response. The parasympathetic ability to self-soothe isn't available and baby needs his or her familiar mom to act as the soothing agent to help with self-regulation but she's not there. Events that happen age 0-3 are encoded as implicit memories and become embodied because they place before language develops. Adoptive parents can be sensitive to this and later help put explicit language to the felt experience for their child.

Sometimes birthdays and Mother's Day are difficult for adoptees and they might not even know why. Birthdays are often the day adoptees were relinquished and again, that memory of separation is an implicit one, just a feeling. I've worked with parents who become frustrated after planning a big celebration and their child suddenly becomes sad and no longer wants to participate. Parents can empathically respond to a child who is struggling by saying, "I wonder if part of you remembers this is also the day your birthmother made the difficult decision to have someone else raise you." Mother's Day can be hard because as an adoptee is celebrating with his or her adoptive mom, no one is acknowledging or talking about the "other mother," that is, the first mother. Parents can "say" what is not being said by celebrating and acknowledging their child's birth mom.

9. We want adoptive parents to be our advocates.

According to the Adoption Institute, there are more than 1.5 million adopted children in the United States*. The Center for Adoption Support and Education states that 60% of Americans have contact with adoption in some way.

The school environment can be a great support for adopted children and their families if teachers and administrators are comfortable and informed about

the subject, language and issues related to adoption. Trainings need to be implemented in schools to inform and educate about adoption and foster care in the same way educators are trained and informed to the sensitive issues related to race, sexuality, gender and religion. Parents can ask if programs like this are taking place in their schools.

I have a friend who adopted her sons Andrew and Jake when they were infants. The brothers are not biologically related and are different races. Andrew is African-American and Jake is Caucasian. In September, they found themselves in the same Biology class. On the first day of school, the students went around the room introducing themselves. Andrew introduced himself as Jake's brother. The teacher glanced at the only other black student in the class and told Andrew to "quit messing around." Andrew shyly explained they were adopted. The teacher still thought the boys were trying to "punk him." It wasn't until several minutes later the teacher stopped pressing the issue but not before both boys were quite embarrassed. Had proper trainings been implemented, this would not have happened.

10. Adoption is a lifelong process.

Separations, relationships and transitions may be difficult hurdles throughout the lifespan for those whose earliest experience was separation from their birthmother. Attuned parents can help their children and adolescents navigate these events and ideally these experiences will be integrated along the way. In time, adoptees can eventually acquire what Dan Siegel calls "Mindsight" or "the kind of focused attention that allows us to see the internal workings of our minds and examine the processes by which they think feel and behave..." As adoptees understand the details of their story, make sense of their feelings and triggers as they relate to adoption, they can cultivate resilience and learn to respond rather than react -- a skill that offers more freedom

of choice in day to day actions and provides an overall sense of well-being.

Used with permission. Originally posted 01/11/2013 Huffington Post online. Thanks to FMNFS member Rob Ganton for recommending this article.

Source information:

#3 - The Emergence of Story Telling During the First Three Years, By Susan Engel, Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont, Edited from the Zero to Three Journal, December 1996/January 1997. <http://main.zerotothree.org>

#8 - www.adoptioninstitute.org

#9 - Understanding the Effects of Maltreatment on Brain Development, Author(s): Child Welfare Information Gateway, Year Published: 2009 (online) <https://www.childwelfare.gov>



About Lesli Johnson

Lesli Johnson lives in Los Angeles. She is a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist specializing in adoption related issues. Her practice includes adults, adolescents, couples and families. Lesli is dedicated to helping her clients connect the dots of their story in order to achieve understanding, clarity, emotional resilience and a general sense of well-being. She utilizes attachment theory, interpersonal neurobiology, mind-body connection and mindfulness practices in her work with her clients. Visit her website for more information. www.yourmindfulbrain.com.

Any intelligent fool can make things bigger and more complex... It takes a touch of genius - and a lot of courage to move in the opposite direction. ~ E. F. Schumacher

Blog responses to Lesli's article:

Laura G. says:

Thank you for articulating the experience of being an adopted person. I tried explaining it to a friend when I was in college and all I could come up with was "It's like you're always looking for your keys." Not to minimize the experience for myself, but you need your keys to get where you're going...I felt like I was always missing a piece of myself that I needed to get to the next place in my life. I still do, from time to time, but as an adult I understand why my 16 year old birth mother had to give me up for adoption.

I have never met my birth parents, but I would like to. I'd love to know if I have half-siblings. Or if cancer runs in the family. Or if the way I feel when I hear a piece of music that is so beautiful I have to catch my breath is something we have in common. A reunion may never happen, but I like to think they have the same thoughts about me once or twice a year, too.

When I gave birth to my son a month ago, I finally met my first blood relative. And it was totally worth the wait.

Mike Milton says:

Adoption is not just about stories and history. It is also about how we process the world. I lived my life with people who were simply not 'wired' the way I was. We had different emotional and intellectual ways of responding.

In an ancestral family, there is always someone who can help one feel their way forward and by being

similar, validate and grow your way of thinking and feeling. I don't think anyone can really understand the complete re-evaluation of one's self, life and experiences that happens in a reunion unless they have undergone one.

Reunion made me feel that my earlier life was like a play in which I was a character that had ended. I was at a complete loss as to what to think or do until, as it progressed, my life became re-evaluated as my own and understood in a genuine way rather than as an ill-fitting construction of others.

Jennifer from Anywhere says:

I think it is important to point out that not all families are comfortable with an open adoption, for reasons that are entirely valid.

If my son wants to find his birth mother, I will help him. But I don't want him to make that decision as a child. It is important to remember that not all reunions have happy endings. There may also be extenuating circumstances that are not appropriate to share with a child.

Because I love my son, I will support any decision he makes. But, although he will never know, it will be painful for me to have him search for his "real" mom. That doesn't make me a bad person.

We forget sometimes adoptive parents have feelings too. Society frowns on that, however, because we are supposed to be noble.

My greatest fear is that my son will someday look at me and think, that's not my real mom.

Unlike the grief felt from a death, the loss from adoption is often said to be a complicated grief or a continuous grief. As life for both parties carries on through the years, the separation continues to add more missed opportunities or milestones that are normally shared with one's children. To complicate matters further, some mothers have had to bury their feelings and have never had the opportunity to express them.

~ Claudia Corrigan D'Arcy, *Musings of the Lame (blog)* <http://www.adoptionbirthmothers.com>

FMNFS FALL WORKSHOP:

“ WHAT YOUR HEART COST ”

Presented by Rich Uhrlaub M.Ed.

November 1st – 2nd, 2014

We hope that you will join us for our 9th Annual Forget Me Not Family Society Fall Workshop. Once again the workshop will be held at the Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre located at 7311 Westminster Hwy, Richmond, B.C. This is a great location for those of you flying in, or coming in by ferry and using public transit. For those who attended last year you will remember the great food and the wonderful meeting room with its floor to ceiling windows and the rooftop deck that allowed for some nice fresh air.

*Please note we now have a Paypal account for those who wish to pay by credit card. You can send your payments to adoptioncircles@yahoo.ca

Rich Uhrlaub will be presenting two intriguing sessions on Saturday, Nov 1:

- Workshop #1 - “Before You Dismantle the Time Bomb, Should You Bind and Gag the Victim?”
- Workshop #2 - “I’ve Found the Truth, So Where’s the Freedom?”

A support group/healing circle will be held on Sunday Nov 2.

In our time together we will:

- Recognize and honour the personal costs associated with relinquishment and adoption
- Explore ways to find our empowered voices in the midst of past grief, loss and injustice
- Learn about how our memories and/or fantasies about the past can impact healing
- Create new, liberating perspectives and strategies for accepting our truth and living in the present

Who can benefit:

- All members of the Adoption Circle: adoptees, birth families, adoptive families, supportive family/friends, and professionals

“I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship.” ~ Louisa May Alcott

“Learning is the beginning of health. Learning is the beginning of spirituality. Searching and learning is where the miracle process all begins.” ~ Jim Rohn

“ WHAT YOUR HEART COST ”
Presented by Rich Uhrlaub M.Ed.
November 1st – 2nd, 2014

Workshop Location:

Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre
7311 Westminster Hwy, Richmond, BC V6X 1A3
Tel: 604.278.5555 Fax: 604.278.0255 Website: www.executivehotels.net

Travelling there:

By Air: Complimentary Airport Shuttle to and from the Vancouver International Airport for all guests.
Shuttle runs every 30 minutes from the hotel and on the hour every 15 to 45 minutes from the airport, between approx. 6 am to 11 pm

By Public Transit: www.translink.ca for routes & times of buses and Canada Line (Skytrain).

By Car: The parking fee of \$16.75 per night for overnight hotel guests has been waived and a special rate of \$7.00 has been negotiated for non-resident participants. All day maximum (8am - 8pm)
Parking pass* to be picked up and paid for at the reception desk.

Where to Stay:

Executive Airport Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre –
SPECIAL RATE* for our workshop attendees: \$109 + taxes for a single or double room per night
Extra person: \$20.00 per person per night
This special guest room rate is available 3 days prior to and 3 days after the event date.
Reservations must be made no later than Sept. 27th, 2014 to qualify.

Check-in time is 4:00 pm check-out time is 12:00 noon.

Reservations: 1.604.278.5555
Toll Free: 1.800.663.2878
Email: dos.richmond@executivehotels.net

***WHEN MAKING YOUR RESERVATIONS MENTION THAT YOU WILL BE ATTENDING THE FORGET ME NOT FAMILY SOCIETY'S WORKSHOP TO QUALIFY FOR GROUP RATES AND PARKING PASS.**

Registration Information

- Members enjoy the benefits of reduced workshop fees! JOIN NOW! PAY LESS!
- Early Bird Deadline is September 14th, 2014 at 12:00 midnight for discounted rate.
- Mail the completed registration form (to be received no later than October 16th, 2014) with cheque or money order, payable to FORGET ME NOT FAMILY SOCIETY, to: Marnie Tetz, President, 17302 – 1A Avenue, Surrey, BC V3S 9P9
- After October 16th, email marnietetz@shaw.ca to make arrangements regarding registration.
- Walk-in registrations Saturday: Call Marnie at 604-862-4434 to ensure space is available.
- Since the hotel requires final numbers for the Saturday lunch confirmed by, October 27th, 2014, LUNCH IS NOT INCLUDED FOR LATE OR WALK-IN REGISTRATIONS.
- Refund requests must be received in writing prior to 12:00 midnight October 11th, 2014. No refunds will be given after this date. All refunds are subject to a \$50 administration fee.



Forget Me Not Family Society (Adoption Circles)

Mailing Address: #102 – 1860 Southmere Crescent East, Surrey, BC V4A 6Y7

Phone: 604-828-9577

Website: www.adoptioncircles.net

Registration For “ WHAT YOUR HEART COST ”

Presented by RICH UHRLAUB Nov 1-2, 2014

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province/State _____

Postal/Zip Code _____ Phone # _____

Email _____ (Required for confirmation)

Check all that apply:

☐ Birth / Natural Parent

☐ Adopted Adult

☐ Adoptive Parent

☐ Foster Care

☐ Professional

☐ Other _____

	Member	Non Member
Early Registration (September 14th, 2014 midnight):*	\$140.00	\$175.00
Registration after September 14th, 2014:	\$160.00	\$195.00
Saturday Only:	<u>\$130.00</u>	<u>\$165.00</u>
WORKSHOP TOTAL:	_____	_____
Optional: Annual Membership in FMNFS:** (Individual \$30 / Couple \$50 / Pro. \$65)	_____	_____
TOTAL:	_____	_____

** Early discount is available on full weekend package only. The weekend registration includes Saturday workshop with Continental Breakfast and Lunch; Saturday evening support group; and Sunday morning support group with Continental Breakfast. (Lunch will not be included for late or walk-in registrations.)*

*** Membership takes effect as of date of email confirmation.*

Send this registration form (to be received no later than October 16th, 2014) with cheque or money order, payable to FORGET ME NOT FAMILY SOCIETY, to:

Marnie Tetz, President

17302 – 1A Avenue

Surrey, BC V3S 9P9

OR send Paypal payments to adoptioncircles@yahoo.ca and email your registration form.

Interview with Rich Uhrlaub

Rich Uhrlaub, M.Ed. was born, adopted and raised in Denver, CO. He located his birth family in 1995. Rich has served on the board of Adoptees in Search - Colorado's Triad Connection for over 18 years. He serves on the American Adoption Congress Legislative Committee and was thrilled to witness Governor Hickenlooper's signature of SB 14-051 and HB 14-1042 on May 22, 2014 to open adoption records in Colorado. He is a contributing author to *Finding Our Place: 100 Memorable Adoptees, Fostered Persons and Orphanage Alumni* by Nikki McCaslin, and *Adoption and Mothering* by Frances Latchford, ed.



Rich's responses to our questions:

1. How did you become involved in adoption reform?

Three events fueled the fire. First, a 1989 Colorado law that created the nation's second Confidential Intermediary program was stalled by Denver Juvenile Court Presiding Judge Dana Wakefield, who was later censured by the Colorado State Supreme Court for "impermissible exercise of judicial authority." Then, in 1995, I first testified against the Uniform Adoption Act, which would have sealed adoption records nationwide for 99 years. Then, after her election in 1998, adoptee and State Representative Fran Coleman carried HB 1188 to grant adult adoptees access to records.

2. B.C. and Colorado are among the few provinces and states that have been successful in unsealing adoption files. For the information of our readers in other jurisdictions, what are the key steps to getting legislation to unseal adoption files?

- Research your state or province's legislative history. Do your homework regarding current laws.
- Find out who the key players in the adoption community are, and initiate a respectful conversation.

- Leverage the skills and contacts of members of your group who are politically active, influential, and/or attorneys.
- Be clear on your philosophy. Align your political strategy with your desired goal (i.e., court rulings and ballot initiatives bring "no compromise" results. The same is not always true of legislation.
- Build coalitions.
- Choose the right bill sponsor: someone (preferably a leader from the majority party, or committee chair) who is more than just sympathetic. They must have a grasp of the issues and a fire in the belly for the cause. This is not usually a piece of legislation for the novice or faint of heart.
- Know what you're willing to compromise on, and build some things into your bill that you're willing to give up as bargaining chips.
- Find out who assigns bills to committees, and have your lobbyist or legislative liaison be sure your bill gets assigned to a "friendly" committee.
- Craft your testimony so that all the essential points are made concisely by the fewest number of articulate people representing the broadest array of interested parties possible.
- Never be rude. Never misrepresent or manipulate data and facts. A little strategic

behind the scenes "sword rattling" toward opponents up front can sometimes create healthy respect for your position. Being respectful of various viewpoints does not necessarily mean being collaborative, and it should never mean giving up control of your bill. Have an agreed advance plan with your bill sponsor about what to do if things "go south."

- Know the difference between a fallback position you can live with, and when it's time to kill the bill. Be right, be nice, and be fearless.

3. Reunion is one of the most complicated aspects of adoption recovery and healing. Sadly, many reunions end after what appeared to be a long (15-20 years) and happy reunion process, causing the pain to start all over again. Why does this happen? Do you have any advice for those of us who are living this experience?

I'm not sure that there is one universal answer as to why even seemingly successful reunions go on hiatus or end. Here are some possible ideas, based on what I've seen through the years:

- Life circumstances change. A death, divorce, child leaving home, job loss or other major life event consumes a tremendous amount of energy and often causes the grieving person to step back and re-evaluate everything in their life.
- Even some of the best reunions involve a considerable amount of tension, ambiguity, communication challenges and unresolved emotions. For some, there may come a point where the rewards no longer offset the costs of staying in ongoing communication. Much as we may hope for the "running across the meadow" feeling, the reality is that some people find dramatic socioeconomic differences, or, for whatever reason, simply don't like each other.
- If we look at the process of reunion relationships as sharing some parallels with infant and child development, part of the important work an adoptee must do is to go back and try to address various developmental stages that they may have left incomplete along the way. Our initial drive to bond may eventually evolve into the "terrible twos", the need to differentiate ourselves from our parents,

and later a form of emotional adolescence in which we need to create conflict, if necessary, in order to assert our independence and "be our own person." At the same time a possible temptation for a birth/first parent, already terrified of losing their child again, is to resist these efforts to differentiate and assert their independence because it feels like losing their baby again. However, there comes a point where the tighter a birth/first clings to their adult "baby," the more it may feel like smothering and clinging to the adoptee, eventually driving them away.

- In some cases, the relationship has simply provided both parent and child with what they need in terms of closure, and both are able and ready to move on.
- Sometimes another person (spouse/partner, sibling, child, adoptive parent/grandparent) in the family constellation feels threatened or jealous, and forces a choice.

4. Why did you choose these titles for your workshop sessions?

- ***Before You Dismantle the Time Bomb, Should You Bind and Gag the Victim?***
- ***I've Found the Truth, So Where's the Freedom?***

I like the "Time Bomb" title because it encompasses so many complex factors that touch the entire adoption constellation, and recognizes the delicate and serious issues that we must navigate. We all face the question: Will this process be a life-saving, freeing experience, or will it end in a huge "kaboom"? This workshop is designed to help raise awareness of and explore the intricacies we encounter.

The truth/freedom title comes from the oft-quoted phrase "The truth will set you free." This creates what, in many cases, may prove to be a false set of expectations. As a result, too many people experience frustration, disillusionment, and remain "stuck in my adoption stuff" even after a reunion. The goal of this workshop is to help us understand ourselves, our memories and our expectations and come to terms with "what is."

Complex City... the World of Adoption

By Joe Soll 조 살, LCSW, DAPA
Psychotherapist & Author

Author of "*Adoption Healing... a path to recovery*"
(1 for moms, 1 for adoptees, 2 for both),
Co-author of "*Evil Exchange*" and "*Fatal Flight*"

How complicated can one's adoption experience be? I've been asked, "How is it that all that adoptees and mothers of adoption loss are not schizophrenic?"

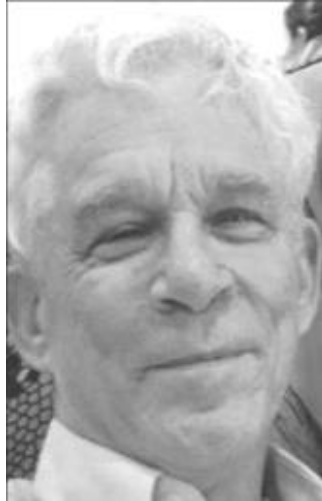
Many years ago, a psychiatrist asked me to consult with her about one of her patients who was an adoptee. I spent about an hour explaining the wounds of separation of mother and child, the trauma, Post Traumatic Stress and the profound effects on one's later life. She had tears in her eyes when she asked me, "How is it that you are all *not* schizophrenics?"

At that time, I had no answer as I had never thought about it. So, let's think about it now.

We adoptees are told we have another mother - and then we are told to forget about her. Our Mothers give birth to a baby, who is taken away and then they are told to forget about her. Is it not crazy to ask someone to do this? To pretend that something that happened did *not* happen?

Is it not crazy to be asked to create a false reality? Does it make your head spin? Is it enough to make you want to pull the hair out of your head? Is it not like being told to think up is down and down is up?

Is all of this not crazy? Is it not insane? Is not all of this just plain nuts?



We have the enormous pain of our losses which we are not allowed to deal with, which we are supposed to bury. And to survive, we *must* bury it. So, why are we not crazy? Why did we not become schizophrenic?

To me there is only one answer. Some of us have such a strong core self that we stayed sane in spite of the demands to forget reality.

Some of us have such a strong core self that we stayed sane in spite of the pain, in spite of the total insanity of the situation.

Some of us have such a strong core self that we stayed sane in spite of the demand for us to make believe that what happened to us did not happen.

We were born with that core strength. One cannot develop it. One has it or one does not. We may not be aware of or able to find and use that strength until later in life but once we find it, I believe we are invincible. I believe that those of us who find that we *have* that strength can survive anything.

We are facing our demons and only the super strong do that. Only the super strong stay sane in the face of insanity.

Think about what you have survived. Think about the strength it takes to face your demons. Really think about it.

Is there *really* anything you can't survive?

The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth

By Mary Ann Dubeski

In response to New Brunswick's call for public input on the proposed
Opening of Sealed Adoption Records

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am an adoptee and I am writing to let you know that in my experience, it is very important that full disclosure of birth certificate and adoption records be given to adoptees when they reach adulthood. This should not be a "secret" from the one person this information belongs to.

In my situation, my parents withheld any knowledge of my adoption from me and I did not find out until I was 50 years old that I was adopted. Luckily, I was able to get my birth certificate and find out my biological parents' names because of the open records policy of the country I was born in.

Finding out their names and nationalities was tremendously comforting and healing. My identity and sense of "belonging" in this world felt more solid after finding out my mother's name on my birth certificate. (I did not have to wait long and it cost me \$25 USD)

For me, it is too late to have any reunion with my bio-parents as they have passed on, but at least I found out the truth about where I came from. I wish I'd known at 19 years old because I might have trusted my instincts more and gone into the arts instead of trying to become a scientist/engineer (the career of the family that adopted me).

I have, since finding out I was adopted, spoken to a number of biological mothers, and each and every one admitted wondering what happened to the child they lost to adoption years ago. They were never able to "forget and move on."

It seems that closed adoption records protect only the interests of those adoptive families who are not very understanding or compassionate about the needs of people to know their own truth. (I do know that there are many more adoptive families who support their children in knowing their truth.)

It is actually a human right to know who your parents are and where you came from.

I am in favour of letting adoptees get their original birth certificate and adoption records with no restrictions, no intermediaries, just access to "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." I think the age of 18 is a good time to allow access.

I hope you will consider opening the records for adoptees. We really need it.

Mary Ann Dubeski

Coldstream, BC



Feedback

I love the Forget Me Not Family Society and all the work you guys do. You have helped me so much find resources to help my adoption healing! You guys are awesome! 😊

Mary Ann Dubeski

Canadian Council of Natural Mothers

Letter on Opening Sealed Adoption Records in NB

The Honourable David Alward
Premier of New Brunswick
P. O. Box 6000
Fredericton, NB, E3B 5H1

February 21, 2013

Dear Premier Alward:

The Canadian Council of Natural Mothers (CCNM) has been instrumental in clarifying the real, lived experiences of natural mothers for legislators across Canada. As a founder and member of The Coalition for Open Adoption Records (COAR) Ontario, we worked closely with the Government of Ontario helping it to craft legislation to unseal adoption records, first in 2005, through the Constitutional challenge as interveners, then later when the final legislation was drafted, passed in the legislature in 2007, and implemented on June 1, 2009.

The CCNM in Alberta consulted in the development of Alberta's legislation that opened adoption records in that province. Our members in provinces and territories across Canada have been working steadily, assisting them in the opening of adoption records in a manner that suits their local laws, cultures and beliefs. It is with the greatest confidence and pleasure that we endorse the initiative of *COARnb that proposes to open sealed adoption records to adopted adults and their original parents in New Brunswick.

*Coalition for Open Adoption Records of New Brunswick - website at COARnb.org

The main obstacle to opening sealed adoption records everywhere is the mistaken belief that "birth mothers were promised confidentiality". The CCNM has hosted thousands of mothers from all provinces. We assert that mothers were never promised confidentiality. Rather, we surrendered our parental rights, and we understood that confidentiality was a condition of surrender. We did not ask for it—it was applied to our circumstances.

We thank you so much for taking on this challenging initiative. It is our hope that your government will succeed in this 21st Century initiative to ensure a better province and country in the spirit of openness and truth. Please contact us without hesitation if we can help in any way.

Sincerely,

Karen Lynn
President, Canadian Council of Natural Mothers

The CCNM was founded in 2000, the first united voice of Canadian mothers who have lost their children to adoption.

Mail: 107-232 Heath St West,

Toronto, ON, M5P 1N8

Phone 416-669-1980

Online at www.ccnm-mothers.ca

Email: CCNM@rogers.com

Welcome those big, sticky, complicated problems. In them are your most powerful opportunities. ~
Ralph Marston

People who work together will win, whether it be against complex football defenses, or the problems
of modern society. ~ Vince Lombardi

Adult Adoptive Sibling Research Study: Seeking Participants

I am not an adopted person, but my three siblings are (adopted 1966, 69 and 71), and this has led me to where I am today.

I am currently doing an Institutional Review Board approved (IRB 14.061.01) research project at Boston College with Dr. Ruth McRoy on adult adoptive sibling relationships. I am also working with her to interview birth mothers as part of a 30 year longitudinal study on adoptive families. I have heard from many people in response to my

advertisement, but most of them come from trans-racial families whereas the pilot study that I am conducting is in-race. In fact, little research has been conducted on blended (bio/adopted) sibling groups, and the research that has been done has been primarily on trans-racial or internationally adopted sibling groups. So, I believe I can make a unique contribution if I am able to find in-race adoptive siblings willing to share their experiences.

All the best to you! Claire Madden

Looking to Interview Adult Adoptive Siblings

I am a student at the Boston College Graduate School of Social Work conducting a study to better understand how the relationship between adopted and birth (non-adopted) siblings growing up in the same adoptive home evolves from childhood through adulthood.

Specifically, I am seeking families that meet the following criteria:

Family unit: an in-racial, intact, two parent family with parents who were heterosexual and remained married while raising their children. The family includes at least one birth child and one adopted child.

Sibling pair: The sibling pairs in your family meet the following criteria: adult birth (non-adopted)/adopted sibling pairs in which the adoptee came into the adoptive family under 2 years of age and the birth child was no more than 5 years at the time

the adoption occurred. Ideally, the siblings would now be between 20 and 40 years of age and will no longer be living with their parents.

I am interested in the possibility of interviewing both the adopted and non-adopted siblings and their parents. Interviews will be either face to face or over the phone and will probably take between one and two hours.

A 20 dollar Target gift card will be provided to each participant at the end of the interview as a recognition of the time and energy you spent volunteering for this study. If you are interested or know any adult sibling pairs of adopted and not-adopted persons, please contact me for more information about the study. Thank you in advance for your support and interest.

Claire Madden

Email: maddenc@bc.edu

Tel. (617) 997-5906

"Sibling relationships are complicated. All family relationships are. Look at Hamlet." ~ Maurice Saatchi"

Comparison is a death knell to sibling harmony." ~ Elizabeth Fishel

In the News

- **NEW JERSEY** – May 27, 2014 New Jersey is celebrating the conclusion of a thirty-four year campaign to allow adopted persons access to their original birth certificates. Adoptees in New Jersey will be able to obtain birth records beginning in 2017 under a bill signed into law May 27 by Gov. Christie. Birth parents will be able to choose their preferred means of contact — directly, through a confidential intermediary or no contact at all.
- **COLORADO:** May 22, 2014 Governor John Hickenlooper signed bills SB 51 AND HB 1042 to open adoption records in Colorado! Congratulations to Richard Uhrlaub, Kathy Hatt Aderhold and the team that spearheaded this action.



Photo by Paula Bard

Two more bills we like also received unanimous approval by the Colorado House and Senate this session:

HB 14-1372 makes it a Class 6 felony for an unauthorized party to advertise a child for adoption through a "public medium." Signed by governor 5/22/14.

SB 14-062 allows reinstatement of parental rights in certain circumstances if a minor child over age twelve has not been adopted. Signed by governor 3/27/14.

- **ANN FESSLER Wins Adoptee Trailblazer Award**

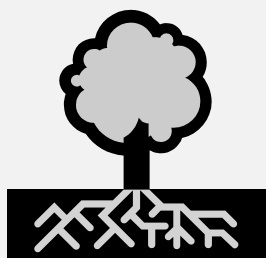
Photography Professor Ann Fessler has won a 2014 Adoptee Trailblazer Award from the Adoption Initiative for her work about unwed mothers who were forced to surrender their babies. Fessler is the author of *The Girls Who Went Away* (Penguin 2006) and the films *Cliff & Hazel* (1999), a 9 minute experimental short called *Along the Pale Blue River* (2001) and *A Girl Like Her* (2012). The Adoptee Trailblazer award is to honor an adult adoptee whose work inspires and is foundational for future adoptee professionals in adoption and foster care work. Congratulations Ann!

A clip of her film is at: agirllikeher.com/view-trailer/

The Forget Me Not Family Society will be having Ann as our presenter at the Fall Workshop in 2015.



ANNOUNCEMENT



FMNFS Display & Information Booth

at the Finding Your Roots Seminar

Saturday Oct 18, 2014

Location: Family History Centre,

6270 – 126th St, Surrey BC

Seminar cost: FREE

Drop-ins are okay, but online pre-registration ensures enough printed materials and correct seating for classes. Attendees may pre-order bag lunch \$5 with online registration.

<http://www.findingyourroots.ca>

“Tell the negative committee that meets inside your head to sit down and shut up.”~ Ann Bradford.

“70% of all the conversations you have are with yourself. Are you taking control of your thoughts?”

~ Anonymous

LEAN ON ME

Telephone/E-mail Support List



Reunited Adoptees:

Cecelia Reekie (cecelia_r@telus.net) (604) 857-2125
Betty Anderson (bettboop@telus.net) (604) 531-4074
Dan Carson (ariete_132@hotmail.com) (604) 557-0230

Marnie Tetz (marnietetz@shaw.ca) (604) 535-4434

Kimberley-Ann Jandl – Abbotsford, BC (604) 852-9663
(kajandl@yahoo.ca)

Judy Lanyon- Courtenay, BC (250) 338-2429
(juriah@shaw.ca)

Leanne Neighbour – Kamloops, BC (250) 374-0990
(neighbourhoodz@shaw.ca)

Lynn Carrier- Edmonton, AB (780) 455-8528
(carrierlynn@hotmail.com)

Reunited with Siblings:

Michael Hodgson (tiggerboots@shaw.ca) (778) 395-0206

Reunited Birth Parents:

Nancy Kato (katosan@telus.net) (604) 777-2920
Susan Wiesendahl (susanwiesendahl@yahoo.ca) (604) 275-3243

Alice McKinnon – Chilliwack, BC (604) 858-9970
(chkekray@shaw.ca)

John Post - Castlegar, BC (250) 365-5991
Diane Herbert – Abbotsford, BC (604) 870-1821

(dalendi@shaw.ca)

Bernadette Rymer - Ashcroft, BC (250) 453-2360
(bjrymer@telus.net)

Kathy Chambers (chattycats@telus.net) (604) 541-6267

Searching Step-Adoptee:

Edith Archibald (eearchibald@shaw.ca) (604) 583-7792

Interested Professionals:

Judy Archer, MSW, RSW, (250) 758-1275
Counselor and Consultant in Adoption
(judyarcher@shaw.ca)

Lee Crawford, M.Ed. R.C.C. (604) 875-9957
(leecrawford@shaw.ca)

John Thomas - Quesnel, BC (250) 992-5688

Christine M. Gatzke, M.Ed.,CPAC/ARC
Psychotherapist (306) 352-4069
(christine.lachaine@clc-apathtohealing.ca)

J. Amy Newman, Newman Research Services

Genealogist/People Finder, Burnaby, BC
(info@nrsfind.com) 1-877-521-3463 (604) 521-3463

Genetic Attraction:

Anne Tasko, M.A. R.C.C. (250) 721-5995
(anntasko@shaw.ca)

This is a peer support service.

Please contact our office if you wish to be included in the
LEAN ON ME Support List.

Forget Me Not Family Society

Support Groups



The FMNFS holds three support groups a month, for adoptees, birth/natural/first parents, adoptive parents and those in a supportive role:

Cloverdale, B.C. meets the first Thursday of each month.
year-round from 6:30 - 8:30 pm.

Cloverdale Public Library 2nd floor

5642-176 A Street, Cloverdale, B.C.

Contact Marnie Tetz (marnietetz@shaw.ca) or 604-535-4434.

New Westminster, B.C. meets the second Tuesday of each month
year-round from 7 - 9 pm. New Westminster Public Library 2nd
floor, 716 - 6th Ave, New Westminster, B.C.

Contact Nancy Kato (katosan@telus.net) or 604-777-2920.

Kamloops, B.C. Interior Support Group meets once a month
(days and times vary). For information please contact Bernadette
Rymer at (bjrymer@telus.net) or 1-250-453-2360.

Other Support Groups

Vancouver, BC: The Adoptees Association holds a discussion
group for adopted adults the third Tuesday of each month starting
at 7 pm at the Rhizome Cafe, 317 East Broadway (near Main
Street). Please contact Catherine at (katiesue@shaw.ca) or visit
www.adopteesassociation.ca for more information.

Please note that the "Other Support Groups"
do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of FMNFS.
They are listed above for your information only.

Life is really simple, but we insist on making it
complicated. ~ Confucius

Adoption Circles is Your Newsletter ~ Your Voice!

Our next theme is “**Patience**,” chosen by Guest Editor Mary Ann Dubeski. Let us know your opinions on our topics, tell your story and news. We welcome your contributions! Editorial support is available. Send to <amynewman@telus.net> or by mail c/o the Society.

Issue	Topic	Submission Deadline	Distribution
Fall AC 71	Patience	Oct. 15, 2014	Nov. 15, 2014
Winter AC 72	TBA	Jan. 2015	Feb. 2015

What topics would YOU like to see or write about in 2015? We are inviting readers to volunteer as **Guest Editor**, when Bernadette is away. This involves researching the topic on the web, pulling together relevant information for members and readers, inviting members and professionals to contribute and receiving their contributions, pasting each contribution onto one document and sending it to Amy so she can work her editorial magic. We also appreciate receiving illustrations and photos, as long as we can get permission from the artist/photographer to use them.

This newsletter is produced by volunteers. Distribution dates are estimates.

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### Have you renewed your MEMBERSHIP?

Membership to the **Forget Me Not Family Society** includes:

- ✓ Subscription to **Adoption Circles**, a quarterly publication
- ✓ Reduction in workshop fees
- ✓ Information on books and support groups

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Province/State \_\_\_\_\_

Postal/Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Adoptee \_\_\_\_\_ Adoptive Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Sibling \_\_\_\_\_ Reunited \_\_\_\_\_

Prospective Adoptive Parent \_\_\_\_\_ Adoption Professional \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Change of Address \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Membership  
\$30.00/year  
Couples Membership \$50.00/year  
International Membership  
\$50.00/year  
Corporate Membership  
\$65.00/year

Please send cheque payable to the  
Forget Me Not Family Society  
#102-1860 Southmere Cres. E.,  
Surrey, BC V4A 6Y7