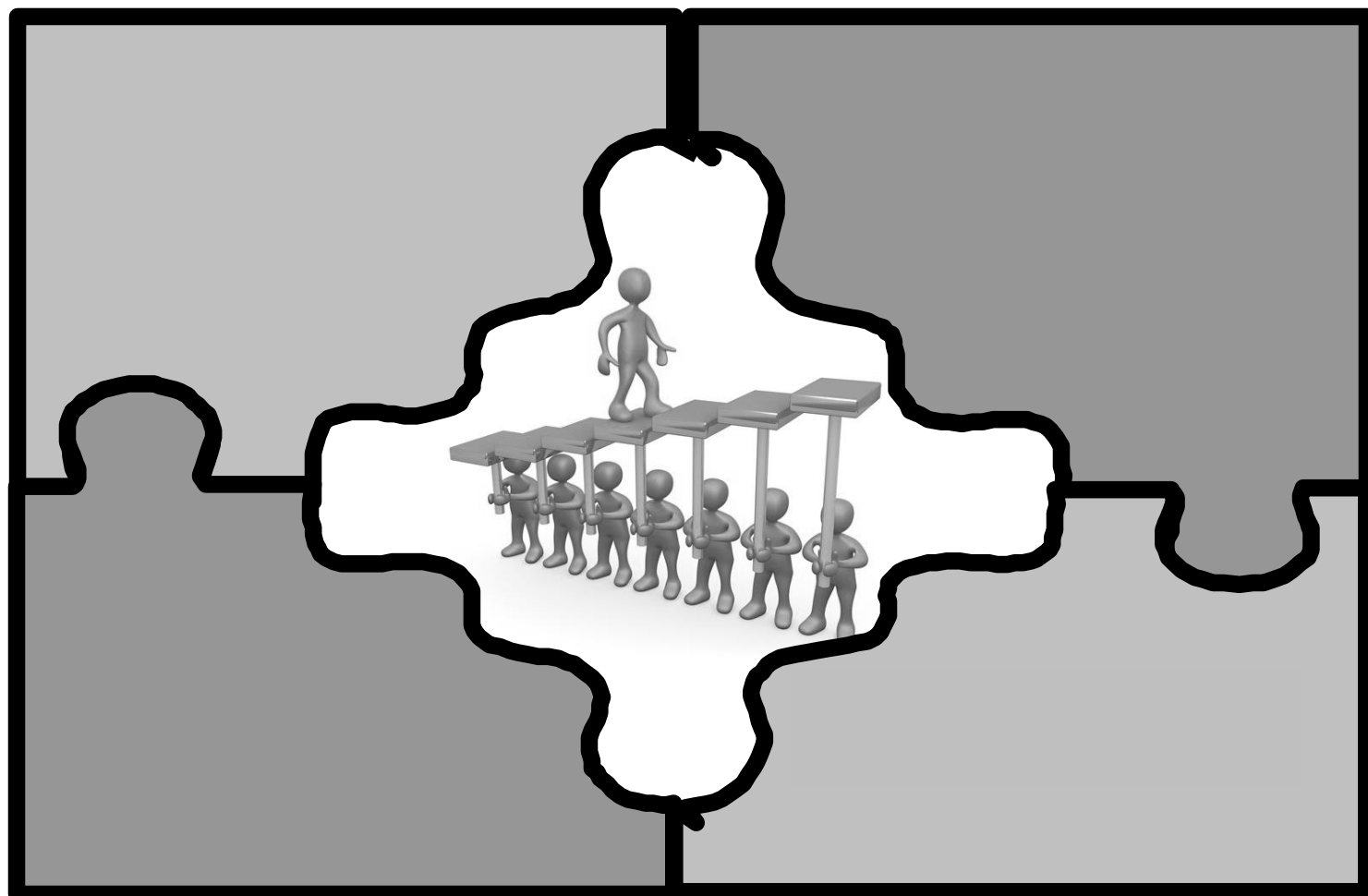


ADOPTION CIRCLES

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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 an amazing summer we have been having here on the West Coast! Record temperatures with days on end of sunshine. I love it. However, with all this warmth and record setting, the forest fires have caused a haze to blanket the area. Thankfully this weekend we have had some rain and cooler temperatures. Nothing like the smell of a fresh rainfall!



My summer has been a busy one, I moved to a beautiful spot in the Fraser Valley, close to my little granddaughter. Yes, this is a picture of us enjoying a bedtime story. I think she was more interested in tasting the book than hearing it! I have also retired and I know that soon enough I will be wondering how I ever had time to work!

Okay, now that you have your update on my life, let's get down to the nitty gritty and talk about this issue of the AC. When Support Groups was mentioned as a possible topic I thought, BANG ON! This is a topic near and dear to my heart. I well remember in 2002 when I walked into my first support group in Cloverdale. Well, back up the train a bit. I remember when my searcher, Ray Ensminger, suggested that I might need the support of the Forget Me Not Family Society. I guess I was sounding that much over the edge that he knew I needed the help of this amazing organization. He was right. I called the number he had given me and left a message. I had the most kind and caring return call from Nancy Kato. I could tell from her tone of voice that I was going to be in good hands. And I was!

I walked into the first meeting in Cloverdale and was welcomed. I belonged. I don't remember what I shared that first meeting, but I do know that I felt that I was with those who understood what I thought were my crazy mixture of feelings and thoughts. I didn't have to explain my emotionally intense roller coaster of obsessive feelings and thoughts and relentless need to connect with my new found family, as those in attendance already 'got' it. They had already walked the path that I was starting on. I was home — with my people.



What are you really feeling?
"Fine" and "Okay" are not emotions!

This journey of adoption search and reunion is like no other. Most people in the general population don't get it. Yes, they will listen a bit and think, "Oh isn't that nice" or "Why are you bothering?" They don't get it. They already know where they come from, who they look, act and sound like. What's the big deal? A lot of them don't even like the people they look, act and sound like – so they really don't get it!

As adoptees, we don't know who we look like, much less sound and act like.

Mums have lost their hearts when they lost their babies – they need to know that that precious life they weren't allowed to keep is okay.

We in the adoption circle 'get' it.

We need support to sort through our lifetime of hurt, anger and aloneness. Who better to help than the support group of peers who have already forged that path?

Thank you to Nancy Kato and those before her and those after who have helped me and so many others!

Please find that favourite spot with your favourite drop and enjoy this issue of Adoption Circles.

~ Marnie ~

Change in Format of Adoption Circles: from Paper to .pdf

Future issues of Adoption Circles will be available as a .pdf document you can read online or print at home. They will either be distributed to members via email or accessed through the Members Only section of our website: www.adoptioncircles.net

The decision to change the format was made in response to member preference expressed in our online survey. For more details see Survey Report, page 17.

The theme of our next issue (AC #75 Fall) is "Memories & Histories", inspired by the topic of Ann Fessler's upcoming workshop. We look forward to receiving your memories!

Editorial: Rymer Writes

By Bernadette Rymer

Welcome to our summer issue of Adoption Circles. When the theme Support Groups was suggested I thought it was perfect. At the risk of sounding melodramatic I say that I can't sing my praises of support groups loudly enough. However, this was not always so. Before my FMNFS support group experience I had been superficially involved in a few other groups and my response was "Nope – this is not for me!" So what happened to make me do a 180 degree turn?

I have shared my conversion story with FMNFS members quite a few times, however for those who are not aware, I share it again, briefly, because it is a perfect introduction to our theme.



Until that moment in time I had spent 38 years NOT talking about my trauma and loss and grief, not sharing my feelings with anyone – ever.

The instant I entered the meeting room Nancy Kato (past president of FMNFS) approached me and said "You must be Nickie's mother". Again and without a hint of melodrama I say that those words changed my life forever. It was the first time anyone had ever named me as mother, and therefore the first time anyone had acknowledged my daughter and I as belonging.

I remember the instant and deep feeling of belonging, and thinking: "These are my people. I have finally come home".

No need to say more here about the power and benefits of support groups. This issue is rich with stories, insights and advice on the topic from wonderful people who have not only blazed trails in adoption loss, search, reunion and support, here in BC, across Canada and in the U.S. They have also done and continue to do marvellous work in the areas of advocacy and education. To each contributor we thank you for your time, energy and wisdom. Our line-up of authors includes: Nancy Kato, past president (25 years) of FMNFS, Monica Byrne (Parent Finders of Canada) Karen Lynn (Canadian Council of Natural Mothers); Lesli Johnson, Marriage and Family Therapist, Joe Soll, author and Licensed Clinical Social Worker, and Amy Newman, vice-president of FMNFS and associate editor of our AC

This issue features a Wujue-style poem by Gail Davies, Secretary Treasurer (forever!) of FMNFS and is also packed with information about our work, advocacy and education events, survey results, announcements and our Fall Workshop.

If you are involved in our support groups, you will know what we are talking about. If you are not, well really, you don't know what you are missing!



In October of 2008, I attended my very first FMNFS workshop. My daughter had been involved in the society for a while and she asked me to come to the workshop. As I live in Ashcroft (which is a four hour drive to New Westminster) my entire thoughts on the drive were filled with sheer terror. I was so anxious I used two bathrooms between the parking lot and the meeting room. Before entering the meeting room I gathered every ounce of courage I had and tried as best I could, but rather unsuccessfully to look not terrified.

Running a Support Group

By Nancy Kato

As the past long-term President of the Forget Me Not Family Society (over 25 years), I can tell you that running a support group is not for the faint hearted. Nor is it for anyone who has not resolved their own reunion journey. In other words, if you want to be a facilitator, you need to be in a place where you no longer need to tell your story. In addition, support meetings should never be held in public places – emotions can be triggered and people need to feel safe in expressing those feelings. In all my time with the Society, I have found less than a handful of people who have the necessary skills to facilitate a group, including managing emotional stress and reunion trauma.

Having said that, there is nothing wrong with people meeting together to discuss their reunion stories and issues. However, boundaries need to be clearly established and expectations reviewed. What is important is that people feel safe. And if a group is not meeting your needs, then it may be beneficial/necessary to seek professional help. People come to groups for specific reasons and at various stages of their search & reunion – all of them have something to share. What I ask people to do in my group, is to share the lessons they have learned from their own journey; other than that, it is not appropriate to give advice or critique but to be inquisitive and ask open-ended questions.

With respect to Forget Me Not Family Society, it is their policy and practice to put their support behind



facilitators that have resolved their reunion issues. Under these conditions, they are happy to promote a group or individual who wants to help others. Talking about one's story is always healing and if you are living in a smaller community, then getting together with others in the adoption constellation can be beneficial, even if it's just to chat. However, you need to stress that these are peer support groups only. As a collective, they will have to establish their own rules and

boundaries.

With respect to locations, it can be difficult, and/or expensive, to find appropriate space for meetings. If you have to pay, this is something that is going to have to come out of the pockets of the attendees. In my case, I was lucky to find space at our local public library – they allow me to hold one free meeting per month. Churches can be a viable space and I understand the overtones associated with not wanting to meet there. The same could also be said for using Ministry social worker offices. This certainly limits your options. You could try Family Planning offices, community or seniors' centres.

I would not recommend meeting in someone's home. It is important to have structure around the time of a meeting, ie, keep it to 2 hours and no more. A coffee somewhere afterwards is okay, but you need to manage the conversations and make sure you don't go back into support mode again (at a public place).

Nancy Kato's support group sayings to keep in mind:

"What would you do if you weren't afraid?"

"And your homework assignment will be.....?"

"Remember, slower is always better."

"In the absence of the truth (or information), you might as well make assumptions in the positive."

And her favourite: "Don't hit the 'send' key until you review your message with someone else!"

Why Adoption Support Groups Matter

By Monica Byrne

I started to look for my daughter in 1986. By pure chance one morning I happened to hear Peter Gzowski on CBC “Morningside” interviewing P.D. James the mystery writer. She and Peter were discussing her latest novel about an adoptee searching for her birth mother and the conversation moved into one about adoption disclosure laws generally. England had opened its records for adopted adults in 1976 and Peter said something about how they were still closed in Ontario. This caught my attention immediately. I had always believed what I had been told at the time I signed those relinquishment papers, that when my daughter was over 18 I could find her. She was now nearly 20 and I had started to think of looking for her. Like many birth mothers I had thought of my daughter EVERY single day since her birth. But I had always felt it necessary to stay away until she was a grown up. I felt that often-described feeling, that I would be “imposing” on her new family should I approach her earlier. So, right or wrong, I stayed away. And then I heard this news – that records in Ontario were closed tight!

My first move was to phone Children’s Aid, the agency through which my daughter had been placed. The closed records information was repeated to me. When I became upset and started to argue the cruelty of the situation, the social worker I was speaking to told me to phone Joan Marshall at Parent Finders. Apparently this group (that I had never heard of) was organizing a public meeting to discuss reforming Ontario’s adoption disclosure laws. And so I did, and everything else in my life changed forever! Joan spoke with me for more than an hour. For the first time I spoke to another birth mother. For the first time I spoke to someone who had married the birth father and who had had three children and was still married to him.



Joan invited me to join Parent Finders and come to one of their monthly public meetings.

And so my experience with support groups started right there. I attended meetings for months. I met lots and lots of people in the same boat. I heard many, many stories similar to mine. I was introduced to the world of adoption literature – the many books written about reunion, the first person stories, the philosophical analysis of what had “actually”

happened to us all. I was completely blown away. How could I have not known all this existed? I remember standing up in public for the first time to ask a visiting Guest Speaker at a PF meeting his opinion on something or other. My knees were knocking and my heart was pounding but the strength of my new found convictions and the huge support of this group overrode my fears. I asked my question. And I have stayed with Parent Finders for nearly 30 years to ask many more. In the following years I found my daughter and we have had a wonderful and happy reunion for 26+ years. I can honestly say that having the support and input from experienced volunteers and a wonderful support group was the secret ingredient that made it all work.

In the old days, meetings were monthly, 12 months a year. They were always packed with returning people and groups of 50 and 60 people were the norm. We published a newsletter every month as well, and at our peak were receiving more than 300 phone calls a month. It was a very busy time for the volunteers at our support group in Ottawa, but the same experience was happening all across the country. This was the period before the Internet, before Facebook, before cell phones. If you wanted to join something or learn something you actually had to go somewhere away from your home and “meet” people in a “meeting place”. You had to

talk to people face to face. And it was very, very successful. But like all things it changed. And thank goodness, so did the laws of disclosure. But in my opinion the essential “Value” of the support group does not change.

For most people the experience of adoption search and reunion is not something they have learned or practised on a day to day basis for years! When people decide to search for a missing family member that decision is usually ‘triggered’ by some random event which moves them to action. Since they have read nothing about the subject, know few if any others in the same situation, have not discussed the matter with anyone, it would seem clear to an outsider that such unprepared people would be ill-advised to take on what could be a life-changing event, by themselves.

A successful support group has tips, information, and experience. It can be there when you have questions. After all, who will you go to when things need a nudge? Often the principle parties to a reunion use each other as their sounding boards, with disastrous results. You need a disinterested third party. A birth mother cannot expect the adoptee to ‘fix’ her shame and grief and the adoptee cannot expect the birth mother to listen to and help with the ‘anger and loss’ feelings she might have. I guess the best piece of advice I can offer is do seek help from those who have been through the process and come out the other side. Sometimes advice from those who are not part of the process, while well-meaning, may not be the best.

Search and support groups like Forget Me Not Family Society and Parent Finders give people the voice they never thought they had. They provide the safe environment to ‘normalize’ their feelings



around the lost child or the lost parent. They make the experience ‘real’. I don’t know how many people have said to me, over the years “I felt like I was the only one!” And of course the support group shows us the truth about humans, that we have difficulty surviving in a vacuum. We need each other. All this says why I remain at Parent Finders – even though laws are changing or have changed, there is still the need for ‘personal’ support and assistance.

The best advice I can offer someone who is starting a search is:

- Do join a respected support group.
- Do seek help from those who have been through the process and come out the other side.
- Read everything you can get your hands on especially those books recommended by people in the search and reunion field. They can advise on what is appropriate and accurate.

Monica Byrne

Registrar, Parent Finders Ottawa

National Director, Parent Finders of Canada

<https://parentfindersottawa>.

The most difficult battles in life are those we fight within. ~ Chinese proverb

Nobody's going to fix the world for us, but working together,
making use of technological innovations and human communities alike,
we might just be able to fix it ourselves. ~ Jamais Cascio

CCNM Group

By Karen Lyn

In the community of adoption support which includes people seeking support, others giving support and still others seeking legislative reform, we are a relatively small crowd. We surely need each in a world that too often doesn't understand the complex layers of emotions we must navigate to find peace after adoption. Instead we are regularly told to be grateful.

In the online support group The Canadian Council of Natural Mothers (CCNM), mothers and adopted people keep in touch when they need to by email which has become our healing hearth. In our monthly ASK meeting, we always have a box of tissues handy to wipe away the tears caused by a lifetime of sadness resulting from a recognition of

loss caused by an often unfeeling system of adoption.

As it turns out, there is nothing like a support group of peers who have been there, and who will never tell you to be grateful.

Karen Lynn

Canadian Council of Natural Mothers

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www.ccnm-mothers.ca



Wendy Rowney, Michael Grand (behind), Monica Byrne, Sandra Papatello, Karen Lynn and ??

Sandra Papatello is the Liberal Minister of Community and Social Services who brought in the bill that finally opened the Ontario records in 2009 (after the legal challenge was dealt with). Sandra is speaking to me.. Alas, I can't remember the name of the supporter on my left.

You can do anything as long as you have the passion, the drive, the focus, and the support. ~ Sabrina Bryan

Feeling Felt: The Importance of Adoption Support Groups

By Lesli Johnson, MFT

“I’ve tried to explain it so many times, but they just don’t get it. They say they understand but how can someone who wasn’t adopted know what it feels like.” Sixteen-year-old Lisa’s voice trails off as she explains the many frustrating conversations she’s had with her friends about adoption. The other teens sitting in the room nod their heads in agreement. “I know, right!” adds Jake, 15. “How can they possibly know what it feels like to miss the mom who gave birth to you or why sometimes birthdays are really hard...not to mention how uncomfortable it is to hear for the zillionth time, ‘Where were you born?’ because I’m a different race than my (adoptive) parents.” More nods from the group. “You guys get it,” laughs Adam, “That’s what’s so cool about this group, we don’t even have to explain ourselves.”

This conversation is one of many that occur each time a group of adopted teens come together for Teen AdoptCONNECT, a support group I co-facilitate in my community. Teens exchange stories, give and get support and whether they are talking directly about adoption or not, the common thread of a shared experience puts them on a similar playing field and helps them “feel felt.” Most teens come to the first group coaxed by parents who explain “she probably won’t say too much” or “I don’t think he’ll want to stay so maybe I’ll just sit outside.” That said, our we have a 100% return rate so far! The teens who “won’t say too much” are the ones who open up and expose their vulnerabilities as they share intimate details of their adoption stories to a group who welcomes each detail and listens attentively.

Participants in Teen AdoptCONNECT include teens who were adopted transracially and domestically as



well as foster and former foster youth. Bringing together teens with varying stories and experiences allows teens to normalize similar issues on a bigger scale. It also further emphasizes, “you are not alone, you are a part of our tribe!”

AdoptCONNECT is another unique group that invites all adult members of the adoption and foster care community to come together to give and get support. Adult adoptees, adoptive parents, former foster youth, first/birth parents and

waiting parents sit side by side, exchanging stories, fears, challenges, struggles and wisdom. Members share thoughts and emotions openly and honestly without the worry of hurting someone’s feelings and realize they are not alone. It is pretty powerful to witness the exchange between an adult adoptee and adoptive parents of an adolescent. “What did you need?” ask the parents. The adult adoptee takes a few seconds and tearfully responds, “I needed my parents to realize that I thought about adoption all of the time growing up and being curious about my biological family wasn’t a threat to them...I wish I could have shared my thoughts with them.” An adoptive mom cries in relief after hearing another adoptive parent express similar feelings about sometimes not feeling like a good enough parent. “Wow, I thought I was the only one who felt that way.”

Support groups are an essential place to express feelings, give and get support, build lasting connections and ultimately “feel felt.”

My colleague and I started Teen AdoptCONNECT and AdoptCONNECT to serve an unmet need in our community. The groups provide a place for the adoption and foster care community to come together and share stories, ideas and concerns in a safe environment. Support groups are an essential place to, express feelings, give and get support, build lasting connections and ultimately “feel felt.” The importance of sharing experiences with those who are walking a similar path as you cannot be over-emphasized. Join a group or start a group. If you need help with this, please contact me directly for guidance.

About Lesli Johnson, MFT

Lesli Johnson, an adult adoptee, works as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist specializing in adoption and related issues. Her clients include all members of the adoption and foster care community: adoptees, (children, adolescents and adults), adoptive parents, waiting parents, birth/first parents, foster parents and families. She 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. In addition to her work in private practice, Lesli facilitates on-going adoption support groups and conducts adoption awareness and education workshops in schools, universities and mental health settings to help professionals better understand issues related to adoption. Lesli is an invited speaker at adoption related conferences and events throughout the United States.

Lesli’s writes for Huffington Post, Adoption Today, GoodTherapy.org and other online publications. She is a consultant for many local treatment centers, Children’s Lifesaving Foundation and Young and Healthy.

Her offices are in Beverly Hills and Pasadena, California.

Contact Lesli at (310) 614-1867 or

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Follow Lesli on Facebook:

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and Twitter @LesliAJohnson



“icon-team” Illustration by Dawn Hudson, publicdomainpictures.net

HOME AWAY

Wujue: Chinese severed-sentence
style poem

Dense brown stone, holds cries
Cold gray walls, grief lies
Bright skies, sun light, stay
Grim times, blue days, wise

Gail Davies
July 29, 2015

It is when we start working together that
the real healing takes place
...when we start spilling our sweat, and
not our blood. ~ David Hume

Confidentiality:

“What’s said in the room stays in the
room!” This is one of the most important
factors to creating a safe environment.

Basic Guidelines for Beginning A Search/Support Group in Your Area

By Joe Soll 조 살, LCSW

INITIAL STEPS

If you are a dedicated adoptee or natural parent, and want to create a group for others similarly affected, we offer a few simple suggestions:

1. Commit yourself to what will be a very rewarding experience.
2. Secure a meeting place for the group. There are many which can be used, free of charge; check with churches, banks, libraries.
3. Contact a local newspaper for publicity. You might consider running an ad in the personals column to reach others affected by adoption. Newspapers also have community calendars which list events.
4. Check with radio and/or television stations. They are often willing to announce meetings for community groups.
5. Be willing to use your name and phone number or address for group related contacts.
6. Contact adoption agencies, counselors, attorneys, or others who work in adoption related fields. Inform them of your group and invite their participation and referrals.
7. Once you are established, inform your local libraries of your meeting time and place. Many people approach them for information.
8. Prepare yourself to be a good listener. Many new members just need someone who can do that in a non-judgemental way.



MEETINGS

Meetings need not be complicated nor overly business-like, as you will wish to create an atmosphere of warmth and openness.

1. Keep the time of the meetings short, from 2 to 2-1/2 hours.
2. Let people get acquainted.
3. Establish a regular format or structure which is comfortable.
4. Be in charge, but quietly.
5. Discuss basics, such as feelings of being adopted or being a natural parent.
6. Decide on a name for the group; it is advisable to check with Adoption Healing to see if another group has chosen the same name.
7. Decide on membership dues for members, based on projected expenses. These might include printing, postage, and purchase of books for a group library.
8. Consider printing a monthly or bi-monthly newsletter to keep members in contact between the meetings.
9. Establish a file on each member in search. Be sure all searchers are given ISRR (International Soundex Reunion Registry) forms.
10. Plan to share responsibility for the group as soon as possible. After a few meetings you will be able to "pick out" the workers.
11. Keep a master list of members for mailing purposes.

YOUR JOB AS LIAISON

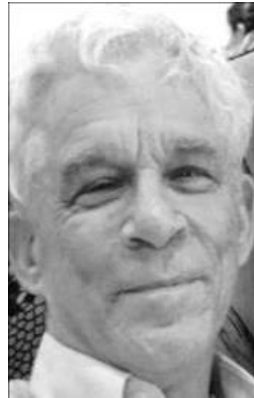
As the founder and motivator of your new group, you will act as a liaison between the group members and other groups. These guidelines may help:

- Ask for suggestions or assistance when you need it.
- Contact those in your region and establish a working relationship for the exchange of ideas and newsletters.
- Become familiar with books on the subject of adoption; purchase as many as possible for the group's library.

Good Luck!

About the Author:

Joe Soll is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker/ psychotherapist and 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*. He is also an adoptee.



An AUDIO BOOK version of *Adoption Healing... a path to recovery* is now available on amazon.com .

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Joe Soll - Selections from Facebook

(Printed with Permission)

"There was a mom who attended my group who had been sending her son cards for years with no response. One day, she received a call from her son's girlfriend. She wanted the mom to know that while he was not responding, he had each and every card chronologically saved in a catalogue cabinet. He was too terrified but, eventually he started responding." - JS

"Time after time, I've had a mom come to my group or me personally for counseling or just calls to inquire about the group. The mom says she never wanted her baby that she wasn't coerced, not brainwashed, not in pain. Some moms will say this for years and years. One day, out of the blue, they get into horrible pain (or call years later in horrible pain). While sobbing almost uncontrollably, they will say they all of a sudden remember the day they signed the papers, how they didn't want to do it, how they couldn't find a way to Not sign them, how much they wanted to keep their baby, how they were coerced. The events surrounding her pregnancy and loss of her baby are repressed (hidden from her conscious memory), to enable her to survive emotionally. Every mom and every adoptee has had some of their experience repressed in order to have survived the trauma. We "wake up"

when we are ready. We have no control over WHEN we wake up. Our unconscious mind is in charge of this.

This is the same phenomenon as the adoptees who say they are not affected by adoption. I used to tell the same story and I remember how much in the dark I truly was because of the terror of feeling the pain. What all of us must do is deal with our own pain, anger and sadness first. Only then can we look at things with an open mind... If we look at things through anger colored glasses, we will not be able to be objective." - JS

I heard Rollo May, perhaps the most famous existential psychotherapist of all time, say the following (slightly paraphrased) at an adoption conference in Boston in 1987, "When you make a decision, that decision is based on your age, your life experience, your knowledge, your wisdom, your childhood and the influence of those around you. At the moment you make that decision, you have NO other choice." - JS

"If one can hold unto the belief that one's mom did not care enough to keep her or that one's child does not care enough to have contact, then the mom or the adoptee is being devalued. Devaluing them

means that one didn't lose so much and therefore lessens the pain. However, this only reduces pain on the surface. Way down deep, thinking we were not or are not loved makes it worse. We need to stop thinking we know what went on or goes on inside of our "other" and remember that we've all suffered what, in the words of Anna Freud, makes the horrors of war pale in comparison. Each of us will face our pain when we are able to do so. Our

terror rules our unconscious mind. We need to keep this in mind and find total empathy for our "others" if we want to heal and find peace." - JS

In the words of Clarissa Pinkola Estés, in *Tales for the Abandoned*, those who have been abandoned (and we all have experienced it) and work it through (do their healing) ARE the strongest people on the face of the earth. Believe it!

Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned. ~ Buddha

Why Not Go?

By Amy Newman

I sometimes wonder why more people don't avail themselves of the Forget Me Not support groups. I strongly recommend it to any of my "adoption search" clients who live near one. When they hear "support group" do they think this is a place where they will be confronted or have to bare their soul? Do they feel that it's a sign of weakness to "need" a support group? If that's your idea of a support group then think of it as an "adoption reunion networking group" instead.. We offer peer support, not therapy.

Our support group meetings are structured in a way that fosters fairness, mutual respect and confidentiality. "What's said in the room, stays in the room." This is one of the most important factors to creating a safe environment.

No one has to share their story at our groups unless they feel comfortable doing so. You can just sit back and listen or bring an adoption related issue that is bothering you. Everyone is there to learn from one another. Whether you are an adoptee or birth parent it's a great way to understand where the "other side" is coming from. Occasionally we have had adoptive parents attend, because they are concerned about their adult adoptee and want to understand them better. Adoptive parents benefit from listening to birth moms and other adoptees besides their own.

While some members continue to attend because they are having a problem with their reunion, it is also valuable for people whose reunion was successful, or who have done a lot of healing work and feel complete, to attend and share. We learn so much from you.

Hearing the experiences of others can help you prepare for possible reactions and outcomes before, during and after reunion. Preparation is key to a successful reunion. So before you just blunder in, attend some support groups if you can. Read up on adoption reunion issues and get the perspective of others.

A smart person learns from their own mistakes, but it's a wise person who learns from the mistakes of others.

Why not go?

Amy Newman is a probate genealogist, who locates missing heirs to estates, but finds that helping to reunite adoptees and birth parents is the most rewarding part of her business.

www.NRSfind.com



Benefits of Participating in Support Groups

By Bernadette Rymer

Given all we have read about support groups so far in this issue of our AC I wonder if you need any more convincing about the benefits of participating in support groups, so long as it is the right group for your current needs.

But something tells me we aren't done yet. Having spent 35 years in my professional career in education and as a speech-language pathologist I am always interested in the science behind why and how something works. So as I often do, I took to Google research sites for fact based evidence about the benefits of support groups.

If you need further convincing, or if, like me, you wonder about the science behind the how and why of the benefit of support groups, below is my summary of information from many research based sources.

Being a member of a support group can bring you a sense of belonging, enlightenment and awareness, strength, hope, and empowerment.

Decreased Sense of Isolation Leading to Increased Sense of Identity and Belonging

Perhaps one of the most important benefits of participating in a support group is a decreased sense of isolation. People are free to express feelings of loss, grief, anger, depression, terror, guilt and anxiety in an atmosphere of mutual respect and confidentiality, and most importantly, with peers who have had similar experiences. Because their feelings and experiences are validated by peers, they identify with others in the group, and develop a sense of belonging. Participants often experience an overwhelming 'AHA Moment:' "I am not odd, crazy or losing my mind – finally someone understands!"



Enlightenment and Awareness

Awareness and education, whether formal or informal, are a huge benefit of participating in support groups. Learning the facts and the truth about adoption trauma for natural mothers, adoptees and adoptive parents helps us understand our own story, the adoption context in general and the context of the time and place in history when our personal trauma originally occurred. This awareness helps us understand how and why we can be re-traumatized over and over, by other events that may or may not be directly related to our adoption loss trauma.

Strength through Developing New Coping Skills

While this awareness and enlightenment does not take away our pain, it can help us develop new coping skills, which leads to new/renewed strength. Our peers can offer valuable support. By sharing information and resources, learning how others have coped with similar situations, we can improve our own coping and problem-solving abilities. We develop new strategies for managing our situation, which for us means, search, reunion, reconnection and, sadly for some of us, severing or discontinuation of our reconnection with our loved ones lost through adoption.

Enhanced Self-Esteem

When we develop new coping abilities and unique strategies for managing our situation, this then leads to enhanced self-esteem. A sense of emotional strength can return as we gain a sense identity and belonging, and a sense of perspective and control during a difficult crisis.

Hope and Empowerment

When we feel emotionally strong and ready to face the world, our sense of hope for our future begins to develop. Then slowly but surely we come to understand that we have the strength, courage, skills and support we need to move forward and to deal with whatever comes our way. We know with certainty that we are not alone, or crazy, or helpless.

We are in truth, strong, courageous, skillful and perhaps most importantly, hopeful.

Sources

The websites of the following organizations are the main sources of information for this article:

American Psychological Association, WebMED, Mayo Clinic, HRMWC: H.R. Mental Wellness Clinic, Community Tool Box, and RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association.

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## FMNFS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING REPORT

This year's AGM was attended by eight members. The board submitted some Special Resolutions to bring our bylaws up to date with the electronic age and all of them passed unanimously. Bernadette presented the results of our Vision Survey. Michael Grand gave us feedback on our name and website and we discussed ideas for updating the website to increase web traffic, rebranding, and changing the name of the Society to something that clearly reflects our adoption reunion focus. We need new board members to step forward if the Society is to continue its support and educational work, since a few of us are planning to retire. Two new board members were elected: Rian Martin and Michael Hodgson – thank you for your enthusiasm for the FMNFS!

### Elections: Board of Directors 2015-2016

PRESIDENT: Marnie Tetz  
VICE PRESIDENT: Amy Newman  
SECRETARY/TREASURER: Gail Davies

DIRECTORS: Bernadette Rymer  
Rian Martin  
Michael Hodgson

### FORGET ME NOT FAMILY SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S REPORT

For the period of February 1, 2014 to January 31, 2015  
Presented 27th May 2015

Normally I would have started my report with something flip like, in a blink of an eye, or time flies by so quickly. Not this time. My report will start off a bit more somber as this past year held enormous sorrow for me personally, and for some of our members as well. 2014 dealt my family a very heavy blow as I as diagnosed with breast cancer and the fallout that comes with that. And my husband Rod...my hero and lifetime companion of over 40 years, passed away from multiple myeloma after living courageously with it for seven years.

I will proceed to share with you our year as the Forget Me Not Family Society enters its 23rd year. In actual fact it was originally Missing Pieces thru Adoption incorporated on January 9, 1992 and the

name was changed to Forget Me Not Family Society on June 23, 1992 – the official start.

Since our AGM in April of 2014 your Board has continued to meet on an almost monthly basis. You must remember that your Board is made up of aging citizens who qualify for that seniors' breakfast menu at all of our favourite restaurants! I just keep forgetting that I'm that old! Then again, it's only a number; we are only as old as we feel!

I am getting ahead of myself. First off, I want to thank our membership for their continued support, keeping up your membership dues and attending our support groups and workshops. I know sometimes when that support group rolls around and you are

thinking – support? I don't need it; I am good with how my reunion is going. Or, support? My reunion is in the tank, our dance steps are not in sync so why bother? And yet you do, month after month. You continue to attend because you want to pay it forward like many before you. Thank you for doing so. By being there you are helping someone else.

Since our last AGM Nancy hasn't had any speaking engagements with pre-adoptive parent groups because funding has been cut. Such a shame that now the pre-adopting education is being done online. There is no way that this is even close to being as educational as the time these adoptive parents need with someone with the knowledge that Nancy has been sharing and teaching over the years.

For the second time the Society made a presentation to the Masters class of students at the School of Social Work at UBC. This occurred on October 8th, 2014. Thank you to members Triss Matthews who spoke from the adoptee's perspective, Elizabeth Christian sharing her experience as an adoptive parent, Gail Davies as a reunited birthmother, and a special thank you to Michael Grand as a step adoptee. Nancy, again, you did a fabulous job as our moderator and Bernadette as our facilitator. Bernadette, the work that you put into this whole event is so appreciated. The connection you have made with Dr. Kruk is invaluable! I was able to attend this event and in awe of how light bulbs were turned on! Thank you to all who generously shared their experience, thoughts and time.

Once again the Society had a presence at the "Finding Your Roots" seminar held at the Family History Centre in Surrey. This is the third time the Society has had a booth. Gail the ever present trooper was there as well as member Audrey Harrington, and Board member Amy Newman. Thanks Amy for making this an annual event and for those who have given up their Saturday to 'man' the table!

This past year we had some turbulence with our Annual Workshop. Gail, our pillar, was able to pull off making a disaster turn into a weekend none of us will forget. Our contracted presenter bailed at the 11th hour and Gail, bless her, dove in with both feet

– I'm glad you are such a great swimmer! And made an even better workshop event! She convinced Brian Stanton and Patti Hawn that they needed to be here for our workshop November 1st and 2nd, 2014 and they believed her! And what a workshop it was! Even with short notice and change of presenters those that should have been there were! We had rave reviews as Brian once again performed his one man play BLANK, with the skillful behind the scenes work done by Gail on sound. Patti Hawn shared her personal story with readings from her book "Good Girl's Don't" accompanied by Brian. The only comment that was repeated was that we would have liked to have heard more readings from Patti's book. The afternoon

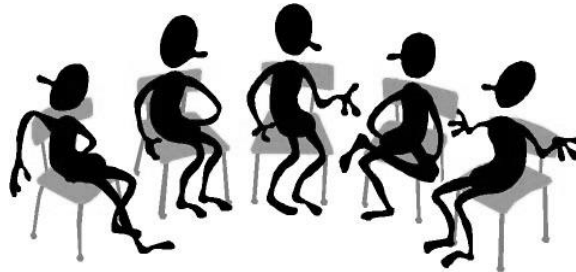
was more interactive with writing and sharing led by both Patti and Brian. Sharon Jinkerson and Glida Morgan facilitated a healing talking circle that followed the workshop. Sunday morning we met once again for a support group. As we all know it is so hard to leave a safe, understanding environment to go back to the real world.

With each of us being busy in our everyday lives we have had a few changes this past year. The Forget Me Not Family Society lending library was returned to me and as always Gail kept a watchful eye on what it contains. Kathy Chambers agreed to look after our Archives and has put some things in order and returned them to me. Thanks Kathy!

As last year, our Board is still small and yet we just click! We each have our strengths and we go with them: Gail as our Secretary/Treasurer, Bernadette as our Director/Newsletter Editor and Amy as our Vice President and Associate Newsletter Editor. I think I have it easy – I'm just the President!

And so, .like a broken record I am going to thank each of you, and as boring as it is, it will once again be in alphabetical order.

Amy, Amy, Amy! You are a gem. Sometimes like a dog with a bone, and who the heck says there's anything wrong with that? You continue to pursue until you have the answers you want. Guess that's why you are a professional searcher! Thank you for the amazing job that you do with the AC. Your attention to detail and making the newsletter



appealing to the eye is second to none. The layout is fabulous and the number of drafts before we go to print shows your attention to detail and also how versatile you are when at the last minute you are thrown a change that you make happen! Thank you! I smile thinking of the time you put into this publication, that apparently some want to receive online. Me? I want it in print so I can savour it – enjoy it with coffee, wine or with the bubbles in the tub – a matter up for debate – the hard copy or e-copy I mean! It bears repeating, Amy you are a gem!

Bernadette. I want to say I am speechless. Then again, we all know that's not the case. I am never speechless unless I am at a loss for words to describe and thank someone as talented as you are. The gifts that you have brought to the Society are enormous: The positive life that you bring to the AC and the ever changing topics and editorials; the time that you have invested into the UBC educational program, a gift to all of us in the adoption world; teaching new social work students what it is for those of us who have lived the adoption truth and lies – myths and realities. Thank you. This is a gift that you and your cohort in crime, Dr. Kruk are giving to these young students. I hope they realize what they have been offered and that they won't forget these lessons so generously given by those members who bared their souls. Thank you Bernadette for making this happen!

Okay, broken record time. Gail, last – and never ever least!!! Ever! Thank you for your softness and generous spirit! With all that you do in your 9 to 5 life, you give that and more to the Forget Me Not Family Society. You are a joy to work with and to be associated with. As your reunion has moved in different directions you have continued to be supportive of me and each of us on the Board. You remind me of what needs to be signed and you just do what needs to be done to keep us registered as a Non-Profit Society without any of us even being aware. You keep our books, take our minutes and then remind us all that it's AGM time. If there's a question about the by-laws and what we need to do to set them right, you do it by researching it and then sharing with us what our next move is. As I always say, you are a keeper and we will be doing races in our walkers for sure!

Thank you, Amy, Bernadette and Gail for your continued hard work and support over this very tough past year. Your love and caring for me and my family has been much appreciated. You are all very dear friends to me – as well as to our membership.

And to our membership, thank you for continuing to support us. Just as we think that we are not needed anymore, a phone call will come in, or an email asking "What do I do?" So tonight we shall chat about our vision for our future – how do we keep being there for those that ask that question?

Thank you!

Marnie Tetz



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FMNFS Survey Results
April 2015
By Bernadette Rymer



In April of this year we conducted an online survey seeking member input into your satisfaction with our current focus and services, and your needs and suggestions for the future of our Society. Some questions gave a choice of ratings and others invited comments.

At our AGM on May 27th the results were discussed in detail. One surprising survey result was member

preference regarding format of our Adoption circles Newsletter.

When asked to rate the value of our Adoption Circles Newsletter, 72.92% of respondents noted that our AC is important to them.

When asked which format members would like to receive our Adoption Circles Newsletter, 41.67% preferred a hard copy mailed to their home address,

while 58.33% preferred an online newsletter via email.

As a result of your stated preference and in efforts to reduce operational expenses, the discussion moved to a vote. All members present voted in favour of moving to online format of our AC. After further discussion it was decided to provide one more hard copy issue, and to inform our membership of this decision in this issue of AC.

We are very grateful to you for your time and effort in completing the survey. Many insightful suggestions have been made for ways to improve and expand our services to meet the future needs of our members. We value your input and assure you that every point, comment and suggestion has been discussed, or will be discussed in the near future. We will also report back to you on decisions made as a result of your input.

However, given our current working team (Marnie, Amy, Gail, Michael, Rian and myself) we are not able to take on any additional projects at this time. We are all volunteers and need to prioritize our work loads, so when new projects are taken on, others have to take a back seat for a while. (See announcements in this AC about our annual Fall Workshop and our 3rd annual invitation to present to the graduate students in social work at U.B.C.)

Can you help us fulfill these requests?

As you read the comments and suggestions, perhaps a suggestion will strike your fancy and you may feel you have the time, energy and creativity to support our members by pursuing your interest in that area. We will be delighted to hear from you and support your efforts to meet current and future society work.

Complete survey results will be available at www.adoptioncircles.net

SURVEY COMMENTS

(Similar comments have been combined)



Adoption Circles Newsletter

- In order to keep the membership costs to a minimum, please consider moving to an electronic

newsletter as opposed to the current paper format which is expensive to produce and send out via Canada Post.

Support Group Meetings

- Finding this group and learning how multifaceted adoption and reunion are, was the key to a successful and happy reunion. The support, encouragement and knowledge shared at our meetings have proven invaluable.
- When I attend, now it's to support new and other members. The support group has been a HUGE influence in my successful reunion and healing.
- I have nothing but positive comments for the Cloverdale group – people and process.
- Although I have been reunited with my birth family for a long time and do not feel the need for support, I think that having this available for people in the process or newly reunited is very, very important.
- I think that the concept of open meetings intimidates me. Perhaps if there were topics, or the meetings were structured around a theme, then I would feel more comfortable and prepared for the discussion.

Annual Fall Workshops

- Workshops: Great energy, information and the networking is so valuable.
- Some of your annual conferences have been of great help to me in putting my feelings into words.
- I have attended two Workshops. I am not always comfortable with the format of the Workshop. There is absolutely nothing wrong with the format for the Workshop but it takes me out of my comfort zone. I prefer Workshops where there is no role playing.
- Every time I attend a workshop I have hope and strength to go further into reunion. I am always excited each year to see my friends again at workshops.

Advocacy

- I think there is an opportunity for the FMNFS to be a stronger voice. I also think there's an

opportunity to be more active on social media. The Facebook group is just one example of a currently underutilized resource that could be used as a support resource for those in the adoption community and for educational purposes.

- It is ESSENTIAL that the birth family has representation/advocacy/support in the adoption community. No one else is doing this piece.
- Adopted children's rights have to be restored to equal to those of all Canadians.
- Adoption reform is sorely needed.
- I think that, with Open Adoption now "maturing" and with more people connecting on the internet, the need for an organization like Forget Me Not Family Society is as important as it has been, if not more so.
- Provide focused support events/meetings. Do outreach to members and provide peer and professional support. Partner with other adoption and permanency organizations to provide birth family perspectives to their work. Provide more online support. Contribute to other periodicals, events, conferences.

General Comments

- The society has changed my life completely. I am not alone anymore with my Adoption issues. It is okay to talk and share the loneliness the years held.
- I am VERY grateful for the help FMNFS gave me to find my birth mother two years ago. We now have a happy relationship. At this stage, I don't personally feel a need for future support from FMNFS.
- I've been a member of Forget Me Not for over 10 years. They guided me through personal healing, grieving for the past, finding my voice, and right up to a successful reunion with my daughter. **The group has been a huge influence in my life and I consider many members as my friends.** I feel healed and my life feels complete, so unfortunately I attend meetings irregularly and mainly to support new or existing members. If my attendance was actually needed to keep this group afloat, I would make it a priority. I have so much respect for the members that work so hard for the group.

- I have taken comfort over the years that Forget Me Not has been by my side with advice and support. Even when I didn't totally follow the good advice, they were still very supportive and not judgmental. Through good times and bad they have been there.

- The society has provided ongoing support for me in a very difficult and one-sided reunion! I would be very sad to see it fold. I do believe new members need to step up to help carry the duties.

- I appreciate being kept up to date on what is happening now with artificial insemination and how that will affect these children as they grow to adulthood and what is being done about the law to provide for these people's needs in future. There are a number of provinces that still need to update their laws with regard to the adoption triangle.

- The email, telephone and in person support has been very important to me. You helped me a tremendous amount as all of you really get it. Such a difficult time for me in the beginning of reunion.

- Real people to talk to.

- For me- online will never replace the personal touch: human touch networking is so important to healing.

- Based on my personal experience, the FMNFS has been an integral part of my journey to educate myself about my adoption. **The people I have met at the support meetings helped me to prepare to search and provided me with essential information and contacts. They saw me through the emotional journey as I got in touch with my feelings, before, during and following my reunions.**

- The idea of only having the internet from which to get information and inform oneself makes me sad. It is only real and genuine human perspective that can facilitate this type of experience, one that can only truly be understood through a personal connection. The internet can certainly convey information and facts, but it can't hold you when you cry, share its personal story with raw emotion in a voice that helps you feel and understand another person's experience or perspective. It can never replace the safety and acceptance and understanding that one finds in a group like the Forget Me Not ... even years later

(having moved to the interior) I will always feel a deep connection to the members of this group. It is precious and I am forever grateful that I came upon them when I needed this in my life. I do not ever recall feeling that way about the internet ... I feel that I owe the peace of mind I have around adoption to the time spent at support groups and in workshops with the FMNFS. Thank you...

- I will be forever grateful for the friendship and support shown me by the FMNFS these last four years. As I move along in my reunion I feel much stronger emotionally and have a much more realistic view of what I can expect in my relationship with my child. **I still feel the need to stay in touch with my adoption friends occasionally simply because they understand my pain and sadness and I'm comfortable in sharing with them because they "get it". Thank you FMNFS ~** I hope you will always be there for people that need you as desperately as I did at the beginning of my reunion.
- I've been a member of Forget Me Not for over 10 years. **They guided me through personal healing, grieving for the past, finding my voice, and right up to a successful reunion with my daughter.** I've been enjoying a relationship with her

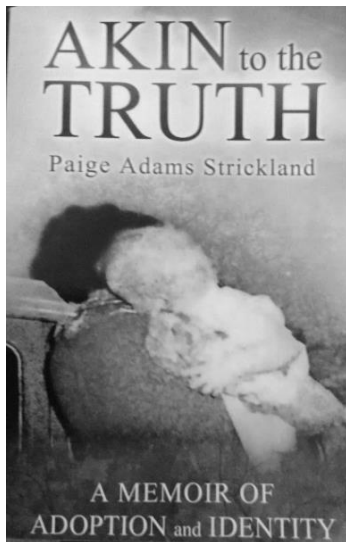
for nine years. The group has been a huge influence in my life and I consider many members as my friends. I feel healed and my life feels complete, so unfortunately I attend meetings irregularly and mainly to support new or existing members. If my attendance was actually needed to keep this group afloat, I would make it a priority. I have so much respect for the members that work so hard for the group, but so much of my effort goes into running my own business.

- **Finding this group and learning how multi-faceted adoption and reunion are, was the key to a successful and happy reunion with a sister and brother I did not know I had. The support, encouragement and knowledge shared at our meetings have proven invaluable.**

- Real people to talk to.
- I am sorry that membership numbers are dropping. Perhaps it is a sign of the time and people are finding the support they need online. For me, online will never replace the personal touch: human touch networking is so important to healing.
- LOVE THE GROUP AND SUPPORT ... SO IMPORTANT! THANKS TO EVERYONE!!!

Book Review: *Akin to the Truth*

By Marnie Tetz



The memoir *Akin to the Truth* is a detailed description of Paige Adams Strickland's adoption story. Paige leads us from her earliest childhood

memories through to her adult years. She shares how it felt for her to be adopted into a family that, like most, had some level of dysfunction. Paige shares how it was to feel like she didn't belong in the family she was growing up in. She wasn't any of the people she was expected to be while she was growing up. She was none of those 'last names' of her adoptive family as much as she wished she were. Those names just didn't fit right or feel right. What Paige wanted most was to feel like she really belonged. Fortunately she was able to have warm loving relationships with her grandmothers. Paige touches on the feelings that most adoptees have growing up in families that they have been placed with and not families they are not biologically related to. Through personal growth work and the understanding of her future husband, Paige comes to terms with what is, and becomes comfortable in her own skin.

Upcoming Events

Sat Sept 5 - **Adoption Crossroads 29th Anniversary Celebration BBQ with Joe Soll in Congers, NY**
You're Invited! Sat, Sept. 5th 2015 from noon to 8:00 pm. Joe says: "We'll supply hot dogs, hamburgers, ribs, chips and dips and soda etc. If you want to bring pot luck it will be appreciated. Rain or shine, big lawn, big screened porch, big inside. Fun, camaraderie, peace, understanding and perhaps silliness. Bring your guitars." **RSVP to Joe by Sept. 2** <joesoll@adoptionhealing.com>
For more info: www.adoptionhealing.com/Anniversaryouting.htm

Wed. Oct. 14, 2015 - **FMNFS panel presentation to UBC grad students in the School of Social Work**

Sat. Oct 17, 2015 - **FMNFS Display & Information Booth at the *Finding Your Roots* Seminar**
Family History Centre, 6270 – 126th St, Surrey BC <http://www.findingyourroots.ca>
Do you want to know more about your family tree? Register for free classes.
Would you like to be a greeter at our booth? Contact <g.davies@telus.net>

Sat/Sun Oct 24 –25, 2015 - **FMNFS 10th Annual Fall Workshop *A Girl Like Her* with Ann Fessler**
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel and Conference Centre, Richmond, BC (details below)



Ann Fessler

FMNFS 10th Annual Fall Workshop ***A Girl Like Her* - a film**

by Ann Fessler, producer and director,
followed by two workshops: **Memory Writing** and
Collecting Oral Histories, What can be learned
from asking and listening?

Saturday Oct 24th – Sunday Oct 25th, 2015
Executive Airport Plaza Hotel and Conference
Centre, Richmond, BC

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT ends
September 24, 2015 at midnight

Member rates: Early bird: \$195, after Sept 14: \$225
Non-Member: Early bird: \$230, after Sept 14: \$260
Registration forms via: marnietetz@shaw.ca

Please register early to avoid disappointment

ABOUT ANN FESSLER

Ann Fessler is an author, filmmaker, artist and professor who has spent the last twenty-five years focusing on the subject of adoption and revealing the hidden stories of mothers who lost children to adoption in the 1950s to early 1970s, when an unprecedented number of babies were surrendered due to the social pressures of the time. Her recent film, *A GIRL LIKE HER* uses passages from interviews she conducted with over 100 women in the US, with archival footage from the time period.

Her critically acclaimed book on the same subject, *The Girls Who Went Away* (Penguin Press) was chosen as one of the top 5 non-fiction books of 2006 by the National Book Critics Circle. It also won the Ballard Book Prize, given annually to a female author who advances the dialogue about women's rights.

WORKSHOP OUTLINE:

Saturday Oct. 24, 2015

8:30 – Noon: Registration, Breakfast, Welcome, Introduce Ann Fessler,
Screening of “A Girl Like Her,” Break, Q&A

Noon: Lunch and group photo

1:00 – 4:00: **Memory Writing Workshop**

The film will likely bring up memories and this workshop will follow up on getting our memories on paper. Memory writing is different than writing one's story. The workshop will begin with memory writing exercises that are not directly connected to adoption and progress from there. Participants will write during the workshop and those who *want to share* will be invited to do so, but sharing is not required.

2:30: Refreshment Break

4:00 – 4:30: Break

4:30 – 6:00: Support group

Sunday Oct 25, 2015

8:30 am: Breakfast

9:00 – noon: **Oral Histories: What can be learned from asking questions in a better way and listening**

This workshop combines ideas from the field of Oral History and media literacy. The techniques can be used to collect a family member's oral history (grandparent, parent) or to have a conversation with another person that opens up dialogue and understanding, rather than shutting it down.

UBC Presentation 2015

**The FMNFS is delighted to announce
that for the third year in a row we have been invited to address the
graduate students in the School of Social Work at UBC
on October 14, 2015.**

We view this invitation as a testimony to the value of the presentations we made in 2013 and 2014.

It is also an excellent opportunity to fulfill our mandate for education and advocacy: 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.

A report of this event and student responses to our presentation will be in our next issue of AC.

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 (604) 557-0230
(ariete_132@hotmail.com)
Marnie Tetz (604) 862-4434
(marnietetz@shaw.ca)
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) 690-8982
(carrierlynn@hotmail.com)

Reunited with Siblings:

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

Reunited Birth Parents:

Nancy Kato (katosan@telus.net) (604) 777-2920
Alice McKinnon – Chilliwack, BC (604) 858-9970
(amckinn@telus.net)
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 (604) 541-6267
(chattycats@telus.net)

Adoptive Parents:

Elizabeth Christian – Delta, BC (604) 329-0660
(elizabethc134@gmail.com)

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)
Christine M. Gatzke, M.Ed., CPAC/ARC
Psychotherapist (306) 352-4069
(christine.gatzke@clc-apathtohealing.ca)
Patricia Roles MSW, RSW, BCATR (604) 375-9215
(e-mailtherapy@shaw.ca) Skype: pat.roles
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 Sept to June 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. now meets the third 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) at Kamloops Women's Resource Group Society, 353 Tranquille. 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 monthly at the Heartwood Cafe, 317 East Broadway (near Main Street). The day changes each month. Please contact Catherine at (katiesue@shaw.ca). For more information visit www.adopteesassociation.ca.

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.

DID YOU KNOW? We have PayPal!

Use the link on our website www.AdoptionCircles.net for a convenient way to pay for FMNFS membership fees or workshops. You can set up an automatic, recurring membership renewal on PayPal. If you have any problems, email Gail Davies at <g.davies@telus.net> and she will send you a PayPal invoice to make it easier.

Adoption Circles is Your Newsletter ~ Your Voice!

Our next topic is “Memories & Histories”

Please send us your submissions. We anticipate that those who attend the Fall Workshop may be inspired to share what they learned. Let us know your opinions, tell your story and news. Editorial support is available.

Send to <bjrymer@telus.net> or <amynewman@telus.net> or by mail c/o the Society.

Issue	Topic	Submission Deadline	Distribution
Fall AC 75	Memories & Histories	Nov 5	Nov 30
Winter AC 76	TBA	Jan or Feb	

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

Call for Guest Editors

Do you have a topic you are passionate about? We are inviting readers to volunteer as **Guest Editor**. This involves researching your topic on the web, pulling together relevant information for members and readers, inviting members and professionals to contribute; receiving articles, and sending them to Amy so she can work her editorial magic. We also appreciate illustrations and photos, as long as we can get permission from the artist/photographer to use them.

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## Have you renewed your MEMBERSHIP?

(Hint: Your expiry date is on the mailing label)

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

Individual Membership  
**\$30.00/year (USA & Canada)**

Couples \$50.00/year  
International \$50.00/year  
Corporate \$65.00/year

Use the PayPal link at  
[www.AdoptionCircles.net](http://www.AdoptionCircles.net)  
Or send cheque payable to the  
Forget Me Not Family Society  
#102-1860 Southmere Cres. E.,  
Surrey, BC Canada  
V4A 6Y7

Residents of the U.S. please send  
U.S. funds

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

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

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

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_