

Adoption Network Law Center

Monthly Update Newsletter December 2003



From Your Birthmother's Perspective... The Reciprocal Feelings of Love and Gratitude

By Margarethe Smith, Birthmother Counselor

Happy
Holidays!

This monthly column often addresses issues related to adoption from the perspective of adopting couples or individuals. Those involved in the triad of adoption instantly realize the level of gratitude, thankfulness and love that the blessed individuals feel toward their birthmothers, but seldom are the feelings of the birthmother verbalized or understood.

Often the Counselors suggest that our individual birthmothers write letters to the adoptive parents and/or child explaining their reasons for placing their son or daughter for adoption. This effort not only helps these young women through the grieving process but the written task often results in the most ultimate gift – a glimpse into her thought process and love-filled intentions.

Our Birthmother Housing Counselor, Ellen Edman, had the recent privilege of supporting this Birthmom through the adoption of her unborn child. The letter she chose to write was directed to other prospective birthmothers and yet holds a clear message for both her adoptive parents and the child. (Letter has been edited for purposes of this printing.)

Dear Prospective Birthmom:

"This can't be happening to me! This doesn't happen to people like me." At least this is what I always thought. I never imagined that I would be someone who would place a child for adoption, or even have to be placed in a position to make a decision of "What do I do?"

Should I terminate the pregnancy, have the child and try to raise it, or place the baby for adoption? For a while, I tried to forget about it. I thought that if I didn't acknowledge the problem, it would just go away. One day I woke up and decided I could not parent a child at this present time in my life... I had decided to terminate my pregnancy.

I was almost in my third month when I decided on an abortion and began to make appointments – my third month of pregnancy had come and gone with 5 appointments that I never followed through with. I kept finding excuses on why that day was not a good day to go and have it done. Finally, half way through my fourth month and 8 appointments later, I was finally on my way to have the procedure done. I woke up early, boarded a bus and prepared myself for the hour and a half bus ride to my destination. As the time passed, so many questions and worries kept racing through my mind. Finally the clinic was in view and my heart began to race. I looked across the aisle on the bus and saw a mother and her child, laughing and smiling. The bus stopped, the doors swung open. I couldn't move, my body was paralyzed, and questions were still racing through my mind. I stared at the mother and child, for what seemed like hours. I looked at the clinic one more time and it became very clear to me, I could not terminate this pregnancy. This little life I was carrying deserved a chance.

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REMYNDER!

Please be sure to inform ANLC whenever you have any modifications in your contact information. Not only is it important that you notify us of new addresses, but also of any changes in your home, cell phone, or work telephone numbers, including any area code changes. Having current information will make it easier to reach you when we have that "all important" phone call to make! You may fax or email us with any changes. Thank you!

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For several days I pondered whether I should keep this child or place it for adoption. Those several days turned into several months. I kept asking myself, "Is it wrong for me to place my baby for adoption, does this decision make me heartless?" Every day as I felt the life inside of me grow; I knew this was no longer just about my feelings and me. There was now another life inside of me that deserved the best in life, and as hard as it was for me to come to terms with this, the best life was not with me – I finally decided on adoption!

I contacted Adoption Network but still had my doubts and was wondering, "What is really the right thing to do?" Two days later I received a number or profiles of couples that were looking to adopt. I opened the package and spread them out on the table one day when I was home alone. All of a sudden, there they were.... Their picture and profile jumped out at me and I felt as though God was leading me to this couple.

They were to be the parents of my child and I was no longer scared. I left my hometown and came to Adoption Network's birthmother housing, I still had not told anyone of my pregnancy. It was as if a weight had been lifted off of my shoulders. I didn't have to hide my pregnant body, I was able to talk about my decision and pregnancy and I had wonderful support from my counselor. I no longer had to deal with this on my own. It got even better – I was able to meet my adoptive couple face to face! When I saw them, I started to cry, but they were tears of joy for I knew in my heart that I had made the decision I was meant to make. In them, I saw years of happiness for my baby and an undying love. And in me, they saw the beginning of a dream come true for their lives!

On November 20, 2003, she was born! I could hardly believe I had created such a beautiful life and that she had come out of my body. Everybody was overwhelmed with love for this 8 pound little baby girl.

As I lay recovering, I waited for sadness or depression to come over me but it never did! The feelings of love and joy for my baby girl overcame any hint of sadness I felt. I had created life and completed a family all in one day. WOW!!! What I had thought was the biggest disaster and mistake of my life turned out to be the most blessed and beautiful day I've ever experienced and I would not trade it for the world.

You may ask yourself, "How is her life now after all that?" Well, my life will be forever changed but only for the better. I was able to give my little girl two loving parents; a great, stable environment and endless opportunities and I couldn't feel better about my decision.

Just know in your heart that God will bless you in your decision. Adoption is a way for you to bless someone, as God blesses you!

