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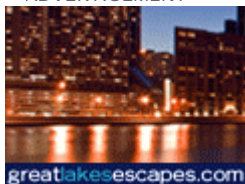
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A challenge to those adopted and adopting

Julia Fuller
Reader Submitted

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Today is a joyous occasion for each family finalizing an adoption. It has been a long and emotional process to get to this point. Many of us feel a sense of relief upon dismounting the emotional rollercoaster of foster care adoption. Please let us remember that our children may also experience some sadness about being adopted today. Today's adoption forever closes the door to their dream of returning home to live with birth family. While our children may not be able to express that dream verbally, if they have ever lived with their birth family, it is in their hearts.



Zoom Photo

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The Bible in Jeremiah 29:11 says: (NIV) For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Each of us can feel confident in our decisions to be here today, knowing that God is in control of each of our lives. He chose each of these parents for each special child here, for a reason. Therefore parents, you must possess the tools or have access to the resources necessary to parent each child entrusted to you to raise.

The children being adopted today can also take refuge in God's word, understanding that He is in control of their futures. He knows the plans that He has for you to give you hope and a future. In your previous families, there was little hope for you children to have futures filled with the opportunities that most children have.

I pray that each child here will now strive for normalcy and a prosperous future. Remember children, your parents can open many doors for you, but they cannot make you walk through them. Some of you will have to work much harder than others do because of your past, but if you are determined and you are willing to work hard, you will succeed. Try to accept the opportunities presented to you by your parents with an open mind, they truly have your best interests at heart. The Bible says in Colossians 3:20 (NIV) to "obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."

Parents, raising a child who has been subjected to trauma is not easy. Whether that trauma was being subjected to drugs and alcohol while still in utero, or being subjected to physical abuse or neglect after birth, it will affect your child's behavior and learning abilities. While the differences your child has may not affect life or property, the day in and day out of living with the same quirks and mistakes can begin to grind on parents.

Parents, don't walk away from your support group or training options just because this is your last or only adoption. Trust me; you will need people to talk to who really understand what you are going through. Non-adoptive parents will think you are nuts or your children are nuts. Only another foster or adoptive parent of traumatized children will give you the support, understanding, and ideas you need to parent your child successfully.

Asking for help, seeking counseling for your child, or respite care are not signs of failure. These choices indicate that you want to help your child succeed in your family and in life. Don't wait until your family reaches a breaking point to seek help, be proactive in parenting your child.

Just like a good marriage, parenting a traumatized child successfully takes a

lot of work and frequent compromise. Either working through the tough times will cause your relationship with your child to grow closer or it can distance your relationship. I charge each of you present today, children and parents, to work on building a strong, loving, and healthy relationship that binds your family together for your entire lives. Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts with you.

Julia Fuller is a freelance writer for Adoption Blogs. Please visit the blogs on special needs and sibling adoption at www.adoptionblogs.com. I look forward to reading your comments and getting to know each of you better through these comments.

STORYCHAT 

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