

ADOPTION

Bracing for a Birthparent Change of Heart

Sensible Expectations

- People change their minds everyday about everything.
- The “adoption plan” is merely a preliminary notion based on less than full information. It is not a commitment.
- Can it really be a surprise that a mother decides to raise her child? The surprising decision is adoption.

Murphy’s Law (Resist Magical Thinking)

- Murphy’s first law of open adoption: “The most difficult experiences happen to the nicest people.”
- Murphy’s second law of open adoption: “Favorable odds never apply to decent people.”
- Murphy’s third law of open adoption: “You are good and decent people, so you are absolutely scheduled to have an unbelievably taxing foray into the world of adoption.”
- Murphy’s fourth law of open adoption: “New and foreseeable obstacles to adoption are being invented every hour.”

Can’t Lose Mind Set

- Adoption done beautifully is more concerned with giving than receiving. If the goal of the experience is to support the birth family and that in fact happens, than it is mission accomplished.
- Irrespective of the outcome, the chosen family:
 - has the satisfaction of being chosen
 - meets new and interesting people
 - participates in the adventure of birth and new life
 - gives and receives love (love never diminishes)
 - learns about babies, birthparents, and themselves
 - gains self respect from sacrificing personally for the sake of the children

Clear Thinking

- From a fairness perspective, the chosen family’s loss is no greater than the birthparent’s loss.
- Until Surrenders are signed, an adoptive family is simply a “foster family looking after” the baby for the birthparents.

There are Reasons for the Risks

- Prospective families do not expose themselves to massive hazard lightly. This approach to adoption was not chosen recklessly; it was selected carefully and voluntarily on the basis of its potential benefits. Participants are risk-takers; not victims.
- For the sake of the children, caring people extend themselves beyond usual limits.

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Acceptance

- We believe in our hearts that things happen for reasons, some we can know and understand and some which are beyond us.
- Until Surrenders are signed, the adoptive family is not the primary decision maker. They are passengers in a vehicle driven by the birthfather.

Preparation

- Usual support system ready and activated.
- Particular adoption supports in place.
- Personally prepared to grieve.

Prevention

- Delay showers until Surrenders are signed
- Delay public declaration or ceremonies until Surrenders are signed.