

The background of the cover is a photograph of three women sitting on the stone steps of an ancient Roman amphitheater. They are seen from behind, sitting in a row and holding hands. The woman on the left has short, wavy grey hair and is wearing a blue short-sleeved shirt. The woman in the middle has blonde, wavy hair and is wearing a black dress with a colorful floral pattern. The woman on the right has long, straight blonde hair and is wearing a white short-sleeved shirt. They are looking out over the arena, which is a large, circular, open-air theater with tiered stone seating. The arena floor is a flat, rectangular area made of stone tiles. The walls of the amphitheater are made of weathered stone and have several arched openings. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

Adoption Reimagined

**Building Relationships In The Adoption
Arena and What To Do When It Doesn't Work**

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Adoption Reimagined

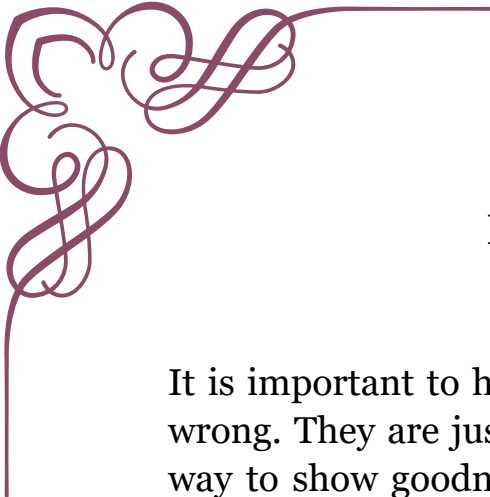
Study Guide

Building Relationships in the Adoption Arena and What to do When it Doesn't Work.

Your attention to these pages will be of great value because finding purpose for your adoption journey has great benefit; for you and others. The journey you took that led you to pick up this guide may have been fraught with rejection, guilt or fear, but the fact you are reading this leads me to believe you are willing to try to move forward. This guide, along with the book, *Adoption Reimagined*, will help you redefine your thinking, heal your wounds, claim your identity and solidify your purpose.

Before you is the path to more contentment. It involves a supernatural partnership that you must join forces with and participate with to access the best strategies to build relationships through reconciliation. The path may be difficult to see. You may not understand. You may disagree completely, but I promise the next step is in your hands right now. The fog may be dense, but there is enough light to take one step at a time, regardless if you can see them or not. Let's walk together, be it ever so slowly. I'll hold your hand as you work towards mending your heart. Your contentment with your past, your present and your future await.

These pages are filled with strategies to tackle roadblocks and obstacles adoption created. If the loss you feel affects your relationships, if your mind is filled with negativity about yourself, humanity and spirituality, if you allow others (parents, spouse, family, friends) to trigger anger; stick with this plan and begin to reimagine adoption.



Chapter 1 Study Guide
Hear Different Perspectives
Goodness vs. Comparison

It is important to hear different perspectives. Different perspectives are not wrong. They are just different. Showing grace towards other viewpoints is a way to show goodness without comparing to show you have the best worst story.

Hearing someone else' perspective does not mean you must agree with it. It does not mean you must incorporate the beliefs into your thoughts or actions. You don't have to yield to their perspective to show or speak goodness and decency towards the people who hold it.

Some perspectives may make your blood boil, but it is still 100% valid for the owner. I believe negative reactions to different perspectives are caused because you are subconsciously comparing their story to your own. Being able to hear other perspectives without judgment and without trying to debate or change their perspective is a great sign of emotional maturity. Respecting without agreeing or comparing is possible. Being decent involves empathy and compassion in disagreement. Practicing empathy and compassion has to be intentional. It probably won't come easy.

Are you ready to open up to new perspectives about adoption issues without comparing or debating? Are you ready to learn to hear with no agenda for changing someone's beliefs to align with your own? Are you ready to hear others and attempt to respond with goodness for their benefit and not from a place of comparison?

1. Do you often insert your beliefs into someone's adoption story to tell them their view is wrong or hurtful to you? Do you compare, debate or try to change someone's mind?
2. What hinders you from seeing a different viewpoint and speaking with goodness into their story?





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3. Do you have a fixed mindset towards negativity and always pick out the differences that trigger your anger instead of seeing how you are similar?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. Make a list of statements to pre-plan what to say when people say things that trigger you so you are not comparing, but learning from them. For example, “That is an interesting perspective. Mine is a little different.” Or, “I need to learn more about that because that is not my experience. Tell me more.”
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
5. What similarities do you have with others in the adoption arena?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
6. What molded the perspective you have?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
7. How does your perspective prevent you from pursuing relationships or building relationships with others in the adoption arena?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
8. What have you missed out on because your perspective limits who you can be around?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
9. Is your perspective based on how you internalized your beliefs about different perspectives? Do you believe others’ beliefs about adoption are wrong?
10. How can you show goodness to others?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.



11. What measures can you take to stop comparing yourself to others?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
12. What can you advocate for because you have experienced adoption?

According to editor and writer Mirele Mann, in her article from 2017 entitled *7 Scientific Facts About the Benefits of Doing Good*, doing good and helping others relaxes people and motivates people to further good deeds. Not only that, but doing good releases endorphins that help people feel satisfied and grateful. People reported they were less stressed and happier in life. These side effects of doing good also lessened depression and helped them feel better physically. Start doing good by trying the strategies below.

Strategies For Showing Goodness

1. Give others grace and mercy, the same kind you would like to be shown, especially for things you can't understand.
2. Hear, really listen, to people without telling your story or giving advice.
3. Plan phrases to say like, "You have an interesting point of view," or "I hear you."
4. Do not assume everyone is like you. Something that is hard for you may be easy for another, and vice versa.
5. Find a good purpose for your adoption story. Be an advocate for positive change.
6. Pray for people who hurt you. Start by saying, "Lord, please bless them with the knowledge of how their actions and words caused pain. Turn their hearts to be more compassionate."





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7. Make a list of good things in your life. Focus on those things because what you feed grows. Focus on what benefits you, not on what irritates you.
8. When you are triggered, try exercising, gardening, cooking, or listening to music that diverts your attention.
9. Make a list of your good characteristics. Share them with others.
10. Plan responses that are filled with goodness when you are triggered. Walk away. Ask them if you can tell them your point of view. Nicely say that is not true for everyone.
11. Remember there are thousands of experiences, terms, feelings and reactions in the adoption arena that are not wrong. Yours is not the only way.
12. The most beneficial and good response to do for those in the adoption arena is to listen and not insert your story into theirs.
13. Using words like should, all and must should be avoided. Not everyone has the same experience.
14. Read body language. Recognize when your story and tone of voice is triggering someone.
15. Make a list of what you desperately want. Now give that to others.
16. Forgive and release the weight that person has placed on you.
Realize forgiveness is a journey, not an instantaneous moment.
17. Do not compare yourself with others.
18. Be fascinated with someone's story.
19. Actively listen for similarities when you are talking to someone.
Mentioning similarities can help someone feel like they are not alone instead of bringing up division, which causes isolation.
20. Make a list of ways you can show goodness and start today.

