



Adoption Reimagined

Building relationships in the adoption arena
and what to do when it doesn't work

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Chapter 1

Hear Different Perspectives

Goodness vs. Comparison

Six blind men got to experience an elephant by touching one. The first man tripped walking beside the elephant and fell against his hard, sturdy side. He said, "The elephant is like a wall."

The second man reached upwards and felt a smooth, long and sharp tusk. He said, "The elephant is like a spear."

The third man approached the elephant and took hold of his wiggling trunk. He said, "The elephant is like a snake."

The fourth man reached out his hand and touched the elephant's knee. He said, "The elephant is like a tree trunk."

The fifth man reached out and touched an ear. As he examined it with his hands, he said, "The elephant is like a fan."

The sixth man grabbed the swinging tail. He said, "The elephant is like a rope."

Each man was right, because his perspective was correct, but each man also did not have all the information and his perception was incomplete. The moral of the story: You can not possibly understand what another is feeling, experiencing or how they interpret their information. But, it is all useful to learn to understand the whole.

Goodness is the quality of showing mercy, respect, uprightness and decency towards others. How is goodness beneficial when there are many different perspectives involved? One benefit is the knowledge you gain from other's viewpoints. If the blind men would have had all the other perspectives of the elephant, it would have given them a better understanding of what was in front of them. I hope they all discussed their findings together and got a more accurate picture of the elephant. With knowledge comes understanding. You may not have the same details in your adoption story, but we all have similar stories in some way. We can all say we live in the adoption arena and we are not alone.

Why is goodness a favorable characteristic? It shows maturity on many different levels. It shows emotional maturity. It shows good judgment. It shows wisdom. Goodness is respectable and can validate feelings and experiences even if they are different from your own. When goodness is not shown, immaturity, foolishness and lack of sense is seen in words and deeds.

What can you do to show goodness? Goodness is hearing and listening without inserting yourself into someone's story. It focuses on the beneficial parts and can discard what is not useful nicely. Goodness does not have to compare to feel validated. Goodness does not debate or sway or pressure or argue over disputable matters. Goodness is not improper and it does not manipulate.

One adoptee may want to search for biological family members and try to have a relationship. Another is content not knowing. A biological mother may want to find the child she relinquished to ease her obsessive wondering. Another believes bringing up the past is too painful. An adoptive mom may support her child's search. Another mom may be reluctant and fear reunion.

Some perspectives may make your blood boil, but it is still 100% valid for the owner of that perspective. It is important to hear different perspectives to get a richer, fuller understanding of another person. Different perspectives are not wrong. They are just different. Hearing someone else's perspective does not mean you must agree with it. It does not mean you must incorporate the beliefs into your thoughts or actions. It also does not harm you! You don't have to pretend to support or agree with the perspective to show decency towards the person who sees things differently. Showing grace and decency is a skill that can be learned with time and practice. It's called being mature.

Being able to show goodness and compassion to other perspectives without judgment or debate is a 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.

Have you heard of confirmation bias? That is when you only seek to hear the side you agree with. You find others who agree with you. You dismiss those who do not. You listen to others who agree with you to make you feel better about your narrow view. You get defensive when others speak about a different view. You get your ego stroked by staying engulfed with one side. Only hearing, seeing and surrounding yourself with one side deepens intolerance for issues on the other side and for the people who hold those other beliefs, too. It deepens your inability to be in certain places and around certain people. Thus, your world gets smaller and smaller. You feel isolated not realizing you whittled down your comfort zone to a very small circle of people who you use only to validate your point of view.

There are many things you perceive differently because you are in the adoption arena. You have experienced what only a small portion of the population has. According to the U.S. Adoption Statistics, 2% of the population is adopted. That also means 2% of women relinquish their baby

(by choice or not), 2% of the population voluntarily take non-biological children into their care and 2% of men (knowingly or unknowingly) got a girl pregnant who did not keep their child. About 140,000 adoptions occur per year. Of those, 59% are from the child welfare foster system, 26% are from other countries and 15% are voluntarily relinquished or voluntold to relinquish, according to the statistics. Subsequently, this also means there are 140k adoptive parents, 140k birth mothers and 140k biological fathers each year. When added together, there are over half a million individuals directly affected each year, not to mention the extended families like grandparents and other siblings.

I Define Adoption

“I finally recognized, at 50, how adoption affected my life.” This adoptee admitted having late-onset adoption issues such as loneliness, low self esteem and not feeling worthy of any kind of relationship. I propose a different perspective: Maybe all the issues had nothing to do with adoption and everything to do with how he responded to life up to the point of awareness.

I believe God has a plan for you in this exact place and time in history where you were born. You can use your adoption story to help other broken people find goodness in their story or waller and obsess which makes you no earthly good to anyone. Decide how much weight you give adoption instead of allowing adoption to weigh you down. You can control your response to adoption and not allow adoption to control you. Choose to break any stronghold created by adoption and not allow them to take root so you can help others break the strongholds of adoption in their lives. You have free will. You were protected from a permanent solution for a temporary problem so use your life wisely. Use your story to benefit others. You have a purpose. This kind of purpose has to be accompanied with confidence in who you are, what you believe in and what you value. Start defining these things in your life if you are struggling with your purpose.

My parents really helped me overcome the need to seek approval from anyone. I chose not to compare myself with others. What I realized was that everyone was different in some way and mine was not any more important than others. We were all important. My difference fit perfectly because everyone had their differences.

In school, I had a friend who was overweight. That was her difference. Another friend had a huge red birthmark on her face. That was her difference. Two of my friends lived with their grandparents. Each person in my class had something unique and distinguishable. That difference also made them targets for being bullied and teased. I also was bullied and teased but not because of my adoption. I had orange hair. Even though all my classmates knew I was adopted because I told them, my hair was a much easier target.

My hope is that each one learns to use their differences to ignite understanding and change. I know many women who have lost weight and share their struggles and success to help other women. I have seen several people with abnormal facial pigmentation become a spokesperson for a treatment. The differences can be used for good and something beneficial. Sharing it encourages others who struggle and teaches those who don't have that experience. I have also seen people blame their differences as the root of all their problems. They never discovered a way to use it to benefit anyone. They blame others and say it's their fault because they were rejected, teased or isolated.

These things happened to me, also, but I thought of it logically. I got rejected, but realized other girls did too. I felt alone, but realized so did other girls. I didn't get invited, but realized other girls didn't get invited either. Some girls were gay. Some girls ran away from home. Some girls took drugs and some girls got pregnant. All these girls were not adopted. All the situations and feelings were not exclusively adoption issues. There are

similar issues for girls across the board, whether you are adopted or not. In a poll I conducted, I discovered 90% of non adoptees have the same issues as adoptees.

I never felt any animosity for my birth mother. I knew she had a story that made her different. I also didn't fantasize about her story in my mind and give her feelings she may not have had. I chose to focus on the few facts I knew until I knew the truth. I focused on what was right in front of me, not an illusion. When I met my birth mother, we started from day one and went forward. I decided there was nothing back there I really needed. She was not the same person she was 36 years before. I haven't asked medical questions or much about my birth father in 14 years. She said I could ask anything and she would tell me whatever I wanted to know.

My strategy may be something you have never tried. It may seem like it could never work. What worked for me created less stress, less drama, averted depression, and I sidestepped emotional and mental illness that could have affected my family, friends and coworkers.

Adoption had to fit into my beliefs. I did not allow the negative perspectives of adoption to shape me. I had beliefs about myself instilled in me by my parents before I knew what adoption meant. So, I fit my knowledge about adoption into what I believed about myself and my values. The saddest person I have talked to told me I needed to research adoption trauma because I obviously have not found mine yet. I encouraged him to think about if it was really his adoption that affected him or the way he responded to his adoption that affected him. We respond based on our beliefs and what we value and since he didn't value himself, he wanted everyone to be like him, miserable. He absolutely could not hear or empathize with my perspective and wanted me to be in misery with him. I guess sometimes the saying, "Misery loves company," is true.

You can't change your beginning? You can't change your upbringing? You can only change how you respond to your beginning and upbringing. Do you try to get others to step into your brokenness? You can decide to release the victim mentality and learn to cope with the hurt and pain. By doing so, instead of thinking others should be there with you, you can show good character that your kids, family and co-workers will see.

Different Perspectives for One Word

If you ask 100 people to describe adoption, you will get 100 different perspectives. There are many different details and diverse parts of adoption, like the elephant. None are wrong. Each is explaining the same word from their vantage point. Because of past experience, personality and upbringing, each will focus on different aspects and how it shaped them. That which ties us together is only a blip at the beginning called adoption. After that, so many factors mold us, change our trajectory and cause different situations. There are thousands of forks in the road and you must choose which one to travel down.

What choices led you to your vantage point in adoption? There are four in this book. Adoptees, adoptive moms, birth mothers and those who love us. Each one is different with different roles, triggers, attitudes, motives and misunderstandings. Each is valid. Each focuses on different facets of adoption. Each one has reality for the woman who experiences it.

I cannot understand what it was like for my mom who could not have kids. The doctors, hormones and intimacy on demand. I cannot fathom what it was like for my birth mother who gave me up (not by choice) and had to think about me every day. There is a glass wall between us. We can peer through it and see clearly, but we can't feel the feelings, know the motives or assume anything. However, when you decide to give grace and respect, even when understanding is not attained, healing is possible.

Hearing is beneficial to help you respond appropriately. When you decide to listen with empathy and without comparing, peace is possible. Even if your situations are completely different, offering a compassionate ear and appropriate reaction can be a balm for many hurt feelings. No story can be compared with another. The only similarity is the word *adoption*; everything is different after that. Depending on which area of adoption you are dealing with, the definition is so personal. It all comes down to perspective. My mom said adoption was a blessing that allowed her and my dad to have children. My birth mother said adoption was a necessity her parents chose, but the hardest thing she ever had to do. I say adoption is a fact in my life, but never defined my life and didn't cause me difficulty. Those are three perspectives that are true for each of us, but there are hundreds more that are also true.

Stay In Your Lane or Merge Gracefully

Being able to hear others' perspectives, views and feelings while not inserting yourself into their story, is the most beneficial thing people with adoption stories can do for one another. Stay in your lane or learn to merge gracefully. Be able to discern when your story is relevant to share. Be able to pick up cues when someone needs someone to listen and not give advice.

Sadly, being able to say, "I hear you. I empathize with you," is hard for many. The tendency to compare how much worse your story is, is so prevalent. Focus on responding favorably. Sometimes showing goodness means keeping your thoughts to yourself. I am a huge advocate for educating others. However, if your tactic is to badger, debate or harass or belittle into change, you're wasting your breath. I cannot give one example of someone getting mocked, yelled at, insulted or taunted that changed their point of view. That behavior just makes others dig in their heels. I have witnessed a transformation when people are treated with respect. New information can transform thinking and actions when presented in a non threatening way.

The overflow of your heart is evident in your actions. Your actions are a good representation of what you stand for and what you value? Are you divided in how you present yourself to others? Goodness should not be divided. Have consistent characteristics wherever you go and no matter who you are with. Not knowing what you stand for and what you value will propel you into fake relationships, compromise and lobbying for approval. These false relationships will leave you feeling devalued, used and unimportant. So pick a lane and stick with it.

Your perspective is beneficial. How you merge your perspective into a conversation is important. Focus on building others up and encouraging them to love and respect. Our stories are more complete when we learn to hear, not agree with, other's perspectives. We see different details when we are willing to listen to different areas of adoption. Hearing other perspectives helps you grow in knowledge and empathy. So, be of good character when you listen and if you must, merge gently.

Dispossess Pain

Does your perception of reality help you flourish in life, love and relationships or does it keep you stuck in self-pity, agony and isolation? If you change your focus you can change your reality. You can choose to focus on learning coping skills for low self-esteem, anger and resentment. You can learn to discern when feelings and thoughts do not benefit you and teach your mind to think of beneficial thoughts that move you forward in life. You can learn to move into good thought patterns, good actions and good plans. Trauma, mental illness, mistrust and fear can deepen and take more and more brain space unless you intentionally dispossess the sensations and fill your mind with positive and productive activities. Think of cleaning your house. When the negativity of the world puts you down, visualize those feelings being swept up, bagged up and tossed out. Change

your reality by taking hold of your thoughts. Dilute the impact by intentionally dispossessing thoughts that do not benefit you.

Do you look at your GPS to plan your route before you leave the house? What do you do when you see yellow and red lines indicating slow or stopped traffic? Do you decide to go a different way or go headlong into the stopped traffic that causes frustration and anger? Thoughts are the same way. If you know a wreck is coming and can feel it rising, learn some skills to avoid the area and divert your reality to a different reality.

I have heard of a coping skill that encourages you to sit with your feelings and let those feelings come to full maturity. The premise is that allowing them to run their course helps you understand yourself and that is supposed to help you. However, when you allow them to grow and expand, they engulf you like rising water that eventually drowns you. When you sit with feelings of guilt, resentment, anger and loneliness, you are befriending them and feeding them. Sitting with your feelings is the opposite of healing. They will come back again and again stronger with a vengeance because there is no resistance. Their duration will lengthen because you don't cut them off. Their intensity will spike because you allow them to get out of control. There is no boundary and they will take you off the cliff everytime.

I propose the opposite. Instead of feeling all the hurtful feelings, redirect your thoughts to a different reality. Choose what feelings to focus on and don't allow the feelings to overtake you. Choose what is beneficial to you for growth, reconciliation and building relationships. By doing so, you can change your reality and lessen your heart rate, your overactive imagination, your unequaled reactions to situations and your negative thoughts.

If you begin to drown, you would not allow yourself to choke and suffocate. You would thrash around, fight and try to free yourself from the water that is overtaking you. It is the same with your feelings. You can allow them to gradually encroach to the point of anxiety, distress and depression or take

control and breathe until your mind moves through the episode. You can control where your mind goes when it wanders.

Do you desperately want to feel peace and harmony, but have been told sitting with your anger, depression, shame and rejection is how to achieve it? Practice reimagining your reality and redirect your mind every time it goes where you don't want it to go.

Philomena made room for goodness in her life and pushed away the resentment, hurt and revenge. In 1952, a young 18 year old Irish girl named Philomena had a whirlwind encounter with a boy that resulted in pregnancy. Her dad sent her to Sean Ross Abbey and convent in Roscrea, a place for unwed mothers. The nuns made her work and do penance for her sin of fornication. They made it clear she should have a lifetime of confession and guilt for her sin. She worked all day except for one hour when she was allowed to see her son, Anthony. When Anthony was three, he was adopted for \$1000 by rich Catholic Americans against Philomena's wishes. She never saw him again.

She had to stay at the abbey and pay penance until she was 22. Then Philomena continued with her life. She became a nurse, she got married and had two more children, but she never forgot the trauma of going through labor with no pain medication, more payment for her sin, and watching her child be taken away without her consent.

On Anthony's 50th birthday, she confided in her daughter. They set out on a quest to find Anthony with the help of a journalist named Martin Sixsmith. The nuns were no help. Behind their humble and sweet disposition were lies, secrets and misinformation. Later, she found out they kept the biggest secret of all.

Philomena and Martin headed to Washington, D.C. to find more answers. Martin discovered that Anthony had been renamed Michael Hess. Michael was a successful attorney and politician who advised two U.S. presidents. Sadly, he died of AIDS in 1995. After talking to Michael's partner, Peter, they found out that Michael knew he was adopted from Ireland and he even tried to find Philomena by visiting the abbey for answers. Just as with Philomena, the nuns lied and misguided him. Philomena realized they had been looking for one another and it soothed her heart to know he tried. Michael knew his Irish roots and his adoption story affected him so much he requested his ashes be buried at the abbey where his life with his mother began and lasted for three years. Philomena and Martin went back to the abbey so she could see Michael's gravesite.

Martin was so angry at the nuns he burst through the living quarters. He found the same head nun when Philomena was there. She was a very old woman at this point. He chastised her for lying and keeping secrets and treating women harshly and without compassion. He wanted her to apologize to Philomena. Philomena told Martin to stop because it was her life, and her choice what she did about it. Philomena told the nun she forgave her even though it was hard. She told Martin that his anger must be exhausting. Philomena said, "I don't want to hate people. I don't want to be like you, Martin." Then Philomena left to go stand by her son's tombstone that had been there the whole time she had been searching.

She told Martin she wanted him to write her and Anthony's story. She said she wanted to bring light to the treatment of unwed mothers in the church, change some laws in Ireland about adoption and help other women find the children that were taken from them against their will.

Philomena understood that offering forgiveness did not equate to saying that what they did was okay. Forgiveness unburdened Philomena from being tethered to the wrongs committed by others. Even though the nun never apologized or asked to be forgiven or even saw any wrong in her

manipulation, Philomena forgave anyway because she was following Jesus' example. Martin saw how Philomena handled her hurt and anger. He saw a different perspective; a different way to deal with it than his way. One can only hope it softened his heart.

Philomena chose wisely even though it was hard. So, I ask you which hard do you choose? Forgiveness is hard. Not forgiving is hard. Releasing it is hard. Clutching tightly is hard. Choose your hard. One brings release, peace and an unburdened mind. One keeps you tethered to anger, bitterness and maybe even revenge.

Forgiveness is the most important decision in a person's life that can bring freedom, peace and ultimately the conduit for goodness to those around you. The wrongs committed by others are never to be carried by you. Forgiveness is a gift to yourself to release someone's past action so your present and future can be full of goodness. Sadly, many don't even try. Unforgiveness keeps one captive to pain, bitterness and strife. People who choose to only sit with those feelings have always perplexed me. They want peace, but will not work to attain it. They hate feeling the way they do, but reject the steps to combat the feeling. It is like a key to their prison has been gifted to them and they choose not to unlock the lock while the object of their pain walks around outside the door going about their business. Unforgiveness only hurts the one who holds it. The object of the hurt is oblivious.

Many people try to work for forgiveness backwards. They want to feel forgiveness first, then give it. Let me tell you from experience, you will never feel like forgiving first. You have to do the work and your feelings will come later. Focusing on the person or situation will never help you move beyond it. Start with a tiny step towards forgiveness by praying for the person. Decide to refocus your mind away from the object of your pain.

What is Detrimental to Goodness?

A detriment to goodness is comparison. Comparison makes the fog that hides goodness. Comparison is the examination of something to find similarities and differences. I find the differences are pointed out more regularly and talked about because the person comparing seeks validation and wants to be superior. When people compare, they sometimes want sympathy because they think their problem is worse or they want validation to feel important. Reimagine what it would feel like if your goal was to encourage, come alongside and build up someone in a similar situation. Comparing to compete when there's nothing to win, harms your mind and damages relationships. Be a person others want to see because you make them feel heard and appreciated; not the person they try to avoid because all you do is talk about how bad you have had it compared to them.

How many times have you heard someone's nice adoption story and thought, "I wish..."? I wish my husband/partner was more supportive. I wish I was invited on their vacation. I wish I had a relationship with my biological family. I wish I could've had good adoptive parents. I wish my adoption would have been open. I wish my child had never searched. It leads to jealousy. It's like comparing apples to pineapples. Both may have the same word apple, but, like the word adoption, they could not be more different.

There will always be someone who has what you want. Don't judge or belittle. Ask intelligent questions. Build one another up. Be happy for them. Be fascinated instead of comparing. Learn from what others possess. Comparison devalues what you do have.

When you hear another perspective, it is true for that person, important to them, valid and useful. Their story does not nullify your story and vice versa. Have you ever thought that your adverse reaction to different

adoption perspectives is caused because you are subconsciously comparing your experience when you hear someone else explain their situation? Comparison leads to division, disputes and arguments. It is not useful.

Learn how to use your story in useful ways. Being able to use your story to educate and encourage is a skill used by mature people. Using your story to get sympathy, make you feel superior or get the upper hand is what immature people do because they have a low view of themselves. Develop the desire to show goodness.

Become An Advocate

There are some situations you can only truly wrap your head and heart around if you have experienced them. Being able to extract from your personal experiences to help others going through similar situations is a good skill to have. You can find purpose in your experience and use your experience to pour into others. You might be only 2% of the population, but you are 100% an expert in your own life and can help others with similar situations.

So, instead of comparing, become an advocate for changes that are important to you because you have adoption experience. Become a counselor, work at a pregnancy center, write your own book to help people with adoption issues. I know it will have a different perspective than mine, and it will have different strategies to cope. I am a Life Coach that helps struggling women cope with adoption issues. I believe my gift is to help women with my unique perspective so they can find purpose, healing and hope. What purpose can you find with what you have been dealt? Your story may be filled with rejection, abuse and confusion, but having an overcomer's story will help others. How will you use your experience? Build others up, not tear them down. Reimagine a good future instead of staying in bondage. People are looking at you as an example whether you like it or

not. Do they see a good, compassionate overcomer or someone crushed under the weight of things out of their control?

Use the study guide and strategies that follow to help you discover how you can improve in this area of your life. I would love to hear your perspective.

My email is adoptionreimagined@gmail.com or you can contact me through my website at www.adoptionreimagined.com.

You can follow me on Facebook at facebook.com/steepedinpurpose.

I have tips for women in the adoption arena on my YouTube channel [@adoptionreimagined](https://youtube.com/adoptionreimagined).

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's 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?
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?
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.”
7. Make a list of good things in your life. Focus on those things because what you feed grows. Focus on the future and not the past. Being good does not bring a painful past up over and over.
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, denial, all, must, are not good.
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 those can be a bond and feeling of not alone instead of a division and isolating.
20. Make a list of ways you can show goodness and start today.