

Twenty Things Adopted Persons Want You to Know

From the book "Twenty Things Adopted Kids Wish Their Adoptive Parents Knew" by Sherrie Eldridge (1999)

1. I suffered a profound loss before I was adopted. You are not responsible.
2. I need to be taught that I have special needs arising from adoption loss, of which I need not be ashamed.
3. If I don't grieve my loss, my ability to receive love from you and others will be hindered.
4. My unresolved grief may surface in anger toward you.
5. I need your help in grieving my loss. Teach me how to get in touch with my feelings about my adoption and then validate them.
6. Just because I don't talk about my birth family doesn't mean I don't think about them.
7. I want you to take some initiative in talking about my birth family.
8. I need to know the truth about my conception, birth, and family history no matter how painful the details may be.
9. I am afraid I was "given away" by my birth mother because I was a bad baby. I need you to help me dump my toxic shame.
10. I am afraid you will abandon me.
11. I may appear more "whole" than I actually am. I need your help to uncover parts of myself that I keep hidden so I can integrate all the elements of my identity.
12. I need to gain a sense of personal power.
13. Please don't say I look or act just like you [or other members of my adoptive family]. I need you to acknowledge and celebrate our differences.
14. Let me be my own person...but don't let me cut myself off from you.
15. Please respect my privacy regarding adoption. Don't tell other people without my consent.
16. Birthdays may be difficult for me.
17. Not knowing my full medical history may be distressing at times.
18. I am afraid I will be too much for you to handle.
19. When I act out my fears in obnoxious ways, please hang in there with me, and respond wisely.
20. Even if I decide to search for my birth family, I will always want you to be my parents.

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