

THE PROCESS OF WAITING

PRESENTER: Vanessa Mills

WHEN: Monday 3 March 2007 between 6.30 and 9.00 pm

LOCATION: Bower Place, Level 2/55 Gawler Place, Adelaide

FEE: N/A

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The journey to becoming an adoptive family, or extending your family through adoption, can be long, highly process driven, and filled with uncertainty. The aim of this workshop is to assist waiting families in managing this often difficult time.

During the first part of the workshop, Meredith DuCaine from AFIS, will summarize what happens to your application during the unpredictable time frames between when it leaves Australia and the time where a child is matched to your family. She will also discuss what AFIS can and cannot do to assist you during this period.

During the main part of the workshop, Vanessa Mills from Bower Place, will discuss the types of issues that can emerge for a family or individual during the process of waiting, and to assist in developing strategies when things become difficult. Topics to be covered include:

- Managing the uncertainty of the adoption process,
- What to do with relationship and other personal difficulties that can emerge during this time,
- Managing the inevitable life changes that occur as life keeps going while your file sits waiting,
- Talking to your other children about the waiting process,
- Managing when life is not where you expected it to be by the time your child is matched to you,
- Understanding that you may change your mind about adoption (more than once) during what may be an extended wait,
- Recognizing the different ways that people have of managing themselves during this process, and
- Specific strategies to assist with the waiting process.

Finally, during the final 30-minutes of the workshop, participants will have the opportunity to raise any other issues that they feel are important during the process of waiting directly with Vanessa Mills.

Vanessa Mills *B.A (Hons). M. Psych., PhD.*
Registered Psychologist

Vanessa is a clinically trained psychologist, registered with the South Australian Psychology Board, and is a member of the Australian Psychological Society. She has over 10 years of experience as a researcher, lecturer and clinician. In this time, she has explored many areas of psychology, including attachment issues in blended families, neuropsychological functioning, decision making and cross cultural issues in Defense personnel, and patterns of mental health service use in individuals exposed to trauma. She has authored and co-authored a number of papers, particularly in the areas of cross cultural experiences and decision making.

In terms of therapeutic approaches, Vanessa has trained in Systemic, Cognitive-Behavioural, and Acceptance and Commitment frameworks. At Bower Place, she applies these techniques to the general areas of depression/anxiety and relationship difficulties. She also specialises in attachment issues in blended families (including adoption, foster care, and step-families) and adjustment difficulties following family disruptions. She is also specialized in conducting neuropsychological assessments in both adults and children to assess multiple areas of neurocognitive functioning, and provides assessments of the functional impact of any deficits.

Vanessa is also an adoptive parent, with a daughter from China. She and her husband are also hoping to become parents for a second time, with a current application with the China program.

Please register your interest in attending with AFIS via email

adoptions@dfc.sa.gov.au or by phone on 8207 0060.

or with Bower Place vanessa.mills@bowerplace.com.au or by phone 8221 6066

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