

Inter-Country Adoptee Perspectives: Would we Adopt or Not?
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Great question!

As first preference, no I would not adopt. However, that said, if my situation resulted in an inability to conceive then I would look at adopting from overseas but preferably a child who came from my own birth country so the chances of them looking similar to me was optimal. This is because I understand the struggles that arise when you have no physical validation of how you look in your own family or surroundings.

Thanks for asking!

Analee



Great topic! Before my reunion I was of the view that I preferred to adopt a child, particularly one from Taiwan. My reasons: I felt that as an adopted person I would be in a better position to understand my child's challenges as well as provide a positive role model for my child. I also felt, and still feel, that from a global consumption/environmental impact perspective, there are already enough people in the world - so why add another mouth to feed by giving birth? Plus, if there's already a child who is parentless, provide him/her with love and care.

However, now that my eyes have been opened up about the degree of trauma that adoptees in general, and inter-country adoptees in particular, face, I'm not interested in adopting. I don't think I would have the patience to deal with such deep-seated emotional pain - as well as the possible physical health problems that an adoptee may have. As Nancy Verrier states, adoption parenting is parenting plus. To add to all of this, I'm not confident there are enough support services to assist adoptive parents or that education and health professionals know how to address the needs of both adoptees and their adoptive parents. Furthermore, I've heard that adoptive parents find it difficult to gain parental leave for sorting out their adoption/post-adoption situation. In other words, in my eyes, adoption parenting is more work with less community support. I don't think I have the patience and the energy to want to deal with this combination. I applaud those parents who have the guts to honestly recognize their children's pain and then find the patience, energy and love to care for them. I have the former - I don't have the latter.

Regards,
Ilan

To adopt a child from another country takes a special person. Someone who understands the journey of an adoptee. An adoptee needs a parent who understands the inner struggles and disconnect from their ethnic heritage and will always love that child with all their individual needs. Adoptees need a leader and support system to help them through adolescence. Personally, I don't think I could handle that role after evaluating my own personal experiences. I think my choice to have kids has more weight in my answer than the opportunity of adopting or not adopting.

I support adoption and the parents that welcome adoptees into their homes and raise them the same way they would with a biological child. Continuing education and understanding of the adoptee experience after the diapers are free is the bridge that will fill the gap of understanding about the full role of an adoptive parent.

My life is unwritten. Someday I may choose to have kids. Adoption is definitely an option. I hope they will improve Post Adoption programs for the future generations. We need mentally and physically health children to grow up and take care of our planet.
Peace in every step.

Jared Rehberg, Vietnamese Adoptee
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Prior to being in a committed and long term relationship that had the prospect of us being parents, I had always said I'd not adopt. This was because of my own journey in understanding what it takes to be an adopted child and come through the journey relatively emotionally healthy, well adjusted and balanced – the mental and emotional fortitude to deal with the significant trauma of loss and grief that often goes unrecognized by society at large - because inter-country adoption is still portrayed as an altruistic act by adoptive parents who want to “save” a child from a life of “poverty” and lack of “opportunities”. My belief is that it is this blind attitude towards adoption created by well meaning altruistic (and usually religious) first world adoptive parents that does the most damage to inter-country adoptees - who need huge amounts of unconditional emotional love, tolerance, empathy and understanding to deal with the history we are born with.

I would not have adopted purely because I do not believe that our society as a global entity is adopting for the right reasons and I would not want to support this created market. This is because we in the first worlds do not do enough to address the underlying causes that create orphans. Adopting from 3rd world countries is done not as a last solution to children being left homeless and without a family, but it is driven largely by organizations who thrive off the needs of adoptive parents who cannot have children of their own and have turned orphaned children into a common commodity that you can purchase for any price. And if you don't want to wait too long, you just have to choose the country that has the “shortest” turnaround time.

If our globe was really interested in meeting the needs of children who are left parentless, hand in hand with what we know today of the struggles inter-country adoptees deal with when removed from their birth country, why aren't adoptive parents moving to the child's country of birth to live and raise the adoptee there – and why don't we see many adoptive parents wanting children who are older or with deformities or handicaps? Why do we see adoptive parents choosing the country of adoption by which country has the shortest queue or easiest process to get through? Is the country of birth this insignificant? Why do we see so many celebrities adopting when with their status and money, they could do more to stop the need for children to be orphaned and hence “help” more orphans than just the one or two that they adopt?

Has my view changed since being in a position to want to have children and becoming a parent? For a fleeting moment I thought maybe I'd “consider” adopting a child if I was infertile, but then I questioned why I would now consider adoption. To be honest, it would be because I was being purely selfish in wanting to become a parent and experience that phase of life. I wouldn't want to miss out and never know what it would be like. I didn't want to see the rest of my life being like where it was already – just more of the same. I wanted something new in my life that would help me to continue changing and challenging me. This need would become a priority over standing up for the principle that children should not be adopted just so I (or anyone else) could experience being a parent if I couldn't have experience it naturally.

Now that the fleeting moment is over and I have a child of my own, I would again say no to adopting a child. I know there are children out there who “need” but at the same time, I could not justify supporting an industry that promotes the creation of “orphans” and downplays the significant emotional turmoil that an adoptee has to deal with. An example of this downplay is the lack of Post Adoption Support services all these wealthy first world countries have. Why is it that the Governments elected by the people of these first world countries pump money into helping

the adoption market continue, but do nothing or very little to help those who experience this system? In Australia, we have a fully funded and resourced Government Department in every state to support the adoption of children for prospective parents, but once the child is in the country, the majority of states/territories have no funding, personnel, resources and services to help the adopted child. Inter-country adoption is still promoted today as something that “benefits” the child without wanting to expose that under the glossy façade, there are human souls (orphans) who need “real” help that is given without the expectation of the giver receiving something in return i.e., parenthood. There are other ways to “help” children who have lost their birth family – why does providing them with a surrogate family get promoted as the “only or best” way?

Actually, I have considered adopting internationally. I would be interested because I feel that with my experiences and awareness, I could help guide the child through difficult identity struggles and support in a way that I did not have. Of course, my experience may not necessarily solve or be “better than” any other experience, but I would welcome both the challenge and camaraderie. I certainly understand the issues associated politically and legally with intercountry adoption along with the cultural and identity struggles of the adoptee in a new country and culture. However, often times being adopted in a more affluent country offers better circumstances and more opportunities (or a different set of opportunities) the child would otherwise not have in their birth country. And due to unfortunate circumstances, the child is up for adoption, having an adoptive family is often a better option. Does this imply that I am “better” than what the child would have had? That is conjecture and cannot be answered, but I know that if there is the possibility for adopting a child, I believe I would be a good candidate and a parent.

I am not involved in the politics of adoption, but I do know enough to know that adoptees have very little voice and say in the process. It is a process and institution dominated by social workers and adoption specialists. While they are necessary, I believe that the voices of adoptees need to be a key part of this process to inform adoptive parents, agencies, and even birth parents about the costs and risks of adoption.

All this being said, yes, I am interested in adopting internationally. While I would hope that there would be a day when adoption doesn't occur, as long as it does, I hope to provide a safe, loving, and comfortable home for the child and to continue to promote adoptee voices in the process of adoption and in post-adoption.

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I have given a great deal of thought to the question of whether or not to adopt.

When I was younger - i.e. in my 20's & 30's - I was intent on having a biological child. I felt a great need to experience what I had been denied as an adoptee - to realise a connection with a biological family of my own.

However, as I approached my late 30's I realised that the chances of having a biological child were remote. It was at this stage in my life that I began to consider the possibility of adoption. Over the years, I have become more comfortable with the notion of adopting a child. I am a single working woman in my late forties - so perhaps I have left things a little late. Still, I would not rule out the option of adoption of a child.

I am an adult adoptee of Jamaican origin, born in England and adopted by white English parents.

I would choose to adopt a child of African/Caribbean origin.

Maria Carter

I have considered adoption myself but I don't know if I would go through with it knowing the feelings of abandonment and identity issues an adopted child would have. I wonder if I adopted a child would he/she relate to me (because I'm also adopted), would this lessen their feelings of 'not fitting in', 'being different'. I have a child of my own and I think it's wonderful and special to be biological related to someone and I think there is a bond between being biological related that you would never get being adopted. Would it be better for children without parents to be raised in an orphanage where they would be raised in their culture with other children from the same country???? Would it be better to adopt from the same country ??? These are questions I ask myself which is why I wouldn't adopt.

Regards
Catherine

I would adopt because I am totally biased (go adoptees!). Also, I think it would be special because I have 2 generations of adoptees in my (adoptive) family in the USA.

My (adoptive) maternal grandmother, Lucy Jing Jue (1911-1995) was a Chinese adoptee like me, and we had a special connection. Grandmother Lucy (I called her "Popo") lived with us growing up in Laguna Beach, California. Lucy was born in 1911, and she was the first person of "color" and the first Chinese American female to go to college in her Los Angeles community - UCLA, on a full scholarship....so I was always really proud of my grandmother! (After graduating from UCLA in the early 1930s, she went to teach English in China as a Chinese adoptee from America.)

Looking at my (adoptive) grandmother gave me a great sense of pride of being both adopted and Chinese.

Hope this helps!

All best wishes,
Jennifer
(Chinese Adoptee from Laguna Beach, California)

I hadn't really thought much about whether I would adopt or not. If I were to adopt, I think I would try to adopt from South Korea, where I was adopted from because my experiences are as a Korean adoptee. I think it's important for adoptees to have strategies to know how to deal with issues that may arise from being adopted and for transracial adoptees, to have someone that knows what it is like to be a minority and to know how to confront discrimination because of their physical appearance. I think this support is important to have within the family. Adoptees that

adopt would be able to give their adopted child that support based on their personal experiences. I don't think I have a clear yes or no answer to the question on whether I would adopt or not. Loss is part of the adoption process in 'Western' societies because it replaces parents and tries to replace identities. And for that reason, I think adoption is a difficult choice to make because ultimately it is a decision made by others for the child being adopted.

Jessica

In principle, I wouldn't want to adopt and I also want the experience of having my own child. Completely selfish and self-serving reason, I know. But then I don't know the feeling of being unable to conceive, so I can't say conclusively whether I would or would not adopt. It's quite paradoxical. I am most strongly opposed to adoption from my own birth country, Korea on principle. Yet, if faced with the possibility of having to adopt in order to have a family, I would want to adopt a Korean child. Confused answer, sorry. Guess I like to think I'm more steadfast in my views than I really am ☺.

Blossom

I think I would not adopt a foreign child.

The only country would be India and the only possibility if my husband is Indian too. And I hope it would be one of the most important things to know the parents and to be sure that it is legal and that the child could stay in contact with them.

Swati

I would adopt if I qualified! Don't know that I ever would because I'm still single and have a mental illness. I already thought I'd support inter-country adoption IF it is proven that a child has no other apparent option. Having travelled to Vietnam, the country of my birth and inter-country adoption, and having seen the most beautiful babies and children withering away in orphanages, I'm now 100% pro inter-country adoption. My thoughts are that if any of those children could be immediately in the care of a loving, well meaning and well screened adoptive family, then that is what I would wish for each of them. Even with money and good intentions of the best of orphanages, no little soul should be left as "nobody's child" in an orphanage. It broke my heart to see these modern day orphans in April this year. It seems just SO unnecessary.

Even though my life with my adoptive family was not ideal and I even suffered pretty outrageous physical, emotional, and mental abuse from my adoptive parents, I still think I was lucky to be adopted into a wealthy family and country. Lucky because with all the problems I had, I had the resources to help me overcome them. And all these problems aside, I had every opportunity to shoot for the stars in life. Education, career wise and personally. I also had all the resources possibly available to help me heal the wounds of my orphan past. Even though the best of resources never helped me to perfectly heal my wounds, until I actually found my birth mother just this year.... I'd choose this struggle and all the trappings of my western life over the pain of growing up an orphan, never with a family and/or resources to help me through these things.

TO ADOPT OR NOT TO ADOPT, THAT'S THE QUESTION

*"When I look
into the eyes of my heritage
I feel the heart of my father"*

Eon Jung

The question if adoptees themselves would adopt is many times (mis)interpreted as a causal perspective of the success of their own adoption. Which is a questionable conclusion due the fact, that experiences are so diverted, many times undefined and the deeper layers of its reasoning unrevealed and vulnerable. Especially for those who are expected to understand this the most, the adoptees, are in many ways 'blinded' or confused by the wish to help or to be helped, or to cover the deepest fear to learn (the need) 'how to carry' the 'burden' of (their own) abandonment.

Nonetheless their perspectives of course are important. But we have to understand the constitution wherein we have been raised and developed has influenced our ideas and concepts regarding adoption. I have not met and seen many adoptees that understood, know and undergo their adoptions 'fully' without have been tempted to release their anger and emotional breakdowns and came out of this situation with strength and relief.

Those who do not have and had these experiences are the potential ones who will consider adoption easier. Some see the possibility of adopting themselves, as an appreciation to the lives they had themselves; in many ways an unspoken but explicit form of gratitude and loyalty towards their adoption parents wherein their paradigm has been developed. But the question remains, where is the source of live in this 'picture'; with other words, the mother (and father) who conceived the child.

The question if adoptees would adopt themselves is, because of this underlying question, an almost unbearable one. We can try to rationalize and determine the aspects of the consequence of this essential question to a minimum, but the question will remain.

If we see the child, we cannot pass the heart of the mother. And with this in mind, we cannot pass the bereavement of the on going history of (our own) adoption. But we can see a certain common understanding if we dare to pass the rationality of the mind and try to see and understand the deeper drives of our motives and decisions.

The moment of understanding that live seeks connection with the collective soul of consciousness; you can observe that the movement of live towards adoption is universally a very a clear one. *It looks for the source and tries to find a way to (re)connect with it and to heal its inner grief and sadness.* 'Abandonment' is an essential trauma for living creatures. To fully understand its impact and the consequences on further developments in live, we need to dare to get onto the path of self-awareness and inner development; An uneasy but worthy exploration into the human heart and soul.

The lesson to pursue this quest is, to prepare and to get in ease with yourself to fully explore the (common) soul; you need a certain distance towards the unproved emotion of awareness and the unpleasant experience to get disconnected with the daily indulgence of stimulants. But at the end, you will feel a connection to each human being and its origin. And if you reach this state of being, you will experience a deeper feeling and understanding of human dignity and the flow of live. There, at this point, is no question or answer on adoption or abandonment anymore but only the sense of belonging. And my guess is that this deepest feeling of belonging (re)connects us, with and to our own past and future. Understanding, that each act and easy acceptance of relinquishment breaks the vulnerable balance of human lives. If this is not respected it will calls its price sooner or later.

To conclude in a Shakespearian way; to adopt or not to adopt, that's the question. But I sense, if you understand the above, everybody will find the right answer.

Warm regards,

bonjour à tous,

Je suis d'origine vietnamienne et j'ai été adoptée à l'âge de 3 ans par une famille française. J'ai toujours bien acceptée l'idée d'avoir été adoptée parce que c'était la guerre au Vietnam. J'ai eu l'immense chance de retrouver ma famille biologique et depuis je retourne rendre visite à ma famille vietnamienne dès que je peux. L'orphelinat d'où je viens n'existe plus, un nouveau a été créé. Tous les enfants qui y sont actuellement ne sont pas voués à l'adoption. Il y en a une centaine, petits et grands. J'ai pu leur rendre visite à deux reprises. J'ai pu réaliser qu'ils ne sont pas malheureux du tout. Ils forment une grande famille tous ensemble. Ils vivent mieux que certains enfants de ma famille et sont sûrs d'aller à l'école. Certains sont vraiment orphelins de père et de mère, mais pour la majorité il reste toujours un membre de la famille. C'est pour cela qu'ils ne sont pas mis à l'adoption. Pour mieux comprendre je vais vous raconter une petite anecdote concernant le filleul d'une de mes amies qui parraine un enfant, qui a maintenant 17 ans et qui a été viré de l'orphelinat pour mauvaise conduite. Mon amie au début était complètement affolée, car elle pensait que l'enfant serait à la rue. En fait, il avait été renvoyé chez sa grand-mère!!! Cet orphelinat vit grâce aux dons, aux différents parrainages et à la culture de bonzaï frangipanier. Quand je vois ces enfants, je me dis que la chance qu'ils ont c'est d'être dans leur univers, leur culture... L'adoption internationale déracine les enfants. Personnellement, je serai toujours entre deux... Je suis entièrement pour le parrainage et pour certains cas l'adoption. Maintenant que le Vietnam est en paix, si certaines institutions apprenaient à la famille que le parrainage existe et n'incitaient pas les parents à abandonner leurs enfants, il y aurait moins d'orphelins aujourd'hui. En écrivant ceci, je voulais aussi saluer le dévouement d'une soeur (décédée depuis peu) qui faisait tout pour parrainer les enfants du Vietnam, afin qu'ils puissent aller à l'école et avoir de la nourriture et surtout qu'ils restent dans leur famille!!! Car envoyer les enfants à l'étranger ne règlera pas le problème de la pauvreté. Maintenant, concernant l'adoption, l'idéal serait d'être adopté dans son propre pays, mais rarement possible. Je suis pour l'adoption simple, qui impose aux adoptants de garder contact avec les origines de l'enfant. Pour finir, je dirai que j'aie payé cher le prix de la vie!!!

Lê Thi My Hoàng

Hello everyone,

I am born Vietnamese and a French family adopted me at the age of 3 years old. I have always agreed with the idea of being adopted as it was during the Vietnam war. I have had the great chance of reconnecting with my biological family and since then I'm visiting my Vietnamese family as often as I can. The orphanage where I came from does not exist anymore; a new one has been created. All the children who are presently living there are not up for adoption. There are about one hundred of them, young and old.

I have been able to visit them twice.
I realize that they are not unhappy at all.
They have created one large family all together.
They have a better life than some of the children in my family and they are certain to go to school.
Some of them are real orphans, but most of them still have a father or mother.
That's why they're not up for adoption.
For your better understanding, I will tell you an anecdote concerning the godson of one of my friends who has sponsored a child, who is now 17 years old and who has been withdrawn from the orphanage for misconduct.
At first, my friend was worried as she thought the child would live on the streets.
In fact, he was sent back to his grandmother!!!
This orphanage survives because of donations, with different sponsors and with the planting of bonsai.
When I see these children, I tell myself that they have the chance to live within their world, their culture...
The international adoption uproots the children.
Personally, I will always be in between...
I favour entirely the sponsorship and the adoption in some situations.
Now that Vietnam is at peace, if some institutions acknowledged the family that sponsorship does exist and that giving up their children is wrong, we would have fewer orphans today.
Also, I would like to honour the devotion of a sister (deceased not too long ago) who did all she could to sponsor the children of Vietnam, so they can go to school and have food on the table but most of all they can remain with their own families!!!
Sending the children abroad cannot solve poverty issues.
Now, regarding the adoption, ideally the child should be adopted in his own country, but it's rarely possible.
I favour the simple adoption, imposing the adoptive parents to recognize the child's origins.
In conclusion, I would say that I paid dearly for the price of life!!!

Lê Thi My Hoàng

I am a trans-racial long term fostered / adopted adult living in the UK. Would I adopt?

Yes I would...reasons: purely from experience - there was no way that I would be returned to my birth parents ... hence the option for me was to languish in an orphanage and be raised by the state sometimes not a bad experience for some ... but instead I went to a foster home to be raised in a "family". I have had that experience, some good, some not so, but that normal life.....

I would adopt a child ... but only with the view that I had had plenty of input on raising my awareness of the difficulties a child might have and ways of addressing the adoptive child's needs through out their own life cycle. That I would see that I am not the only parent in this child's life, there were parents before me, and still are, and how to integrate that into their whole life story ... in other words have a more open mind about adoption and what the child I am adopting would need and what I would need to be the best person in that child's life

If I had not have a family, then I would not have wanted to be in an orphanage all my growing life, and then at age 18 be out on the streets so to speak, with no connections to anyone permanent, I would not want that for any other child either if that was the only option open to them

Shelialie

I would definitely adopt a child. In fact we are considering adoption right now. I feel as an adopted child from Bangladesh that I am truly fortunate to have the life that I have and would love to share it with someone who needs a loving family. I know first hand that adoption can be a wonderful thing. I feel it gave me another chance at life and I know I could do that for someone else.

Harmony
