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## **Adoption: Making Sure You're Ready**

**By Yvonne Volante**

Adopting a child of any age is a very difficult, long process, and it should be an equally well-thought-out personal consideration -- whether you will be a single parent, want to adopt a child outside of your native country, or are already in a marriage with your biological children.

Here are some of the things you will need to ponder to be able to make a fully informed, satisfying decision for both the child or children and yourself and your family.

For example, do you feel that it's possible to love an adopted child as much as a birth child? What if this is an infertility issue, yet you haven't given up hope that one day your family may produce a biological child? How will this interfere, if at all, with your feelings toward your adoptive child, should this happen?

One red flag should be obvious, but often isn't: Make absolutely certain that, if you have a partner, he or she does not have any mixed feelings about adopting, and really would prefer to have birth children. Make sure you and your partner have thoroughly discussed what you believe it will be like to raise an adopted child.

And even if you "sometimes" have these same feelings, that's another really important thing to consider; you should most likely give this more thought if you are having any doubts at all. Maybe you've always dreamed of adopting, even if you had birth children. Do you still feel that way? What about your extended family? Will they support your decision, and if not, will that matter to you?

Another, more obvious red flag is, are you in a position to financially afford to adopt and raise this child?

Financial preparedness is just one aspect; are you also emotionally prepared to be a parent, for either the first time or in the case of an additional child? And do you worry about adopting a child who may have serious emotional and/or physical problems, either now or in the future?

Another, last thing, is something many people don't think about: Are you adopting out of "guilt," or do you believe that adoption is a good thing because it saves a child from a difficult life?

There are a lot of questions associated with adoption, but they are all for the benefit of, first, the child; and second, you and your family or lifestyle. If the two don't connect in a way you find satisfying, it may be time to seriously reconsider your decision or put it off for another day. It's that important.

Yvonne Volante, the author, is a big fan of <http://www.fdforadoption.com> and writes for fdforadoption.com, which is the premier adoption resource on the internet. You can see all of the articles over at <http://www.fdforadoption.com>

## Adoption Is A Great Option

By Analeese Burnabaker

Are you hoping to expand your family by adding a child or children to your home? If so, then you are probably busy considering all of your options for becoming a parent. Of course, there is the option of having your own biological children, which most people go for, but then there is also the option of adoption.

Quite honestly, I had never seriously considered the option of adoption until quite recently. I have been married for many years and have had no problems getting pregnant, and I always just assumed that adoption was only for people who had trouble having biological children of their own. I am so grateful that my perspective was expanded recently by a friend.

I guess it was ignorance that led me to believe that adoption was only a backup plan for couples who were trying to have a family. Perhaps because I didn't know anyone who had gone through an adoption for a child simply because they felt like they wanted to. That is, until I met my friend Kate.

Kate and her husband have been married for several years. They are able, as far as they know, to parent biological children, yet they have decided instead to go with adoption for building their family. As Kate told me this over coffee one day, I couldn't help but stop her and ask why. Why would she and Mike go through the sometimes awful process of adoption when they could get pregnant on their own? And why, more importantly, would they put themselves through all of the emotional trauma that comes with adoption when they could just have their own kids?

Kate laughed and then began to explain the process that she and Mike went through in deciding on adoption. She explained to me that they simply have become overwhelmed with the amount of need in the world and they have determined that adoption is one small but significant way that they can contribute to making the world a better place. Kate and Mike believe that everyone has a role to play in making the world better, and for them, they are committed to adoption. They are committed to taking children into their homes that might otherwise bounce from home to home in the foster care system and never actually be adopted.

If you are looking for a way to do something great for a child, for your family, and for the world, consider adoption. Of course, it is a much more complex issue than I can discuss here. Do some research, talk with your spouse and anyone you know that has gone through the adoption process.

Analeese Burnabaker is a family therapist who has been studying the affects of adoption on the family for several months now. Kate and Mike's story intrigued her. See <http://www.funadoption.info> for more on adoption.

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