

Adoption Soup: Exploring the Complex Needs of the Adoption Triad

Utilizing the infant adoption process as a lens for deepening an understanding of the complex needs of those impacted by adoption in its many forms, we will examine implications for counselors working with biological parents, adopting parents, and children experiencing adoption across the lifespan.

- I. Understanding ADOPTION SOUP: The emotional work of birth, placement, building a family, and joining a family examined through various theoretical frameworks.

- The work of expectant parents (biological parents)

- The work of adopting parents

- The work of the child

- Lifelong Themes

"Soup is a masterpiece in a bowl.... each ingredient enhances the others."

- II. Examining the parallel decision-making processes and the transfer of roles and responsibilities that bring birth and adopting parents together in adoption planning

- Making a parenting plan OR an adoption plan

- Building a family through adoption OR being childfree

- Steps of an adoption

- Clarification of roles and transfer of key responsibilities

- Trauma informed placement planning

"Adoption is the most intentional process on Earth."

– Jody Cantrell Dyer

- III. Describing the Work of the Child in adoption with implications for conceptualizing formational experiences of birth and adoption

- Needs of the child pre-birth

- Needs of the child around birth

- Needs of the child after birth

- Needs of the child across the lifespan

"Adoption is not about finding children for families. It's about finding families for children." – Joyce Maguire Pavao.

- IV. Implications for Practice Today

- Positive Adoption Language

- Normative Crisis of Adoption & a proposed treatment model

- Post Adoption Depression

- Openness in Adoption

"Adoption is complications, but it is also rich with narratives of strength." – Jillian Lauren

Stacey Buford, MDIV brings over fifteen years of experience providing clinical care to individuals, families, and groups in hospitals, adoption agencies, therapeutic foster care agencies, and psychiatric residential treatment centers. She is currently a candidate for the Educational Specialist degree in Professional Counseling-Clinical Mental Health at Middle Tennessee State University with a focus on trauma informed care and practice. She holds a Master of Divinity degree and advanced post-master's clinical residency specializing in women's health, perinatal loss, high risk pregnancy, and care of the adoption triad. Ms. Buford served as founder and inaugural chair of the Adoption Task Force which transformed the practice of care for the adoption triad at Northside Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia which has the distinction of delivering more babies per year than any other hospital in the United States.