

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER ASKING ADOPTIVE PARENTS REGARDING INFERTILITY

*Developed by Denise Kuehl, M.F.T.*

1. How has going through infertility changed you personally and/or your views on having children? (Have they decided parenting is more important than having the birth child?)
2. What are some tools you used that helped you deal with the grief of not being able to get pregnant? (Explore in detail their grief process using the grief sentences in the Practice Tool “Three Part Letter for Grieving,” if you are concerned they are not moving through the grief in a healthy way, or if you think they may be stuck somewhere.)
3. Was there a moment, or several moments, that was a “turning point” for you towards adoption?
4. It is normal that one person in the couple is open to considering adoption sooner than the other considers adoption. Did this occur with you, and, if so, how did you negotiate the differences? (This can be used to assist them in seeing how they may need to negotiate their differences in parenting styles, etc.)
5. How is the concept of adoption different for you now than when you were first diagnosed with infertility? (It is normal to have a strong negative reaction while in the early grief stages then to become more open as they progress.)
6. What do you anticipate will happen to your desire for a birth child once you adopt? Or what would your reaction be if you were to get pregnant after adopting? (Reassure it is OK to still have the desire, even though they are fully committed to adoption.)
7. What helps you deal with the “unfairness” of infertility and/or the feeling of second choice about adoption? (Give examples regarding how you are still not in the mother “club” or father “club” of childbirth experiences.)
8. How might you feel if you receive stares or questions regarding whether you have adopted your child? What might you say to your child? (Give general stories about how sometimes people in our culture stare at you if you have a child that looks different from you.)
9. How can I provide you with more support or information to help you discover whether or not you are ready for adoption? (You may make a referral to a therapist to help them assess their readiness.) This is a touchy situation, and needs to be handled with a lot of compassion, but may still need to be brought to the surface in order to provide them with an accurate mirror of their situation.
10. How does your family of origin feel about adoption, and are there adopted children in your extended family?

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