

TAGS: Trauma Related Issues; Child Attachment

Will My Adopted Child Love Me as Much as if I Was His Birth Mother?

OK, confession time: Have you ever, in the tiny dark corners of your mind, wondered if your adopted child will love you as much as if you had been his birth mother? Do you ever just for a tiny moment wonder if his love for her will be bigger or better than the love he has for you?

Will my adopted child love me as much as if I was his birth mother?

This isn't a question of what your rational mind thinks or what you would share with the whole world. This is that niggling fear that lays hidden in your brain to come out in the wee hours of the night when you can't sleep or when you've had a particularly hard day with your little darling.

One brave soul asked the following in an adoption support community:

I realize I have been stuffing a fear that one day my 3 year old son through adoption will realize I am not his birth mom and that he won't love me the same way. Our son, of course, knows he's adopted, we visit his birth family twice a year, and I've made him a life book. But although he "knows", I worry about the day when he gets to an age where he truly understood (psychologically) that "I was born to another mom."

I know it is ridiculous and insecure for me to think that. He and I are so close, and I love him so dearly, but I share him with another mom, and I will never be what she is to him. I suppose she could say the same of me.

What Lurks in the Dark Corners of Our Mind

It's an incredibly brave thing for this mom to share her fear. The response flooded in because she is not alone with this small niggling worry. The reality of adoption is that we share our beloved children with another family. We want them to love their first family, truly we do, but the irrational part of our mind worries ...

~Will they have enough love and time for all of us?

~Will our place in their lives will be solid enough and grounded enough that they'll always feel connected?

Truth be told, there is probably not a birth parent alive that doesn't share these same fears on some level as well. If, as adoptive parents we do our job well, their birth family will hold a special place in their heart, but so will we.

The beauty of finding connection in a support group is that you learn that you are not alone. If you find one in which all parts of the adoption triads (adopted people, birth parents, and adoptive parents) have a voice, you also learn that there is richness in other perspectives beyond your own. In this case, the

adoptive mom got to hear incredible encouragement from adult adoptees and birth mothers who reached out to offer their perspective.

What Adult Adoptees Had to Say

Sweet Mother, ... PLEASE don't sell him short by thinking he doesn't have enough room in his heart to love two people...after all, he will, in his lifetime, love many. You are right about never being the same person to him that the women who gave birth to him is. But by the same token, neither is she the woman to him that you are. And that's OK. You need to rest peacefully in your roll as his Mother and trust that you will nurture his heart and mind in a way that allows him to accept truth and to see ALL of the love that there is in the world for him.

I am an adoptee and reunited with my birth family as an adult. I can tell you that NOTHING can replace my (adoptive) mom. She's my mom, first and foremost. I love my birth family and am thankful for them, but they are added blessings, not replacements.

How very aware of you to recognize your feelings and work through them AND be sensitive to him. Even adoptive parents sometimes have processing to do, just like adoptees. Hugs. As to your concern, I can say as an adoptee, my parents are my parents and that will never change. My biological family is ancestry. As someone else so eloquently stated, love does not subtract, it multiples. Just like having a second child doesn't subtract your love from the first child, birth families typically don't take away. Just focus on your relationship with him, and be the one that is there for him if he decides to pursue one with his bio family some day.

[He] won't feel differently about you. I do think that there can come a difficult time of trying to reconcile all the feelings- loving you as a mom, missing his bio mom (even if he never knew her), feeling guilty and not wanting to hurt your feelings. He will still love you, but will need a little help to work through it all.

What a Birth Mother Has to Say

I am a birth mother and my son's adoptive mom will never be what I am to him, however, I will never be what she is to him either. I hope he grows to love us both, but that love will never be the same kind of love. I will always be his birthmom, but she will always be his mommy, and I don't want that to be any other way.

It's a beautiful thing when so many with differing perspectives on an issue can come together to share hope, encouragement and personal experience all for the sake of a child. Even if that child isn't their own. Again, there is tremendous benefit to being part of a support group. There are many online, adoption focused groups, such as the one that our partners at [Creating a Family host on Facebook](#). If you are interested in parent support groups, [NACAC has good resources for how to start one](#) in your area.

Open adoption can feel threatening or scary if an adoptive parent is worrying about how a child can love both parents. Navigating the dynamics of birth parent relationships can certainly trigger those fears. But if you are willing to put in the hard work to build healthy relationship for the sake of your child, those fears can be addressed and settled. [Embracing Open Adoption by C.A.S.E.](#) is a good tool for understanding how to do that.

Finally, if that niggling little fear is something you are concerned about, consider ways to equip yourself, address your fears and strengthen your relationship with your child. [Intentional Parenting: A Whole New Game](#) is an excellent strategic approach to doing just that.