



While going through infertility I began attending a Women's infertility support group. I was hesitant at first because I thought it would be full of crazed women willing to drug themselves up in order to get a litter of children. I was wrong because what I found was a room full of women who were just like me. We all are struggling to find answers to our infertility, having difficulties with relationships, and trying to curb the strong feelings not to lose our minds whenever we passed a pregnant woman on the street.

I learned a lot of helpful information from these meetings which helped me keep my sanity during the extremely stressful years of infertility treatments. One of the best pieces of advice I received quickly became my personal infertility mantra. It was that I was allowed to have ?avoidance without guilt.? So if I chose not to go to a baby shower, I shouldn't feel guilty. If I didn't go to a work gathering in fear of being stuck talking to the young women who are trying to get pregnant, then it was OK. Using this mantra helped me make some difficult decisions and still feel good about myself.

Since that mantra was so helpful for me during infertility I knew I'd need something new during the adoption process. I thought it would be something like ?Remember to sign all of the checks? or ?Always look presentable in front of the potential Birthparents.? Never did I expect to use the mantra told to me by an Adoptive mother and the leader of the Adoption Support Group I was attending.

## **My Mantra**

Her words were simple. ?It's not your job to save the world.? These words can be used during many different times throughout the adoption process. You don't have to adopt from a country where there are currently lots of homeless orphans. You don't have to adopt an older waiting child over a newborn. You don't have to accept an adoption case where the child has a disability or where the potential birthmother abused alcohol. You don't have to take a baby from the hospital after he was born and immediately diagnosed with a medical condition not seen in the ultrasounds. ?It's not your job to save the world.?

If you reached the decision to adopt then odds are it wasn't a simple road to get there. Maybe you were like me and sick and tired of not having control of my life. I felt like my days were dictated by doctor's appointments and blood tests. Once I chose to adopt I realized that this was finally going to be MY time to make MY decisions to create MY family. I felt like I deserved to be selfish. I would get the opportunity to make choices about ethnicity, health history and other factors that I would be unable to if I was a biological mother.

By truly accepting that ?It's not my job to save the world? I didn't feel guilty for choosing to adopt a newborn. I didn't feel guilty filling out the adoption form where I had to mark if I'd adopt a child with certain medical concerns or a complicated family medical history. Even at the hospital as I watched what I hoped to be my Son be born I was still willing to walk away from the situation if something unforeseeable occurred.

### **Sticking to My Mantra**

I still remember being dressed in a white sterile jumpsuit following the potential Birthmother's gurney as she was brought into the OR for the scheduled cesarean. I was quietly muttering to myself over and over ?It's not my job to save the world. It's not my job to save the world.? No one expected anything but a healthy baby boy but I had worked in the medical community long enough to know that the

unexpected does happen. The baby could have an undetected syndrome or the cord could be wrapped around his neck stopping the flow of oxygen. There could be complications during the delivery to cause lifetime medical issues. None of these thoughts were positive but they were realistic. Luckily he came out perfectly healthy and I was relieved.

I knew what my limitations were as a first time Mother and accepted them. I selfishly wanted what every parent wants, a healthy baby. Thanks to adoption, I now had the option of walking away from a situation that was overwhelming to me. If I had given birth to a child who had medical issues I of course would love and care for that child. I wouldn't have the choice to say, "Sorry but no. It's too much for me. I'll wait for another child." With adoption I could say those words.

In no way would saying "No" to a child been easy. I know it would had been extremely difficult. I had to remind myself what decisions I had made when I wasn't emotionally involved with an adoption case. I had to tell myself that raising a child with medical issues beyond what I comfortable with was not "my job." I knew "it's not my job to save the world." There would be someone else who was more qualified and would want to adopt that child. It would be unfair to that child and their Birthparents if I adopted the child just because I promised I would before the delivery.

## **Other Opinions**

Possibly I sound like a cold person. That's fine if you think that. I hear couples in the adoption process say that they will adopt the child that is born no matter what because they committed themselves to that potential Birthmother. That is their right to do that. Personally, I cannot understand that way of thinking. But part of the beauty of adoption is that everyone can make their own decisions on the best way to form their family.

If you are adopting as a couple, then you should discuss with topic with your partner as soon as possible. You could have very different views on this topic. Are you adopting for humanitarian reasons to help a homeless child or are you trying to add a child to your family? Are you willing to accept any medical issue that comes your way just as if you were the biological parents?

Maybe after your discussions, you'll end up using the same mantra that helped me get through my three adoptions. Or possibly you'll find a different mantra to give you comfort during the difficult decisions you will be making throughout the adoption process. Either way, find some helpful words which you can lean upon and use them as your personal mantra.

Danielle I. Pennel

Three Yellow Roses

[www.threeyellowroses.com](http://www.threeyellowroses.com)