



Heart to Heart ADOPTIONS

NEWSLETTER OF HEART TO HEART ADOPTION AGENCY

Microaggressions

These comments are considered "microaggressions."

You may be new to adoption or a veteran in your adoption

journey, however,

it's safe to say you as an adoptee, a birth mother, or adoptive parent have become

accustomed to

hearing and witnessing "microaggressions."

"Who are your real parents?"

"Was your mom on drugs?"

"I'm so sorry that you had to be adopted."

"How much did you cost?"

"You must be so grateful that you got chosen to be adopted."

"Why didn't your mom want you?"

These unintentional and sometimes intentional slights can imply that a child's adopted status or parents' adoptive status reflects some form of inferiority.



Prepare for Microaggressions

As an adoptive child, birth mother, and adoptive mother, be ready with a response. You can and should be in control of these situations where someone either intentionally or unintentionally says something insensitive.

Why Do You Ask?

Consider beforehand how you might handle a situation. One response is to say, "Why do you ask?" or "What are you suggesting?" These questions put the spotlight back on the questioner.

Let the other party hear their own statement. They may be unaware of the snubs that they convey.

My son often repeats the question. "Did you just ask me if my mom was on drugs? Was yours?"

Verbalize Your Observation

We have also suggested our children verbally make an observation about how a comment made

them feel. For example:

"When you said you were sorry I was adopted, I felt like being adopted is inferior in some way."



Set Limits

Allow yourself and your children to set limits. You may need to break off associations if you have a "repeat offender" in your associates.



In most situations, we shouldn't be shaming people but actively and proactively supporting every adoption triad member and teaching those who lack experience or are ignorant of adoption.

Microaggressions Can Come in Different Forms:

Micro-invalidations—This is the most subtle form of microaggression. These types of comments invalidate or negate experiences surrounding adoption.

Micro-insults—These are the most common form of microaggression. These are when people ask overly intrusive questions about adoption. Questions that suggest you owe the world an explanation into personal affairs because you are involved in adoption.

Micro-assaults—This is the most blatantly derogatory kind of microaggression. These comments are insulting and harmful. This type of assault should be addressed.

Always feel free to discuss your feelings about microaggressions. Contact us if you need to talk.

