

AM I READY TO ADOPT TRANSCULTURALLY?

A Self-Assessment Guide for Prospective Adoptive Parents by Pamela Servers

Please take some time to discuss these issues with your family. Also, remember that there is not always a clear right and wrong answer. These topics are meant to encourage discussion, openness, and honesty.

YOUR OWN CULTURAL IDENTITY AND KNOWLEDGE OF OTHER CULTURES

- When and how did you first become aware of your race and ethnicity?
- What role has this played in forming your values and attitudes?
- What is your earliest memory of a person of another race?
- What do you know about the race and culture of the child you want to adopt?
- How personally involved are you with other races and cultures?
- Have you had experience as a minority person? If so, what were your feelings?
- Can you identify positive role models in the culture of the child you wish to parent?
- What are the similarities and differences between your culture and the culture of your child?
- How can you begin to establish racial identity for an infant? For an older child?

YOUR SUPPORT FOR TRANSCULTURAL ADOPTION

- What led you to consider transcultural adoption?
- Do you know other parents who have already adopted transculturally?
- Are there people of other cultures or races within your immediate or extended family?
- Have you discussed transcultural adoption with the significant people in your life? With friends and neighbors who will be part of future support system?
- How have others reacted to your adoption of a child of a different race or culture? Are you prepared to comfortably and knowledgeably deal with others as needed?

OPPORTUNITIES FOR CULTURAL AND RACIAL AWARENESS

- What is the racial composition of your neighborhood, school and church?
- Will your child usually be “the different one” at family and social functions?
- Can you identify attitudes in your community concerning the child’s culture and race?
- Are same-race role models and peers available to the child on a daily basis?
- What racially mixed functions do you attend?
- Are you comfortable around others who are of a different race?

YOUR PARENTING SKILLS

- What do you already know about the child’s dietary, skin, hair and health care needs?
- Where can you go to learn about the personal care of the child?
- How will you involve same-race people in the child’s life?
- How do you think transcultural adoption may have a negative effect on you? On your family?
- How will you respond to the child when he or she is called racially derogatory names?
- How do you think the child will feel about growing up in a family of a different race or culture?