



## **Synopsis**

I tell you this story because for too many years, people have told my stories for me. I am ready to speak for myself. So where do I begin? ..... Juli Jeong Martin, transnational/transracial adoptee ..... Pieces of Me, Who do I Want to Be is a collection of stories, poems, art, music, quotes, activities, provocative questions, and more all for the young adopted person who wants to figure out his or her story but doesn't know where to begin. A submission based book with over 100 different pieces, this book was designed for the teen who happens to be adopted, but it will reach all those who live, love, and work with them. It is a book of voices, from ages 11 to 63, speaking honestly and authentically about what it means to be adopted. Most are adoptees from around the world some are transracial, some are international, some are from foster care, some are young, some are old. There are a few adoptive parents, birth parents, and professionals who share themselves in here as well. It is a series of experiences, expressions, feelings, hurts, hopes, dreams, and struggles from a wide range of individuals. Some will make you laugh, some will make you cry, some will make you happy, some will make you feel less alone, some will offer advice, and some will just share. All of them are figuring out where the Pieces of Me fit in with Who I Want to Be. Organized around the idea of putting a puzzle together, there are five major sections: 1. Gathering the Pieces ..... 2. Stolen Pieces ..... 3. Fitting the Pieces ..... 4. Sharing the Pieces ..... 5. Where do These Pieces Go?..... - all offering hope, encouragement, empowerment, and a sense of not being alone. Although it was conceived for the young adopted person, there are universal themes of healing, hope, and struggle all of us can resonate with. And if you are a parent, birth parent, or professional who works with adopted and foster kids, you will find a glimpse into their world, a place that you might not often be invited to share. This book has hands on activities for teens including t-shirts, sock bunnies, collage and postcards. There are thought provoking questions and places to doodle and think. Reading this book is not just for teens. Others who might read this include social workers who work with pre and post adoptive parents, teen group coordinators, therapists who work with the teen population, school counselors, pre and post adoptive parents, relatives and friends.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

Pieces Of Me gives an honest account of what it's like to be an adopted teenager. The voices of adoptees are allowed to come through and give a clear picture of all the things that adoptees feel. While very age appropriate, anyone who is involved in adoption can learn much from this book. As an adoptee myself, I identified with many of the essays and some brought out things that I had never considered before. I'd recommend Pieces Of Me; Who Do I Want To Be? to anyone who is adopted, loves an adoptee, or just wants to know what it's like to be adopted.

Pieces of Me: Who Do I Want to Be? gives voice to a striking range of adolescent perspectives on adoption. In this astonishingly vivid collection of essays, poetry, art work and songs, young adoptees give direct, honest voice to their inner thoughts and feelings about struggling to fit their personal pieces together. These contributors from around the world reflect highly diverse adoption experiences. The few adult contributors extend the process by revealing how later-life pieces fit together over time. Yet no matter how wonderful or problematic their adoptive experience, each piece reflect a sense of being different. This book, beautifully designed for adolescent readers, addresses the challenges of gathering pieces, losing pieces, reclaiming pieces and sharing pieces of one's identity. Just as no two snowflakes are the same, no two adoption experiences match perfectly. Each of these 107 compelling stories, conveyed in extraordinarily varied ways, reveals a unique perspective on growing up with an identity that sets one apart. Yet each voice reflects a journey toward identity. Some contributors struggled greatly in their journeys, others found an easier path. The voices speak to experiences of domestic or international adoption, interracial adoption and living in foster care. Some contributors grew up as only children; others lived with siblings - adoptive or biological. Whereas certain voices talk of ongoing anger, pain and struggle; others reflect joy, peace and comfort. Every young adoptee will resonate strongly with many of these voices and find a unique connection to a special few. Adult adoptees will wish they had read this in their teenage years. Yet these voices speak eloquently not only to other adoptees but to all

members of adoptive and birth families. Every family touched by adoption needs to consider how each member's pieces contribute to the larger jigsaw puzzle. Pieces of Me offers healing, help, and hope as contributors describe finding, reflecting on, struggling with and often embracing the pieces of their puzzles.

This is a powerful and important book! For the first time ever, adoptees and foster care teens tell their own stories in their own voices. I was so overcome with emotion I found I could only read a few entries at a seating. My high school age daughters (one international adoptee and one bio child) were captivated by the book. I asked my 12-year-old, adopted as an infant, if she wanted to read some of the articles with me at night before she went to bed. She said "no" and stated firmly that she wasn't interested. I had the book on my night stand and, a few nights later opened the door to my bedroom and saw my daughter reading the book--in secret. When I later discussed an article in the book with my older daughter, it was apparent my 12-year-old had read this article already. And that is the power in this book --the things that adopted and foster teens are thinking about--and don't always want to share with their parents--are the contents of this book. My daughter obviously WAS interested in the contents, she just wasn't ready to share that with me. I am grateful beyond words that a book like this was published. I highly recommend this to all adoptive families, schools and adoption professionals.

"One of my pet peeves is that many discussions about adoption and adoptees box the adoption experience by "alls" and "shoulds". All adoptees are \_\_\_\_\_ (take your pick: angry, happy, sad, confused). All adoptees should \_\_\_\_\_ (feel grateful, want to search for birth families, need therapy). Pieces of Me: Who Do I Want to Be avoids that trap by including essays by adoptees that reflect the diversity of reality. Some adoptees are angry, some are content, some are confused, some need to search, and on and on. Pieces of Me encompasses the whole of the adoption experience--the deep love, the confusion, the living with empty places and unanswered question, and yes, even the gratitude. It is not always an easy book for an adoptive parent to read, but for just that reason, it is an important book for us to read. Dawn Davenport, host of the radio show Creating a Family and Director of Creating a Family, a nonprofit providing education and resources for adoption and infertility

My husband and I work with teens and young adult adoptees who are struggling with many unanswered or unanswerable questions about their identity and existing attachment difficulties in

relationships. This book has quickly become one of our most referred to titles for helping this population. Kudoos!

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