

Submission: inquiry into past forced adoptive policies and practices

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

I was sent to Nagla to await the birth of child, during that time never once was the process and procedure of adoption discussed nor was I asked if that was what I wanted.

My parents also never received any advice or counselling as to what choices could be made regarding baby and myself.

Baby was born at King Edward Hospital on the 18th January at 32 weeks gestation. I saw my child momentarily at birth. She was taken to special nursery as she was premature.

I was kept on the ward with other mothers and babies for several days during that time I asked if I could see my daughter. I was refused access to her. I went to the nursery one day and demanded to see her. I spent about five minutes with her under the supervision of a nurse. I was unable to touch her due to her been in an incubator.

I was sent back to Nagla for a few days before going home with my parents. One day I was taken to an office in West Perth where I was to sign some papers (unknown to me were adoption papers). [REDACTED] was there with his father and I was with my father. The papers were signed and I then became upset as did [REDACTED], he left the building, we were unable to talk with one another.

From that day it was never spoken about again.

[REDACTED] and I married in 1971.

The effects on my life:

The effects of the adoption on my life was profound and everlasting, not a day went by that I didn't think of my daughter. Throughout the years I tried many ways to find out what had happened to my daughter and was never told anything.

I suffered from chronic depression, poor self esteem, suppressed grief and feelings of no control over my life with guilt over what I had done. (Getting pregnant as a young teenager). I saw psychologist and psychiatrist. I know I will need to continue with anti-depressants for the rest of my life. I am now 71 years old and the trauma of my experience will live with me till I die. I have many times tried to go off medication but the feelings of loss and grief

consumes me. In my thirties I was part of a study into adoption with UWA and I found out for the first time that all mothers had one month from birth to decide to relinquish, the anger I felt at learning that information was indescribable, I felt that we mothers were used as a supply for a demand for babies for infertile couples.

When I tried to have children I suffered from infertility and after years of treatment I adopted a baby. I then fell pregnant with my own biological child and went on to have 3 healthy birth children and a much adored adopted child. I have done everything I could do to ensure that my adopted child knew of his back ground. I have seen how it has effected his life and we both agree open adoption would be a much better option.

The depression worsened over the years and I began antidepressants in my early thirties and started seeing psychologists and psychiatrists over the next 12 years. I contacted Jigsaw and put my name down so my daughter could find us if she desired. My daughter contacted when she was 21 years of age, we slowly began to establish a relationship. She lived in the Eastern side of Australia. She eventually came to Perth and met her 3 brothers and sister.

Depression

Psychic treatment needed

Throughout the years I tried to find information about what had happened to my daughter but was just always told she had been adopted and was settled

During the intervening years I contacted JigSaw and put my name down so that it would be easy for her to find me. I found out during this time during a study that was being done at UWA that all relinquishing mothers had 1 month to change their mind and could collect their child. This indeed was upsetting news

Over the years I suffered from chronic depression, poor self esteem and powerlessness. I felt I had no control over my life. I started ant-depressant in my late 20 and started regularly seeing psychologists over the next 10 years.

When my daughter at the age of 21 contacted me, we began slowly to establish a relationship. [REDACTED] lived in the eastern states. We continued to get to know each other with [REDACTED] finally meeting her and [REDACTED] coming to Perth to meet her brothers and sisters.

[REDACTED] and I had four children, so it needed to be explained to them that they had a sister that they never knew about. Around this time I began to experience profound grief at the loss of her. One day I woke up and spent about a week crying. I was referred to a psychiatrist who said I was suffering from chronic depression and suppressed grief. I continued to see a Psychiatrist for several years and I am now at 71 still taking ant-depressants and know that I cannot go off them, I have tried many times to but the feelings of loss and grief consumes me. I no longer see therapist.