

What year were you born?

I was born in 1958 in Broome.

Were both of your parents Aboriginal, or just one? Which one?

My mother is Aboriginal, my father is not.

What do you know about your parents' circumstances at the time of your birth? Their ages, where they lived, who they lived with, what they did?

My mother was 18 when she had me. She was in a relationship with her now husband, but he is not my father. There are several stories around who my birth father is. On my original birth certificate, my father is an English man and 19 years old.

What have you been told or found out about why you were adopted?

I was told by my adoptive mother when she was nearing the end of life due to breast cancer. I was 17 years old. She gave me my original birth certificate so that I could follow up if I wanted to. My younger brother kept telling me as I was growing up, but I didn't understand what he was meaning to begin with. I was only when I got older that I asked my adopted mother what it meant. She told me that it meant that she and her husband did not give birth to me. That I had other parents.

What do you know about how your adoption was arranged?

I don't know anything about how it was arranged. All I have is the 2 birth certificates and very little else. I have been told that my grandmother was a devout catholic and spoke to the nuns in Broome. I don't know if they were involved in the actual adoption.

What do you know about your adoptive parents' circumstances? Why were they adopting?

I don't know why I was adopted into this family. I can only guess that it was because my adoptive mother could not have any more children. (2 boys 15 and 3 years older than me) They were English migrants.

Did you have any support in finding your parents? Was it good enough?

I accessed Adoption Jigsaw in Perth, and they were great in giving me information, support and counselling.

Have you had any counselling or help from support services (ARCS, Relationships Australia)? Was it helpful? Why/why not?

I have not had any counselling apart from Adoption Jigsaw and that was a one-off meeting session when I was given information about my birth family and a contact with them.

Have you accessed any of your records? Are you willing to share any with the Committee, confidentially?

I have accessed my records from the Department for Child Protection when I was in my 30's. some of it was blanked out and only gave me very basic information – birth name, date, birth place and mothers name.

What outcomes would you like to see from this inquiry?

I would like to see that there is better support offered to people who were adopted, either forced or consented adoptions. It is then their choice to follow up or not.

I would also like to see that people are given better access to their records and be able to make contact with their birth family in a safe environment if this is where they want to go with their journey.

I would also like to see that Aboriginal people are offered better support as we have lost so much – language, culture, connection to Country, position in community (Elders, Senior people ect) connection to family as we have been raised in a different culture than our birth parents.

Some form of compensation for the forced removal from family and culture.