



Twelve years ago when I was 48, I discovered that I was adopted. However, not legally, as we know it. My birth was registered in my adoptive parents' names, an illegal registration, which has never been investigated by the Irish government. I spent many years searching, trying to fit the pieces together. It was really impossible when there is no paper trail. I have taken a DNA test because this is the only way of finding someone who may be a blood relative.

Then I met Sharon. She was genuinely interested in what happened to me, as well as the injustices to other adoptees. Working together, we have found people in the US, Canada, Spain and Australia who were sold at birth. Sharon is doing this by herself, without any way of funding to date, tracking down information on the medical and legal professionals involved in my so-called adoption – who they were and how lucrative the practice was.

I am amazed at Sharon's dedication especially for someone who is not adopted. She supports us and is proactive, whether she is working on 'Adoption Stories', or not. With Sharon, it is about getting justice for everyone.



Theresa, your Friend

Sharon

She comes from fairly large extended Irish family, so most of her earliest memories are of parties, picnics, vacations and visits with grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. When Sharon was ten, a girl in her class mentioned she had been adopted and, as a baby, spent her early years in a convent where nuns looked after her. "I thought the idea of living in the convent was fascinating and, also, a bit terrifying."

Over the years, Sharon discussed options for having a family with her sister, Sarah, "I would love to adopt children. I would shower them with love and give them a secure and happy life." Sarah had spoken with people who had been adopted and realized that not all adoptions turn out well.

Sharon, a filmmaker, had the idea of exploring these issues in a television series, "Adoption Stories." She started to do research and met people of her generation who were either looking for their natural parents, or the child they had given for adoption. She saw how badly both sides were being treated by the authorities. "I knew successful, kind people who had been adopted, but due to circumstances at the time of their birth, now had difficulty obtaining information regarding their birth parents. This information was both kept from them and held against them."

"Because of my own extremely close bond with my mother, I have come to realize what is at the crux of adoption: the natural, primal bond between a mother and child cannot be explained, replicated, or fixed when broken. I would be very different person if I didn't have that security and love. So I know the loss both the adopted person and natural mother feel after they have been separated even when they are reunited in later life. My biggest fear at the moment is the inevitability of death and how empty my life will be without my parents. Everything good and worthwhile about me is from them loving me from the minute I existed. I don't think, I could do a project like 'Adoption Stories' with the compassion, understanding and honesty it has been praised for without my parent's love."



Sharon - "Adoption Stories"