

## Kimberley

### Raised in a Biracial and Open Adoptive Family

Text: Kimberley adopted from South Korea at 4 months old

I'm someone who is led by my values, courage, loyalty, freedom, adventure. I'm also a Korean adoptee, adopted at four months old into a family where mum's Anglo white and dad's Chinese. I was adopted at four months old. I'm now 37 years old and I am a communications consultant and a counselor and a meditation teacher, can't forget that one. And I've grown up in Sydney.

I've had a lovely childhood growing up in Australia and I think being part of a biracial family, as well, has helped, dad being Chinese. I grew up in a family where I had a lot of other Asian family members. And so I think that has helped in a lot of ways where they understand what it's like to be Asian growing up in Australia. And I think mum also experiencing some racism as a white woman marrying into a Chinese family also understood. And so I never really experienced much racism or prejudice. And I think maybe because they'd gone through it themselves, there was a little bit of protective factor happening there.

So my childhood was great. Growing up in Sydney, we had a house with a big yard. We went to the park, went to beaches. So it's really the idyllic childhood. I have a younger sister who is a product of IVF and a younger brother who was actually, we call him the miracle baby because he was my parents' only natural born child after adopting, after IVF, and he came along, so, my family's very close.

Some of the most interesting factors about being adopted into a biracial family is that it made it somewhat easier to, to exist as a family unit. People would look at me, they would look at dad and kind of connect some dots. And I think that's quite a different experience to a lot of other adoptees that I've spoken with who might be a Korean adoptee into an all white family, or I have Sri Lankan cousins we call them, and there's a Thai boy, and they're born or adopted into a white family, and I think the experience is quite different.

When you're young, you wanna identify visually even culturally with somebody who's like you. And for me, having a Chinese side of the family, I think really helped me feel like I was part, it made me feel into my Asian part, my Korean part, even though Korean Chinese. But, I think that was a huge factor in being able to process being adopted and accept and understand because there was that other cultural understanding from dad's side as well.

I think my experience has been different having siblings where we've all come into the family in a different way. So I think some of the incredible factors that have contributed to my experience of being adopted that has been a positive one is having parents who have been very open about my adoption. It's something that we talk about. We celebrate my adoption day every year. Nothing is off limits. They're incredibly supportive, encouraging of any decision I make around my adoption. They encouraged me to explore. And I know that, and I feel like I've always known that. I don't remember a day they sat me down and said, "We've got something to tell you, you're adopted". And they could have gotten away with it 'cause dad's Chinese. So I could have just grown up thinking that I had more of my dad's genetics, but I've always known. And I've always known that it's something that we can talk about together as a family. My brother and sister are very supportive. So, I think being open, not hiding anything helps remove any kind of secrecy or shame that might come with that around being adopted.