

Informal groups for adults affected by adoption

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Information for attendees

Who are Adoption Connections?

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We are a peer support group of adopted adults who meet once a month to listen, share our experiences of being adopted, exchange support and discuss ideas. The group meetings are chaired by volunteer adopted adults.

Who can attend?

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Any adopted adult can attend this group as it offers a space for adoptees to come together and share adoption experiences and feelings.

About this group?

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This group is an online forum for adopted adults to express their thoughts and feelings around adoption without being judged, gagged or feeling held back. Attendees will also be able to share their healing experiences, which may provide hope to others, who perhaps may not be at that point yet.

However, there is no obligation to share your story or make any contributions if it doesn't feel like the right time, or if you just don't feel like it. It is completely fine to attend the group to just listen.

It is a brilliant opportunity for adopted adults to exchange ideas and share useful resources around adoption related topics.

Where is the group held?

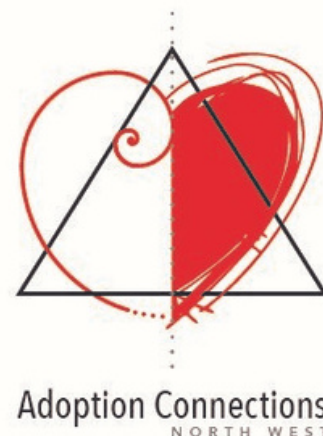
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The group originated in the North West of England but moved online during the Covid-19 pandemic and has remained online via Zoom to make it more accessible to a wider audience.

This way, there is the potential for you to interact with other adult adoptees from all over the world!



For more information email: postadoption@adoptionmatters.org

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How does the group operate?

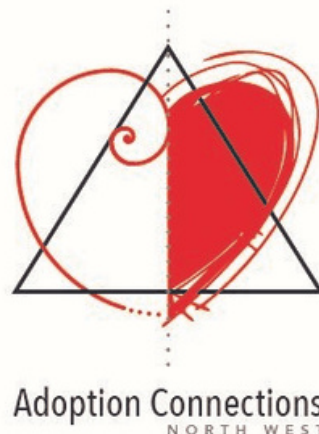


There is no obligation to attend every session and you're more than welcome just to 'drop in' or not, as you prefer.

Although, to maintain safe boundaries, we do have some pre-agreed meeting agreements:

- We agree to allow others to share their experience that may be different to our own, understanding that there is no single way of experiencing adoption. Unresolved adoption issues are welcome.
- We agree to the principle of group sharing and support and understand that we do not meet with the intention of 'fixing' fellow attendees.
- We agree to avoid judgement, criticism or the giving of unsolicited advice or feedback about things that have been shared. Others may share details about their own, or others behaviour, that we may have opinions around – we agree to keep these to ourselves as we have not lived their life.
- We agree to share the time for sharing and discussion equally and to avoid hogging the air time so that others don't get a chance to speak.
- We agree to not eat or drink alcohol during meetings or otherwise distract from meeting proceedings.
- For online meetings - if we need to leave the room we will turn our cameras off.
- When others are sharing, we agree to no cross-talk, interrupting or cross-sharing – adoptees have often not felt 'heard' so we listen in respectful and attentive silence.
- We don't risk making others feel awkward by asking for contact details or social media hook-ups. People can state that they are happy to do this if they choose to.
- We meet in the security of knowing that we operate with complete confidentiality – what we hear, who we see and what we do stays within the safe confines of the group.
- We agree to a policy of 'no recordings' of group meetings.
- We agree to respect the group space as being somewhere for people to share their adoption experiences free from the 'selling' of services, products or other business ventures.
- We agree to respect all religious or spiritual beliefs that may differ from our own, all adoptees are welcome.

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What is a typical meeting like?



Usually, if a meeting is solely online, it will last around 60 minutes. Any face-to-face meetings can last up to 90 minutes.

There is an informal format that goes something like this:

To begin with, we like to remind all of our attendees of the aims and agreements of the meeting.

Following that, the group discusses and shares their own experiences around a specific adoption related topic that has been selected. For example, finding out about being adopted, coping strategies or birth families. The adoption related subject can be decided by group attendees.

Adoptees are welcome to share not only their thoughts, but journals, blogs, books, videos (5-10 minutes long) or any other resources with the group, as long as it is related to the topic. However, if you do not wish to share anything, please do remember that just listening to others is completely fine.

The next section we like to call 'free share'. This part of the session usually lasts for around 30 minutes and it gives people the chance to share anything that is currently on their mind, as long as it is somewhat related to adoption/their story. Things that people might like to talk about, but are not limited to, are co-dependency, finding their birth family, people pleasing, addictions, therapy and relationships.

To keep things fair and to ensure that every attendee gets an equal opportunity to speak, should they wish to, we divide the number of attendees by the amount of time we have dedicated to the 'free share' section and that is the amount of minutes a person has to speak. Should the group be bigger than 5 attendees, we will make sub groups. If you feel like you need longer to talk, then you can make a request to the group and a solution may be able to be found.

Again, we would like to stress, there is no obligation to speak or share during this section, if anyone prefers not to speak, they can simply say 'pass' when we get round to them.

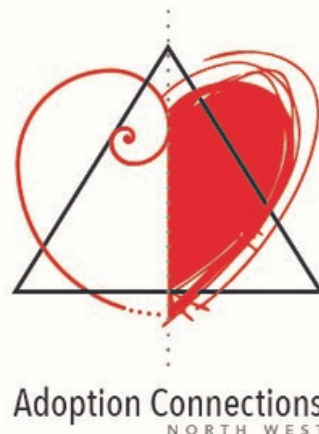
Each member of the group will take in turns of being the timekeeper for this section.

Before we move on to the 'any other business' section, which concludes the session, we will have a quick chat about useful resources that you have found which could benefit other members.



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How can I attend?



If attending this meeting interests you, then please contact Sarah at:

postadoption@adoptionmatters.org

From here, we can look to provide meeting dates, venue addresses or alternatively if you wish to attend online, joining links.

Please note: Adoption Matters supports this group by assisting with venues and Zoom access, the group is run independently by adopted adults for adopted adults.