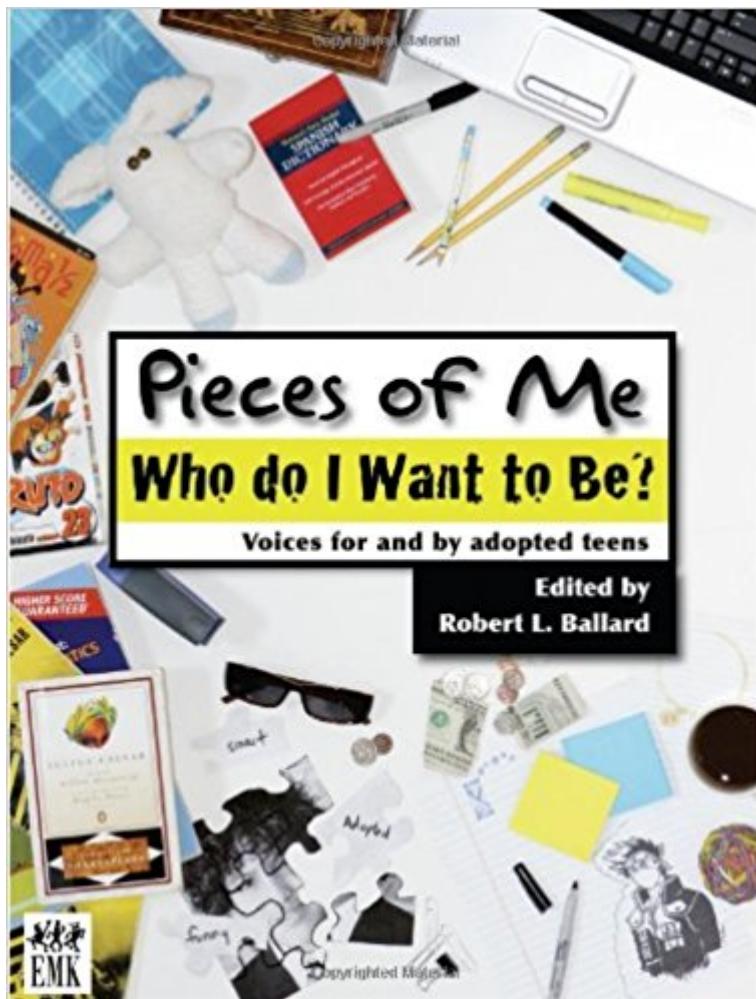


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# Pieces Of Me: Who Do I Want To Be



## **Synopsis**

I tell you this story because for too many years, people have told my stories for me. I am ready to speak for myself. So where do I begin? .... Juli Jeong Martin, transnational/transracial adoptee .... *Pieces of Me, Who do I Want to Be* is a collection of stories, poems, art, music, quotes, activities, provocative questions, and more all for the young adopted person who wants to figure out his or her story but doesn't know where to begin. A submission based book with over 100 different pieces, this book was designed for the teen who happens to be adopted, but it will reach all those who live, love, and work with them. It is a book of voices, from ages 11 to 63, speaking honestly and authentically about what it means to be adopted. Most are adoptees from around the world some are transracial, some are international, some are from foster care, some are young, some are old. There are a few adoptive parents, birth parents, and professionals who share themselves in here as well. It is a series of experiences, expressions, feelings, hurts, hopes, dreams, and struggles from a wide range of individuals. Some will make you laugh, some will make you cry, some will make you happy, some will make you feel less alone, some will offer advice, and some will just share. All of them are figuring out where the *Pieces of Me* fit in with *Who I Want to Be*. Organized around the idea of putting a puzzle together, there are five major sections: 1. Gathering the Pieces ..... 2. Stolen Pieces ..... 3. Fitting the Pieces ..... 4. Sharing the Pieces ..... 5. Where do These Pieces Go?..... - all offering hope, encouragement, empowerment, and a sense of not being alone. Although it was conceived for the young adopted person, there are universal themes of healing, hope, and struggle all of us can resonate with. And if you are a parent, birth parent, or professional who works with adopted and foster kids, you will find a glimpse into their world, a place that you might not often be invited to share. This book has hands on activities for teens including t-shirts, sock bunnies, collage and postcards. There are thought provoking questions and places to doodle and think. Reading this book is not just for teens. Others who might read this include social workers who work with pre and post adoptive parents, teen group coordinators, therapists who work with the teen population, school counselors, pre and post adoptive parents, relatives and friends.

## **Book Information**

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up • This title refers to the "pieces" that adoptees must identify, gather, and put together properly in order to make themselves whole. It is a compendium of poems, essays, drawings, quotations, and photos created by adoptees, from 12 to 60+, intended to "offer practical insight and hope" to other adoptees. Each contributor is introduced in a brief biographical sketch that provides readers with background information that helps place each work in context. A few contributors describe their delight at finding someone who "looks like me," while others explore the agony of being rejected, or ignored, by a birthparent. Several adoptees express regret for the suffering they inflicted on their adoptive families, who were often caring and loving. Although many contributors are adults, they focus on their experiences as teens. The raw emotions exposed here make this a rather painful, but extremely powerful read. Suzanne Slade's *Adopted: The Ultimate Teen Guide* (Scarecrow, 2007) offers practical, factual information as well as some first-person narratives. However, its tone is more restrained and matter of fact. *Pieces of Me* should be considered for older patrons who are adoptees, as well as adoptive parents. • Deborah Vose, Highlands Elementary School, Braintree, MA Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

*Pieces of Me* is good for teen adoptees because it portrays common adoptee feelings. Reading about people experiencing the same situations is comforting to teenagers, who live in a judgmental world. The style of the book is more interesting than a textbook or self-help book and will capture your attention. Nothing is more valuable than being able to know that there are people just like you in the world who are feeling the exact same way about their lives. Yoselin Corrales, 19, adopted from Tegucigalpa at 9 months, sophomore at Nebraska Wesleyan pursuing a double major in Vocal Performance and Psychology..... I really enjoyed reading *Pieces of Me*. It makes me feel good to know there is someone else that feels the same way I sometimes feel. It's like there is a missing piece of me and I have now realized that a lot of adoptees feel that way. Every story is

different, but they are the same too. I am happy to have this book! Jazz Pyne, 12, adoptee from China, budding musician ..... Looking at the wide range of articles and topics in this book, this will be an invaluable book for our agency. We will definitely use it in our home study classes as we educate new families and we will encourage our older adoptees to purchase a copy. It will give many young people a voice. Julie Craft, Founder Adoption Support Center, Inc. ..... Pieces of Me is a powerful compilation I want to share with all the youth I work with in Get Real a group of youth in foster care. Each teen has expressed at least a part of everything in this book about identity and fitting in. As an adoptive mom of a 23 year-old, Columbian born daughter, I am sharing the book with her. We have lived the pieces and will continue to do so. --Valli Baba Spahn, MPA, LSW Child Centered Recruitment Coordinator Adoption Network ClevelandWho was it that said relevance is talking to a man in the language of the man about what is in the heart of the man? By the power of that definition, Pieces of Me is hugely relevant. Created by adoptees for teen adoptees this book describes a unique culture as spontaneously as birds cry out warnings, make nests and sing. What are the pieces of the adoptive experience? Describing who, what and why things need to be found, what has been stolen, fitting the pieces together and sharing the pieces. There is no way you can be indifferent to it. Each story, poem, song or image is different, intimate and challenging. The contents is layered, just like human experience and collectively offer a relieving lifeline, I'm here to tell you, you're not alone. The point is adopted people have a connection through a culture all their own, a unique space they share only with others who have been moved from one family and perhaps country to another without choice. In the process they have lost their first culture, family, language, religion and the identity they would have had. Equally connecting is the unique need to combine the inheritances of both birth and adoptive cultures and fit in to wherever they find themselves, building a healthy identity based on wholeness. Pieces of Me is a much needed contribution to the world of adoption books for teens and has plenty to say to adults. Perhaps the best advise for parents is to read it yourself and leave it on the coffee table just waiting to be discovered by you know who. --Gail Steinberg, co-author Inside Transracial Adoption, adoption professional and adoptive parentAs I read Pieces of Me: Who I Want To Be?, I was moved to tears again and again. As a psychologist who works with many foster and adopted children, I recognized the deep pain that so many of the children have endured and some continue to experiences. I am struck by the courage of these individuals to be authentic, to not sugar-coat their experiences or to focus only on the challenges of adoption. Pieces of Me is for parents who wonder what their child might be going through. It is for adoptees of all ages who want to know their feelings are normal and to find gems of wisdom from others who have journeyed this path before them. --Kali Miller, PhD

Pieces of Me: Who Do I Want to Be? gives voice to a striking range of adolescent perspectives on adoption. In this astonishingly vivid collection of essays, poetry, art work and songs, young adoptees give direct, honest voice to their inner thoughts and feelings about struggling to fit their personal pieces together. These contributors from around the world reflect highly diverse adoption experiences. The few adult contributors extend the process by revealing how later-life pieces fit together over time. Yet no matter how wonderful or problematic their adoptive experience, each piece reflect a sense of being different. This book, beautifully designed for adolescent readers, addresses the challenges of gathering pieces, losing pieces, reclaiming pieces and sharing pieces of one's identity. Just as no two snowflakes are the same, no two adoption experiences match perfectly. Each of these 107 compelling stories, conveyed in extraordinarily varied ways, reveals a unique perspective on growing up with an identity that sets one apart. Yet each voice reflects a journey toward identity. Some contributors struggled greatly in their journeys, others found an easier path. The voices speak to experiences of domestic or international adoption, interracial adoption and living in foster care. Some contributors grew up as only children; others lived with siblings -adoptive or biological. Whereas certain voices talk of ongoing anger, pain and struggle; others reflect joy, peace and comfort. Every young adoptee will resonate strongly with many of these voices and find a unique connection to a special few. Adult adoptees will wish they had read this in their teenage years. Yet these voices speak eloquently not only to other adoptees but to all members of adoptive and birth families. Every family touched by adoption needs to consider how each member's pieces contribute to the larger jigsaw puzzle. Pieces of Me offers healing, help, and hope as contributors describe finding, reflecting on, struggling with and often embracing the pieces of their puzzles.

This book is very powerful! It is a collection of 107 stories, poems and art works. Most contributors are now adult adoptees. Yet, in this book, they look back on their adolescent experience of being adopted. The "pieces" are what the adoptee needs to gather in order to become whole. Each "piece" of this book is unique. We often have preconceived beliefs about adoptees. Most typically we describe them as "angry." Pieces of Me will dispel this type of stereotyping. It gives depth and breadth to our understanding of what adolescent adoptees actually feel and think. As a therapist for children with histories of trauma, I particularly like some of the candid "pieces" like Why I Cut Myself and The Queen Redeemed. This is the story of moving from being the "oral sex queen" to

reclaiming self-worth. These are particularly poignant selections--essential for the troubled teen who can learn that he or she is not alone in thought, actions and feelings. Information relating to sexuality and sexual behavior are rare among adoption literature. It is great to see this type of content put forth! There are also anecdotes about moving from the birth home; prejudice, discrimination and all out feeling hatred from others; search and reunion and the profound and bottomless pit of feelings for the loss of the birth family. The pain and triumph of these young people will move you from tears of sadness to tears of joy! This book is absolutely a must read for all in adoption! Brothers and Sisters in Adoption

helpful

Ordered the book after we found my husband's adopted daughter who wrote a poem published in this book.. EXCELLENT book of poetry by adopted children. I highly recommend.

My husband and I work with teens and young adult adoptees who are struggling with many unanswered or unanswerable questions about their identity and existing attachment difficulties in relationships. This book has quickly become one of our most referred to titles for helping this population. Kudos!

Recommended by therapist.

Great book!

Insightful book for parents of tweens/teens.

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