



We think that adoption is a difficult choice that takes courage, strength, and a tremendous amount of love and understanding. It is a choice as a birth mother and as adoptive parents. We are looking, as you are, for the person who feels right. What we have to offer is love, lots of family, and room to be different from the mold.



About Us:

We both grew up in large families with adopted sisters and brothers. Cameron is the middle child with two sisters and two brothers, one who is adopted. Ilyse is the second to oldest with an older sister and two younger brothers, both adopted. We have one child, Bashert, and while Ilyse and Cameron are Mama and Papa, Bashert was conceived with the help of a sperm donor. We knew we would have a few children in our lives and we feel it is a good ethical decision for us to adopt. Our vision always included adoption, not out of necessity, but out of a desire to give back some of the goodness life has given us. We are a warm, cozy, loving, vibrant family who wants another child.

Cameron and Ilyse met in an unusual way. Ilyse was 19 and Cameron was 26 when we both decided to go on a cross country peace walk. We became close friends on this ten month journey from Los Angeles to New York City. We kept in touch by writing letters and visiting. We began dating while Ilyse was in Seattle at nutrition school and Cameron was living in Santa Cruz, California. Ten years later we married. Our lives are rooted in community. We met in a peace activist community, married in our Jewish community, and now are building a co-housing community where people live in a kid centered village.

Our Community:

We live in a medium size town on the Hudson River. We have a big brick house with a huge yard where we play soccer and have a vegetable garden. We all love to dig in the dirt, look for worms and eat our fresh vegetables. Our house is on a quiet street, though there are always kids riding bikes and playing on the sidewalks. A short walk down our street ends at a beach, and we love jumping in the small waves. On summer evenings we often meet our friends on the beach and have a picnic.

We live in a very kid-centric town. There are many playgrounds nearby, some overlooking the water and one with a small zoo. In the winter and fall, we are regulars at our local library's story hour, where children do crafts, have musical parades, and of course, listen to stories. We are lucky that our town offers an indoor play space in the winter where kids can ride bikes, play ball, and climb on towers—so we are always entertained. When there is a lot of snow we grab our sleds and go down the block to a small hill—and we make huge snow people in the back yard and watch the birds come and eat the seeds we leave for them. Spring and summer are alive with outdoor festivals, farmer's markets, and lots of swimming.





Cameron:

I grew up in central Virginia, surrounded by history. My early childhood was spent running around the neighborhood with all of the other kids. There was always a pickup softball/football/basketball/tag game going on. Or, we were down at the creek building forts and catching salamanders. All of this after chores, of course. Being from a large family, we all had our jobs to do. My parents gave me a love of music, history and a strong work ethic.

From my small town, I took off for adventure to California. I settled in Santa Cruz where I went to college, and remained for several years. A major earthquake devastated the town, and led me to reevaluate; I decided to walk across the country for peace, and I met Ilyse. I returned to school to get an MBA, and I became a Certified Public Accountant. One of my proudest accomplishments is putting myself through college and graduate school.

Now I am a teacher; it is my dream job come true. I teach accounting and finance to budding chefs and hotel managers.

A great day for me: digging in the garden, doing yard work, swimming and fishing, visiting family and friends, watching a movie.

Ilyse:

I'm content to put on my music, sing, and bake all afternoon. I adore playing with Bashert, cooking grass soup or dressing up and playing rock band. A great day for me is going to NYC, seeing a musical and walking 40 blocks to an Ethiopian restaurant for amazing food.

I grew up in a wonderful town in New Jersey where all the kids played tag in front of the houses. Our neighborhood was a close community and I am still connected to some of my childhood friends. I loved being outside and riding bikes with my friends—without having to plan play dates. As kids, we just went outside and had fun. I want this for my children also.

From a mainstream background, I went to high school, fell in love with musical theater, went to college, dropped out of college and became a peace activist. I have walked across the country twice, down the east coast once, and across Japan. I once lived in a van on the streets of Asia, and saw the country in a magical way. I connected to people from all walks of life, and am so happy I took a different path to my current destination. I grew up hearing from my parents that I could do anything I wanted to do.

After ten years of living 'on the road' I went back to school for a degree in nutrition as a form of natural medicine. Today, I am a dietitian with my own business. I thrive on working for myself. I work with teens and adults and specialize in eating disorders. I teach people tools to manage stress, love their bodies, and feed their hunger. I love my work and I love my home life.



Our Families:

Our life is filled with close family and friends. Since our extended families are in other states, we have a weekly "Family Dinner" with a small group of friends, to create closeness among ourselves and our children. We visit our extended families quite often.

Ilyse comes from a large extended family. Her family is a loud, raucous, loving bunch who's favorite activity is spending time with one another. We all congregate at holidays, summertime barbecues, and yearly family reunions in Virginia Beach.

We visit family in Santa Fe, New Mexico about twice a year. We have the best trips out west, with horse back riding, swimming, glass blowing, and visits to peacock and goat farms. Bashert is wild about her cousins and talks about them daily. Whenever Bashert is with her cousins-nothing else is important. They squeal with delight from morning till night when they are together.

Cameron's family lives in Virginia. We see them at Christmas, when we have our cookie baking extravaganza. His sisters come up to visit with Bashert's cousins as frequently as possible. We keep in touch through emails and phone calls. We're a close, supportive bunch.

Bashert:

My name is Bashert. It means 'meant to be.' I like to jump. My favorite color is Blue. I have a fish named Red. I am 3, and when I am 6 I will be as old as my cousins. I like to be outside and look for worms in the garden. I can count to 10 in Japanese. S-T-O-P spells stop. In the morning I cook the breakfast and help Papa push down his coffee. I love to swim. If I sleep all night I get a balloon. When I eat broccoli, Papa does a broccoli dance.

Bashert is joy in our lives. She teaches us to slow down and notice all the bugs, birds, and people who walk by our way. She loves the water and takes swimming lessons with Cameron every Saturday. She has an ear for music and Ilyse attends music class with her at a local Kindermusic class. As parents, we balance home time with activities, and love to cook together, do painting projects, or just swing on the hammock and watch the clouds. At the tender age of 3, Bashert knows she has a 'donor' who helped to make her. We read books about all different kinds of families: ones with two moms or two dads, children who are adopted, or families where everyone looks really different from one another.

Some kids have a nurturing quality to them as young children, and this is Bashert. She is ready and waiting for her turn at pushing the stroller and holding the bottle. I want a baby sister or brother. I like to give the bottle to the babies at the YMCA. I will be a loving big sister. I really want a baby!



Our Adoption Philosophy:

Having adopted children in both of our families has made us aware of issues surrounding adoption. Brett, my brother, is not different because he is adopted, he is different because he loves lacrosse and Avenged Sevenfold, hates broccoli and Pearl Jam.

Our adoption philosophy is that we strive for open communication. We realize that all children want to know where they came from, and that it may be essential for their own identity. If it is possible, we want our second child to know where he or she came from and why her hair is brown or how her birth mom loved horses too. Bashert knows her birth story, that she has a donor, a mom, and a dad, and we want our next child to have a cherished story also.

We honor your decision and want our children to fully understand the love that went into that decision.

