

BirthMom Buds Bulletin

BirthMom Buds

Announcements



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Special Points of Interest

- Why the BirthMom Buds Retreat was Created, beginning on page 1
- Lent and Letting Go, in Ideas and Insights, beginning page 3
- Best of the Blog, page 5

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Adoption Spotlight	1
Ideas and Insights	2
Ideas and Insights, cont'd	3
Inspiration	3
Birthday Celebrations	4
Best of the Blog	4
Founder's Corner	5

BMB 2015 Retreat – Register now for the 2015 BirthMom Buds Retreat which will take place May 1 – 3, 2015 in Charlotte, North Carolina. You can find more details about the retreat [here](#). Please [email BMB](#) to receive a registration form and reserve your spot today!

Go Fund Me Retreat Fund - We have created a Go Fund Me Page for the BMB 2015 Retreat. Please consider donating to help make this retreat a reality for as many birth moms as possible. Also, please consider passing along the link to friends and family members. Visit the Go Fund Me Page [here](#).

Slideshow Submissions - We are now accepting slideshow submissions for the 2015 Slideshow. Please check out [this webpage](#) for more information on what types of photos we are looking for as well as for links to past slideshows.

Bloggers Needed - BMB is currently looking for a couple of new bloggers. If you are interested in being considered as a blogger please [email Coley](#) for more information.

BMB on FB - Don't forget to like [our fan page](#) on Facebook. This is a great way to stay up to date on the latest blog posts, retreat news, give your input into periodically asked questions, and more.

Mentors Needed - We are always in need of mentors, specifically birthmoms who placed after the age of 25 or were parenting a child at the time of placement, for our Pregnant and Placing program. For more information about this program and how to become a mentor, please visit [this webpage](#) or email our Pregnant and Placing Coordinator, [Natasha](#).

Writers Needed – We have an ongoing need for birthmoms to write articles for this newsletter. If you'd be interested in writing for an upcoming issue, please email our newsletter manager, [Monika](#).

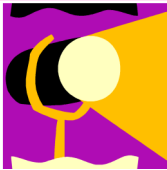
Adoption Spotlight

Support: Why the BirthMom Buds Retreat was Created!

By Amy Schumaker

In the past couple of weeks the topic of support has really been sitting on my mind. Everywhere I look, something makes me think about that word in all aspects of my life (family, friends, and adoption choice). So what is support? How would you define the word "support"? Do you see the word as a positive word or more of a negative word? We probably all have some type of definition that is very similar. Webster's dictionary defines the word as both a verb and a noun. As a verb the word is defined as: "to bear all or part of the weight of; hold up; to give assistance to." As a noun the word is defined as: "a think

Continued on page 2...



Adoption Spotlight continued from page 1...

So thinking of the definition, how much support do you currently have when it comes to your adoption plan? Would you say, 1) I am completely swimming in support, 2) I have some type of support, 3) Does my sports bra count as support? Or 4) I have no support and have nowhere to really look for the support I need.

Anywhere you land on this support spectrum...you are not alone. I am sure another reader will be like, "Hey...that is so me!"

This is where the BirthMom Buds Annual Retreat comes into play. Many of us probably fall between thinking that there is some type of support and then knowing that there is nothing there. The retreat is a way to be in the first type of support for a whole weekend. It is there to help you connect with others that have a very similar story to your own, so when you walk away at the end, you have a phone number you can call when you need someone to hold you up even if the support is through the

phone or through a long email.

I can remember my first retreat which was back in 2010 or 2011. I didn't really know anyone except for Coley, with whom I had many instant message conversations, emails, and text message exchanges. I remember meeting a few other women and thinking, "This is the place where I belong. These women who I have barely met, fully understand who I am and what I have been through in some way." I spent the weekend developing new friendships that I still cherish to this day. It was the type of support that I needed and still need on a yearly basis as there is no local adoption support group in my area.

If you have been pondering attending this year's retreat, I strongly encourage you to jump in head first and come. Yes, it might be a bit scary at first, but you will not regret it. There will be breakout sessions on various topics from which you can

choose, other meaningful activities such as a candlelight ceremony and balloon release, plus late nights giggling with new friends, sight-seeing in one of the coolest cities in the south, and most importantly filling your support tank to overflowing by the time you leave.

I can't wait to offer my own support to you this year if you are attending the retreat, so I will see you in May!

For more information about the 2015 BMB Retreat, please check out [this webpage](#).

Ideas and Insights

Lent and Letting Go

By Terri Gake

So the Easter season has begun. Fat Tuesday and Mardi Gras 2015 are in the books and it is officially the time of year when churches and Believers around the world start settling down and focusing on the time leading up to Jesus being crucified on a cross.

In preparation for the celebration of Easter, many Believers and non-Believers alike give up something in order to better focus on remembering what Christ did for us through his death. Some people give up television or video games in order to spend more time in prayer or reading the Bible. Some people give up chocolate or other kinds of dessert in order to be regularly reminded of Jesus' sacrifice for us.

Personally, I have never really practiced this ritual. There may have been a year here or there when I gave up something that others in my group did, but I've never really taken the practice to heart.

Ideas and Insights continued from page 2...

But this is a new year. And I'm not the same as I was last year. Time and circumstances continue having their way in me and around me and through me. So this year, I am giving up something for Lent. In fact, I have a whole list of somethings. Wanna see what they are? Well here's my top three, starting with my favorite:

Lying. I'm giving up lying this season. I'm giving up lying about who I am and how I feel. I'm giving up lying that everything is fine when in fact it is not. I was challenged to do this recently by a book called *The Emotionally Healthy Woman*. Chapter 2 was entitled Quit Lying! and I read it out of sheer curiosity. The book is written by a pastor's wife who got fed up with the church culture and finally left the church her own husband was pastoring. I figured her perspective on lying would be interesting because of that, so I read it. I do not consider myself to have a lying problem. I try and live an honest life, tell the truth and so forth. But I must admit, I was challenged by this chapter in all the little ways I lie. So that is the number one thing I'm giving up for Lent – lying.

Comparison. I am going to be especially focused this season on NOT comparing myself with others. It seems like I go through times when my self-esteem is really good and my confidence level is high. Then it seems like I go through other times when those things cannot be said of me. For this 40-some days, I'm going to stop myself whenever I start comparing myself to another and say, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made on purpose for a purpose. And that purpose is one only I can fill."

Overcommitment. One of the biggest killers of my energy is spreading myself too thin. As an introvert and thereby as one who recharges through spending time alone, I recognize my limitations and seek to live within them. One of those areas has to do directly with friendships and those with whom I choose to spend my time. Unfortunately there are people in my life who just make me tired with their drama and neediness. For those people I need to draw a line and say I just cannot be in relationship with them at this time. It makes me sad but I need to prioritize my energy *including* my emotional energy.

Where can you let go this Lenten season? What is something that you can give up just for a short time? What do you have to lose?

Terri is a frequent blogger on the BirthMom Buds blog. Look for more of her writing there!

Inspiration

Moving On and Getting Over It
by Coley Strickland

"Moving on."

Have you heard that phrase in relation to your grief as a birthmother before? Has anyone ever told you that you need to "move on" or "get over it" when talking about your grief and feelings about placing your child? I certainly have and I have grown to really dislike both of those phrases and their implications.

To me personally, moving on implies moving on and getting over it implies that you are just moving past something and forgetting about it. As a mother, even though I'm not raising my son, I can't ever just forget him. Even if I didn't have an open adoption he would still forever be a part of my heart.

I much prefer the use of the phrase "moving forward." To some this might just be considered splitting hairs over the words but to me moving forward is really what I'm doing as a birthmother. I'm moving toward the future because I know that I can't go back and get a "do over" for the past. I'm making new goals and trying to fulfill new dreams.

Does moving forward in my life, creating new goals and dreams, mean that I am moving on and forgetting my child? Of course not! Yes, I'm moving forward in life. For the most part, I'm happy and content with my life, but I will never ever "get over" the loss of my motherhood to my son. Although he may not be in my everyday life, but as I travel forward in life, my son will forever be a part of me and my journey.

Birthday Celebrations



If you'd like yours or your (placed) child's birthday shared in a newsletter, please email it to bmbulletin@gmail.com.

January

1—Angela Norris
 4—Madisen Cook
 4—Shelby Young's son, Jonah
 5—Nicole Wright-Ellis' son, Joshua
 11—Alicia Moser's daughter
 12—Corky Vestal's son, Noah
 19—Diane Parker's daughter, Lauren Alexis
 19—Shelby Young
 20—Brittany Fox's daughter, Karma
 24—Erin McCarthy's son
 26—Natalie (Avery) Vang's daughter, Ava
 27—Alicia Sappingfield

February

1—Cheri Trussler's daughter, Stella
 4—Kelly Archie
 6—Sonya Banks' daughter
 13—Allison Alexander's daughter, Anastasia
 15—Corky Vestal
 16—Ashley Winsett's daughter, Emmalie
 21—Nicole Wright-Ellis
 22—Amy Lofthouse's son, Luke
 28—Allyssa Gunn's twins, Katelyn and Kenzlee

March

1—Stephanie Dillon's daughter, Alena
 12—Lorinda Makinson
 15—Anne Bennett's son, Colin
 23—Kellie Shirek
 23—Christine Hively's daughter
 24—Kelsey Moore's son, Evan
 24—Alena Diaz' daughter, Makaela

Best of the Blog



Coping 5: Look to the Future: <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/02/coping-5-look-to-future.html>
 written by Elsa, published on February 28, 2015

BMB Reform Blog: Meet Amy! : <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/02/bmb-reform-blog-meet-amy.html> interview by Amanda, published on February 27, 2015

Running Away: <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/02/running-away.html> written by Terri, published on February 19, 2015

Movie Reviews: <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/02/movie-reviews.html> written by Chelcie, published on February 4, 2015

Founder's Corner

Hello friends!

What a winter this has been!

Since we both live in the South, we have had not had as much snow and winter weather as some of our other members have, but like many of you we have dealt with shorter, dark dreary days that we have both felt affecting our moods and bringing on bouts of depression. We have survived by leaning on each other and doing things we each know that make us feel better like praying, crafting, writing, spending time with family, and planning the [11th annual BMB Retreat.](#)



We are happy to have survived another winter and are eager for Spring, longer days, more sunlight, and warmer weather.

You too have survived another winter and spring is on the horizon bringing new beginnings, hope, and change.

Happy Spring, Friends!

Hugs and love,

Coley and Leilani