

BirthMom Buds Bulletin

BirthMom Buds



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Special Points of Interest

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Announcements

2017 BMB Retreat - The 13th annual BirthMom Buds Retreat is scheduled for Friday, May 5, 2017 - Sunday, May 7, 2017 in Charlotte, North Carolina. Please check out [this page](#) for more information and [email BMB](#) for a Registration Form if you are interested in attending.

Fundraising - Please consider making a donation (every little bit helps!) towards our retreat via [our go fund me page](#). We're also looking for sponsors as well as items for the SWAG bags and door prizes for the retreat. If you or your organization is interested in becoming a sponsor or donating items, please [email us](#) for more information.

Slideshow Submissions - BirthMom Buds is currently accepting photo submissions for the annual slideshow. The slideshow debuts at the retreat and then is available online. Please check [this page](#) for photo submission guidelines as well as links to past slideshows.

Bloggers Needed - BMB is looking for a couple of new bloggers to write content weekly for the BMB blog. If you are interested in being considered, 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 answers to periodically asked questions, and more.

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](#).

Ideas & Insights

Achieving your New Year's Resolutions by Madison B.

Each year as the calendar turns from one year to the next, I'm excited for new beginnings, a fresh start, and a clean slate. I always, like most Americans, make some resolutions for the new year. I always start off with good momentum, but typically that starts to taper off as February approaches. This year, I searched and thought about some ways I could still keep my resolutions into summer and beyond. I'm passing some of these ideas on to you in hopes that you may find encouragement and inspiration as well.

Ideas & Insights continued from page 1...

- ◆ Keep it simple. Don't make too many resolutions or make them too elaborate. Focus on one or two key goals.
 - ◆ Map out a plan of how you are going to achieve those goals. For example, one of my goals for 2017 is to make a scrapbook for my (birth) daughter. I intend to work on it a little bit every Tuesday night. I've got my supplies together in one basket and some pictures printed to start with. I think a little preparation will help me not to get too overwhelmed and will make it easy to just grab my basket of supplies and start scrapping.
 - ◆ Be specific with your goal. Try not to make vague goals like "I want to lose weight" or "I want to travel more in 2017." Instead be a little more specific with your goals. For example, say: "I want to lose 20 pounds" or "I want to visit 3 states."
 - ◆ Use an accountability partner. Tell a friend your goal for 2017 to help hold you accountable on moving forward on those goals.
- Whatever goals you make, adoption related or not, I wish you the best of luck in achieving them in 2017!

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—Shelby Young
 19—Diane Parker's daughter, Lauren Alexis
 20—Brittany Fox's daughter, Karma
 24—Erin McCarthy's son
 26—Natalie (Avery) Vang's daughter, Ava
 27—Alicia Sappingfield
 31—Amy Schumaker's daughter, Kaylee

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 & Kenzlee

March

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



Adoption Spotlight

The Light Between Oceans A Review by Michelle Thorne

I was excited about watching this movie, though I knew it would be intense. Its leading cast was full of fantastic actors. My hopes were high.

[The Light Between Oceans](#) (Heyday Films 2016, PG-13) is set in the 1920's in Western Australia, a country coming off war. It follows a former officer, Tom (Michael Fassbender), who is stationed on an isolated island as the keeper of a lighthouse. He meets and marries a woman named Isabel (Alicia Vikander) and they conceive a child. Early in the pregnancy, Isabel miscarries. She takes time to grieve and then they conceive again. This time, Isabel is showing when she miscarries. In the midst of her grief, a boat washes ashore with a dead man and a screaming baby girl. The couple take in the baby and care for it. When Tom goes to report the incident to the mainland, Isabel begs him not to, insisting that they should care for the baby as their own.

"No one will know the child is not ours," she says. Reluctantly, the man agrees and buries the dead man on the island. Tom then sends a message that Isabel's and his baby has arrived early instead.

For two years, the couple cares for the child as their own, but at her christening, Tom sees a woman named Hannah (Rachel Weisz) tending to a grave singing a lullaby. When Hannah leaves, Tom reads the gravestone that indicates it is the grave of the baby he and his wife are raising. Distraught, Tom inquires about the woman and is told a story confirming his suspicions.

Tom decides to leave Hannah a cryptic note, saying that her child is well taken care of and that her husband is dead. This sends Hannah into a tail spin and to the police office, hoping they will investigate the note. When the police refuse, Hannah is left with nothing. Hannah never stops hoping, never stops searching.

It isn't until the child is four years old that there is any resolution. While I will leave the ending unknown, I have to say that there is little satisfaction in this movie, though it is brilliantly acted. The couple act selfish and have a blatant disregard for the biological mother's feelings. They are so focused on getting a baby that they do not consider the child or the long-term effects of their choices, let alone the biological mother and how their choices affected her.

In honesty, I hated this movie. It made me furious. I was literally cussing at the television after I chewed off all my nails. I know, impressive, but better out than in, right? I would not recommend this movie for any person touched by adoption anywhere. I certainly would not endorse it for birthmothers, unless you enjoy torture. Sorry, friends. I hope the next review gives you some sort of entertainment to enjoy, but for now, trust me and grab a margarita and a RomCom instead.



[Image Credit](#)

Inspiration

Curing the Birthmom Holiday Blues By Robyn Flint

The holidays have passed. The hustle of family gatherings and shopping trips are behind us for another year. For many, that signals the beginning of the holiday blues. I have found this especially true for birthmoms who find themselves with thoughts of the child they don't have. You may find yourself wondering whether or not your child celebrates with their adoptive family the way they would with you. You may wonder what they asked for this year for Christmas or if they were on the naughty list. These thoughts, I would recon, are fairly common in the birthmom community. But where do we go from here? How do we put the holiday blues behind us and get on with the order of the day? Here are five simple ideas to help you to celebrate your choice to place your child for adoption and to move past the blues.



Self-care is important. This may mean eating healthy, exercising, replacing your 5th cup of coffee with a glass of water, or reading a book. Whatever you choose do to for self-care, make it a priority during this time. Go for a walk, meditate, pray, or join a gym. Take that class you have been considering. Get into crafting or blogging or cooking. But find yourself again and build your individual identity apart from the adoption experience. It is ok to make yourself a priority. Go to a spa and have a massage, get a new hairdo, and a pedicure. Some of you may be waiting for someone to tell you it is not selfish to put yourself first once in awhile. So here I am to say it is not selfish, it is essential. You are more than just the woman who placed a child for adoption, you are a strong, selfless, and incredibly loving person! Celebrate yourself!

Start a holiday tradition to celebrate your child and your birthmom experience. Maybe each year you write a letter to your child after the holidays telling them your wishes for them in the next year. You can describe how you and your family celebrated the holidays and include pictures. If you are not able to share these letters with your child yet, save them until the time comes and pass on a little history.

Lean on your family and friends when the emotions become too much for you to handle on your own. Be open and honest when the feelings of self-doubt and sadness creep in. Let others know you are struggling and need some encouragement. You are a strong, brave and selfless woman. Even the toughest of women need time to feel.

Journaling is a healthy outlet to express yourself and your feelings. Begin journaling daily to record your thoughts about your path as a birthmom. Share the ups and downs, the highs and lows, the remorse and reassurance that your path takes you on. Your journals will be a good reflection down the road so that you can see just how far you have come in your journey.

Get plugged in. Connect with other birthmoms through social media such as BirthMom Buds. Attend local support groups in your area. Volunteer to speak at events promoting adoption and pregnancy. Share your story with others to let them know that there is hope and life after adoption. Spend time with people who can understand your feelings and who can uplift your spirit.

As a birthmom I can understand that the journey we take is hard sometimes. But what I have also learned is that I won't let my loving choice to place my son in a closed adoption define who I am as a mother and as a woman in a negative light. I am more than my choice. I am a wife, a mother, a daughter, a mental health professional, a friend, a student, a Christian, an advocate for adoption as a beautiful option, and an entrepreneur at heart. Who are you?

I encourage each of you to take some time as we start 2017 and define who you are. Gather your inner strength and make this year the year that you make yourself a priority. Don't hide from your feelings, embrace them.

"I can't change the future tomorrow if I don't change myself today."

Author unknown

Founder's Corner

Dear Friends,

For the past 5 years, as the new year approaches, we have each chosen a word of the year. The one little word concept is easy in that you just choose a single word or two to focus on throughout the year implementing that word into your life as much as possible for the year. It's a great alternative to New Year's Resolutions that are often hard to achieve.

Coley's Word - I love the one little word concept and start thinking of what my word will be around December. Some years, the word comes easily to me and other years, it takes a lot of thought to finally settle on a word. Last year, my word was gratitude. And that word was so good to me! I implemented that word into my daily life by listing 10 things I was grateful for each week. I focused on the positive in my life and tried to let the negative go. As silly as it sounds, that word and the way I implemented it into my life, helped me become a happier person. So choosing a word this year was difficult because it had big shoes to fill from last year. I wanted to keep focusing on the good things in life and try and get rid of the negative, anxious thoughts in my mind so I ended up choosing the words "Be positive." I'm implementing this little phrase into my daily life by framing it in my office, printing it out to put in the front of my planner, among other things.



Positive Mind
Positive Vibes
Positive Life

Leilani's Word - One of my favorite things about a new year is choosing a new word. This year's word is really two words - one being plan and the other is the best part of planning; to implement what you have planned. I've shortened my word to P.I. which obviously stands for plan and execute. Plans only come to fruition with action so this year I will make 2017 successful by planning my family time, time with God, friends, finances, and fun. With all that planning, I will implement those plans by taking actions to complete them.



I encourage each of you to come up with a word for the year. It could be something as simple as focus, which was a word I used a previous year. Pause was one of my favorite words of the year because it helped me remember to stop, breathe, and remember who I am and where I'm going when life gets busy.

Do any of you choose a word for the year? If you've never heard of this concept until now, it's not too late to choose a word! If you do choose a word, we'd love to hear what your word is. Drop by [our Facebook page](#) and tell us what your word is!

Wishing you a happy, healthy, and prosperous 2017!

~ Coley and Leilani