Understanding and reconnecting individuals who have experienced separation and loss through past adoption practices

Dr Sue Green
Welcome
✓ Rationale for the Workshop
✓ Content and learning outcomes

• *Understand the context and impact of past adoption practices*
• *Identify the effects of loss, grief and trauma*
• *Provide support to individuals and identify potential resources for healing and growth*
Historical and social context of past adoption legislation and practice
Past adoption
Leigh Hubbard
VANISH Chairperson
Activity

Discuss:

• What does past including forced adoption mean to you?
• What were some of the social, political, religious and moral norms, attitudes and values that may have led to this practice?
• What psychological theories on child development that may have influenced this practice?

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Core Issues in adoption over the life cycle

The Adoption Legacy

Adoption is a fundamental, life-altering event. Like a wheel, it rolls along for a lifetime.

- Loss
- Grief
- Rejection
- Mastery/Control
- Identity
- Intimacy
- Shame/Guilt

Your age timeline

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The experiences of those affected by forced and closed adoptions
A mother’s experience
Madeleine
An adoptee’s experience
Isabell
Presentation
Disenfranchised Grief
Grief and the negative impacts on health and well-being
- The AIFS study

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Possible presenting difficulties, expressions of grief & trauma and triggering events

- Presenting difficulties
- Expressions of grief and trauma
- Triggers over the life course
Adoption- sensitive practice and Inquiry

✓ Adoption sensitive inquiry
✓ Myths about adoption
Activity
Discuss:
‘My current practice and awareness of my personal values and assumptions’
Ask the question
Pauline Kenny
Research Fellow, AIFS
What helps
✓ Acknowledgement and Validation
✓ Self-education
✓ Information and records
✓ Support for search and contact
✓ Specialist counselling
✓ Support Groups
✓ Community Education-’never again’
An adoptee talks about the role of support groups
Isabell