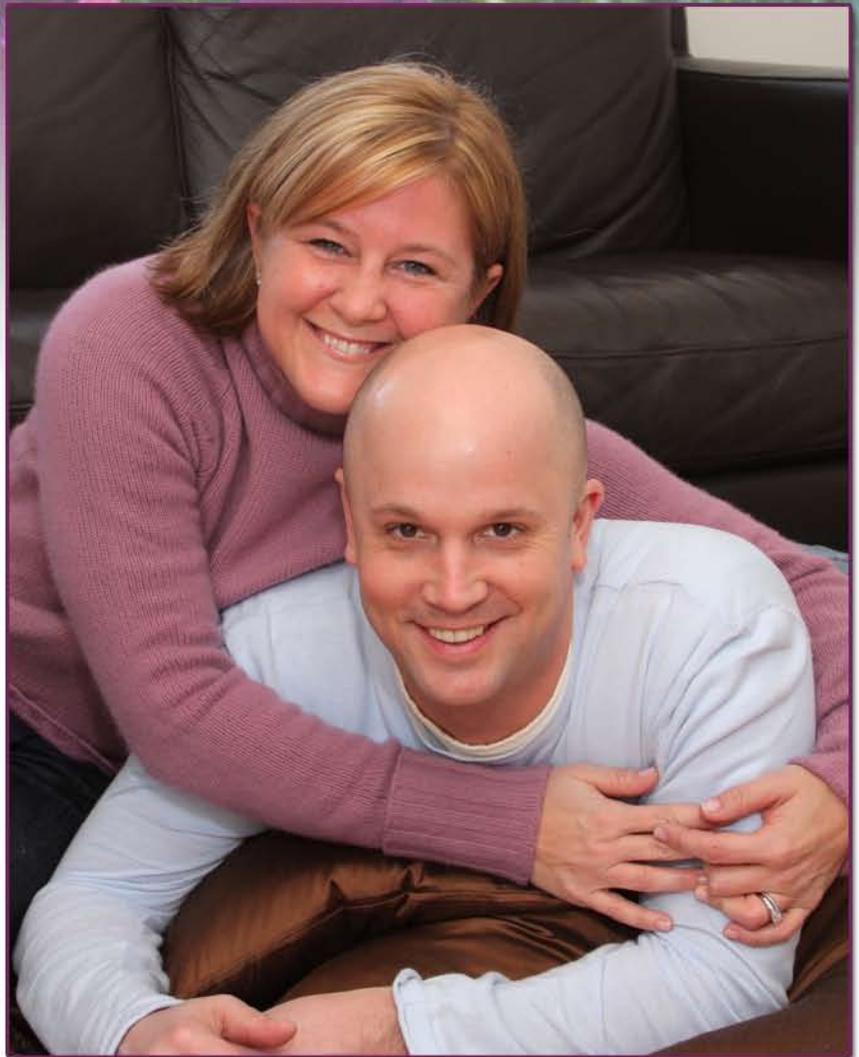




# Terri and Ben

Dear Birthmother,

Thank you so much for taking the time to read our letter. We know the decision you have made to consider adoptive parents for your child is a difficult one and we admire your courage and strength. From the beginning of our relationship, we knew we wanted to start a family together. We have planned our lives carefully so that Terri will be able to be home full-time with our children as we grow our family. When we began, we hoped it would just be a short time before we welcomed a child into our lives. Three years went by without success and we've subsequently learned from doctors that we will not be able to conceive a child. It has been a difficult road for us filled with heartbreak and frustration. But we are also very comfortable building the family we've always



wanted through adoption. Adoption has always been a part of Terri's life; she was adopted as an infant and, many years ago, as a teen, she placed a child for adoption at a time when she did not feel ready to parent. Now, we are celebrating adoption as not only the path that brought Terri to her adoptive family and her son to his, but hopefully will also be the path by which we can welcome a child into our hearts and our lives. Our families know our story and are very excited to welcome a child into the family through adoption.





Here's our story:

A mutual friend, Matt, knew both of us and knew that we both had a very similar sense of humor. While Matt and Ben were having dinner together one evening, Matt told Ben about Terri and, on a whim, called and asked her to join them. The rest is history. Matt was right; we were immediately drawn to one another's sense of humor and felt an instant connection that went beyond friendship. We had such a great time together; it was always fun and exciting to see what would happen next. We discovered that our values and interests were similar; we share a deep love for our family and friends, nature, art and travel. We wanted the same things from life; to be with someone we love, start a family of our own, and experience everything life has to offer together. We felt fortunate to know, from the beginning, that Terri would be able to be a full-time at-home mom for our child. Ben has reached a point in his career where he can shape his hours and flex, when need be, to relax with family, attend school outings and otherwise relish precious family time. We are looking forward to treasuring all the precious moments of childhood.



*Terri and Ben in Hawaii*



*Our Family*

Soon after we married, we began trying to get pregnant. Terri was 35 at the time and we'd been trying for 6 months when we decided to see a fertility specialist. We used several methods to attempt to conceive and after two miscarriages and several unsuccessful IVF attempts, we were disappointed, but also interested to see that we would have another opportunity for adoption to warm our hearts and lives.

More than one member in each of our families have known adoption in

a personal way. Terri was adopted as a newborn and made a loving adoption plan for her son when she was 19. Her sister and brother-in-law, Amber and Michael, became adoptive parents to a baby from Ethiopia, Teshomé, earlier this year and have had a wonderful experience with the adoption process and with their beloved

son. On Ben's side of the family, his older brother, Joe, became a birthfather at the age of 19. All of our experiences have been both positive and rewarding. We know that love makes a family and can't wait to adopt a child and bring him or her into our very adoption-comfortable extended family. The child who joins our family will know adoption as a natural and comfortable part of our everyday life and will understand, completely, that everyone is on equal footing in our family.

We moved from the West Coast to the Boston area for Ben's job and have really come to enjoy our life here in Massachusetts. Ben works



*Our House*

for an athletic shoe and apparel company as a Product Director and Terri has spent the last year volunteering with several organizations in our area. Terri is a Big Sister to a local seven year old girl from Haiti. Terri has felt gratified in helping her with reading and giving her special attention that her large family has had a harder time giving her. Terri attends her school once a week and, otherwise spends enjoyable time helping her feel special, valued and appreciated. When Terri is not being a Big Sister, she volunteers with Horizons for Homeless Children. They raise money to help build play structures in the yards of homeless shelters; a second part of the program involves going to the shelters and spending some time playing with the children who are staying there. She helps plan artist receptions and community events for a photography museum. She also volunteers filling food boxes for distribution for the local Food Bank.



*With Ben's Parents at Walden Pond*



## About Ben

Ben was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. He's the middle child of three sons and is extremely close to his parents and brothers who all live within ten miles of one another in Oregon. Ben's parents are two of the most wonderful people you could ever know. His dad is retired from the real estate development business and his mom is a retired social worker. They spend their time now traveling around the world and with their children and youngest grandchild. Ben's older brother, Joe is a realtor and is married with two grown children, and his younger brother, Adam, who is in the insurance business, has a four-year-old daughter, Madison, who is an absolute joy to us all. She is so excited to welcome a cousin into her life.

Ben will be a wonderful father. When he's with our niece and nephew, he is gentle and has a warmth that makes them very comfortable. He talks with children with respect and they feel cared for by him. He likes playing and laughing with them.

Growing up, Ben was an adventurous kid. He was always interested in how things worked and tried to get as much excitement from life as he possibly could.

He's had the same friends since childhood and places an enormous amount of value on his relationships. After high school, he went straight to college and graduated with several degrees in business and advertising. He's been in the same field, athletic shoes and apparel, for over ten years and really loves it. He has the particular thrill of being able to work for a company that values service to others. Within his project,



*Ben on Safari in Africa*



a percentage of proceeds from sales of his product line are devoted to a health care initiative that funds care of children and families in Africa. An “average” work day might involve anything from choosing the ideal fabric for a product to talking with famous professionals about collaborating on helping others in Africa. His work is very important to him and he is a wonderful provider. He works very hard at his job but also knows that life is about balancing a career with family and friends. Ben loves the outdoors; he surfs on a weekly basis (wearing a warm wet suit!), and traveling the world; he’s been everywhere! He loves trying new things and is always there with a kind word of encouragement for everyone in his life. He is intelligent, funny, generous, and honest and will be a wonderful father.



*Terri with her niece Madison*

### About Terri

Terri, adopted at birth, is the oldest of two daughters. Her adoptive mother, Christine, lives in Oregon where she is a hospital administrator; her adoptive father, Richard, a retired physical therapist, lives in Northern California. The couple divorced when she was young. Growing up, Terri enjoyed ballet, gymnastics, swimming, and track and was obsessed with books.

Just after graduating from high school, Terri found herself pregnant by her first serious boyfriend, after three years of dating. Neither felt ready to parent. The decision to place her baby for adoption was the hardest thing she’d ever had to do but she knew in her heart it was the right thing for her son. She feels this experience and time in her life changed her relationships with her family and brought them closer together to this day.



She went on to graduate from college where she double majored in English Literature and Political Science and started working as a marketing manager for an architecture firm. In 1999 she moved to Utah to work as

*With Harper in New Hampshire*



*Honeymoon in Tahiti*

an architectural project coordinator for the 2002 Winter Olympics – her dream job. She had the opportunity to have a hand in designing the locations for the games. After her job ended she moved back to Portland, which is where our mutual friend Matt introduced us.

These days, Terri keeps herself busy with her volunteer work. She especially loves the arts, cooking, reading, decorating our home,

spending time with her nephew Teshomé,

and just generally enjoys her life. She's a very thoughtful woman, always sending cards and notes to our family and friends, baking for neighbors, and reaching out to people in need. Her dream is to be a stay-at-home mom and given the stability of Ben's career, this is fortunately possible for her.

One of the reasons Ben knew Terri was 'the one' was the kindness and warmth she displayed with our niece and our friend's children. She is compassionate, patient, and giving and will be an amazing mother. You can trust that if you chose us to be parents to your child, he or she will be truly cherished and adored by her.



*Honeymoon in Kauai*



### About 'Us'

Our mutual loves for adventure and learning really keep our marriage growing and exciting. We've been on amazing trips to the South Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, and all over the United States. We love to spend our time playing tennis, golfing, hiking with our dog Harper, going to the gym, trying new restaurants, taking classes, and simply enjoying each other's company. We are both very spiritual people and have a strong sense of faith. Nothing is more important to us both than our families and their well-being. They are all fantastic people and will be such an important part of our child's life and upbringing. We live in a great house right outside of Boston, close to friends and all that this beautiful area has to offer: beaches, hiking trails, skiing and city life.

As a birthmother and an adoptee herself, Terri is in a very unique position. She has experienced adoption from both sides and knows how difficult it has been for you to make this decision. It is one of the hardest things you will ever do. We want you to know that we admire you and respect you and want nothing but the best for you and your baby. If you do choose us to raise your child, we are more than willing to send photographs and letter updates regularly if you'd like this and to keep in touch with you throughout the years. He or she will always know your decision was one based in love and pure selflessness. Please call Full Circle at 1-800-452-3678 if you wish to speak to us, we would love to hear from you.



All our warmest regards, Ben and Terri