

CHARLES & ANELISE



OUR STORY

Hello! We are Anelise and Charles. We are happy and grateful to be able to share a bit about ourselves with you!

We both grew up in NJ and met in high school on a spring day, playing frisbee in a park. Anelise had come with a group from the high school literary magazine. Charles had come with a group who had been building sets for the theater. We connected immediately and quickly became fast friends.



Anelise and Charles at an art exhibit by Charles's cousin.

We reconnected in college as adults and fell in love. In the past eighteen years, we've had quite a few adventures. We moved to New York, got a rescue dog named Max, and then lived in North Carolina and California before returning to the Northeast to finally settle in Maine. We love the Northeast because we can be close to our extended families and our chosen family of friends---many of whom were there the day we first met!

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We want to grow our family in the strong tradition established by Charles' grandparents. After they were told that it would not be safe for Charles's grandmother to give birth, they did not stop the growth of their family. Instead, they adopted three children, including Charles's father. Charles's uncle went on to also grow his family through adoption.

Adoption was always our first choice. We want to continue in the loving traditions established by Charles's grandparents and grow a loving family of our own.

ABOUT ANELISE BY CHARLES

Anelise approaches the world with love and supports that love by fostering strong relationships.

She demonstrates this love with her family. She talks to her parents every day, always wanting to hear about what they are up to. Despite living on the other coast, Anelise's brother is among her best friends. She is one of the first folks he reaches out to when he needs advice on anything or when sharing adorable photos of his young son.

She shows love in devotion to her job as a college professor. Her favorite part of this work is helping young people figure out who they want to be. Every semester she meets with each student individually to be sure she knows both their work and who they are as human beings. When we walk around campus, we often run into her students, and Anelise always stops to chat and check in with them. When she is not teaching, she spends time working with colleagues to make the school an even better place for students, staff, and faculty.



Anelise running a half marathon



Anelise cooking.



She also demonstrates love to our dog, Max, who adores her just as much as she does him. He has helped her train for many half marathons and keeps her company as she works in our garden.

I am lucky that she demonstrates this to me. She recommends books for me, expands my horizons by introducing many delicious new recipes, and asks, every morning, 'What are you looking forward to today' to remind me to be optimistic as I start my day.

ABOUT CHARLES BY ANELISE

Charles is my best friend and the kindest person I know.

The most important thing to know about Charles is that he always looks for ways to help people. Whether it's talking me through a challenging workday, arranging a concert to raise funds for a family in need, or driving over to an elderly acquaintance's house to help him fix his internet, Charles lives his life by putting others first.

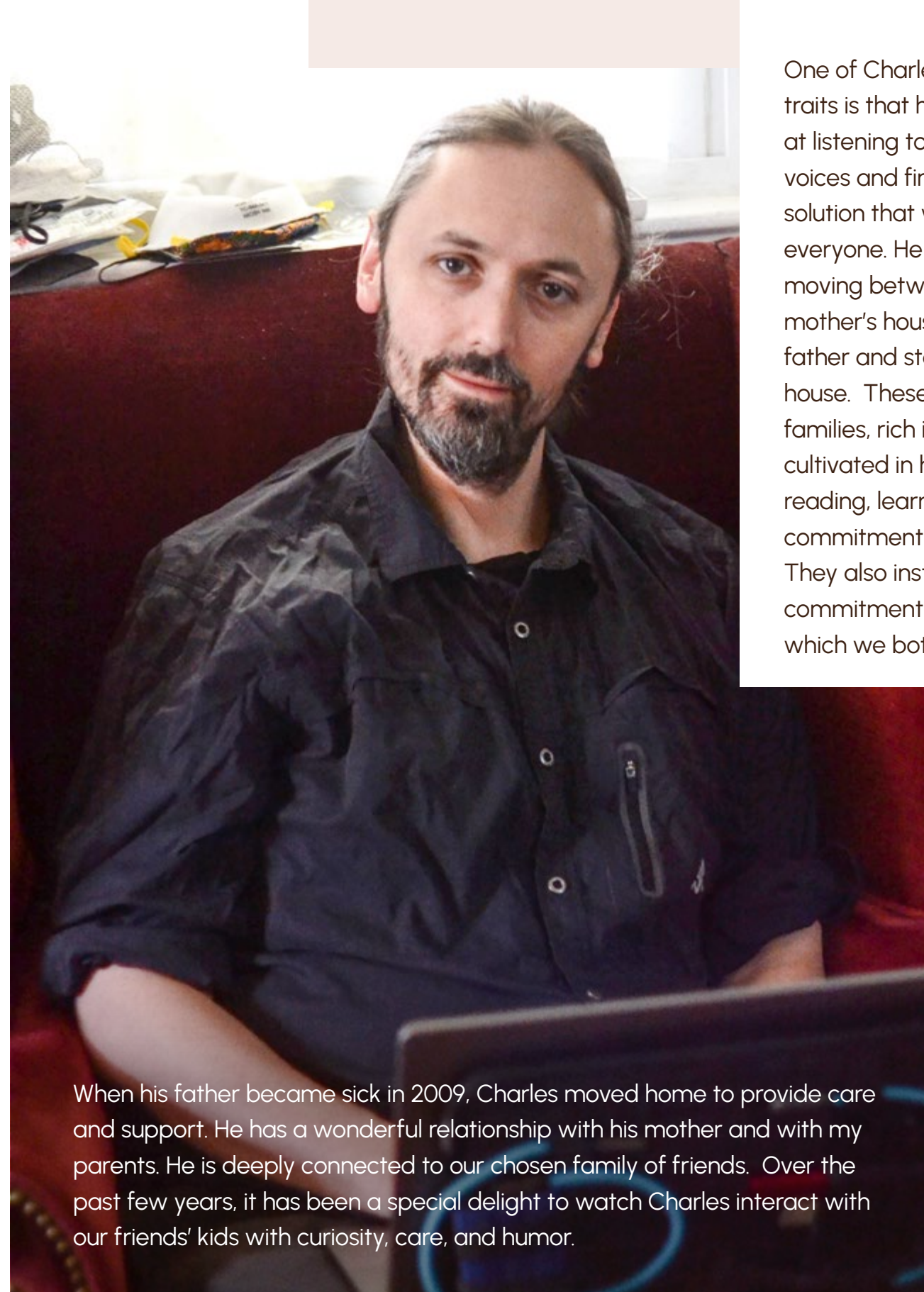
In his work at a software company and in the theater, he is known as the person to call to get things done. When I go into his office, he is often on the phone with a friend or colleague, helping them to brainstorm a tricky problem. He also works to make his industry more open by mentoring and welcoming people who have traditionally been excluded.



Charles on his bike.



Charles working in the wood shop.



One of Charles's best traits is that he is good at listening to multiple voices and finding a solution that works for everyone. He grew up moving between his mother's house and his father and stepmother's house. These two families, rich in traditions, cultivated in him a love of reading, learning, and a commitment to the arts. They also instilled a deep commitment to family, which we both share.

When his father became sick in 2009, Charles moved home to provide care and support. He has a wonderful relationship with his mother and with my parents. He is deeply connected to our chosen family of friends. Over the past few years, it has been a special delight to watch Charles interact with our friends' kids with curiosity, care, and humor.

OUR HOME



In the backyard.

In October of 2019, we purchased an old farmhouse built in 1861.

Our two-storied home is very cozy, has lots of character, and has three bedrooms, so there is plenty of space for our family to grow! There are books in every room of our house, and a lot of art made by friends and family.

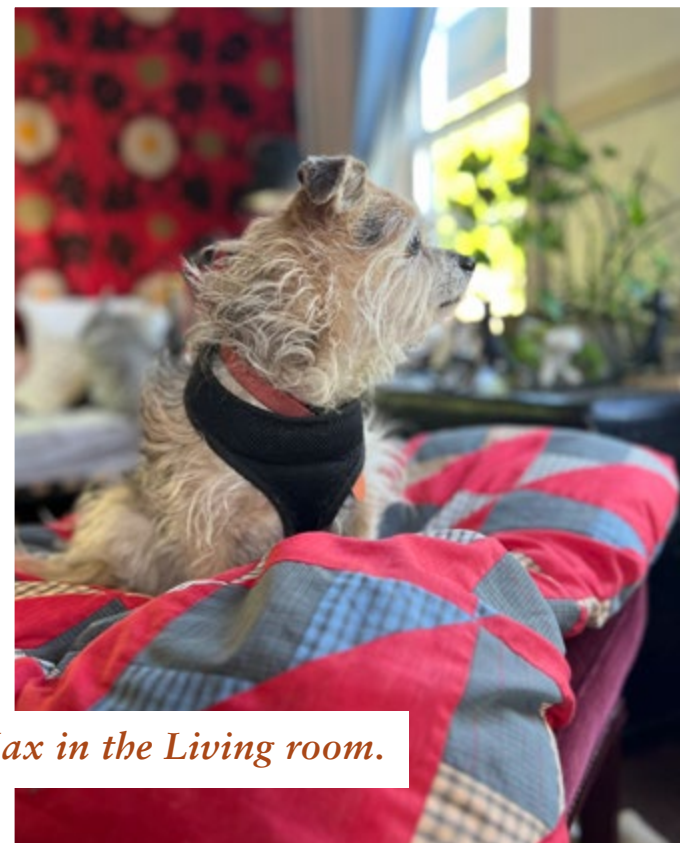
Reading in the living room.



We love to build and make things, and over the past few years, we've been working to restore our home's nineteenth-century charm. We've built a workshop for Charles in our barn, a sewing and weaving room for Anelise in the house, and we've planted a big, beautiful garden. We are right down the street from the local middle school and love to watch as the neighborhood children literally stop and smell our roses!

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We love living in this community, one of the most diverse cities in Maine, and close to some of Maine's natural beauty in the form of state parks, hiking trails, and rivers. On the weekends, we often frequent the local farmers market, where second and third-generation Mainers sell their wares alongside more recently arrived members of the Somali Bantu community. Downtown boasts great children's programming through community-run arts events, a museum, a library, and a famous hot-air balloon festival. Our neighborhood, close to downtown, is extremely walkable. We're just a few blocks from a family-owned local market, parks, and playgrounds. This means that we often run into our friends, neighbors, and Anelise's co-workers out for walks with their dogs or taking their children to school.



Max in the Living room.



Anelise in her home office.



Anelise, Charles and Anelise's mother on a hike.

OUR FAMILY

We both come from big families that are spread geographically out but stay very closely connected.

Anelise regularly boasts that we could drive across the country and find one of her family members to stay with every night! Even though they live across the US, Anelise's many cousins (over fifty!) keep in close touch, frequently visiting each other and recommending books, board games, or recipes.

Charles' family is smaller and centered more on the east coast, mostly in New England. This closeness means that they can maintain a regular exchange of interesting things they've read. Charles's family trades books around enough that his cousin recently lent Anelise a book that Charles had given to his aunt over a year ago!

One of the great benefits of moving to Maine from California for us is that we can now hop in the car after work and visit Charles's family in Vermont, some of Anelise's cousins in Massachusetts, or any of our parents in New Jersey. Of course, our parents have also come to visit us often. **THEY ARE ALL VERY EXCITED TO BE GRANDPARENTS, AND WE EXPECT THAT OUR GUEST BEDROOM WILL BE FULLY BOOKED!**

Our chosen family, a tight-knit group of friends we have shared since high school, is our other support network. Most among them are now the parents of young kids themselves and look forward to helping us through our parenting adventures.



Anelise after a half marathon with her brother.



Charles and his mother.



HOBBIES, INTERESTS & TRADITIONS



Anelise and Charles playing board games.

We both love to learn new things and share what we've learned with others.

We are both **avid readers**. Our car is covered with bumper stickers from the bookstores we've visited on our travels. Anelise starts most days reading a chapter of a book while Max sits on her lap. When traveling for work, Charles brings along a book and reads to her every night over the phone. Our parents read to each of us when we were children, and we are excited to continue the tradition.

We also like to **learn to make things**. After a trip to Rome, Anelise was inspired to learn how to make pasta. She mastered ravioli, agnolotti, cappelletti, and tortelloni, which have become dishes we look forward to preparing when we have friends over for dinner. Charles loves to make things, like building furniture that fits just right in a nook of the house, repairing an old microphone that he found at a garage sale, or building a gift for a friend. He recently carved a wooden rattle for our neighbor's son!

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We love to sit with friends and **learn to play new board games**, spread out on a table for hours on end. In recent years we've begun to teach some of these games to their kids, who often beat us!



Anelise dressed as a sheep for Halloween at work.

Finally, we love to **share our family traditions** with each other and with our friends. Whether it is the annual "Christmas-Eve-Eve" dinner that Anelise's family arranges every year, or Charles sharing his father's famous cherry pie recipe, we cherish traditions that give us opportunities to connect with loved ones.



Anelise working in the garden.

THANK YOU!



We admire your strength, courage, and the act of
profound love that you are taking.

*Thank you for taking the time to learn a little bit about us, our
community, and our families.*

We can't imagine how anxious you are about finding loving parents for your child. We admire your strength, courage, and the act of profound love that you are taking.

If you choose us as adoptive parents, we will do everything we can to ensure that your child grows up happy, loved, healthy, and supported. We promise to unconditionally love, cherish, and care for them with all of our hearts. We promise to do our absolute best to provide everything that they need to thrive: a loving home, strong values and education, and a ton of doting family members. We hope that most times are good, but also promise to approach times that are tough with patience, humor, love, and respect.

We plan to be open and honest about adoption in age-appropriate ways from the beginning, helping the child understand that the decisions surrounding their adoption were deeply rooted in love. We are committed to whatever level of openness makes you most comfortable, and we promise to honor your wishes.

We are so excited to become parents, to share our own family's traditions, and to make new ones. We wish you the best as you decide what is best for you and your child, and we are extremely grateful that you have taken the time to consider us as prospective parents.

With love,

Anelise and Charles



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