



Brad & Johanna

Hello!

We are Johanna and Brad and we are very pleased to “meet” you. Thank you for considering us to be the adoptive parents of your child. We realize this is a difficult time for you, and we think you are very courageous, loving and giving for considering adoption to help a couple who is not able to have children on their own become parents. We hope that this brief window into our lives will give you peace of mind knowing how much we would love and devote ourselves to your child and the stable, supportive home that we would provide. We love children and always knew we wanted to raise a child together. We are not able to have children on our own and have chosen adoption as the way to make that dream come true. We know that raising a child will have its unexpected challenges as well as joys, and we are ready for the task. We are fortunate to have supportive family, established careers, and a wonderful home in New York City. Most importantly, we have a strong relationship filled with love. We are eager to share this all with a child.

Front cover: plant by Brad, flower by Johanna



Our Story

We had our first conversation in 2003. We had met several times before that but were too shy to talk to one another. We started talking one night at the birthday party of a friend that Johanna knew from college and Brad knew from law school. Brad told Johanna that night that he really liked her but had a girlfriend, so, naturally, she told him to go away. Brad found Johanna eight months later using Friendster, a precursor of Facebook. We soon discovered that we shared a love of art, Italy and food!

After a few dates we were both certain that we were meant to be together. Since then, without exception, we have taken care of each other and made one another laugh.

We got engaged at sunrise in Mexico in 2007 and were married in 2008 at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, surrounded by our friends and family, in a ceremony and reception featuring poetry, laughter, wonderful food, and dancing. It rained, but we are proof of the saying that this must be good luck, especially when we have supported each other through some of life's most challenging obstacles. After 15 years, we still just love being together. We eat dinner together almost every night, whether Johanna cooks

(and Brad cleans), or we order take-out. Brad unfailingly texts when he is leaving work and when he's twenty minutes away so that Johanna can prepare dinner.

Both of our parents set great examples of how to sustain a loving and caring marriage. We have learned much from them, not least of all how to communicate and work through problems.

We enjoy taking art classes together, going for long walks in the park or (preferably!) at the beach, and going to the theater or live music.



Johanna describing Brad

I am practically in a state of disbelief every day that I was lucky enough to find Brad. I love our daily life together, making one another laugh with silly plays-on-words and nicknames that will be perfect to share with a child. I first knew I was in love with him fifteen years ago, when I saw him do an imitation of the googly eyes on my panda alarm clock I'd bought in Chinatown.

Brad likes to care for things, whether it be his personal collections, people, animals, or work. At home, rather than listen to his digital music library, he plays records from his vast collection of everything from classical to jazz to soul. Each time he plays a record, he brushes it carefully to remove any dust. His job at work is to be in charge of all the details when documents are submitted to the court. For several weeks each year, we take care of my mother's dog, a Havanese named Goldie. Not only does Brad enjoy walking and training Goldie, but he also feeds and grooms her diligently. And he takes care of me, from making me tea when I'm sick to helping me shop for clothes to wear to an important interview. I look forward to seeing this warm and nurturing instinct applied to being a Dad.

Brad has the patience of a saint; he's rarely rushed or rattled. I started saying this years ago when my mother and I were bickering over wedding plans. He calmly listened to me vent and helped me find mutually agreeable solutions. Fast forward seven years to the death of my father from leukemia followed three months later by my mother's battle with uterine cancer, which she won. Brad has been unfailingly supportive, comforting me through the illnesses of both parents and now, being a major help for my mother now that she is on her own and I've become much closer to her. Family is his first priority and helping those he loves is never a burden to him; if he can, he will.

We complement each other's strengths and weaknesses and have worked out a good division of labor. We respect one another and talk through any disagreements. Even doing paperwork together, from our taxes to our adoption materials (!) is not a hated task when we do it together. I look forward to seeing how our routines will evolve once we are parents together. One of my most vivid childhood memories is that every night my dad would read me two books and we'd eat popsicles. I can't wait to see Brad read to your child and create new traditions that will be carried down for generations.



With niece Ami at birth



With niece Ami at the zoo



Playing Scrabble with niece Ami



Legos with nephew Ollie

Brad describing Johanna

Johanna is a New Yorker through and through. She can put on a tough, “don’t bother me” face on the street, but she is one of the most welcoming, warm, and thoughtful people I know. She can also be very funny. I knew we had a future together when she made me laugh!

Johanna is very in touch with her emotions, and she has helped me become more in touch with mine. She is very good about articulating her feelings, and she knows how to create an environment where I feel comfortable discussing them. Johanna likes to think about and talk things over carefully before taking action, which is a good counterbalance to my tendency to make spontaneous decisions.

Johanna is also very talented artistically and creatively. She has an amazing eye for color, and does fantastic work matching, blending and contrasting color – one of the many reasons she is a great exhibit and graphic designer. She is also very self-motivating, and I’ve enjoyed watching her build a freelance career in her field over the years.

I also admire Johanna for her perseverance. We went

through a very difficult period a few years ago when her parents were each very sick. Johanna showed tremendous strength and courage to get through this difficult time, and worked very hard to get her professional career and other aspects of her life back to the point where they were before all of these painful events interrupted our lives. Not only has she gotten back to where she was, but she continues to grow both professionally and personally. As a result of those tough times, we have grown closer, both to each other and our families.

I also know that Johanna will be an excellent mother. I’ve seen her with my nieces and nephew, and have witnessed her make an upset child laugh just by flashing her beautiful smile or making a funny face. Having grown up a New Yorker, I have no doubt that she will know how to best guide one as well.



Ice skating with our nieces Ami and Mandy in Cincinnati



Swimming with niece Mandy



Niece Ami at birth

Meet Brad

I grew up in suburban Cincinnati, Ohio, with my parents Mike and Phyllis and my older sister Allison. My mother was an elementary school teacher with Public Schools and taught in some very troubled schools. My dad worked at Procter & Gamble and had served in the Marines. So while they were both very loving and supportive, they also taught us the importance of a good education and hard work. My parents encouraged a love of reading from an early age. My first words were “Read the book.”

My love of reading and writing led me to the legal profession. I have a job called “Managing Attorney” at a big law firm. This means that I handle all the court filings and advise the attorneys on the court rules and procedural issues. I enjoy my work and I particularly enjoy teaching the new attorneys – if I was not a lawyer, I’d probably be a teacher! Johanna is happy because as she says “It’s a lawyer job without lawyer hours.”

Though I work in the legal profession, I also have a creative side. I have always loved drawing and painting. I also love music, and while I don’t play any instruments, I have quite a record collection! My other hobbies are playing pick-up soccer in the park and watching my New York Redbulls and the U.S. National Soccer Teams. I’m not a natural athlete, so I really had to work hard to be a decent soccer player and have great admiration for professional athletes.

I also have a love for nature and the great outdoors, which I learned to enjoy with my father, who is an avid nature photographer. Whether it’s Prospect Park in Brooklyn or Muir Woods in California, I find happiness in experiencing the beauty and wonders of our planet. I am looking forward to sharing these experiences with a child and exploring new ones that this child may love.



Meet Johanna

I am a life-long New Yorker and the only-child of my parents Carole and Bob. I come from a very small but close-knit family – we have a lot of silly family jokes and traditions! We watched lots of movie musicals; now I know the words to ‘Singin’ in the Rain’ better than the lyrics to ‘Purple Rain.’ My family loves to celebrate together with lots of delicious foods.

During my childhood, I fondly remember spending time at the house doing watercolors and working on school projects. I even remember working on Halloween costumes with my mom – one year I decided to be a grandfather clock since the kids at school who used boxes in their costumes seemed to always win the contest.

My main hobby was figure skating. I grew up taking lessons when I was six years old at a skating rink called “The Ice Studio.” I was tall and awkward for the sport, but I loved it and continued to pursue lessons and practice through High School.

I knew from an early age that I wanted to work in an arts-related field, and after a few years working in museums, I found my niche doing exhibition and graphic design for museums and cultural organizations. It is a great fit for me because I get to use my creative skills while also working for the arts. I have my own business which means that I work from home and have a flexible schedule. I have always loved art and still enjoy painting, particularly watercolors. I have also recently become an adjunct professor of graphic design at a local community college. I really enjoy teaching – my students are enthusiastic and many are the first in their families to attend college!

We were all devastated by my father’s death several years ago, though his passing has brought me closer with my mother, Carole. We spend many weekends in the summer with her and her new companion, a sweet Havanese dog named Goldie.



Our Family & the Holidays

After 15 years, it's hard to think of our families as separate....

Brad's parents, sister, brother-in-law, two nieces (12 and 10) and nephew (8) live in Cincinnati, Ohio. We visit them every Christmas, vacation together in Myrtle Beach, and talk and Skype regularly. Carole, lives in Manhattan with her dog Goldie. We see her at least once a week. Johanna's dad, Bob, passed away from leukemia in 2015 shortly after the celebration of their 40th wedding anniversary. He was warm, funny, and insightful. We miss him more every day. Traditionally, we would spend Thanksgiving with Bob and Carole and their friends at their home in Connecticut. Since Bob's passing, we've had some lovely Thanksgivings at the homes of our friends or Carole's friends in the city, but we are looking forward to the time when our family is big enough to host our own Thanksgiving dinners in Connecticut again. Carole makes a delicious apple pie, but it's always better when it's eaten at home.

Brad's parents also usually come to stay with us in Brooklyn once or twice a year. They enjoy visiting with Carole and taking in a Broadway show.



Johanna and Brad with our parents. L to R: Johanna's mom Carole, Brad's dad Mike, Johanna, Brad, Brad's mom Phyllis, Johanna's dad Bob



Family pic at Myrtle beach. Clockwise from upper left: Brad's dad Mike, Johanna, Brad, Brad's mom Phyllis, our niece Mandy, Brad's sister Allison, our niece Ami, brother-in-law Senad.



Carole and her dog Goldie did special training so Goldie could be what's called a "therapy animal." They go to schools and hospitals to make people feel better. Goldie is great with kids!



Silly photo booth picture with cousins. L to R: Johanna, cousins Joyce, Lily, Shruti



At cousin's wedding. L to R: Brad's cousin Caroline and husband Isaac, Johanna, Brad, cousin BethAnn



Johanna and our niece Ami



At Cherry Blossom Festival. L to R: Johanna's mom Carole, Brad, Johanna, Brad's mom Phyllis, Johanna's dad Bob

At Christmas, Phyllis usually cooks a traditional Italian feast of the seven fishes on Christmas eve, and then a delicious roast for Christmas Day. We help her prepare the food when she lets us (Johanna's specialties are cleaning shrimp and peeling potatoes), and everyone pitches in for the clean-up! We also look forward to Struff'li that Phyllis's sister sends us every year. Struff'li is an Italian delicacy of little dough balls covered in honey and sugar. It's delightful, and nobody can resist walking by without pinching off a Struff'li or two. And opening presents on Christmas is always fun, especially with the kids. We've enjoyed helping them build their Lego sets and figure out how to play with the new toys they received from Santa over the years.



In Cincinnati on Christmas. L to R: Brad, Brad's mom Phyllis, Brad's dad Mike, Brad's grandma Georgie, Brad's sister Allison, Brad's brother-in-law Senad



Christmas stockings on the fireplace



Our niece Mandy decorating the tree with ornaments hand-made by her great-grandmother



Our niece Ami decorating the tree

At home in Brooklyn

Our home is a lovely three-bedroom home in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn that we have lived in for ten years. There are many young children in our neighborhood, and a great elementary school just down the street. In the winter we host dinner with friends by the fireplace and in the summer we grow herbs and vegetables on our deck where we eat dinner and marvel at the ever-changing views of the city.

A neighbor and friend with two kids recently described the neighborhood as 'Sesame Street.' It's filled with diverse families of young children and there are terrific public schools as well as a farmer's market we attend every week, ice cream shops, playgrounds, and bookstores.

We love walking through the Brooklyn Botanic Garden where we were married and observing the cherry trees, Spanish bluebells, rose garden and other delights as they bloom. In the summer, children fill the cherry esplanade on picnic and movie nights that we regularly attend. We also take advantage of the central branch of the

Brooklyn Public Library's offerings, such as music or talks, and we're looking forward to taking part in the library's expansive children's programming. Nearly every day there's a storytime or craft workshop. Nearby Prospect Park is a great place for sledding, picnics, and a visit to the carousel and children's zoo. We also had some great times with our friends Courtney and Joe and their two young children attending free summer concerts in the park. We bring picnic food and some blankets, and the kids run around, dance, and chase fireflies under the stars.



Sledding in Prospect Park



Bluebell field at Brooklyn Botanic Garden



Arch at Grand Army Plaza



Brooklyn Museum of Art



Weekly farmer's market (we go every weekend!)



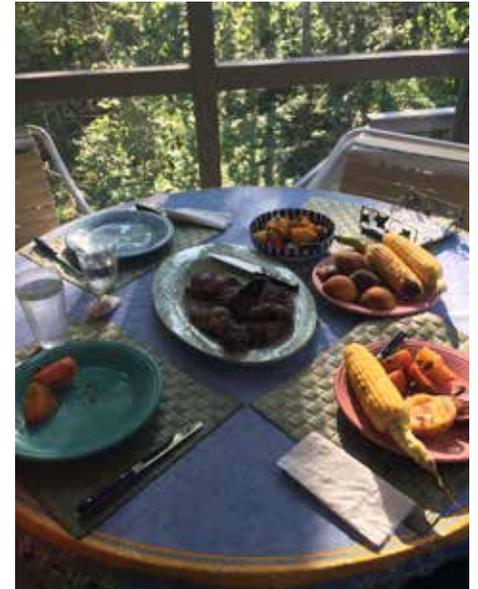
Brooklyn Public Library (wonderful children's library!)

Family Country Home

In the Summer we love to go to our family country home in Connecticut with Johanna's mother and her dog Goldie. We swim in the lake or the pool, cook delicious meals, lounge on the screened-in porch and go on excursions to farms and tag sales. And there's a kid's room with forest wallpaper and glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling. There's a clubhouse with a pool, tennis courts, and games, and several beach areas by the lake. Kids love hanging out at the clubhouse in the summer, especially around the snack bar and the pool. We love having our friends visit us, especially when they bring their kids!



In front of the Connecticut house



Johanna's mom Carole cooking "pull-apart" bread and dinner at the table on the porch.



Brad, Johanna, friend Joe, Joe's kids Scott and Emily



Brad and Emily as a baby



On the deck before heading down to the lake



View of lake and pool



Screened-in porch



Visit from friend Kristin and baby Denise



Kid's bedroom



Visit to a farm with Goldie

Vacations in Myrtle Beach

While Christmas with Brad's family is always fun, our summer vacations in Myrtle Beach are probably our favorite times spent with Brad's family. There, we play soccer on the beach with the kids, play games with them in the pool, and when we're tired of the sun, we play board games with them inside. We love our time with the kids, walking on the beach and collecting seashells, building sand castles, making up stories, and playing classic card and boardgames.



Our nieces Mandy and Ami, nephew Ollie



Johanna and our niece Ami

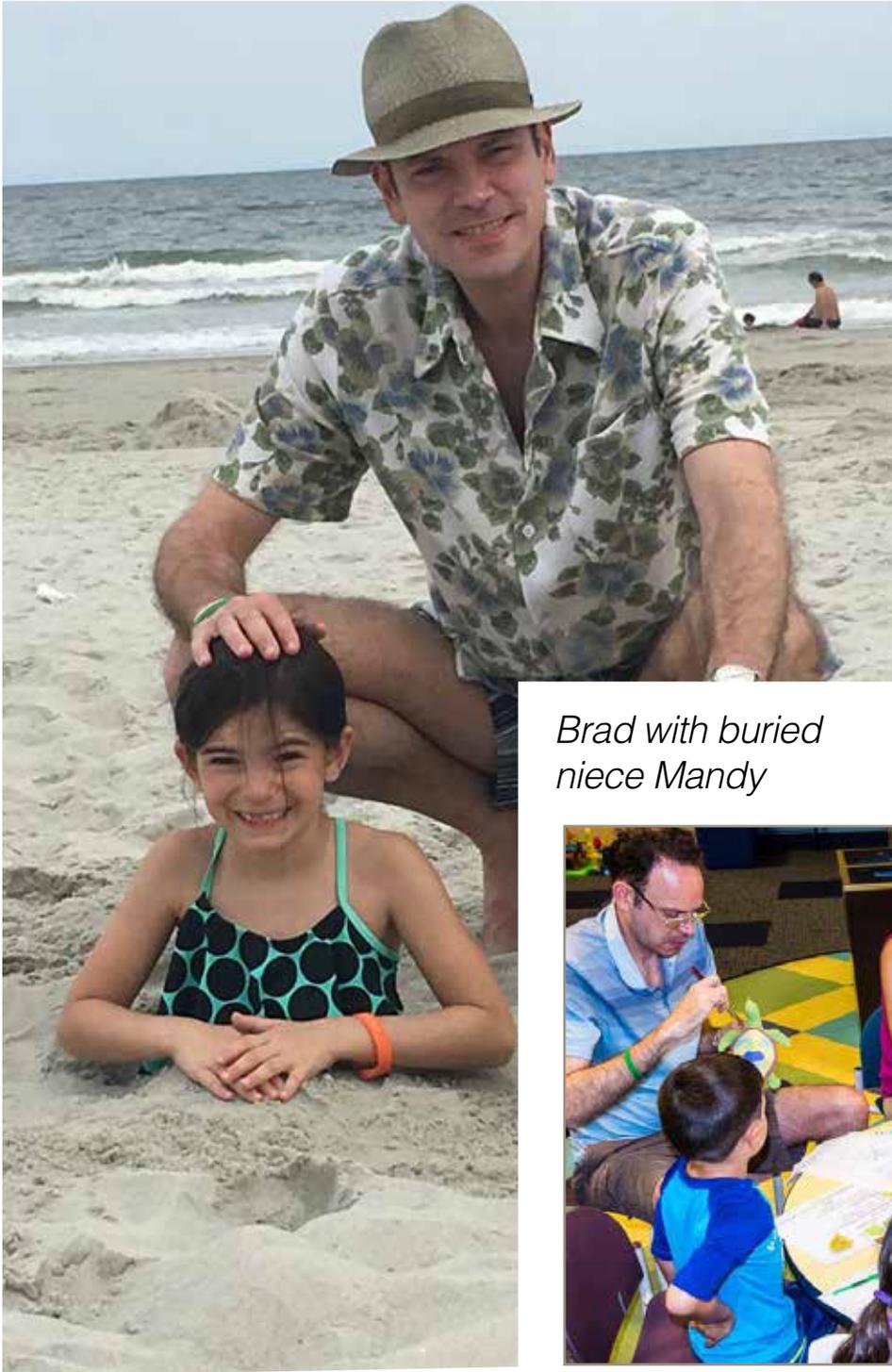


Card games and Monopoly with our nephew Ollie and our nieces Ami and Mandy



Fun in the pool with our nieces Ami and Mandy





Brad with buried niece Mandy



Johanna with niece Ami. We imagined a nail salon with shells as fingernails!



Pottery with our nieces Ami and Mandy and our nephew Ollie

Why we want to become parents together

We love children and have always wanted to become parents. Neither of us has completely lost touch with our inner child – we both enjoy watching good children’s movies like *The Little Prince* or *Moana* and re-reading classic children’s books. Brad has been waiting years to read the *Harry Potter* books because he wanted to save them to read with his daughter or son! We also both look forward to having another person to laugh with our jokes and hopefully pass on that same silly sense of humor to. As we both like teaching, we are also looking forward to teaching not just the fun things like how to ride a bike, or ice skate, or play card games, but also passing on what our parents taught us: how to work hard, how to take care of your family and friends, and how to enjoy life.

But we know raising a child is not all just fun and games, and that it can be difficult, frustrating and stressful too. But frankly, we are ready for a new challenge in our lives. We do not believe in spanking. Our goal is to raise our child to

be the best person that they can be by being supportive, unconditionally loving parents. We feel that school is a very big part of that, and will work hard to always find the school that is the best fit for our child. We will also promise to be good people and lead by example. We will make regular family meals together, which is something we do now. Johanna will continue her design business, and that the flexibility in her schedule will enable her to be an at-home mom. Brad’s office has a parental leave policy so he is going to take off time from work too. Plus, our parents are so excited that they are going to come stay with us too. This child will be Johanna’s mother 1st grandchild and she is looking forward to being really involved. We know our parents will give a child what they gave us: unconditional love and support. I think that is our main goal with raising a child too.



What we do for fun



We enjoy drawing at museums and taking art classes together, especially at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden; pink flowers with bananas by Brad, purple flowers by Johanna



Brad loves soccer and would love to share it with a child!

Photos: Brad playing soccer, coaching a friend's kid's soccer team and Brad and Johanna at a NY Red Bulls soccer game.

Friends & Travel



In the Caribbean



With dear friends in Brooklyn



At Indian wedding with friends from law school. The guys went shopping at an Indian clothing store for coordinated shirts.



Concert at Philharmonic



Vacation in Savannah, Georgia



Brad dancing with baseball mascot



Trip to Montreal



Engagement at Sunrise, 2007



Wedding 2008



Thank you!

Thank you for letting us share this brief window into our lives with you. We are excited and ready to become parents. We hope you can see that a child would have a warm, loving, safe, and secure place in our home. If you would like to learn more about us, we would be happy to meet you and answer any questions.

We'd love to learn more about you and your hopes for your child. If you would like to chat further, please call or text anytime at 800-990-7667, or email@bradandjohannahopetoadopt.com.

If you have any questions at all about us or the legal process, you are welcome to contact our attorney, Suzanne Nichols, at 1-800-255-1415.

Love,

Brad + Johanna

