

Jena Heath: I wanted to start by asking you what, if anything, you know about your birth situation and how you know it.

Meikina Stuy: I don't know very much. I came here when I was eighteen months old. I've been pretty much living here my whole life. My dad and mom are both trying to find my birth parents. They're still searching out there. It's never been a huge concern to find them. If they found them, that'd be awesome. It's never been on the top of my priority list.

Jena: If they weren't searching, you'd be fine with that too?

Meikina: Yeah.

Jena: Do you have a preference? Would you prefer they not search?

Meikina: No, I would like them to search. If they found them, that'd be great.

Jena: Would you want to meet them?

Meikina: Yes.

Jena: You would? If you met them, what would you want to discuss with them?

Meikina: How they're doing, not go right into, "Why did you set me up for adoption?" I'm not mad at them. How they're doing and stuff, and then be on my way, I guess.

Jena: Are you curious about why they decided on adoption?

Meikina: A little bit. I would like to know. At the same time, do I want to know the answer, if that makes any sense?

Jena: It does make sense. What's your fear about what the answer might be? What would you really not want to hear?

Meikina: Probably that they just didn't want me. They had me and then they're just like, "We didn't want you." That'd be probably my worst fear.

Jena: That would be hard to hear. Do you get a lot of questions from other kids or young people? As you've grown up, when you're out and about with your dad, have you ever had strangers approach and ask?

Meikina: No.

Jena: No? That's pretty good.

Meikina: If they ask, then they just nod their head and they're off. It's never like, "Tell me about it."

Jena: They're not fishing for more? You haven't felt that people were intruding?

Meikina: Never.

Jena: For younger people, younger adoptees, one of the things I'm interested in, the biggest reason I'm doing this is for them to have the benefit of older people like you who are living your life and have some experience. What would you tell a younger person who asked for advice about finding out about their birth families, about how to think about how they think about their adoption?

Meikina: I would say, are you ready to know this? I will tell you whatever you want to know. You have to be ready to listen and understand. If they're not, then they'll say no. If they are, then they'll take it either in a good way or a bad way. It's their choice. If you want to know, then definitely ask. If you don't want to know yet, I wouldn't force it upon them.

Jena: A lot of adoptive parents who are searching will search when the child is very, very young, before their child can give any consent. Do you feel like it's okay for parents to search when their children are young? Do you think parents should wait until their children are older? Do you have any feelings about that?

Meikina: I would definitely search while young so that you have the information with you right then. If they do ask later on, you're not like, "Let me go check," and maybe one or two years later it's like, "I have it now." I would definitely go search right then. When you're adopting is where I'd start finding at least little bits of here and there.

Jena: So the trail's not cold?

Meikina: Just so it's like a little bit.

Jena: What if your parents and you find birth parents? What should the adoptive parent do at that point?

Meikina: I would still say make it up to the child. If they want to see the adoptive parent, let them. If they don't, I wouldn't force.

Jena: Just tell them, we found them and it's up to you?

Meikina: It's up to you if you would like to go visit or see them, however.

Jena: I don't know where you are in your head about all this. Do you think about later having your own family? Have you thought about whether you would adopt or not?

Meikina: I don't think I'll adopt. As many kids as there are, my own personal, I would rather have my own little child.

Jena: Of your own?

Meikina: Yeah, DNA-wise. Totally, I would adopt.

Jena: You would adopt?

Meikina: I would adopt, if I couldn't. If not, I don't think I would.

Jena: You'd like to have a biological connection to your child?

Meikina: Yes.

Jena: That brings me to my last question. You sisters, I'm amazed by you guys, the last forty-eight hours. They share a room. They seem to get along beautifully. My brother and I did not share a room. We're constantly at each other's throats. How is it not being biologically sisters? Do you ever think about it? Does it have any impact at all on how you think about your connection to --

Meikina: It's never affected us. We've always thought we're blood sisters. We know we're not true blood sisters. We always think that we're together no matter what. We're family. It doesn't matter if you're different, from a different family or not. We're all the same.