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JOURNEY TO DISCOVERY

BY LISA MILDON ([HTTP://COFFEEHOUSEWRITERS.COM/AUTHOR/LISA-MILDON/](http://COFFEEHOUSEWRITERS.COM/AUTHOR/LISA-MILDON/)) / NOVEMBER 26, 2018 / 80 / 1

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Most folks that know me know that I'm adopted. I was very fortunate to be adopted before I was even born. My adoptive parents, whom I'll call my parents in this series, brought me home when I was 2 days old, so this is the only family I've ever known. But being adopted has always left me with hundreds of questions. Why was I given up? Who are my birth parents? What is my ancestry? As my adoption was a closed adoption, I didn't have access to any of that information, until now.

With the advent of DNA testing companies like Ancestry.com and 23 and me, some of those answers could be available to me. While the reasons for why I was given up and my birth parents names may never be known (you have to agree to share your information on Ancestry.com's site), my ancestry could be right at my fingertips.

However, I have been very hesitant in taking that step in submitting a DNA sample. While my mother has always been open to supporting my search for my birth family, I could never get myself to look as I didn't want to hurt her or any of my adoptive family's feelings. They are the only family I've ever known. The last thing I'd ever want to do is to make any of them feel that I didn't love and appreciate them. And to be quite honest, the only real obsession I've had over the years is what nationalities or countries do I come from. Why do I look the way I do? What traits did I inherit? Do I have any inherited diseases? The list goes on and on.

So, after 50 years of wondering, I took advantage of Ancestry's Thanksgiving sale. The process has been very easy. Once I got online and ordered the test (I got 2 of them, one for me, one for my husband), I just had to set up shipping of the DNA collection kit. No biggie, really. The tests finally arrived a few days later. When I ordered the test, I assumed the DNA would be collected from a cheek swab. I assumed incorrectly. You actually have

this vial that collects saliva. You may have to spit a few times to fill it, but even with my dry mouth, I managed after 3 attempts. Then you seal the sample with a solution that has to be shaken a little to preserve the sample. Ancestry provides pre-paid postage and packing. Pop it into the post, and voila! The waiting game begins.

When you sign up at their site, you are asked if you want status notifications via email or text. My husband opted for emails while I chose texts. These notices really help in the 6-8 week waiting game. I don't feel like they are just sitting on my test, but really working on providing information to me quickly. I've received a notice that they had my test sample, when they began processing it into their system, and just today received notice that they are extracting my DNA. I feel part of the process a bit with these timely updates. According to their last text, my results will be ready in 2-4 weeks.

The other nice thing is you can log into their site and get these updates, plus a whole lot more. You can start building a family tree or just flesh out your own details. Of course, being adopted, I know very little, but they do have a place to mention that you are adopted. I can attest to how much information you can get from their site. My husband found old legal documents on his parents from their birth certificates to wedding certificates. It is really nice to see actual images of these important documents. I really envy him in discovering some of his family's past.

Now, back to that thought with me being adopted. There is that chance that I'll find out details on my birth family. With Ancestry's site, you can voluntarily provide your data for others to discover. So, anything I find will be that person's choice. That being said, I'm thinking about this with nervous anticipation. True, I'll find out my ancestry, but I may be opening Pandora's box on my past. Am I ready to discover the truth? What if I find out about my birth parents and it's a horrible story. Or they are terrible people? Or maybe I just find out they're dead. I have even more questions and thoughts swirling inside my head. Not to mention the emotions. I keep asking myself, am I really ready for this?

I guess, at this point, it's too late to back out. I now need to steel myself into hearing the results, good or bad. What I do look forward to are any stories I may learn about my past and truths my DNA may reveal. Now, I just need to be patient and wait for the results. Instead of constantly wondering where I come from, I'll have answers to help complete my own story.

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Your Dad is proud of you, Jordan. Keep up the amazing work! (<http://coffeehousewriters.com/what-i-miss-most/#comment-3313>)

What I Miss Most



JESSICA KNUEPPEL on DECEMBER 1, 2018

Amazing, Lisa!! Hoping for an update article once you receive the results!!

(<http://coffeehousewriters.com/journey-to-discovery/#comment-3312>)

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