

# The Child Who Was Never Conceived

Category: Parenting

written by David Coulter | May 2, 2019

As we celebrate the joys and frustrations of parenting, let us pause to remember that parenting does not always happen. My wife and I tried to have kids but were not successful. Which is why I hope we can also celebrate the children who were never conceived.

Many couples try and are unsuccessful. Some of those turn to assisted reproduction techniques like ICSI and IVF. My wife and I chose not to go through that. Others choose to adopt instead. My nephew married a woman who had been treated successfully for leukemia as a young woman. They were not able to conceive a child, so they adopted two wonderful kids. My wife and I chose not to pursue that route either.

Our jobs (mine as a child neurologist and hers as a child psychologist) have allowed us to help and support a lot of kids over the years. We became godparents to some of them. I have been privileged to help “parent” thousands of kids who let me care for them from birth to adulthood. I know—it is not the same as being there to wipe their baby butts, tuck them in at night, or wake up to feed them.

But one of my patients with tuberous sclerosis, whom I have followed for many years through many severe challenges, just gave me a photo of himself in his cap and gown as he crossed the stage to get his high school diploma. His mother and I were so proud.

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