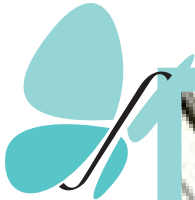


Hello we are...

*Brad & Tessa*



*Graceful*  
**adoptions**<sup>TM</sup>



## Our Hopes and Dreams...

We have so many hopes and dreams! And most of them revolve around being a family. Some people are meant to be explorers or adventurers. Some have natural athletic abilities. Others are better with their hands. We believe we were meant to be parents.

Before becoming parents, we worked, saved money, bought a house, spent time with family and friends and hung out together. Life was good. We weren't one of those couples that were "bored" and thought having children would add excitement to our life. Instead, our path to having a family was purposeful and planned. Long before we were married we talked about having a family with lots of kids, like those that we grew up in, so our children would have built-in life-long friends.

What we didn't know then is just how our life would change when we had children. Sure our schedules changed and we got less sleep. However, what really changed is this amazing feeling that we had purpose! All of the sudden, we went to work to provide for our family, we saved for our child's education, we took care of our house so our child would have a safe and fun place to live.

With this newly discovered and fulfilling purpose, a couple of years after we had our daughter we tried to have another child. Although the doctors said there was no physical reason why we couldn't have children, we were not getting pregnant. There came a point when we had to consider there was another reason. Were we meant to adopt? Once the idea was planted, every question was answered with one word, "adoption."

We know that adoption is an emotional process for adoptive parents; we can't imagine what it is like for the mother making an adoption plan. We're sure that any woman who makes this plan is incredibly selfless. We want her to feel peace with her choice of adoption as well as with the family she chooses to raise her child. If a mother selects us as the adoptive parents, we will unconditionally love, care and comfort her child as if he/she was born to us.

However, our decision to grow our family through adoption doesn't come with the promise to just love and embrace the child. We sincerely hope that the mother will become a part of our family as well. If she is willing, we will embrace her with the openness, mutual trust, respect and admiration she deserves.

Sincerely,

*Brad & Tessa*

The logo for Graceful Adoptions features a stylized teal flower icon above the text "Graceful" in a script font and "adoptions" in a bold, sans-serif font. A trademark symbol (TM) is located at the end of the word "adoptions".

We focus on what matters to make every adoption a beautiful experience.

515.225.6351 / 877.628.1415 [GracefulAdoptions.com](http://GracefulAdoptions.com)



## Our values and beliefs as parents...



**Education** - We both have college degrees and believe that learning is a never-ending adventure that starts at home and transfers to school. From playing to reading, it's amazing the learning that occurs. We like the saying, "children are made readers on the laps of their parents." Our children will attend the same elementary school where Tessa works which will provides many benefits. We hope to instill a true love of learning with our kids and we hope our child will decide to further their education after high school. If so, their college fund will pay for it.

**Laughter** - In our house, laughter and having a good time is important. We have a silly sense of humor and like to laugh at ourselves. Laughing is something we do every day; it can turn a bad day into a good one. The saying "laughter feeds the soul" is completely true! Tessa thinks she is pretty funny and usually laughs at her own jokes. (Most of the time they are pretty corny!) Brad is quick-witted. He can bring a smile to anyone's face. We specifically designed our backyard with fun in mind, even adding a slide, rather than stairs, to the deck. Our nightly activity usually ends up with all of us wrestling and getting into tickling wars. Of course the girls stick together because girls rule! Daddy gets ganged-up on but he is always a good sport and lets us win!



**Faith** - Our faith carries us through the day. We attend church on Sundays, say a special prayer before we eat supper, and pray every night. We openly talk about God and heaven and do our best to answer any tricky questions our daughter asks. The other night she was sitting in her princess play tent. Tessa asked what she was doing and she said "I'm just talking to Jesus." It completely melted our hearts! When our children get older we will encourage them to explore their own spirituality to find a path that speaks to them.

**Value One Another** - Having a strong family means practicing patience and valuing each other. Life can be stressful at times; however, we consciously use a kind tone of voice when we speak to each other regardless of what's going on around us. We make sure that we show just how much we appreciate each other every day. Saying "please" and "thank you," holding the door, buying an extra cup of coffee when we stop to get our own are just a few of the little ways we show our love for each other. When Eva was younger she was signing the words "thank you" and "please" before she could even talk. She shows kindness because it's modeled in our home every single day.



**Don't Sweat the Small Stuff** - We can't tell you how important not sweating the small stuff is in our marriage! It would be embarrassing to say that it's the foundation of our strong marriage; however...it is. Thank goodness too! In every relationship there are things the other person does that might irritate the other. We understand that it's not personal, probably not worth mentioning, and certainly not worth arguing over. It's the same approach we use, and will use, as parents. There are a bunch of times a day that we could correct our child's behavior. However, we understand that to help our children grow we must build them up. By not sweating the small stuff we help build each other's self-confidence...and check nagging at the door.



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# Our home...

A house is made into a home by creating memories together. We do just that in our home and we cannot wait to create even more memories!

We love our home. It's so serene and calm. We live on the outskirts of town on 158 acres that has been in Tessa's family for three generations. Tessa's grandma and grandpa and Tessa's parents raised their children on the property. Now Tessa, her brothers and cousins are raising their families a stone's throw away from each other. Being close to family provides a sense of safety and support, i.e., if snow is too deep to shovel we just call Uncle Allan or Papa, and they clear it quickly with the bobcat!

It's a great place to live and we really have the best of both worlds. We're only 2 miles away from town, yet we live in the country with fields to explore and cows, horses, goats, dogs and cats to care for. There are baby calves and colts each Spring and the younger children often feed the calves a bottle! We have a slide going off of our deck, a swing set, jungle gym, airplane teeter-totter, sandbox and a trampoline. While the kids play, we listen to our favorite Disney tunes through the outdoor speakers. There is always something to do!

Saturday mornings are our favorite time of the week. We wake without an alarm and enjoy the slower beat that only Saturdays can provide. We eat breakfast together as a family, enjoying pancakes made into different letters, shapes and animals covered in melted butter and warm syrup.

Summer days is what it's all about! Because Tessa is a teacher she has 3 months off to spend time with her family with no other demands on her time or energy. Like Saturdays, we sleep until we have had enough rest, we lounge around with only the activities we plan forcing us to move faster than a snail's pace. We visit the zoo, go swimming, visit the library, play in parks, visit daddy at work, and have play dates. We enjoy each and every day!

We look forward to all the joy a child brings into a home...without even trying. The giggles, the snuggles, the pitter-patter of their feet, the nightly feedings, and all the firsts - the first smile, the first giggle, the first word, and the first step. We're excited about experiencing parenthood all over again and watching Eva learn how to be a big sister.

She can't wait to be a big sister and is constantly asking "Can I save this for my brother or sister?" which is usually a toy, blanket or any clothes she has outgrown. The other day she drew a picture for her brother or sister and asked Brad if we could hang it above their crib. She has even picked out a few names, Paxton for a boy and Pinkie Pie for a girl. Obviously, they are still open for discussion! She prays for a sibling every night and will be the best big sister! She looks forward to going shopping to help buy books, pajamas and more toys! We know that the sibling relationship is the longest relationship any person has in their life; we look forward to both of our children having that life-long relationship.



- Both non-smokers

## Hobbies:

### Adoptive Mother:

Love reading, going for walks, playing volleyball, kayaking, playing with our daughter, family game nights, watching movies, making homemade buns-grandma's recipe, playing with our dog

### Adoptive Father:

Basketball, volleyball, kayaking, reading, movie nights, running races, playing with our daughter, hunting, hanging out with friends, paint ball, accessorizing my truck, electronics.

## Professions:

Adoptive Mother: Reading Specialist

Adoptive Father: Assistant Manager

## Education Level:

Adoptive Mother: Master's Degree

Adoptive Father: Associate's Degree



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# Our family...

We've been together almost 9 years. While our meeting was by chance, we consider it fate. Although we had a college class together, we officially met at a bar some time later when we were both out with friends. Brad saw Tessa from behind and thinking she was one his friends he gave her a hug. It wasn't until Tessa turned around that he realized his "mistake." We both laughed about the encounter, exchanged numbers and went our separate ways. When Tessa finally returned Brad's call a month after he made it, the phone call lasted until 3am. The conversation flowed easily as we discovered all we had in common. By the end of the conversation we had planned our first date. Three years later Brad proposed.

We are more than husband and wife, we are best friends. To keep our marriage strong, we still have date nights - dinner, drinks, movies, and walks, so we can hang out with just the two of us, enjoying conversation that, after all these years, still flows easily. We both work hard to provide for our family but it's really a labor of love. Brad takes immaculate care of our yard and enjoys using his carpenter skills to build things for our home - our deck, an entryway bench, a sandbox, and garden boxes just to name a few. Tessa is goal-oriented and works hard around the house taking care of our family. She does not give up until the task is complete.



Our family will always come first and be the focus of our lives. We have one daughter, Eva, who is a spunky and loving four year old. Brad is an incredible father and takes time to actively participate in her life. For family fun we go for bike rides, kayak, play at the lake, participate in 5ks, play with our dog, and go sledding. We try to stay busy and have fun with everything we do. There are days where it's nice to simply hang out at home, play barbies, and make cookies. Brad is the best taste-tester ever!

We are very close to our extended families and cherish our time with them. We all have busy schedules, yet we all make time to spend together. Because Brad's parents want the children to have someplace to play in the colder months, they installed swings for all the kids in their garage. But this isn't like most garages, the walls are finished and there is carpet for comfort. And, the kids love it!

While every day we create great memories, like swinging in the garage, our favorite memories are created during family vacations and holidays. So far we have visited South Dakota, Detroit Lakes, and Alaska together. At Christmas, Eva looks forward to finding The Elf on the Shelf every morning. We decorate the tree with ornaments from our youth and those that we have collected since we met. We even have the star from when Brad was born for the tree topper. There is always a visit with Santa Clause in there too! While Christmas caters to the children in the family, Easter is a holiday for everyone. Yes, even our parents have Easter baskets to participate in the family Easter egg hunt. The 4th of July is a huge celebration everyone looks forward to. There is a parade, art in the park, a BBQ and the rodeo! With more than 27 cousins, there is always someone for each and every one of the children to play with.

Everyone is overjoyed with the prospect of adding another child to our family. We are a big family with big hearts and open arms. We all know that it's not blood that makes a family; it's the love we share.



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