

Dear friends,

Please join us for the 2016 CUB retreat in **Safety Harbor, Florida** this October. This annual event for members and friends of CUB and all those connected to the adoption triad will take place from **October 28-30<sup>th</sup>** and all are welcome. There will be wonderful speakers and activities, and all are invited to join us.

The retreat will start **Thursday evening, October 27<sup>th</sup> with a Hospitality Reception**. The CUB annual Board meeting will take place on Thursday, October 27<sup>th</sup> from 9am-4pm and all are welcome to attend. **Retreat presentations will begin Friday morning, October 28<sup>th</sup>** and will conclude on **Sunday October 30<sup>th</sup>** with a buffet breakfast. If you cannot come for the whole retreat, **single day registrations** are also available for Friday or Saturday.

***Here are some of the remarkable speakers who will join us at the CUB retreat:***

*Please note this schedule is subject to change in the event of any unforeseen circumstances.*



**Loretta J. Ross**

will talk to us about her personal experience with and the politics of adoption. Ross almost relinquished her son for adoption when she was 15 because he was the product of an incestuous rape. Initially she was not conflicted about the adoption (since that's a terrible way to become a mother!), but changed her mind at the last minute, and had to fight the bureaucracy to keep her child since she was sequestered in a Home for Unwed Mothers in the 1960s. Since she was sterilized a few years later, he became her only child. As a rape survivor who was forced to raise a child born of incest and a survivor of sterilization abuse, she is a model of how to survive and thrive despite the traumas that disproportionately affect women.

Ross went on to become a co-founder and the National Coordinator of the **SisterSong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective**, a network founded by women of color and allied organizations that organizes women of color in the reproductive justice movement. She is a consultant for Smith College, a graduate of Agnes Scott College, holds an honorary Doctorate of Civil Law degree from Arcadia University and a second honorary doctorate degree from Smith College. She is the recipient of dozens of honorary awards and is currently pursuing a PhD in Women's Studies at Emory University in Atlanta. She is a mother, grandmother and a great-grandmother.



**Amy Seek** is a birthmother, landscape architect and writer, who will talk about her illuminating 2015 memoir, ***“God and Jetfire: Confessions of a Birth Mother,”*** a beautiful work about love and loss that gives voice to the birthmother experience. The book follows Seek's journey from her pregnancy through the experience of an open adoption with her son and his adoptive parents. The book begins when Seek is in college and finds out that she is pregnant, and how she eventually chooses adoption as a way to provide a better life for her child and at the same time find a way to achieve the life she envisioned for herself.

Seek writes movingly and eloquently about the evolving nature of her thoughts throughout her pregnancy and the self-doubt that plagues her as she is forced to choose the family who ultimately will be charged with raising her child. Seek observes with great clarity the many struggles and doubts that haunt her decision, as well as the many opinions of those around her.

You can listen to this essay written by Seek and performed by actress, Sarah Paulson. [Listen Here](#)



**Suzanne Bachner:** Award-winning playwright, director and adoptee Suzanne Bachner will give a special presentation of her play, *The Good Adoptee*, on Saturday night. Written and directed by Suzanne Bachner herself, *The Good Adoptee* is the playwright's true story of her intrepid and relentless search for her birth parents in the face of New York State's sealed records. Once she opens Pandora's Box, can she find a way to integrate her dual identities and still remain the Good Adoptee? The show won the award for Best Autobiographical Show when it premiered in the 2015 United Solo Theatre Festival. It also received rave reviews:

*"Brava to Suzanne Bachner and The Good Adoptee. Incredible Writing and Performance! A powerful show that I believe the entire world needs to see!"*

- Suz Bednarz, birthmother, [writingmywrongs.com](http://writingmywrongs.com)

*"Easily one of the top shows and one that will touch your heart. It was an honour to watch it!"*

- Jay Ménard, London Theatre critic

*"The Good Adoptee made me laugh and cry. What a powerful piece of work - the script is tight and packed with emotion. Perfection. As an adoptee I could relate to every nuance. My heart was soaring knowing that our common story is being told in such a talented and powerful way - for all to see. As adoptees we long to be understood, and this play, this piece of work, makes our hearts and souls accessible to be known to others who might not otherwise see our reality."*

- Betsie Norris, Executive Director, Adoption Network Cleveland

**Bachner's** hit play, *CIRCLE*, ran for five months Off Broadway, was called "ingenious" by *The New York Times*. Its Sold-Out International Tour won Most Daring Show of the London Fringe. She wrote and directed the NYC cult hits *Icons & Outcasts* and *BITE* and the acclaimed adoption plays *Alexandra Triptych*, *We Call Her Benny* and *Brilliant Mistake*, which the Coast News called "a work of pure genius!". Suzanne studied playwriting with Romulus Linney and Adrienne Kennedy and holds an MFA from the Actors Studio Drama School at the New School University.



**TRAUMA AND HEALING:** There will a special presentation on Trauma and Healing by Triad member and adoptee **Cathy Koley**. Cathy's intention is to share her healing journey and therapeutic yoga experience with as many adoptees, birthparents and adoptive parents as possible. Some of the CUB retreat topics she will share in this session will include: Lessons from an unplanned healing journey, the importance of sharing one's story (and why she thinks you should share yours, too) and a moving meditation practice to us unite all.



**WRITING WORKSHOP for HEALING:** We are pleased to announce that this year there will be a writing workshop where all can participate. The workshop will be led by writers from the adoption community who are also members of the adoption triad. **Dr. Sharon Taylor** and **Dr. Lee Campbell**, will lead this special panel entitled *The Healing Power of Writing Our Truths*. **Taylor** is the author of two books: *Phantom Son: A Mother's Story of Surrender* and *Phantom Father: A Daughter's Quest for Elegy*. **Campbell** is the author of *Stow Away: They told me to forget. And I did. Now my memory has mutiny in mind*, and the sequel, *Cast Off: They called us dangerous women. So we organized and proved them right*. Campbell's two books reveal CUB's own backstory, since she is CUB's founder. The presenters will help you to jumpstart your own memoir writing.

**YOGA!** As a special treat, **Cathy Koley** will also lead classes in yoga each morning!