

# Donor 1923

## About Me

I'd like to help someone else to become a parent, because some of my best friends have conceived with the help of a donor, and I have seen the joy that a child has brought them, and the love and devotion that they have brought to being a parent.

I am a proud and, I hope, loving Uncle, and come from a close-knit family. My maternal grandparents lived just round the corner from my childhood home, and I remember fondly spending time with them: there were many family roast dinners, hikes, picnics and trips to the seaside.

I do my best to treat other people with kindness and respect, as I hope they would treat me, and to try to make a positive difference in the world. I work in the charity sector, and have also volunteered in various roles over the years (e.g. as a helpline volunteer, community mediator (helping neighbours to resolve conflicts) and tree planter).

I strive to lead a healthy lifestyle, by eating a healthy, balanced diet and staying physically active, as I find this gives me more energy to do all the other things I want to do in my life, and helps me stay focused. I run, swim, do yoga and weight training.

I studied English Literature at University, and love to lose myself in great books, theatre, movies and music. It's important to me to keep learning and growing as a person, and to keep having new experiences, whether that's travelling to a new place, trying new foods or even getting a new earworm.

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## Goodwill Message

You've turned 16. I imagine this is an exciting time for you, thinking about what kind of future you'd like to make for yourself. I have not been a part of your life, but please know that I wish you and your family only the best in your happiness, health and prosperity. I wanted to help someone else to become a parent because some of my best friends have conceived with the help of a donor. I have seen the joy that a child has brought them, and the love and devotion that they have brought to being a parent. I'm sure this is the same for your family.

I'm trying to think of some words of wisdom to offer you. The problem with this is that most wise things have already been expressed by other people far more eloquently than I will manage. But for starters, I think you can't go wrong with the serenity prayer: "grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

If I could give my 16-year-old self some advice, I would say, try not to worry too much about what others think of you. The thing is, besides your friends and family, most people are not actually thinking about you very much! They have their own problems. And if they are, it doesn't really matter what they think. Much better to focus on what makes you and people you care about happy, and what you judge to be the right thing to do, and what's going to work out best over the long term, even if this is not easy or popular at the time.

Be kind to yourself and others. Know that you can only do your best. If there's something you want to get better at, try to have a "growth mindset" and try not to get bogged down in thinking that you're not good enough. Your best

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## Goodwill Message *continued*

tomorrow, can be better than your best today. Know that practice really can make perfect, and that practicing little and often (even when you don't feel like it) can help you to get MUCH better at something over time.

Assuming that most other people are trying their best most of the time, can make life easier and make you happier, rather than assuming the worst of people. If someone is unkind to you, snaps at you or is mean to you, give them the benefit of the doubt – they're probably just having a bad day and it probably isn't about you, it's about them. They probably didn't mean to be disrespectful /unkind/whatever. The person you thought "blanked" you was probably just wrapped up in their own thoughts and didn't see you. If they keep doing it, that's different, and you need to look after yourself. If you can, tell them kindly that their behaviour is not OK, give them the opportunity to become aware of their behaviour, and change it, and if they can't/won't, do what you need to do to protect yourself. Consider ending your relationship with them if that's possible or appropriate.

Being a teenager can be hard. You might struggle with feeling insecure or not knowing who you are, what's important to you, or what kind of life you'd like for yourself. Remember that most other people will be having these insecurities too, even if they're pretending everything's fine. You just usually can't tell what's going on inside someone's head from the outside. They can't tell this about you either.

You don't have to solve your problems by yourself. It's usually better to get help

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## Goodwill Message *continued*

or support. Often a problem shared really is a problem halved. Know that sharing your insecurities and vulnerabilities with someone you trust and who has the time, space and bandwidth to deeply listen to you, can bring you closer together. The other person can be grateful or even honoured that you've shared something real and true with them. They will probably feel more connected to you and understand you better as a person, even if they can't "solve" your problem for you. Often, making yourself vulnerable by sharing a challenge you're having is more heroic than trying to solve the problem on your own. It can also make the other person feel they have 'permission' to share their challenges too: so just make sure you give the other person the same time and space to share their problems with you when they want/ need to. Aim for equality and reciprocity in your relationships.

Most of all, please enjoy the beautiful journey of your life, without focusing so much on the destination. It's great to make plans and develop good habits, and it's also good to leave space for spontaneity and creativity, for trying new things and for making and learning from, mistakes, as long as you can keep yourself safe and live with the consequences of those mistakes. Know that:

"What is mine,

Will find its way to me,

And I will find my way to it."