



The Journey to Becoming a Family: Julie's Story

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My next experience with gestational surrogacy came through Julie Francis' story. Julie told me that her involvement with [The Surrogacy Experience](#) started "how most everything starts today – with a Google search". Julie said that her desire to embark on the journey of surrogacy came shortly after her second daughter was born. Her desire to be pregnant again was overwhelmingly strong and after waiting a year, she "never wavered" in her decision. She said "I wanted this so badly, to show my girls good things, be a role model for them. I was tired of so much sadness in this world, it seemed like every day something else horrible was happening. I can't change the world, but I could at least change myself enough to make a difference in somebody else's world, not to mention my kid's world". Truly admirable....

Julie also conferred that a common misconception about surrogacy is that women are "giving up their babies" when in reality, the baby is not biologically theirs in the first place. She said as surrogates "we protect them, care for them, and even love them, but we are not conflicted about returning them to their parents". They are just completing a family. She, too, commented on the compensation factor in being a surrogate. She said {besides the fact that it is still very rude to ask a person how much money they make} it is a job – a job that you are committing yourself to for almost a year and a job that is hard work. Julie told me that nothing about gestational surrogacy is simple – you must be "an open book" answering extremely personal questions and subjecting yourself to medical tests. It can be like a roller coaster with ups and downs will finding a match. And then – you actually have to get pregnant! Daily injections and medications, blood work, waiting to see if you are actually pregnant. "It is extremely stressful, more so then with my pregnancies with my girls" Julie said. "No amount of money is worth it, but the feeling of creating a life for people who deserve it more than anything, is".

While infertility still seems to be a taboo subject in our society today, Julie notes that the pressure on young couple to have children is not. Often, couples are asked "when are you going to have a baby"? like it's the simplest thing in the world. Julie just hopes that people will keep an open mind about surrogacy. She said "people ask 'why don't you just adopt?' as if that is a simple, quick process". You just don't know what others are going through.

We are about to embark on "the holiday season", a time when we slow down and reflect on how grateful and thankful we are for the things we have. We reflect upon the health and happiness of our family. The season is also a time when many of us take pleasure in giving gifts to those we love and appreciate. What if you could give someone a gift so special and precious that it would tie you to them indefinitely? Imagine being able to give someone the gift of "family" who have not been able to conceive themselves. I can only image what it feels like to give such a selfless gift. I truly admire all of the work that Julie and Tina do.



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