

My name is Ruth. I am a mother to five lovely grown up daughters and grandmother of ten.

Endometriosis was only something I had read about or in later years through clients in my role as Manager of Morrinsville Community House, a position I held for 16 years until my retirement last year. That's where I met Annette several years ago and came to admire and respect her for her tireless campaign to launch a support group and to educate the wider public about Endometriosis.

About six years ago my twin daughter was home on holiday from Hong Kong. She and her husband have taught there for many years. They have a seven year-old son. She had never shown signs of having endometriosis and hadn't had any difficulty conceiving, carrying or having her little boy. But at the end of her holiday, she became unwell with severe pain and went to our local doctor who felt she needed to go to her own doctor as soon as she returned to Hong Kong. Within a week of being back in Hong Kong she was tested, diagnosed and had surgery to remove a mass – endometriosis had reared its ugly head. She went on to have an ectopic pregnancy and more surgery, leading to the removal of one fallopian tube and damage to the other.

Three rounds of IVF followed without success and finally they decided to apply to adopt a Chinese baby. That sounded simple; surely that wouldn't take long? After a drawn-out selection process and fortnightly meetings where the team of social workers matched the few babies available with approved adoptee parents, there followed the inevitable "sorry, no match this time", Megan became very despondent. They gradually raised the age they would consider, and still little girls went to the Chinese families who get first chance to adopt. She was just about to give up, after three years of waiting, when they were offered a four year-old girl who had been in and out of foster care since she was two. Within a week of meeting her, Amber (her new English name) moved to live with her new family. She could not speak English and had not been told she would not be going back to her foster parents. That was 18 months ago and Amber now speaks English fluently, has been to New Zealand for her first Christmas with all her New Zealand cousins and aunts, and is slowly settling in with her English family. It's a rocky road at times as Megan has found it hard to bond with her and Amber has had to learn to trust that she wouldn't be torn away from her new family – maybe if she'd been able to come to them as a baby it would have been easier. But this little girl has found love and security in a stable family, and Aaron has a sister he has come to love and protect.

This story is not about me. We have been here to support our daughter and family through the ups and downs of diagnosis and surgeries but from a distance, and we unconditionally welcome our new granddaughter. We wouldn't have had that privilege without endometriosis.

I will always be grateful for the time Annette has freely given me and for the information she has shared which I have passed on to Megan. It's been hard for her being in a foreign country, not having any peer support, and being so far from her (identical) twin sister who incidentally has two children and no sign of endometriosis. On the positive side, I'm not sure she would have received such prompt and efficient health care, at very little cost, as she has in Hong Kong.

I will always be grateful that I was able to have my five daughters without the pain, suffering and tragedies so many of you have had. Keep up the great work of supporting each other and keep on educating the world about this "female curse".

---

**For more information:**

**Visit us at:** [www.InsightEndometriosis.org.nz](http://www.InsightEndometriosis.org.nz) or [www.Facebook.com/InsightEndometriosis](https://www.facebook.com/InsightEndometriosis)  
**or contact our Educator, Annette:** 07 8555 123 [info@InsightEndometriosis.org.nz](mailto:info@InsightEndometriosis.org.nz)

---