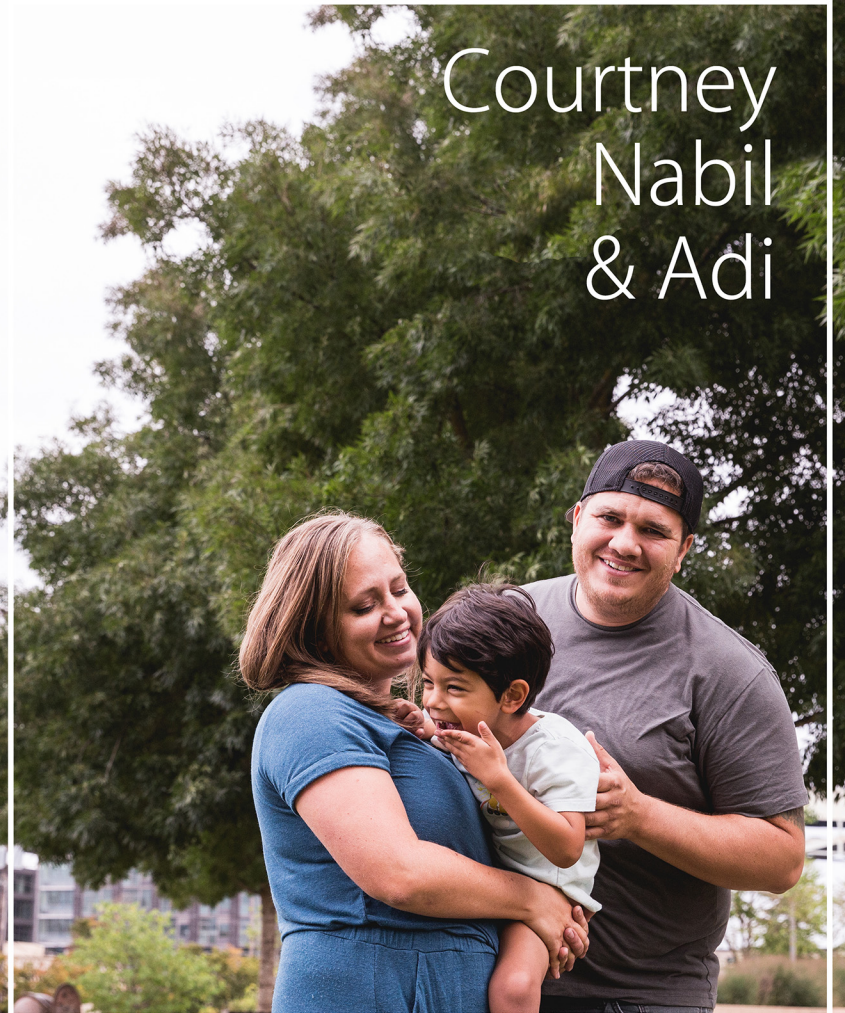




Courtney  
Nabil  
& Adi



First and foremost, we want to express how much we appreciate you taking the time to look through our photo album. We recognize how much emotional work it must take to look through albums of potential families. Our son Adi was adopted at birth – we hold his (and all) birth parents so dear in our heart, and appreciate your time and thought.

Our promise to our current and future kids' birth parents is that we will ALWAYS raise them with you in mind. Our biggest hope is that when our kids are grown and living on their own, we will have raised them in a way that not only makes them proud of their adoptive and birth families, but also to make YOU proud. Parenting is a trip! There are so many ups and downs along the way, but in each and every moment, a piece of you will be in the moment too.

In this book we will tell you a bit about who we are – our story. We'll answer all the standard questions, and you'll see photos from our best moments (Courtney is a photographer and always has a camera at hand). But we also hope that you get a sense of how it FEELS to be in our family. We have a lot of love for one another and always try to be one another's biggest support.

And of course this is just the beginning. The story is still being written. We hope that you are able to be in our future photo albums and to share in our journey as well, but even if/when you aren't physically there, you will still be with us.

*Courtney & Nabil*





August 2019  
Adi and uncle Yacine (visiting from London)



June 2021  
Nabil's side of the family



July 2021  
Courtney's family in HI



April 2019  
baby Adi and cousin Myra

## *a note about family*

There is no one way to make a family. Sometimes family means one mom and one dad. Sometimes it's two dads. Sometimes it's step-parents. Sometimes family means the friends that you choose to have in your life. And sometimes family means adoption.

Adoption runs in our family, which makes our family... unique. Courtney's bio-dad was also adopted as an infant. We have to tell you, from the time Adi came home, these two have shared a deep, instant bond. It's like they know one another's heart.

We have a big, extended family. They live all over the country, and across the world (Wyoming, Hawaii, London, Algeria, and Dubai). It means that while we may not see them all often, when we do, we do it on purpose. And as current adoptive parents, we make sure that EVERYONE who comes into our home and into our family knows (and supports) the whole picture of what adoption means -- and of what it means to be a transracial family.

Our role is to support Adi (and future kids) in the best way we can. These are just a few of the people that



September 2019  
Adi and Grandpa W

Hi! We are Nabil, Courtney and Adi.

We are a family of three who love to have fun together and enjoy each other's company! We also have a dog named Zizou and a cat named... Cat. You'll see her pop up in a few photos from time to time, but she mostly keeps to herself.



Mother's Day 2022  
the one request on Mother's Day is  
for a nice family photo



January 2019, Chicago



September 2020, Oregon Coast



Prom 2003



August 2008

2018 - celebrating 10 years



We are those rare high school sweethearts (met in the summer of '02) who have stayed together and have now been married for 14 years. We are originally from Casper, Wyoming and moved to the Portland, Oregon area for college in 2004. In 2008 we graduated and got married in the same summer.

December 2018, Chicago



And then in 2018, we became parents through open adoption ...much more on that shortly



## *about Nabil in 2022*

I identify as an Arab American. My family on my father's side are Algerian and my mother's side are from the USA. I'm an outgoing person with a ton of hobbies. I love to play soccer, golf and pretty much any game that other people are willing to play!

I love to listen to comedy podcasts in my free time but also really love music of all kinds. I enjoy going to concerts and even used to play in a garage band while in high school (really embarrassing as I listen back now).

I am an educator (elementary school principal) and a lifelong learner. I was not always the best student growing up, so now in my role as a principal I understand and have a soft spot for those kids who need extra support. I have so much empathy for those students with challenging situations and work hard to be able to make a positive impact on their lives.

I love my family and feel so fortunate to get to be around them each day. As our family grows, we will only continue to surround ourselves with more love.

### some fun/funny facts:

- I once sung in a concert at Carnegie Hall
- As a kid I had a large PEZ collection of over 100 dispensers
- I played Rugby in college
- I co-authored a book called, "A Kids Book About Adoption"
- I love to train at a boxing gym
- As a kid I had a turtle, rabbits and a gerbil as pets
- I love listening to old radio clips from the 1930's - 1970's.

## *about Courtney in 2022*

I feel very lucky to be able to call Portland home. I love going out for dinner or a drink with friends, exploring the Willamette Valley, the coast, or the mountains, and taking Adi to local parks. Last year we moved to a more neighborhoody part of Portland, and it's one of my favorite things to be able to walk to the hardware store, or to a neighborhood friend's house.

I value deep, interpersonal relationships where we feel like we really know the heart of one another. My closest friendships are the kind where we know what one another is struggling with at the moment and we really work to support one another through it while also cheering through their successes.

And while I love spending time with our friends and family, I am a classic introvert at heart – I need my alone time to recharge. That means most of my hobbies are single or small group hobbies. I enjoy home improvement (give me all the power tools!), running, tennis, snowboarding (although sadly I haven't gone in a few years), and crafting.

We joke that I'm an "80 year old lady at heart" because my current hobbies include quilting, crafting, and gardening. But really, I'm a creative who has bounced around from one craft to the next. Drawing and painting were early loves, and in college I got into photography – which became a business soon after. When I'm not working, you will almost always find me keeping my hands (and brain) busy with something crafty.



September 2020, Oregon Coast  
Adi, Courtney, and Zizou



1989-ish  
Nabil's sister, Nora  
Nabil's brother, Yacine  
and cute little Nabil



July 2020  
Nora (Nabil's sister), Myra (Nora's daughter),  
Yacine (Nabil's brother), Dezi (Nora's son),  
Nabil, and Adi

## Nabil's story

I am the youngest of three kids and we are all very close in age – so the bulk of my early childhood memories are biking or running around the neighborhood with my sister and brother until it got dark and the streetlights came on. There was also a lot of soccer in my house growing up. It was one thing that everyone could agree on, so it was almost always on the television in the background. My brother was a goalkeeper, and I was a striker, so we were constantly playing in the backyard or on the street. As we got older, my brother went on to play in college and I was on an Olympic development team which traveled around the western United States competing with other teams.

Growing up I could see how my parents had a difficult time financially. My dad struggled with PTSD and it was hard for him to keep a job, so my mom worked tirelessly to support us all pretty much on her own. Watching her work so hard was the foundation for both my work ethic as an adult and also my empathetic nature. Because we didn't have a lot of things growing up, my relationships with my siblings and my friends were deep. We saw each other through tough times, and we also MADE our own fun. We were "latchkey" kids, but we took care of one another. My group of friends and I were very close and loved to do typical goofy teenage stuff. One of my fondest memories from highschool was when my buddies and I hooked a sled up to a rope and connected it to the back of one of our cars. We rode around the snow in the mall parking lot doing donuts and speeding around corners. It was definitely not safe, and definitely not something I'd endorse now as a parent and principal, but we had so much fun that day.

My family was also pretty unique for our area. Growing up in a multicultural (Algerian-American) and bi-racial family, in the middle of Wyoming, I learned a lot about the experiences and perceptions of the outside world. The racism and bias in our community was evident, and I learned to navigate the world as a person from a diverse background with white presenting skin.

Through family, travel and life experiences, I realized that not everywhere was like Wyoming, and in fact most places are very different. I learned to see the world through a more critical lens and consciously examine how my life views have been formed by the structures which have existed around me. I have learned about how religion, patriarchy and colonialism have constructed our surroundings. Because of that, I am a person who can help to challenge forces of oppression and look for ways to bring about positive change both through my career and in my family life.



## Courtney's story

I grew up in a home very different than Nabil's. From the outside, it was a very picturesque, suburban childhood. I primarily lived with my mom, my step-dad and my (half) sister, but I also visited and stayed with my bio-dad frequently. This gave me a chance to grow up experiencing two totally different perspectives. My mom's house was big, beautifully decorated, and immaculate. Her space was always stable, warm, and safe. My bio-dad lived in a very small town (less than 1000 people). His house was small, and let's just say that esthetics was not his priority – he was the parent that taught me to prioritize adventures. He gave me a love of hiking, snowboarding, climbing, caving, and eventually scuba diving. The duality of the houses that I lived in while growing up gave me a unique perspective – all families are different and we get to choose our own priorities in life. It doesn't have to be one way.

I think this is one of the reasons that I knew Nabil was "the one" from such a young age (we met when we were 16). He was thoughtful and kind (uncommon for a highschool boy), but also funny and spontaneous. I liked that I could be myself around him and he felt like the kind of home I wanted to be a part of.

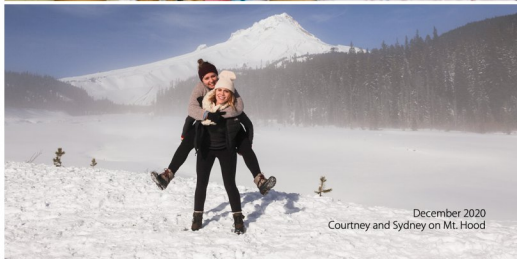
While I'm very grateful for many of the things I was provided as I was growing up, there was also a lot boiling beneath the surface. In college my mom and my step-dad got a divorce. Both parent divorces were messy and pretty hard on everyone involved. I never thought of my step-dad as a step, because he never treated me like that. He chose to love me in the same way he chooses to love his biological daughter (my sister), and has continued to do so even after their divorce. We are still very close to him, and love to visit him as much as possible.

Through all of the ups and downs, my sister was my constant. She's technically my half sister (different dads), but I hate providing that context because we have never felt like half of anything. We have been one another's support system and best friends throughout all of life's changes. She would come visit and stay with Nabil and I in our first apartment, and she is now the BEST aunt to Adi. She loves him so much and is maybe the most supportive person in our open adoption journey. She has a passion for social justice, and has devoted her professional career to shining light in spaces where people have been marginalized. She is truly one of the best people I know.

It's funny how our childhoods often define who we become as adults. Because of a lot of the back and forth, ups and downs, growing up seeing different life perspectives, meeting Nabil at a young age, and traveling and meeting new people, I've been able to broaden my perspective outside of our hometown, and have developed a deep sense of empathy and justice – sometimes to a fault -- you'll catch me crying at every single Olympics commercial. And while I sometimes get deep in my feelings, I'm most proud of my ability to connect, relate, and support the people in my life.



1994-ish  
little Court and Syd rocking those sweet shades



December 2020  
Courtney and Sydney on Mt. Hood

## Adi's story

We love talking about how sweet, funny and cool Adi is. In fact most nights, after Adi has gone to bed, we'll catch ourselves saying something along the lines of "Do you want to know how sweet our son is?" followed by a story of some little tidbit he did or said during the day. Needless to say, we're obsessed.

Adi was born in Chicago. We are forever grateful that his birth parents chose us to be his adoptive parents, and with each parenting decision we try to do it in a way that would make them proud. We call his birth mom "Ammu" which is an endearing term for "mother" in Bengali. We tell him stories about her and show him pictures of her often. And vice versa – we send her photos and try to facetime as often as she is able.

Adi is half Bengali and half Pakistani, so we work to incorporate Desi culture into our lives as often as possible. He has wall decor in his room from Benagli artists, and we teach him about Islamic traditions (which is very important to both of his birth parents). We also try to incorporate more Indian style food into our dinner rotations.

His current favorite things are: trains, trucks, construction, soccer, swimming, playing at the park, counting, and building – blocks and train tracks are always found in some corner of the house. He is also so smart! Sometimes he will add numbers together without really even realizing what he's doing.

Other kids and families who meet Adi will tell us how fun and kind he is. He will often be the first person to welcome others by asking their name and telling them how old he is, followed quickly by seeing if they want to play with him. He is almost always smiling and loves to laugh. His cousins come over often to play and they have developed such a fun relationship. They genuinely love each other and want to be around one another – which is one reason we're excited for Adi to become a big brother!



Dec 2018, Adi and his birth mom  
this photo is framed in Adi's room



December 2019  
Adi's first birthday and first time in the ocean



February 2022  
Adi's first day of team soccer

## travelers at heart

We count ourselves as some very lucky (and privileged) people to be able to see so much of the world the way that we have. Between the two of us, we've been to about a dozen different countries and countless beautiful places in the states as well.

We prioritize traveling not just because we love a great photo op (you can imagine that Courtney has a hard time knowing when to stop snapping), but because it has expanded our perspectives. We have been able to meet people from all walks of life, and from every corner of the world. Traveling has made our own issues feel small, but it has also made us feel part of larger being — like we are all one. We're all part of a larger collective.

This mindset has become a core value that we hope to share with our kids. Yes, it's incredible to hike through the rainforest, and to breath in the palpable history of the Coliseum, but the real impact (for us) has been hearing the stories of the people we met along the way.



July 2017, Rome, Italy



March 2022, Los Angeles



July 2017, Santorini, Greece



July 2015, Medicine Bow Park, Wyoming



July 2022, Oahu, HI

## home, neighborhood, and traditions


We moved into a new house about a year ago, and we love our new neighborhood. It's walking distance to stores and restaurants. In the summertime, we walk down to the farmer's market on Sunday mornings and then walk to get ice cream in the evenings. Adi goes to pre-school only 5 blocks away, and can already tell you directions to most of our neighborhood parks. We've met some great neighborhood friends and are grateful that we are now able to have them over for play dates and BBQs. We have a great little yard where Adi and Zizou play. Courtney built a garden bed and it's been mildly successful in getting Adi more excited about eating vegetables.

We also love to get out and explore Portland and the surrounding area. Since Nabil's mom and sister live in the Willamette Valley, we will often take day trips to see the cousins and spend time at G-ma's farm house. We take Adi swimming at neighborhood pools, enjoy Portland's food scene, and generally just try to take full advantage of the sun anytime it's out.

Have we mentioned that Adi's started playing soccer yet? Nabil's so excited now that he's getting to the age where they can play pass in the yard. It won't be too long before Adi is running circles around Nabil (although he would beg to differ), but for now he's enjoying teaching him some early ball handling skills.

We celebrate many of the American "traditional" holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas, but also try to incorporate Muslim holidays like Ramadan. Islamic traditions are part of Nabil's childhood and are really important to Adi's birth parents, so we like to teach Adi about them and show him how Nabil participates in that cultural experience.





## *dreams for our kids*

We are so excited for Adi to become a big brother! We both experienced growing up with a sibling and know how crucial it can be to have someone in your life who has gone through much of the same things you have. We want him to have a connection with his sibling and in the best case scenario, have a built-in best friend for life – like we have with our siblings.

And while adoption is multi-layered, and we know that we'll be bringing in a whole new dynamic and a new birth family as well, we're ready and excited to do that. We have enough space and enough love in our family to include more, and we're hopeful that we can support another kiddo by providing them with the love they deserve while also honoring their birth story.

Core to our value system, we are also committed to doing our best to lead an anti-racist, pro-equity driven life – and these are morals that we hope to instill in our kids as well.

## *open adoption aspirations*

As an adoptive family already, we recognize that bringing a new kiddo into the mix also means bringing a new, extended family. Just like we have with Adi and his birth-family, we hope to find a connection in which all parties feel comfortable and safe.

We recognize that in the adoption triad, the birth family is often the section that gets left behind. Because we want everything to be child-focused, we also want to make sure that this birth family is as included as they're physically and mentally able to be. Adoption can be really difficult for birth-parents. Of course every situation is unique, and things can sometimes get complicated, but we are committed to supporting birth parents in the best way we can, and doing what is best for the kids throughout their life – even if at times it may be uncomfortable for us as

