

Jennifer & Matthew



ABOUT US

We both left long term relationships with our high school sweethearts in our mid 20's and found each other after that in 2020. Matt was living in LA and I was living in New York with my mom while i finished my degree. Our relationship was long distance for a year until Matt moved back to the east coast and we moved in together in New Jersey. In 2022 we eloped to get Matt on my health insurance and then we had a larger wedding celebration a year later with all our friends and family. Our second wedding celebration was so special for us, we wrote our own vows and my best friend officiated for us. We work together to create a home environment that is calm, warm, and safe. We don't believe in telling or raising our voices at one another and we navigate life as a team.





OUR ADOPTION JOURNEY SO FAR...

I have polycystic ovarian syndrome and have been advised to not pursue pregnancy. We decided for that reason to adopt, and knew we would be adopting from the beginning of our relationship. Adoption was our first choice for building a family. We spent the last few years of our 20's making sure we were able to care for ourselves sufficiently before we entertained the idea of caring for a child. It was very important to us to go into this feeling capable of meeting the emotional and physical needs a child has throughout their development and we've done individual and couples counseling to get to a place where we felt ready.

Matt and I both have adopted friends and family, and have always viewed adoption as a net positive.

HOW WE MET

We first met at college in 2012 during freshman year - Even though we were both Illustration majors, we didn't really talk to each other during school. In spring of 2020, we reconnected over social media and were shocked at how much we had in common and how similar our lives had been since. We talked every day and visited each other throughout the next year and a half, usually for 2 weeks or more at a time. before we knew it, it was fall 2021 and we were moving in together.



ABOUT JEN

MATT (DESCRIBING JEN): SMART, MATURE, LOVING, GLAMOROUS, DRIVEN, STRONG

What attracted me to Jen was specifically the fact that she knew what she wanted, and didn't want in life, as well as having the life experience to be sure about it. Having similar interests and personalities is obviously a big plus, but isn't a guarantee that a relationship will last. Both of us had most recently been in long-term relationships that didn't work out, and neither of us wanted to repeat that. Over time, we built up a strong foundation of mutual experience/understanding/trust from talking about our lives. This let me know that Jen was someone I could build a life with, rather than just spend time with.



ABOUT MATT

JEN (DESCRIBING MATT): MATT IS AMBITIOUS, GOAL ORIENTED, KIND, COMPASSIONATE, RESPECTFUL

I had gotten advice when I was dating to look for green flags in people instead of red flags. So to look out for the positive traits I wanted in a partner instead of just trying to dodge red flags. I saw that Matt was patient and kind. He loved animals and every animal he encountered he became that animal's favorite person. He was warm, he never raised his voice, he liked to cuddle and was down for any activity or movie or craft project or hobby. In the mornings when he would wake up before me he always made sure my feet stayed tucked into the blanket. His art and his dedication to art and design as a craft also stood out to me. He has a level of discipline in growing as an artist that's extremely admirable and when he started going to therapy he showed the same level of discipline and dedication to growing as a person.



Home Sweet Home

Safe, Cozy & Peaceful

Fort Lee is a lively, diverse community with plenty of friendly people, unique local businesses, and top level schools. In addition to its wealth of opportunities, it also has multiple ways to get to NYC - either by car, ferry, or bus!

What do you think a child will most enjoy about your home?
Probably the endless opportunities - meeting new people unique life experiences, places to visit, things to do, etc.



WHAT KIND OF PARENT DO YOU THINK YOUR PARTNER WILL BE?

Matt: I think Jen will be an extremely focused and engaged parent. She truly understands the importance of meeting a child's needs on every level. Parenting is not just making sure your child's physical needs are met (food, bathing, clothing, etc), but also the mental & emotional needs and how to meet them.

Jen: I think Matt will be a very patient and level headed parent. Matt is very calm and I can see him managing a tantrum very well and navigating the teenage years with a lot of patience and grace.



Favorite Hobbies

As trained artists & designers, we both enjoy creative endeavors - drawing, painting, crafts, ceramics, etc. We also work in the fashion sphere, so we have a strong connection to that world as well. Jen is highly interested in cooking and the culinary arts (making a point to cook dinner every night and try me recipes all the time). Matt is also into physical fitness and works out regularly (running, lifting, etc). He played soccer into high school and also was on the rowing team. He has a strong love for games (sports, table games, video, etc) and game theory. Travel is also very important to us, providing unique opportunities to experience new things and meet new people! Music is a big part of our lives as well - both in seeing performances and discovering new artists, but we also have experience as musicians, with Jen playing the guitar in school and Matt playing the upright Bass & Bass Guitar from grade school through college. Jen also enjoys different arts and crafts like needle point and other textile crafts.



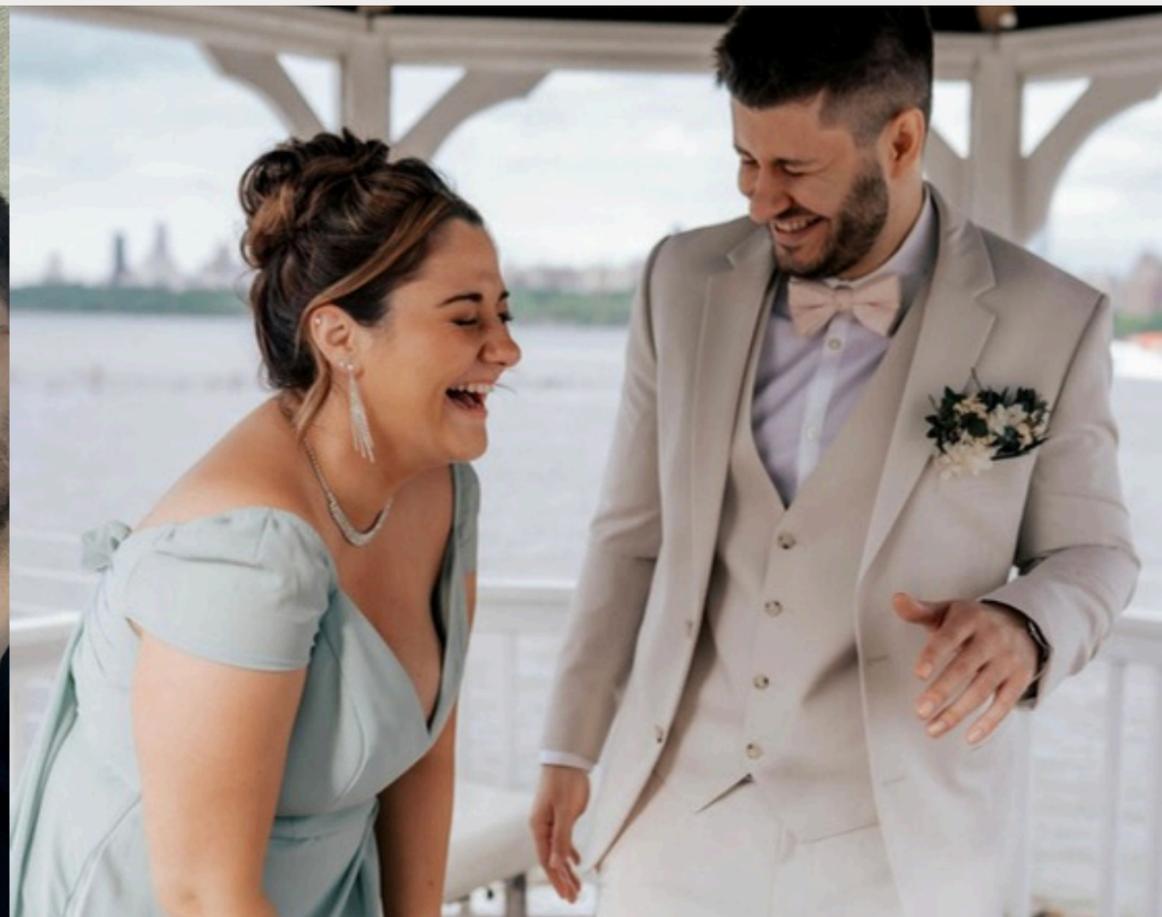
Friends and Family

Jen: My family is my aunt, uncle, cousins, mom, step-dad, dad, and ex mother in law. We get together for every holiday and for everyone's birthday and enjoy spending time together, going out together. I think what makes us special is how consistently everyone shows up for each other. My friends are Marissa, Mike, Andrew, Kate-Lynn, Michelle, Joy, Navid, Chelsea and JD. Joy, Navid, and Chelsea and I all grew up together and the other friends I made along the way in college or at work. I talk to these people on almost a daily basis and they have been present for every big milestone in our lives.

Matt: My immediate family is my Mom, Dad, Brother, and Sister. I talk with them regularly and see them a few times a year, usually at family events and holidays, but also anytime they're in the NJ/NYC area.

My family's pretty unique - we enjoy doing anything together, but each member has their own special interests too!

My friend group is a mix of people I met in school (elementary through college) and people I met through work, Jen, or other friends. Regardless of who they are or how we met, we all share a lot of common interests, such as art & music, sense of humor, lifting (or fitness in general), and personality.



Agave & Aloe

We have two cats that are very bonded with each other and are getting a puppy this spring as well. Our pets love people and other animals to play with. Agave is our first cat and he's too smart for his own good. He's playful and mischievous. Aloe, our second cat, is calm, sweet, and a little goofy. They are our babies - getting pets meant making a commitment to care for them and give them the best life possible. We care so much about their wellbeing and quality of life. It's very important to us that they are treated as full, autonomous, living creatures and not simply there for our enjoyment. We play with them and spoil them with treats and cuddle while we watch TV and sleep and listen to podcasts.



Religion & Faith

We have a very multicultural family, my dad is Puerto Rican and catholic, Matt's family is catholic, and my mom and her family are Jewish. I was raised Jewish and Matt was raised catholic but we have made the choice to be Jewish and Matt is converting to Judaism. For me, Judaism is part of my ethnicity and culture so the practice is much more about keeping the culture alive and passed to the next generation than it is spiritual. We want to raise our child with a mix of the Jewish culture, their own birth culture, while also encouraging them to explore whatever they personally connect to.



Traditions and Celebrations



Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas. All of those holidays are spent with family and friends, as well as meals and gift giving for the winter holidays.

We have a gathering of family and friends - usually a nice meal with a fun dessert, and celebrating the person/events/etc and having a great time! There's always gifts for birthdays, but other things like anniversaries, accomplishments, etc too.

On Thanksgiving, we get up early and watch the Macy's parade on tv in our pajamas until one (or both of us) fall asleep on the couch.

For Passover, the dinner ceremony (Seder) has a reputation of being quite long, about 4 hours if done the right way. To keep things more timely, we use an abridged version of the prayer book from Jen and her cousin's childhood - It's a bit of an in-joke with the family. It keeps things closer to ~30 minutes while retaining the core story and message, so it makes things easier.

Feelings about Adoption & Openness



We will provide a safe, loving home for their child, and that we want them to be as involved in the life of the child as they wish - we want them to know who and where they came from. We think that adoption is a healthy solution to a common but confounding problem. We know that the decision is never easy for the birth parent(s), if it is a decision at all, and our primary focus is to make sure that our adopted child receives all the love, care, and attention that they need - but also the same amount that they would in any other circumstance. We want to make sure to provide a life that they can look back on without feeling confusion, negativity, or as though they “missed out”.

We look at it as expanding a family rather than transposing one! And as the adoptive parents, we look at it as the greatest gift we could ever receive. Matt’s cousins were adopted into their family and Jen’s cousin was adopted out of her family and everyone involved has had a very positive experience with and view of adoption.

Although we know that adoption can bring complicated feelings for the adoptee, we’re ready to support them through that. We will be honest, informative, supportive, and forthcoming with information while making sure they have all the resources they need to navigate the life of an adoptee in a safe and welcoming way. We will never keep secrets from them and always make sure they know that our love for them has no boundaries or limits.

Our Promises to You



We will approach our child with curiosity, kindness, and patience. Our job is to guide them, not control them.

No matter how old they are, we will always be there for them with kind words, a listening ear, a home cooked meal, and a warm bed.

We will make sure they are connected to their roots and background. While we want to include them in our culture and traditions, we also want them to have a strong and independent sense of identity, where they can feel pride in where they come from.

Your level of involvement in our child's life is as much as you want it to be.

We will always speak positively of you to our child. We have no desire to erase or diminish where they come from.

Our child will never be made to feel ashamed, othered, or “less than” for who they are or the circumstances of their birth.

Thank you

