

Preface

After I wrote *Emotionally Healthy Twins*, about raising twins from infancy to young adulthood, I began to hear from adult twins who wanted to know more. They wanted to know if the struggles they were encountering as adults were related to being a twin and, if so, what they could do about their situation. Twins who came to my speaking engagements and workshops or who found me online said that they were relieved to discover that they were not alone—that other adult twins faced similar issues, such as feeling overly dependent on their twin, having trouble forging intimate relationships, worrying that one twin will feel abandoned if the other gets married or moves away, resenting the ongoing role of caretaker to their adult twin, competing with their twin's significant other, tiring of the comparisons to their twin, and wondering if they will ever be perceived and valued on their own terms.

In speaking and blogging about such concerns, treating clients in my private practice, and listening to so many adult twins eager for answers and advice, I realized that I had to write a second book. As a therapist specializing in twin issues, a mother of adult twins, and a twin myself, I knew a book was needed that specifically addresses the unique interpersonal and existential problems faced by adult twins, a group whose numbers continue to grow. According to a January 2012 report by the National Center for Health Statistics, the rate of twin births rose 76 percent from 1980 to 2009. In 2009, one out of thirty births was a twin birth.¹

The Same but Different deals with the reality of being a twin, which bears little resemblance to the idealized portrait presented by the media. That portrait draws from what I call the *twin mystique*, which holds that twins

are essentially mysterious, inseparable, and magical. Twins are assumed to be each other's predestined life partner and to feel lost without the other. They are thought to be able to read each other's minds and finish each other's sentences. Together they comprise a kind of singular entity—two as one. Such romantic assumptions thwart our understanding of what twins actually experience.

If you are a twin, as you read the stories you will identify with many of the twins' personal histories. These are women and men who have confronted and in most cases successfully dealt with the twin-related concerns we will explore throughout the book. My hope is that their stories will provide not only emotional validation but also psychological insight and meaningful guidance. Developing the capacity to be self-reflective and authentic will enhance the quality of your relationships with your twin and intimate others.