



## The Journey Programme: Healing from Abortion Support

The Journey Programme comprises 10 steps towards healing for a person struggling with a past abortion decision. This training will equip a trainee to walk alongside a person, always ready to offer support, encourage, affirm and guide him/her to healing. For this reason, The Journey programme is geared towards taking the trainee counsellor on the same route first, allowing him/her to understand and empathize with some of the thoughts and emotions which a person will encounter and which will need to be sensitively confronted and worked through. Part of the recovery process will involve a change of thinking and attitude: *“We can’t change the past, we don’t know the future, but we can change the way we think.”* The Journey training programme comprises the following 10 steps and is presented over a 4 day period:

Step 1 Seeking Help	This step encourages a person to admit his/her need.
Step 2 Telling the Story	The journey begins when a person opens up and tells his/her story – not just the facts and circumstances but also thoughts and feelings.
Step 3 Moving out of Denial	The moving out of denial step is about a person coming to terms with the untruth that an abortion experience didn’t affect him/her.
Step 4 Anger and depression	As a person moves out of denial, anger is often the result and if it is not expressed, it can often turn inward and lead to depression. The trainee will be equipped to sensitively walk this part of the journey with the client.
Step 5 Guilt and Shame	Guilt and shame are usually simultaneously felt by a person who has a past abortion experience and the trainee will be adequately prepared to help the client understand that, rightly handled, guilt can open a door for repentance.
Step 6 Grief	The journey of post abortion recovery involves a sadness resulting from the loss of a baby. Trainees will be equipped to assist a person to express grief and to validate his/her feelings.
Step 7 Accountability	The accountability step is about taking responsibility for motives, words and actions. After grieving, a person is more able to own the part he/she played in the abortion decision.
Step 8 Forgiveness	After the step of acknowledging accountability, a person may feel that they carry a heavy burden and forgiveness can enable this to be lifted.
Step 9 Acceptance and letting go	Having worked through forgiveness, the scene is now set for a person to accept what has happened and to let go of the losses.
Step 10 The road ahead	This final step is an opportunity to encourage a client as he/she steps into a new chapter in his/her life.

The Journey model can also be used to help with the loss of miscarriage and sexual trauma.