




**FIVE STEPS
TO BEGIN
HEALING FROM
AN ABORTION**



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INTRODUCTION

If you have regrets about an abortion, are grieving over it, or simply can't get it off of your mind, here are five steps you can take to begin a healing process. All five steps take incredible courage. Care Net highly recommends going through the healing process with a trained recovery person.

Many pregnancy centers offer abortion recovery.

Use Care Net's [Find a Center tool](#) to contact a Care Net pregnancy center in your area if you would like further help.

STEP 1: Share your Story.

Sharing your story confidentially with a trusted person is the first step in the healing process. Telling others about a past abortion takes courage. Find someone who has been through an abortion and now regrets that choice. There are many compassionate peer counselors who are called to help others through the healing process who have never been through an abortion, also. Share with someone who understands your regret. Many well intentioned people comment “You made the right choice at that time.”, “Can you imagine a child in your life right now? There is no way you could have handled it”, “Let it go, it happened so long ago.” These are all comments that will not help you move forward in healing. People who are really listening will encourage you to share your feelings, listen intently to your story, and understand your grief and regret. If there is no one in your area, there are also places to anonymously write your story online. You can also find a confidential, compassionate Biblical support group at your nearest Care Net pregnancy center.

STEP 2:

Acknowledge the Loss and Grieve.

Acknowledging what was lost is the key to grieving. This step is more than saying you had an abortion, a surgical procedure. It is thinking about the life that was lost. Give yourself permission to grieve. If the pregnancy continued without interruption you would have had a baby. If this baby or child later died you would have had cultural permission to grieve. Acknowledge what was lost. Was it a boy or a girl? How old would your child be now? What would they have looked like? Who would they look like? When you give yourself permission to grieve, you are not alone. A support group will weep with you. You can also find support for a memorial service on websites such as [National Memorial for the Unborn](#).



STEP 3:

Ask for and Receive Forgiveness.

Asking for forgiveness for your abortion is a huge step forward in the healing process. If you ask God for forgiveness, He will forgive. Receiving His forgiveness is a stumbling block for those who say “I can’t forgive myself”. Other stumbling blocks to receiving forgiveness include holding onto what was lost and having no place to express the remorse or regret. A Biblical support group will help you to receive God’s forgiveness.

STEP 4:

Offer Forgiveness to Others

Offering forgiveness to others is a crucial step in healing. For those who suffer remorse after abortion there are many hurts and anger. These strong emotions cause the need to extend forgiveness to those involved in the abortion experience. It is a great relief to let go of the pain and anger and forgive. It is easier to forgive others once your story has been acknowledged and grieved. Remembering what you have been forgiven for makes it easier to forgive also. Because we have received forgiveness from God we can offer it to others. Our hearts want to set up conditions for forgiveness, but God asks us to freely give forgiveness because He has forgiven us. Find someone to hold you accountable as you go through the process of forgiveness. Pray to ask God to show you who you need to forgive and ask God to forgive others through you.



STEP 5:

Plan for Restitution

Once grief is acknowledged and expressed and forgiveness is offered and received, very often people will find ways to give back. Restitution is a Biblical concept for when you have done something wrong. It allows you to say, "I am sorry for what I have done and I will do something to make up for it". When you are sorry for your abortion and regret your decision, you want to give back to make it right. Restitution can never bring back your child, but it will change your heart and reinforce that the forgiveness you have received is real. It is good to ask for forgiveness and then act out this forgiveness by making restitution. When abortion occurs and there is regret, it is not healthy to seek ways to punish yourself. It is not an uncommon response, but it is not healthy. We can't work for our forgiveness but we can work for God because we have been forgiven.

ONLINE RESOURCES:

Watch other women and men share their stories in Care Net's Abundant Life video series.

Care Net's Find a Center tool

AbortionChangesYou.com to share your story

AbortionRecovery.org to find helpful healing programs