

Dear clients and prospects of Crossroads.

Crossroads is a Christian Counselling Ministry of grace and compassion to women seeking help and advice in a pregnancy crisis; and to all those who are impacted as a result of an abortion, miscarriage or failed IVF cycle.

We would like you to know that regardless of the reasons that caused the pregnancy crisis, our mission is to extend our care, support, and compassion. We are NOT here to judge you.

During the Coronavirus crisis, we would like to support you still and although not the normal way of face to face in our offices. Rather, we want to invite you to use other means such as telephone, WhatsApp, or Skype. This is because we acknowledge that a baby loss, irrelevant of its reasons, is painful to say the least. Also, we want to follow the government's requirements for safety.

With our experience in this ministry and the emotional consequences experienced by those individuals who are involved with post abortion, we are particularly very concerned about the policy introduced by the UK government. This is for women to carry out their own abortion at home without a medical professional present due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Whether you are aware of it or not, we would like you to know that God loves you and cares for you. He sees each one of your tears that fall and He collects them. He wants to restore your broken heart if you could let him.

Please find our contact details below and attached pdf with testimonies. The names used are not real.

We look forward to meeting you when the government lifts the confinement.

God bless you and keep you.

Glossyna  
Crossroads CPC Harrow

***A collection of personal stories from women and men who have been affected by pregnancy loss!***

## Story 1

My story starts in 2008. I was happy enough, having been married for eight years to the most wonderful caring husband, and mother to a lovely little six-year old boy. I was happy with one child up until this point, I didn't feel I was ready for another, as I had suffered quite badly with post-natal depression after his birth, and did so on and off for a couple of years after that. Besides, now I was feeling good, enjoying my job, my family and my life in general. Suddenly though, in the summer of that year, it was like someone had suddenly switched on my maternal clock one day, and out of nowhere, I desperately wanted, needed another child so badly...

I was 34 at the time, and my husband 2 years older, so I was thrilled when I had fallen pregnant within a month of trying! "Just in time" I thought, I didn't want there to be a huge age gap between my children, and besides, I was nearly 35, and a lot of my friends had already completed their families.

I went through the first eight weeks with the usual pregnancy symptoms, I had told close family members and even a few close friends and I felt very lucky. I had Polycystic Ovary Syndrome, so felt even luckier that given my history, I was having this baby, and felt like I had been blessed.

At eight weeks, I experienced a slight discomfort so I was booked in for an early scan, and there it was - a tiny heartbeat - my precious baby. I was re-assured that all was ok and the baby was doing well. The sonographer never gave me a picture and I didn't feel the need to ask for one for some reason - I regretted that. A few weeks later, I went for my twelve-week scan. The sonographer was very quiet as he

scanned my stomach, and I immediately feared the worst. Sure enough, after what seemed like ages, he looked at me and my husband and told us there was no heartbeat, that the baby was only measuring ten weeks, and that it had died. My vivid memory of that moment amongst my total shock, was staring at the screen, seeing my motionless baby, and sobbing "Please don't leave me baby, don't leave me". The memory of that moment, although much less painful now, will always be with me. I had the baby removed under general anaesthetic the next day, and it was the most miserable day of my life. I felt such grief, and was lucky my husband and I were able to talk openly about it, as he too was suffering, but remained calm and strong for me.

The next few months passed in a bit of a blur. I was still full of grief and thinking what could have been, I felt almost numb sometimes and I cried an awful lot, more so than I've ever done. A few people at work were falling pregnant and although I was happy for them, my pain over my baby's loss was unbearable.

I wasn't ready to try again for another baby until the New Year, I felt physically and mentally stronger by then. So, I was devastated when, at seven weeks, the same thing happened - I went for an early scan after experiencing bleeding, only to be told that this pregnancy would not last and to expect it to come away within the next week. I felt bereft. My family were very understanding but I chose not to tell any friends, except maybe a couple of close ones, as I felt like I had to protect myself. I actually physically miscarried this pregnancy in the toilets at work, so I felt very, very alone.

Two more subsequent failed pregnancies followed, and each following a similar pattern - early scans and blood tests and the devastating news that the babies were not growing as they should and that I should miscarry soon afterwards. By this stage, having lost four

babies, I was inwardly a wreck and felt so very sad, but had to hold it together on the outside for my family and my work. By now it was the Autumn of 2010 so I had been having miscarriages for just over two years. I couldn't look at another pregnant woman without feeling pangs of regret and sadness for my poor babies that didn't make it. I planted four little conifers in the back garden, which gave me a bit of comfort, as I had done something in memory of them. I still cried a lot, and there were a lot of bad days where I felt I couldn't cope with my grief and sorrow anymore and somehow blamed myself. It was on one of those days shortly after my fourth pregnancy loss, that I went to my doctor saying that I couldn't cope anymore. She handed me a leaflet for "Crossroads" suggesting I get in touch with them, as they'd offer me the support that I needed.

Glossyna was wonderful, even on that first nervous phone-call I made. When I went to see her, she introduced me to "The Journey" programme. The sessions made me at last come to terms with my losses, and to realise that it was not my fault. It was towards the end of this programme that I suspected I was pregnant again. It was Glossyna who helped me through everything, from buying the pregnancy test and staying with me through pregnancy testing, to praying to God with me that this pregnancy would go smoothly. The whole journey experience totally restored my faith in fate and in God and made me truly believe that He was looking after me and this precious baby. I felt a huge sense of peace when we prayed together. She was so supportive and understood my anxiety through this pregnancy - and was I anxious! Through her, and the programme, I managed to see things clearly and to come to terms with the past so that I was able to move on to the future. My youngest son, who I prayed for so badly, is now eleven months old. I thank you Glossyna for being there for me throughout - the work you do is truly a gift.

## Story 2

I would like to explain my recent experience at Marie Stopes Ealing. I initially booked an abortion on May 24<sup>th</sup>, not because I wanted to but because the father of the child denied my baby and me when I told him of the pregnancy; I had just found positive. I attended the clinic thinking that I was perhaps 8 weeks gone; the nurse gave me a scan and told me that I was in fact 16 weeks and 5 days. I was in shock at this news; I asked her if I could see the scan (it's one thing to be told you are pregnant but quite another to see exactly what is going on inside you). I looked at my scan and saw a perfectly healthy-looking baby; this saddened me so much at the thought of aborting that I had to ask to leave the room for a while. When I came back, I was told that due to the length of time of the pregnancy that I would have to come back another day, on the 31<sup>st</sup>. I felt relieved and pleaded with the father to support my decision in keeping the child I was connected to, the child I loved.

The morning of the 31<sup>st</sup> I found myself physically unable and unready to do such a thing as abort and so I called up the clinic and cancelled my procedure, they then said that the 2<sup>nd</sup> June I could come and have it done. The father at this point seeing my hesitation put ever more pressure on me to abort my dear pregnancy, which I had learned to love so much. I told him that I didn't want to do this, that I didn't know how I could, that I wanted to see this baby and love this baby, not harm and end its life, my head was pounding in my efforts to save the baby with any alternative arrangement I could think of.

I attended my appointment on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June after further arguments and pressure from the father of the pregnancy. I was asked to get undressed and to wait in the room with the other patients. I was handed the pills to take which would start the whole process off. I sat there with the pills in my hand, motionless, again physically unable to

do this, which I knew I never wanted. I was sat there for about 2 hours until eventually a nurse came and told me that the pills would melt in my hand and put them in a cup for me. As more time passed it was obvious that I could not do this and I was told I would have to go home. I not only had the pressure from the situation itself and the father but also time itself, I knew that after 18 weeks the procedure changed and I didn't want to put either my pregnancy or myself through that, I explained this to the clinic and they told me that they could squeeze me in the next day, the 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

I went home wishing never to go back to the clinic again. I had more pressure, death threats and everything the father could think of to put my mind into turmoil, I asked him to leave me alone so I could clear my mind but he did not.

The morning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> June I went to the clinic feeling like a robot. When I arrived (which was late) I asked to go to the toilet. I used this time to go over everything once more in my mind, still so desperately unsure of what I was doing, still so confused at my situation. I asked myself "is it fair to have a child when its father offers no support, when he wouldn't be around to help us?" I asked "can I do this on my own?" I felt defeated from the constant pressure I had in the past couple of weeks, my maternal feels were so strong, I wanted this baby more than anything but thought about the people it would affect and the father, this was the single most painful decision I had ever had to handle and although I should have been in control, I felt powerless to make a stable and right decision. I conceded to the pressure and went through with it. Just before I walked into the procedure room I asked if they knew if it was a boy or girl. I was told that they couldn't tell from the scan. I lay on the operating table in tears as they put me under, unable to contain my pain.

When I awoke, I felt relatively normal considering and was quickly fit to leave the clinic. I was told that the surgeon wanted to speak with me before I left. This concerned me as I wondered what problem this

could be. I was then told that I had twins. I knew from this moment that I had made the wrong choice that I severely regretted what had happened, this information absolutely changed my world; I was uncontrollably distraught at this news, finding this out now, when it was too late to do anything about it. I was told that they thought as a parent I had a right to know. I said but I didn't see it on the scan and they said that I only saw one and that they don't check for multiple births only that there is a pregnancy.

I am absolutely disgusted that the clinic thought that it was not important to check for multiple births, as if this would not make a difference to a decision. I openly struggled so much (which the nurses saw both in the scan and preparation room) that to have been told I had twins, to have just known the truth of what I was carrying, I believe undoubtedly that I would have never have aborted, I simply cannot stand the pain I have felt since knowing what I have done, based on inaccurate information. Such a rare and special gift happened to me, but it was torn away from me without my knowledge. I reluctantly consented to the abortion of one baby, I did NOT consent to what they gave me, the abortion of twins and I now struggle like hell to live with that.

Subsequently I lost my job, my will to live, my well-being, my conscience; everything in my life has been affected by this. I feel so violated, so cheated of my decision. Even if an abortion would have happened which I know would not have been possible at least I would have had the choice, at least I would have known what was happening to me. I have killed two lives that I loved and didn't even know about it, I 'm expected to live with this somehow.

It has been suggested to me that the clinic must have known I had twins. They must have heard that there were two heartbeats even if they nurse failed to see whilst scanning. I would hate for this to happen to anybody else and strongly desire check as standard for

multiple pregnancies and to tell the mother so she can base her decision on fair and accurate information.

### Story 3

I came to Crossroads totally lost, confused and heartbroken not knowing what to do and believing there was no escape from the pain I was feeling.

I had a very difficult pregnancy being happy and sad through different stages; my husband, who is an alcoholic causing unnecessary argument, my three children not coping well with different issues in their lives, and trying very hard to complete a teaching assistant course. Looking back being pregnant made life beautiful but very hard to cope with.

The pregnancy showed signs in the early stages of distress. I had a slight bleed at 13 weeks but after **exploration** I was sent home being told there was nothing to worry about. Everything fine until 28 weeks. I had a day in bed feeling very stressed and tired, my husband was drinking quite heavily and we were not talking to each other he had gone to the shop and I had got up to prepare some food and a drink for my son and I. A sneezing fit then caught me and as it did, I bent over thinking I had wet myself a little, well it was not that I had wet myself, it was I was bleeding again but this time the blood would not stop. Thinking I was having a miscarriage I stopped to feel my bump and felt a kick which was a relief, my baby was alive and kicking. I reached for the telephone and called for the ambulance service. I awoke my sleeping son to run next door to the neighbour who then took over the care of him until my two older daughters arrived home. I was ushered into the ambulance leaving 2 litres of blood on the kitchen floor and rushed to hospital.

It wasn't until the next day after many checks, prodding, poking and scans my baby girl was brought into the world by caesarean section. She was beautiful, she was so tiny, and she weighed 1150 grams. She was rushed into an incubator and I was left with only the slightest

glimpse of my daughter to recover from the operation. I was devastated. I waited for 7 hours to see and hold my baby while all my family were telling me how beautiful she was. When I eventually went up to see her, I was greeted by a nurse telling I shouldn't be there and that I should be resting. I was so upset I stayed about 10 minutes holding her. Oh, so perfect – I was sobbing my eyes out! The next day I was with my baby, however I couldn't hold her she had gained breathing problems in which she soon recovered. It was not vital for the day when I was discharged from hospital and an hour after being at home, I got a call that changed my life and my baby girl was very sick and my husband and I had to get back to the hospital immediately. It was the longest drive ever. The two of us screaming at each other trying to make the car go faster but also staying within the speed limits and stopping at what seemed like every traffic lights. When we finally got to the hospital I jumped out of the car and ran up the stairs forgetting I had just had an operation and still had staples in to hold my scar together. We were ushered into a little room in which a crib was in the corner and all I could think was this is where she will die. The doctor was explaining what had happened but all I wanted to hear was there is hope. Once I heard there was, I was back by my daughter's side each minute was hard and she looks as though she was improving but a brain scan showed she was bleeding. We were told if she lived, she would be handicapped. We didn't care we went! My husband consumed himself with drink in the room we had been given and I stayed by my daughter's side. My other children came to see us and our family surrounded us. My brother-in-law who is a Reverend christened our baby girl Mya-Louise. We prayed and sang songs for God to help our baby girl by the 7<sup>th</sup> day she had no change of a life with poison running through her blood stream, gangrene in her foot and leg and bleeding in her brain. We had to put her out of pain and turn off the life support machine. I dressed her in a pink baby grow and cardigan and hat which was all too big for her and I finally held my baby in my arms.

My husband who was not thinking straight after all the drink took her and run out of the hospital. I was again running down stairs with no sense I was harming myself when I finally got both of them back upstairs, we sat and sang to Mya-Louise holding on to every moment of her being in our arms alive until the doctor came and announced her was gone. I then collapsed on the bed and cried with my daughter in my arms. We were left alone for hours and we all fell asleep then the nurse came to take her to the mortuary. Having no idea of death, I didn't know what happens or what to expect we had to go home without Mya-Louise in our arms and me in pain with a scar to remind me. I was numb and as some of the placenta was also left inside. I had to arrange to go back for another operation to say I was upset an understatement. My whole world was torn to pieces. I had to deal with my husband's grief, my children, my family, and everyone who knew I was pregnant, my friend who was also having a baby girl, the people I was teaching who had made up names for me to give her, the housework, the bills, the shopping and then oh yes my own health, and to look forward to another operation.

After many weeks of trying to get answers and having Mya-Louise funeral I was led to Glossyna and Brenda – what a blessing! Here I was having all this happen and didn't know where to start; they guided me through the Journey Programme over weeks of meeting. They blessed me each time and empowered me to be strong enough to cope with all that I have been through and still going through. I have now through their help found a friend in God and have been blessed with the courage to cope with the bad days that arise. I have accepted that I have no control over what happens and that it was God who had blessed me and thank Him for my daughter because without her I would still be locked in a world of depression. Through 'The Journey' I have strengthened my belief which has had a great effect on my family. My children no longer suffer through the issues but have gained the strength to cope with them. My husband has admitted to

his drinking problem and has had the strength to get himself help from counsellors in which had made our lives a lot easier. I am not saying everything is perfect and easy far from it; I put everything into the hands of God.

I would love to say a big 'thank you' to Glossyna and Brenda but these words can't explain how truly grateful I feel towards them. All I can say is God bless you both, you are true angels.



## STORY 4

### ***A First Year University Student***

#### TO MY FELLOW SISTERS OF SUFFERING

*...Each sunset brings us the strength and peace to face the next sunrise.*

The only reason I believe this so fully, is due to the work of Glossyna and Crossroads.

I came to Crossroads utterly desperate. I really didn't know what was wrong with me, other than I thought I was going crazy!

**"The Journey"** helped me realise I was suffering from a recognised syndrome (PAS) which immediately alleviated some of the worry. As with any disease, once you know the diagnosis, you can get treatment.

Having experienced other counselling services; which offered no constructive help on an opposite side of the room; I found **"The Journey"** to be the most helpful, and tool providing service I've ever experienced.

The stages offer a path to follow so you can map your progress, and I didn't feel I was drowning in seas of unknowing about where I was at mentally.

The worksheets help you to really examine your feelings in a clear, calm manner (quite unusual for me!) so you're able to proceed in a logical way.

Most importantly, **"The Journey"** has helped me address a wealth of past issues and offered new constructive healthy ways of dealing with situations that will arise. I've also been given a new way of thinking about myself and the people I have relationships with; especially in the way I communicate my feelings.

However, all the worksheets and stages in the world would be useless without the right person to teach them.

Glossyna has been my angel, in that she has not only been a positive influence as a counsellor, but also as a woman.

I have a lot of respect and trust for Glossyna, and it takes a lot for me as a person to do that. If this is read by any other women who have suffered from the tragedy of abortion, I want you to know you're in a safe place.

Apart from the endless cups of tea (smile) you're in a place to freely express yourself away from judgement, as well as a place of understanding.

I found difficulty in coping with my experience at first because the only person I could talk to was my partner, and subsequent people who knew had no understanding at all (not their fault obviously). But the more people I told, I realised they were not the right people to help me, it's only through this programme I've been able to move on.

I know it was through fate that I found **Crossroads**; I believe everything in life happens for a reason; and it seems to be; if you're reading this; you're here for the same one. I needed help to move on from my experience and I found it. I will always be thankful to Glossyna and "**The Journey**" for realigning my path in life.

A wise woman said to me recently – "your experience is not unique, but it is unique to you".

I hope that your unique experience does not affect you negatively, but will help you learn and look forward to the future.

Always remember that you are not alone. I'd like to finish with part of a poem by the war poet, **Laurence Binyan**, I hope it brings you comfort as it did me.

**They shall not grow old, as we that are left to grow old  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.**

## Story 5

It was almost three years since my abortion when I went to Crossroads for help.

I'd tried counselling before but it just hadn't seemed right. I'd done lots of thinking and things had seemed to be getting better. I had met a new man and we'd been happy together for two years but I still found myself crying for no apparent reason sometimes and getting angry about the smallest things.

We talked about whether we had a future and I said I didn't think I'd ever really got over the abortion. I decided to seek some help and it was my boyfriend who found Crossroads on the internet.

It was quite hard to make that first call and to tell a stranger I had had an abortion but Glossyna was very warm, very welcoming and I arranged to see her and Brenda.

I cried a lot at that first meeting but it felt such a relief to finally let it out.

After I'd first had the abortion, I had told quite a few people but as time went on, I didn't want to sound like a broken record, going on and on about it.

I'd changed jobs and moved house and tried to make a fresh start and I didn't tell any of the new friends I made that I had had an abortion.

I didn't want them to know about my mistake or to think I was a bad person.

After months of thinking about little else and crying almost every day, I'd stopped talking about it which I had thought was a positive thing but looking back I realise I'd just locked it up inside me.

As we worked through The Journey it became more and more clear to me that I needed to forgive myself. Over time I had realised that the baby's father has simply not been emotionally mature enough to deal with the situation and I no longer blamed him for his failings. But I had refused to forgive myself, believing deep down that if I did it would seem as if I no longer cared for the baby I had lost.

As I went through The Journey, giving myself a bit of a talking to during my walk home after each session, I began to realise that if I was not going to make the most of my life, my baby had died in vain. I had the abortion to give myself the chance to walk away from a damaging relationship which was destroying my self-confidence and which would have become increasingly difficult with a baby tying us together permanently. I wasn't sure I would have survived it. Brenda and Glossyna helped me to realise that while you can't change the past, you can learn to accept it.

I am very hard on myself if I make the smallest mistake and I was angry with myself for getting into a situation where I had become pregnant by a man who was embarrassed to admit we were involved.

Brenda and Glossyna helped me to understand that all humans make mistakes and that God would forgive me for mine.

I still think about my abortion from time to time but it no longer dominates my life. When I feel angry about things now, I try to put it in perspective. So, what if the washing up hasn't been done as well as I would like. Does it really matter? As a result, my relationship has improved and we became engaged.

The Journey made me realise that if I wanted life to get better, I had to make a decision to improve it. I still have occasional bad days, usually when I'm tired, but I have learned to keep myself busy or to allow myself a little cry then move on. My abortion was still the hardest decision I have ever made but it no longer dominates my future.

**Dear Kyle**

You deserved more than what I did to you.

You were the apple of God's eye. He wonderfully and fearfully created you. He had a purpose for your life.

These are things that I know now but didn't know then. I didn't know that all you needed from me was love. You didn't need me to be perfect and sorted. That was other people's expectation of me – not yours.

I am sorry for not trusting my own instinct. I'm sorry I laid you to rest before your time.

I never got to know you. Were you like me? Do you look like me? I miss you and don't know why.

I tried to make my life count without you. Not realising the deep pain and wound I would be left with in my soul. I can't forget you. You weren't a mistake – I made a mistake.

Mum

## To You

Deep in the heart  
Deep down inside  
The memory of two lights I lost does resides.

You would have brought love, happiness and joy to our lives my girls;  
you would have been the apple of my eyes. Do you even know how  
much your mother had cried! And more tears follow when the first  
few had not dried.

I was so selfish, and I regret my decision  
Deep inside our minds its pure hell we've been living what I would do  
to go back in time to have you both here with hugs and kisses all the  
time.

To tuck you away before you go to sleep  
To kiss your sweet heads or a peck on the cheek  
And bedtime stories read by Mum with lights low entertaining with  
different voices whilst reading 'The Gruffalo.'

The loss of you both in our minds is persistent.  
I know you forgave us, in my dreams it's been clear  
I have you on my shoulders as we went to the fair  
We walked hand in hand, so vivid and clear  
Then I had to wake up, I was so sad and felt bare,

Your spirits live vicariously through all the little girls I see. Coz for  
some strange unknown reason they're always smiling at me.  
The fun we could've had a family of four  
I imagine me at home as you peep around the door,  
trying to sneak up on Dad, but your giggles give  
you both away then I turn around to tickle you,  
so now I give chase, you run to your mother as I

follow the trail but it's not hard to spot two naughty pairs of piggy-tails curly wavy hair and brown eyes and fair skin  
I'm told off by Mum for catering to our every whim.

I miss you so much and it's changed my whole world.  
Up in the stratosphere and beyond where you are  
I will remember you both as I gaze at the stars  
I'm really so sorry that we never spent time here  
Together but in the next life I hope you'll be side by side forever.

Two you my lovely Little Angels, I love you and Miss you so much...  
Please forgive me and your mum for what we did, but know it was never out of hate but fear of not being able to look after you. As a family we would have conquered anything.

**Dad**

## **To Jack or to Diana**

I never stopped to think  
About what you would mean  
Not just to my darling Jo  
But even now to me  
I put everything else in my life  
Ahead

Now as we go to Mauritius again  
So close to the second time when  
I think about what this means  
At last

So many years have passed  
But only now does thought come  
Selfish I am and selfish I have been  
But somehow, I know now what  
You mean

I thank God for our love and  
Have strength from Him but though  
Never acknowledged I feel the pain  
Of opportunity missed through putting  
Others first

Forgive me I meant you no harm  
But I should have seen  
Just what it would mean  
To you and to us in being complete.

**Dad**

