



# Transforming Trauma into Treasured Knowledge

**One key aspect of our lived-experience is surviving trauma and thriving anyway. Our experiences from trauma have valuable treasures hidden within them. These treasures can be shared with the anti-slavery movement to improve support services for survivors. This Tip Sheet is best used alongside the Experience to Expertise Spectrum Tip Sheet.**

## Epistemology:

### How do you know what you know?

There are many ways that human beings learn and know things. We learn them by being alive, by studying, observing, doing things, and by having experiences. Epistemology might seem like a big word to shy away from, but it is very important. It is especially important if we want to value different ways of knowing. How we know what we know, changes what we know. For example, how do I know the Earth is round? I have never done the research myself. I know it is round because I trust the process that scientists have gone through to determine the Earth is round.

When it comes to issues that impact survivors, how do we know if what people are saying is true? Do we trust their process? Where are they getting their information? Are they looking at it through the same lenses that we might? These are important questions and the answers are usually different in every situation.

## Step 1

Determine a part of your lived experience what you want to explore further - trauma, courage, success or unanswered questions.

- What is something you wish anti-slavery professionals did differently or better?
- What recommendations for change do you have for a program you went through?

## Step 2

Determine who could benefit from your knowledge.

- Who will be the audience for the information?
- How will the information change people's behavior?

### Step 3

Consider how you could take this information from being about you to being about us.

- Who else might have the same experience or information as I do? What might I learn from them?
- Do you want to speak for yourself or speak with others in mind as well?

### Step 4

Think about other information which might help you learn more about your experience.

- Has my perspective on this issue changed? why, or why not?
- Is there any training, education or research I can do to find out what others are saying?

### Step 5

Consider these other Survivor Leadership questions.

- How public do I want to be?
- In what ways might my health be impacted?
- How might my family be impacted?
- Do I want to do this for a career or on the side of another career?
- Can I manage the 'movement b\*\*\*s\*\*\*'? e.g. tokenisation, ignorance, etc.

For more information, contact  
[www.survivoralliance.org](http://www.survivoralliance.org) and  
[membership@survivoralliance.org](mailto:membership@survivoralliance.org)

