



# **CRISIS AND SUPPORT LINE TIP SHEET**

For sexual assault survivors possibly the most important resource we can provide is listening and believing. Listening, providing emotional support, and helping survivors talk through options is an essential part of our job.

We wanted to provide you with a tool that you can refer to when on the phone with a survivor. On page one we have provided helpful responses and reflective language. This will help you remember that listening and believing is an important part of your advocacy practice. Resist the urge to fill all the gaps with talking. Allowing silence can be powerful and gives the survivor time to formulate what they want to say. Using reflective responses helps you clarify with the caller what they mean and what they need.

On page two we have provided grounding techniques for you to use if you have a difficult or triggering call. We have also included a reminder list of what you actually did on that call.

**Supporting sexual assault survivors is important work!  
Thank you for all that you do each and every day!  
Together, we can End Sexual Assault.**



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## THINGS WE CAN SAY

- I believe you.
- It's not your fault.
- I'm here for you.
- I'm glad you're alive.
- You deserve support right now.
- You are being so strong.
- You're amazing for picking up the phone and calling.
- Take your time...I'm here when you're ready.
- No need to thank me, you're doing the real work. Honor yourself.
- There is no right or wrong way to feel.
- You don't deserve what happened to you.
- I am just going to be with you in the moment.

## IF A SURVIVOR ASKS "WHAT SHOULD I DO?"

How about we work together to come up with a plan for coping with these bad times?

Lets brainstorm together some things that you think may help. Does that sound good?

## BRAINSTORM HEALTHY COPING STRATEGIES

- First, listen to what they have been using as coping strategies.
- Help the survivor decrease self blame for less healthy coping strategies.
- Frame coping strategies as survival skills which make the survivor adaptive and creative.
- Discuss options for support.



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## PHYSICAL GROUNDING

- Run cool or warm water over your hands.
- Grab onto your chair as hard as you can.
- Walk around slowly, noticing each footstep

## SOOTHING GROUNDING

- Say kind statements, like "You are a wonderful person."
- Think of your favorites color, animal, or TV show.
- Picture people you care about.

## MENTAL GROUNDING

- Think of something funny to jolt yourself out of your mood.
- Describe your environment in detail

## SURVIVORS DON'T ALWAYS NEED TANGIBLE RESOURCES

Often they just need someone to listen. You just did that, and much more.:

- **You** helped them build emotional safety.
- **You** normalized and validated their feelings.
- **You** instilled hope for healing, pointed out strengths, and decreased their self blame.
- **You** helped debunk misconceptions and gave them the facts.
- **You** helped them brainstorm healthy coping skills and encouraged selfcare.
- **You** helped them explore their options and validated their concerns.