

## 4 QUESTIONS- some suggested approaches/ responses

1. **A survivor becomes hysterical?**

- **Model calmness:** speak extra s-l-o-w-l-y. Try deep breathing exercise with them.
- Walk together; change scene: “Can we move over there, where I can hear you better?”
- **Use active, empathetic listening.** Then confirm your understanding, occasionally paraphrasing what they’re expressing.. They are heard!
- **Protect, respect, connect**
- **Remove as necessary** (agitation can be ‘contagious’). Be respectful (“Sir/ Ma’am”). Validate their feelings. Unruly or threatening not CERT paygrade: Report, and/or **EXIT!**

2. **A survivor reacts negatively to something you said?**

- Try to understand why. Apologize.
- May get another person with a similar background with the survivor, to take over.

3. **A survivor remains silent and stoic when you talk to them?**

- Be ready to listen: **“What’s hardest for you right now?”** Invite them to speak; not badger. Ask the name of the individual they are worried about or lost- “We wish to be supportive and to honor/ acknowledge them”.
- Provide physical comfort, e.g., blanket, warm liquid.
- Who can you/we try to contact? (e.g., family, clergy)
- **Continue giving them opportunities to open up** “What do you need right now?”

4. **You are busy: but a survivor shows signs of needing psychological first aid?**

- Preferably early on, explain that “...I will have to leave in \_\_\_ mins., but will tell others that you are here...” May add that you will try to come back in \_\_\_ mins./hrs.
- See if someone else can talk with them
- **See if they can help you with a task:** restorative