Psychological First Aid – What to Do

1. Make a Connection
   a. Introduce yourself.
   b. Be fully present.

2. Be Kind, Calm, and Compassionate
   a. Express patience and compassion, even if people are being difficult.
   b. Speak in a calm voice.
   c. Remain courteous and respectful of people.
   d. Pay attention to cultural appropriateness of physical proximity, eye contact, and gestures.

3. Meet People’s Basic Needs
   a. Offer or direct them to food and water.
   b. Provide or direct them to a safe place.
   c. Check to see if family, friends, or peers are available.
   d. Encourage them to promote their self-care such as getting sleep, rest, and nutrition.
      (e.g. take a break, moderate exercise)
   e. Guide them to the next level of care as needed.

4. Listening
   a. Be attentive.
   b. Tune in to where the person is.
   c. Observe body language for cues.
   d. Listen carefully.
   e. Reflect back what the person is saying so that they know you are truly hearing them.
   f. Be available.

5. Give Realistic Reassurance
   a. Help the person to feel less anxious or worried by letting them know that what they are feeling is understandable.
   b. Do NOT promise what you cannot deliver.

6. Encourage Good Coping Skills

7. Help People Connect
   a. Get them access to a phone so that they can contact their loved ones.
   b. Suggest additional methods of communication such as texting and/or email.
   c. Guide the person to the appropriate sources or resources for information in your setting including where and how to make a referral.

8. Ending the Conversation
   a. Ask if there is anything else you can to assist her or him.
   b. Provide the person with phone numbers, handouts, and or relevant contact information of additional resources for follow-up and possible referral to next level of care.