These tips will help you foster safe, caring, and non-judgemental interactions when someone shares that they have been subjected to sexualized violence.

**BELIEVE & AFFIRM**
Validate their feelings. Let them know that you believe them and that the sexualized violence was not their fault.

**BUILD SAFETY AND TRUST**
Address their immediate needs around safety and address issues of confidentiality.

**LISTEN AND BE COMPASSIONATE**
Listen and let them tell their story in their own words and at their own pace. Be comfortable staying silent and ask them how they want to be supported.

**RESPECT AND RESTORE CHOICES**
Ensuring that the victim/survivor is in control of what happens next is crucial to restoring their sense of power and control.

**BE AWARE**
Be aware of the impacts of trauma and systemic oppression on victims/survivors. Also acknowledge your own boundaries as a support person.

Adapted with gratitude from breakthesilenceNS.ca