Quick tips when helping a survivor

Supportive Measures
Practice self-care
Believe the survivor
Acknowledge their bravery in disclosing/sharing
Actively listen, support and express care
Offer/remind survivor of options, resources
Be honest about how you can help, including mandated reporting
Allow moments of silence. Be patient.
Validated their feelings and experiences
Remember trauma informed response, STE-CCC: safety, trust, empowerment, choice, collaboration & cultural relevance

Consider these phrases (RAINN, 2016):
“I’m sorry this happened to you.”
“It’s not your fault.”
“I believe you.”
“You are not alone.”

Common Harmful Mishaps
Judgement and asking a lot of questions, especially, “Why...”
“Is that what really happened?”
“Why didn’t you tell me earlier”
“Are you okay?”
“Why did (or didn’t) you...?”
Explicit and implicit blame
Cold or doubtful demeanor
Making excuses for the perpetrator or the harmful incident(s)
Physical contact (hugs, shoulder touch/rub) without consent
Minimizing the survivor’s feelings and experiences
Telling the survivor what they must or should do, or what you would do

Reference citations: RAINN, 2016; NRCJIW, 2014; SAMHSA, 2014