

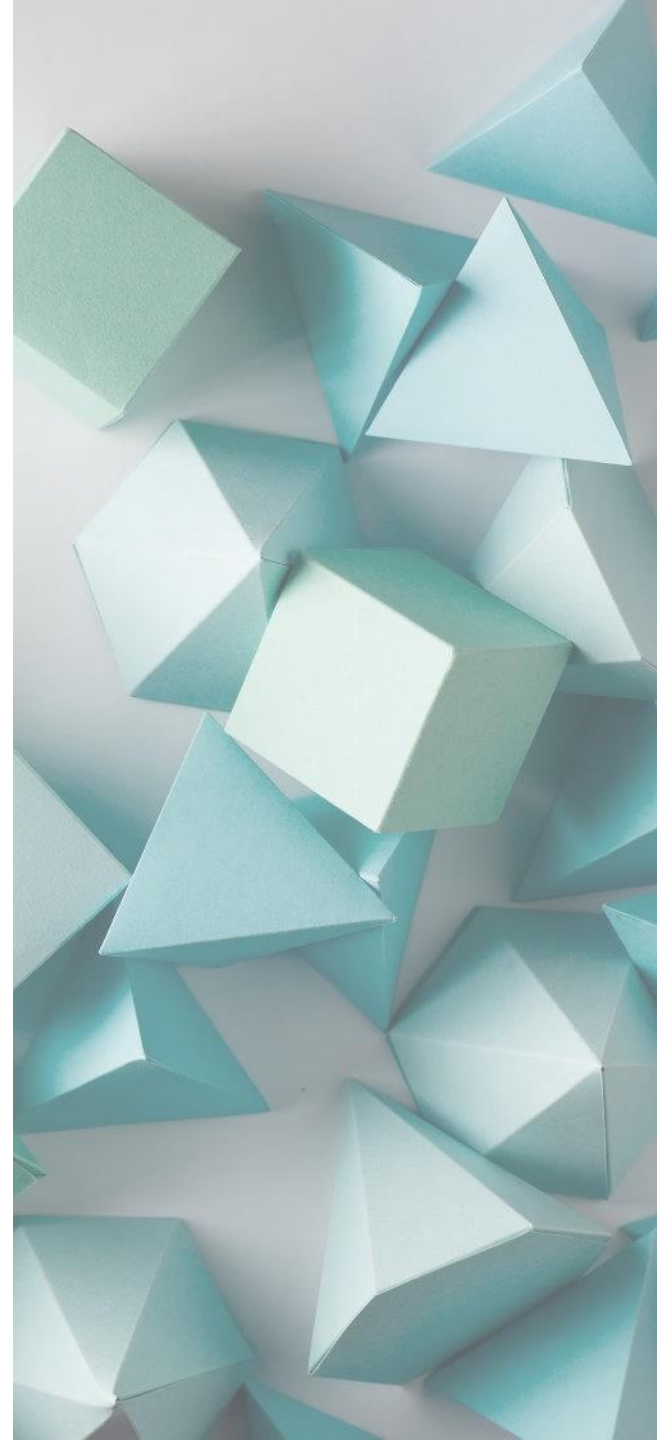
STREE MANORAKSHA TRAINING

Psychological First Aid (PFA) for women facing violence



Learning Objectives

- What is psychological first aid (PFA)?
- PFA - When, Where and to Whom ?
- Why do we need PFA?
- LIVES Model
- How do we do PFA? – Process of PFA
- Dos and Don'ts of PFA

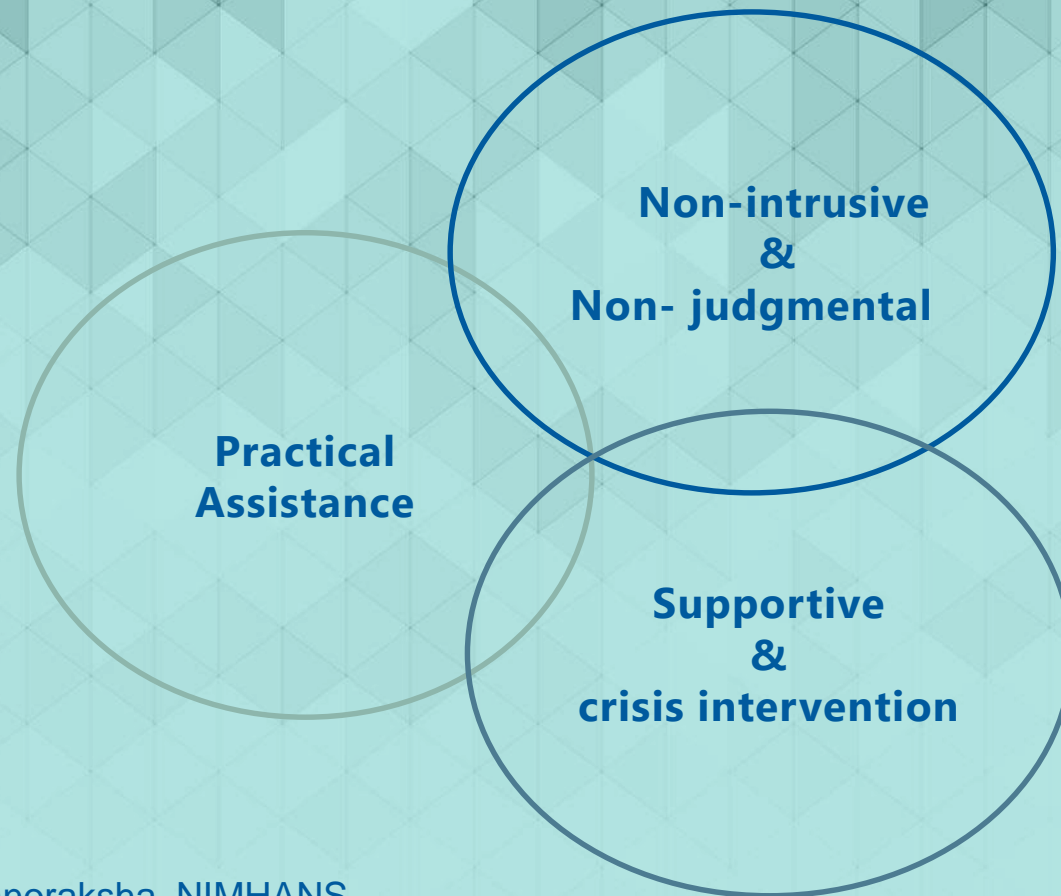


Psychological First Aid

- Humane approach
- Supportive in nature
- Practical assistance
- Delivered to people who recently suffered a serious stressor/crisis/trauma (Natural disaster, accident, rape, assault, abuse, violence, loss and so on)



Psychological First Aid



Main Goals of PFA

- Assessing needs and concerns
- Ensuring safety and stability
- Mobilizing support
- Listening
- Comforting
- Validating



Principles of PFA



What is not PFA?

- X NOT a typical professional counselling
- X NOT “psychological debriefing”
- X NOT asking people to analyse/explain
- X NOT pressuring people to tell you their story

PFA: Who? Where? When?

Who? Any individual who have recently experienced a crisis & are experiencing distress



Where? Anywhere that is safe, ideally with some privacy as appropriate to the situation



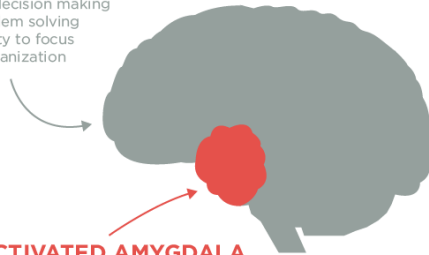
When? *When encountering a person in distress, usually immediately following a crisis event*

Why to do PFA?

THIS IS YOUR BRAIN ON STRESS:

DEACTIVATED PREFRONTAL CORTEX

- Rational decision making
- Problem solving
- Ability to focus
- Organization



ACTIVATED AMYGDALA

- Fight, flight, freeze
- Rapid heart rate, breathing
- "Gut" reactions

Amygdala is responsible for emotional response and gets activated after trauma like violence or assault of any kind

Attaches emotional meaning to memories

Activates Fight, Flight, Freeze or Fawn response

Activates HPA- axis (aka the stress response)

Activates Sympathetic nervous system

Often enlarged in people with anxiety or PTSD

Why to do PFA?

THE 4 FS OF FEAR AND STRESS

F**FIGHT**

This type of response can be physical fighting as well as using your voice to protect yourself.

F**FLIGHT**

This can mean physically leaving a situation that causes fear, or it can be done by mentally checking out.

F**FEAR**

Freezing may be literal in that you physically stop moving when you feel threatened. It can also be shown by an inability to speak or continue doing an activity.

F**FAWN**

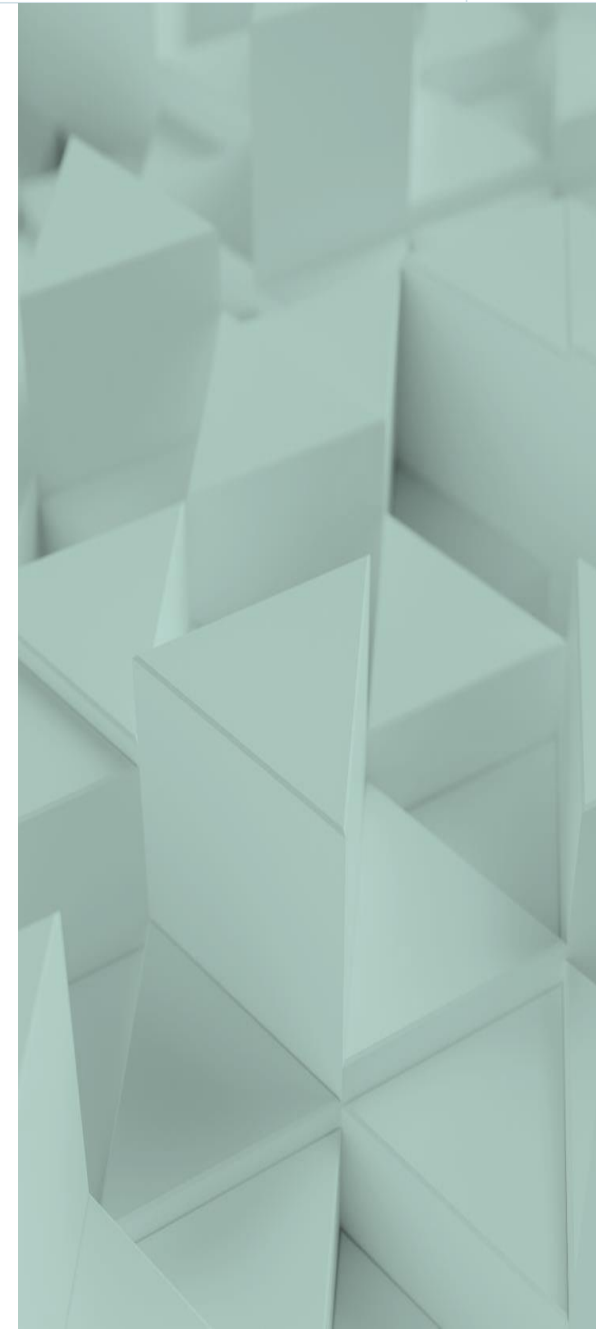
This type of response is seeking safety from the person who is making you feel threatened.

LIVES MODEL



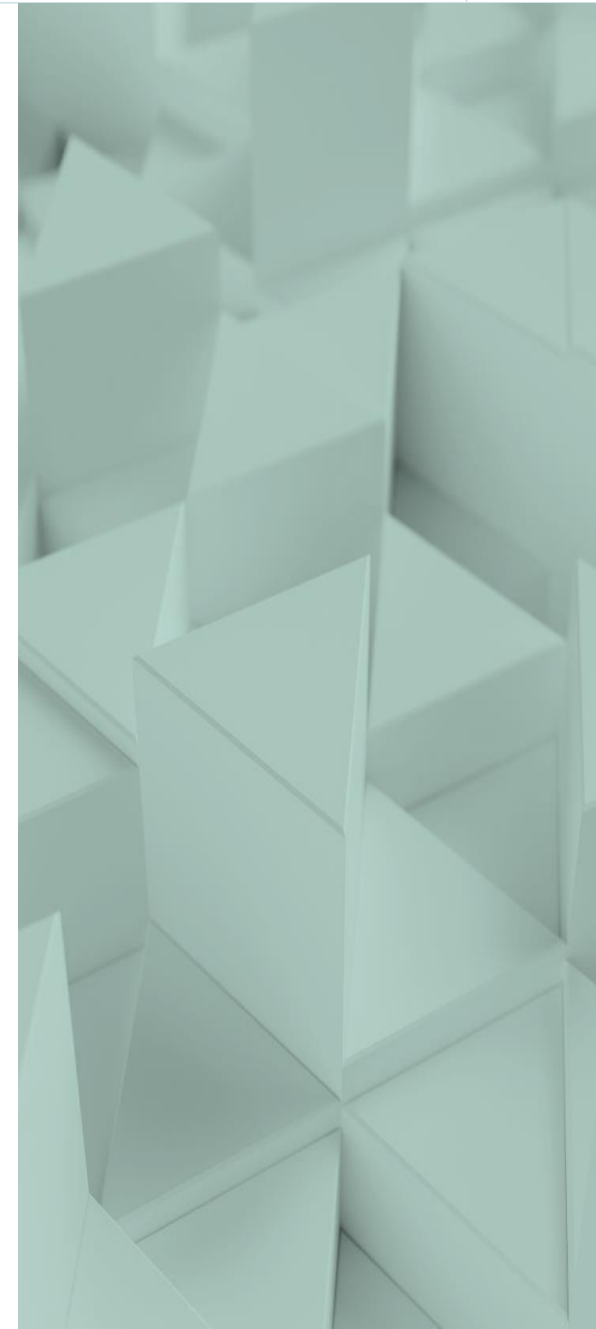
LIVES: How to Listen? & What to Say?

- Be patient and calm;
- Let her know you are listening; for example, nod your head or say “hmm”;
- Acknowledge how she is feeling;
- Don’t look at your watch/computer or speak too rapidly.
- Don’t judge what she has or has not done, or how she is feeling. Don’t say: “You shouldn’t feel that way,” or “You should feel lucky you survived,” or “Poor you”.




LIVES: How to Listen & What to Say?

- Give her the opportunity to say what she wants. Ask, “How can we help you?”
- Encourage her to keep talking if she wishes. Ask, “Would you like to tell me more?”
- Don’t assume that you know what is best for her.
- Don’t interrupt. Wait until she has finished before asking questions.
- Don’t pressurize to speak; allow pauses and silence



Dos & Don'ts of Listening & Speaking with Trauma Survivor



Dos ✓	Don'ts X
Allow for silence. Give her time to think.	Don't try to finish her thoughts for her.
Stay focused on her experience and on offering support.	Don't tell her about someone else's story or talk about your own troubles.
Acknowledge what she wants and respect her wishes.	Don't think and act as if you must solve her problems for her.

LIVES: **Inquire** about needs & concerns

Phrase your questions as invitations to speak :

"What would you like to talk about?"

"Would you like to talk about your needs?"

Ask open-ended questions

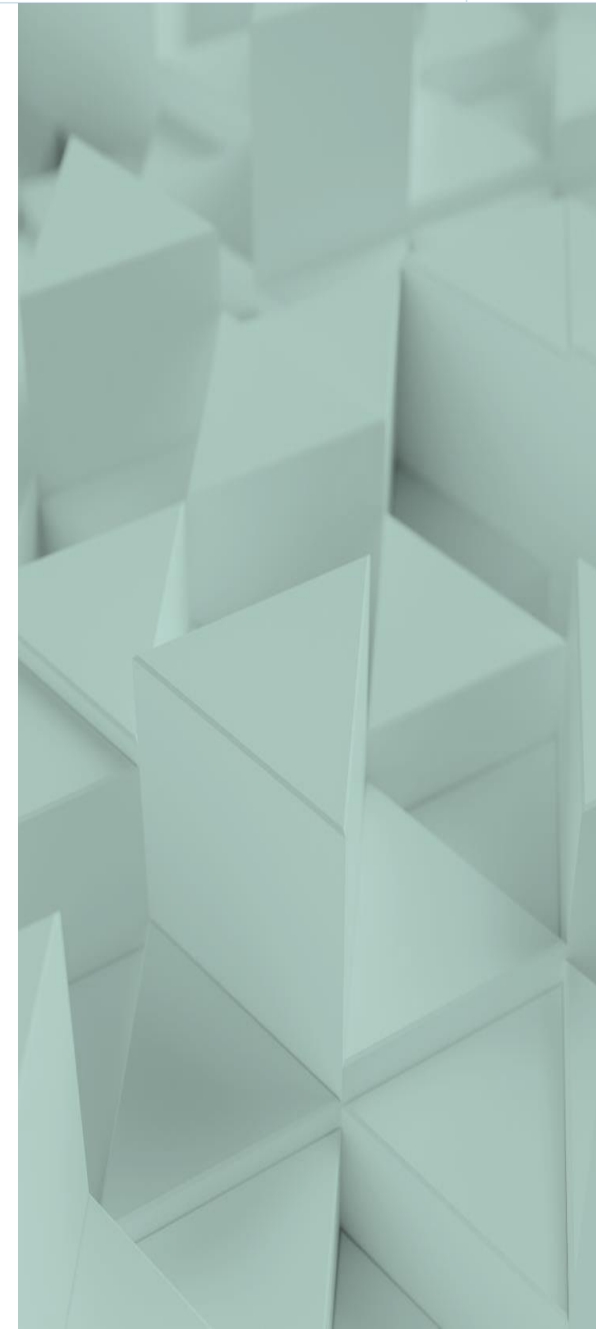
(instead of yes/no questions)

"How do you feel about that?"

Check your understanding

(repeat what she says; rephrase & summarise)

"You mentioned that you feel very frustrated."



LIVES: Inquire about needs & concerns

Validate & Reflect her feelings:

"It sounds as if you are feeling angry about that"

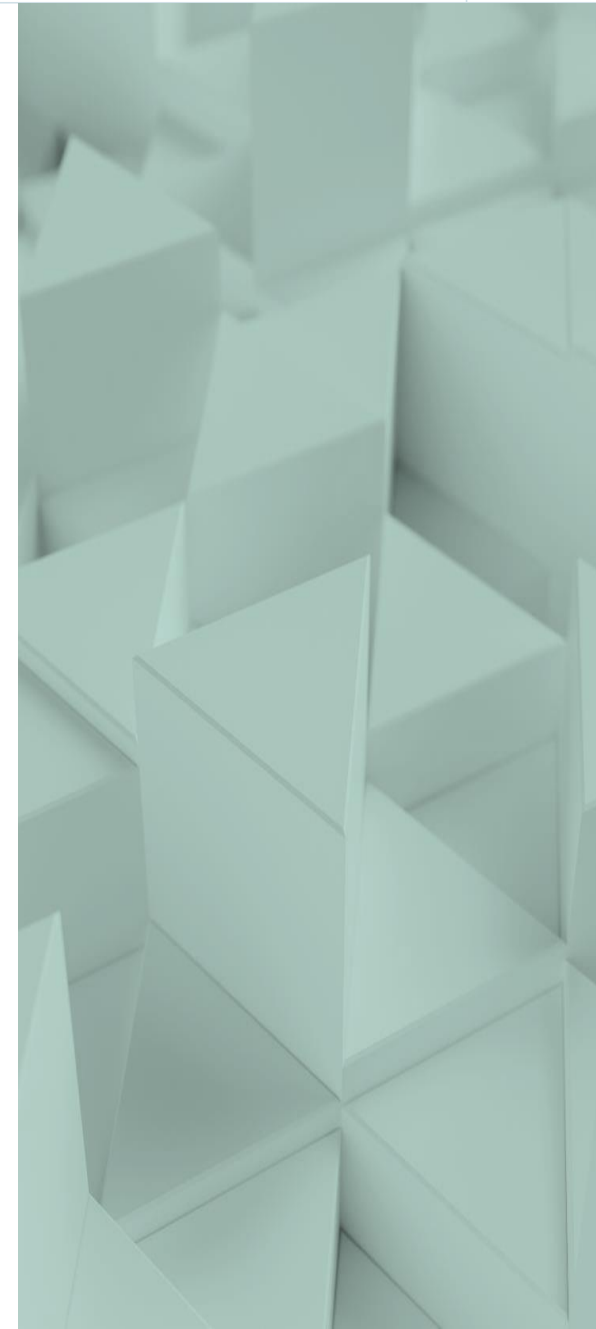
"You seem upset."

Explore as needed.

"Could you tell me more about that?"

Ask for clarification if you don't understand.

"Can you explain that again, please?"



LIVES: Validate

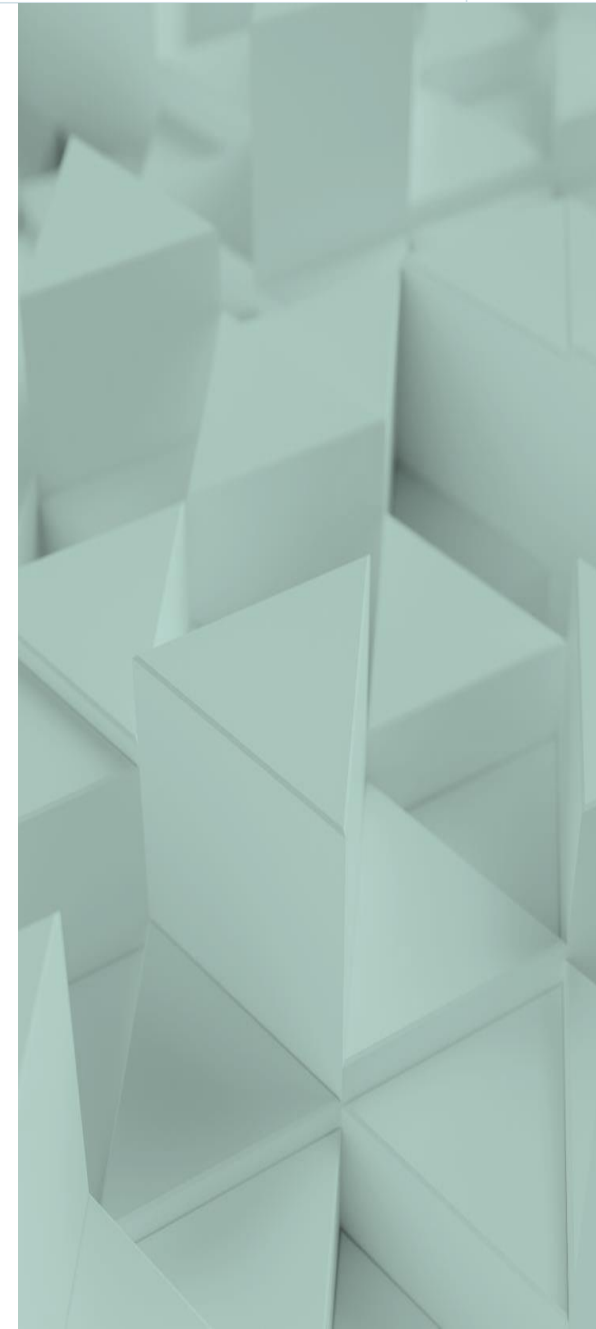
- It's not your fault. You are not to blame."
- "It's okay to talk."
- "Help is available." [Say this only if it is true.]
- "No one deserves to be hit by her husband."
- "You are not alone. Unfortunately, many other women have faced this problem, too."
- "What happened has no justification or excuse."
- "Your life, your health, you are of value."
- "Everybody deserves to feel safe at home."
- "I am worried that this maybe affecting your health."



LIVES: Ensure & Enhance Safety

- Assess safety after sexual assault or episode of intimate partner violence
- Assess immediate risk of partner violence

Find out whether there is any immediate risk of serious injury or it is safe to go home



LIVES: Ensure & Enhance Safety

If NOT safe:

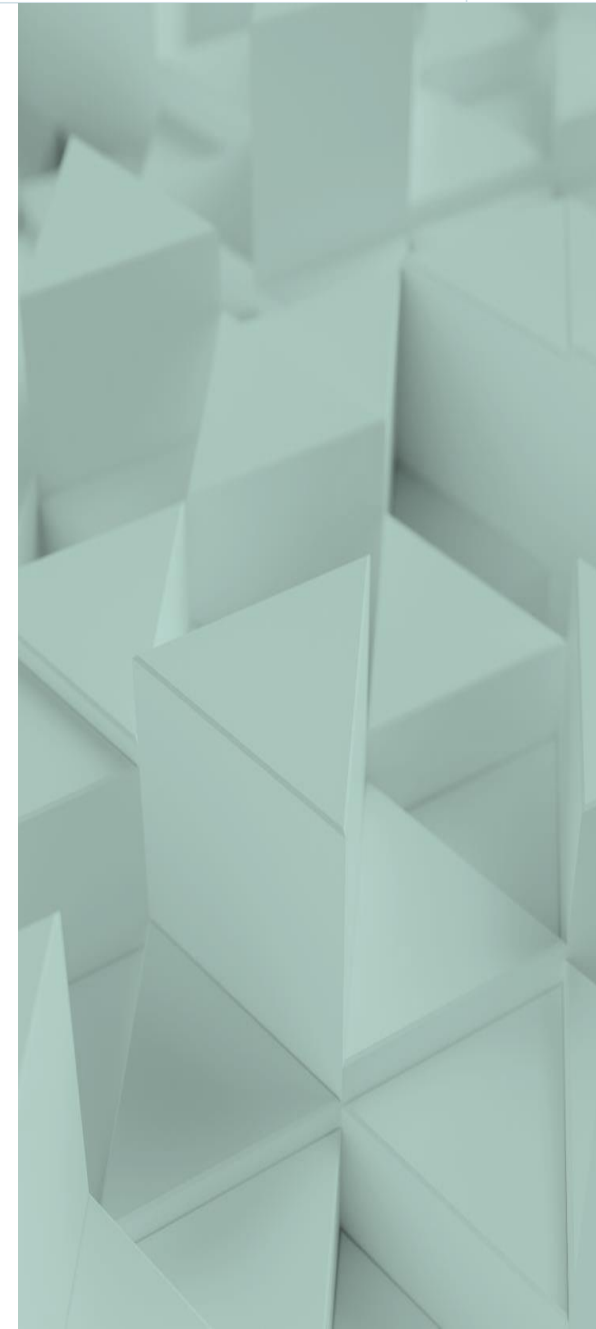
- Help make a safety plan
- Make referrals (for example, shelter home, safe housing)
- Help identify a safe place where she can go
- Make a safety bag



LIVES: Ensure & Enhance Safety

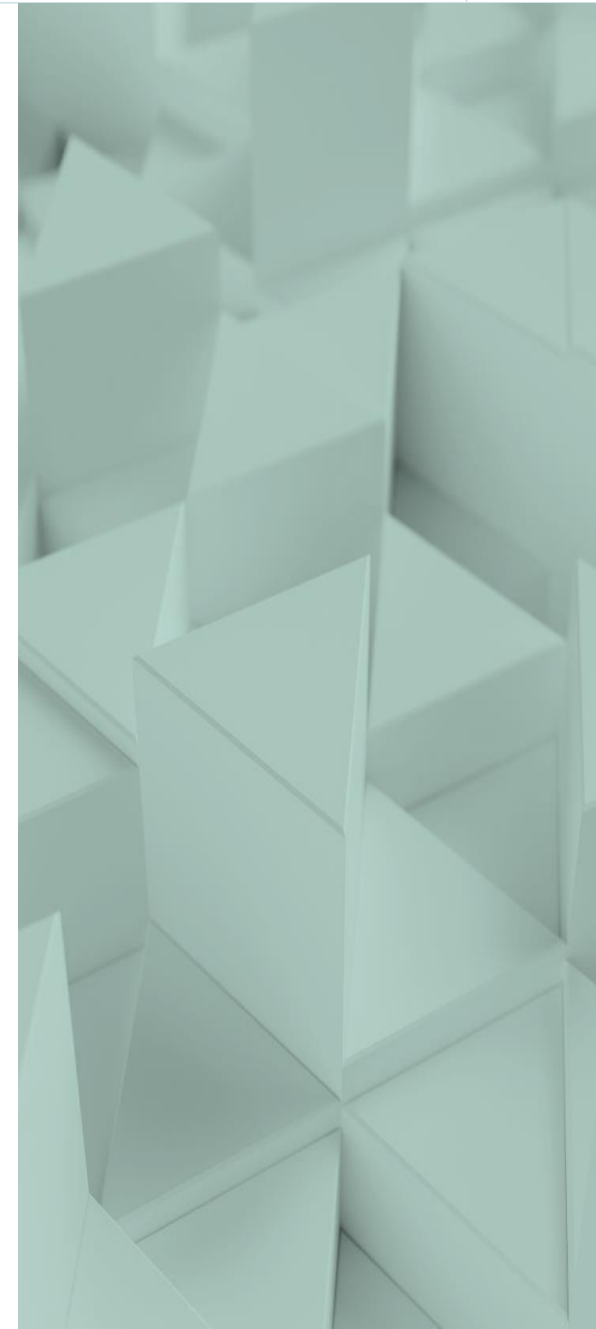
Be Cautious:

- Talk about abuse only when you and the survivor are alone
- Maintain **confidentiality** of health records
- Discuss how she can explain where she has been when asked at home
- Discuss what to do with any paperwork that she will take home



LIVES: Social Support Facilitation

- Help her to identify and consider her options, and what is most important to her
- Discuss her social support –she may prefer to rely on her informal network
- Connect her to resources through warm referrals



Dos & Don'ts of PFA

Dos	Don'ts
Identify needs and concerns	Try to solve her problems
Respond to emotional, physical, safety and support needs	Try to convince her to leave a violent relationship/to go to the police or courts
Listen & validate experiences & concerns	Ask questions that force her to relive painful events
Help her feel connected to others, calm and hopeful	Ask her to analyse what happened or why
Empower her to feel in charge and control	Pressurise her to tell you her feelings & reactions

Let's revise the main concepts of PFA

- ❖ Listen to your client patiently, in a non-judgmental, empathetic, compassionate, supportive way.
- ❖ Trust your client when she says that she faces severe danger
- ❖ Validate the emotions and thoughts
- ❖ Ensure safety
- ❖ Link her to support services and connect to resources
- ❖ Referrals should always be in accordance to her stated needs



Thank You

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