



# PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID



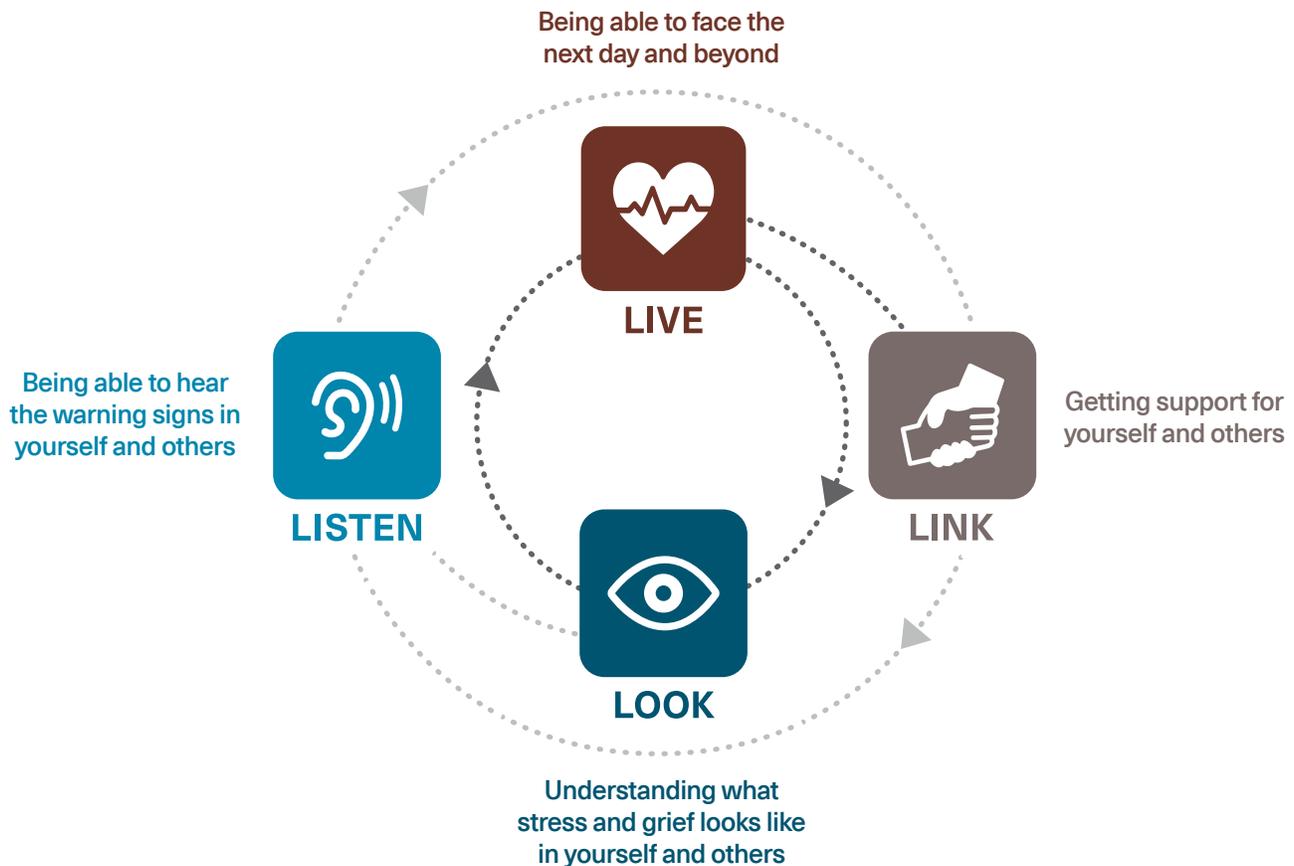
## WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID?

Psychological First Aid is about taking care of yourself – your thoughts, feelings and emotions when you have experienced stress, crisis or trauma – and being there for family, friends and community when they are having trouble dealing with a stressful situation.

It is about reaching out to people with compassion, so that you help them to feel calm and comforted.

## LOOK, LISTEN, LINK, LIVE MODEL

This is the model we use to care for ourselves and for others in times of stress, crisis or trauma.



## SELF-CARE

Understanding and taking care of yourself is a critical part of providing Psychological First Aid. It is difficult to support someone else if you are not taking care of yourself.



LOOK

### Look for common signs of stress:

- Stomachaches, headaches, tiredness.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Anxiety, frustration, lots of emotions.
- Increased use of alcohol and drugs, recklessness, violent behaviours.
- Withdrawal from friends and family, from conversations.



LINK

### Link to support systems in place to help manage stress:

- What actions do you take to manage stress? (listen to music, go out on the land)
- Healthy relationships with family, friends, Elders and work colleagues.
- Community services or helplines.
- Cultural traditions.



LISTEN

### Listen to how you are feeling:

- Am I easily bothered by other people?
- Am I having trouble concentrating at work?
- Am I finding it hard to connect with friends and family?



LIVE

### Live with ways to manage stress so you can feel better:

- Taking breaks.
- Breathing and mindfulness.
- Spending time on the land.
- Asking for help if you need it.

## CARING FOR OTHERS

Many of the same tools you would use when caring for yourself are used when providing Psychological First Aid to others who may be experiencing loss, or grief after a crisis or trauma.

### Know that:

- Loss comes in many forms. It may be the death of a family member, friend, pet, or the loss of a home, job or way of life.
- Grieving is different for each person and is an important part of life. There is no timeline for grieving and there is no right or wrong way to grieve.



LOOK

### There are things for you to look for when caring for others:

- Are they showing signs of stress? Are they anxious, angry, withdrawn?
- Are they safe and are their basic needs being met?
- Are they hurting others or themselves?
- Are they handling things well?
- Do they require special attention? (children, youth, elderly, people with chronic illness or with disabilities)



LINK

### To supportive people or services:

- To resources to meet their basic needs.
- To loved ones.
- Community, cultural and faith support networks.
- Provincial or Territorial Child Protection or medical emergency services if necessary.



LISTEN

### Approach children, youth and other adults and ask them if they need help:

- Be calm: We need to approach people calmly and help them feel safe.
- Be open: When asking if you can help, be open to listening to the person's experience.



LIVE

### It is important to take care of yourself before, during and after a stressful situation:

- How do you feel?
- Do you need to link to any of your supports?

**Self-care is so important if we want to help others!**