25 Ways to Support Survivors of Trauma

1. Listen to and believe them
2. Know that trauma can affect all aspects of life: physical, cognitive, physical and spiritual
3. Recognize they are the expert on their own life
4. Open doors
5. Do what it takes, even when you have to work outside the box
6. Collaborate, even with systems we don’t know or like
7. Provide daily resources (diapers, food, etc)
8. Remember that trauma can lead to temporary substance abuse
9. Help change systems that impact survivors (police, courts, housing)
10. Recognize economic security is the key to safety planning
11. Know that victimization can tangle survivors in criminal activity
12. Let survivors control as much of their process as possible
13. Be familiar with legal options
14. Understand that survivors may still love the people who are abusing them
15. Let survivors move at their own pace
16. Understand survivors get arrested; assess for coercive control
17. Help survivors create and update solid safety plans
18. Help survivors access trauma-informed services
19. Consider the impact of oppression on how and where survivors seek help
20. Work with survivors in the context of their culture
21. Document sparingly and with a trauma-informed lens
22. Attend legal and CPS appointments with victims if they feel it would be helpful
23. Let survivors sleep and restore themselves
24. Support the survivor’s authority as a parent
25. Ask survivors what they think will help, and then help them get that help

For more information, contact the Ohio Domestic Violence Network at 614-781-9651 and at www.odvn.org. Published as part of the 25 for 25 years of ODVN celebration!