

“ The evidence now shows best outcomes when individuals subjected to trauma are **immediately supported** with [...] the helpful, empathic, non-intrusive, and informative presence of another person.”

Dr. Patricia Fisher | Author of *Building Resilient Teams, 2015* & Senior Advisor, TEND

HOT WALK & TALK PROTOCOL >> A strategy to safely and kindly guide someone through a negative stress reaction following an upsetting incident.



HOT

WALK

TALK

“I heard that something difficult or really upsetting just happened – would you like to come with me to talk about it?”

Move the person away from the location where the incident occurred, if that applies. If possible, go outside.

“Here is a bottle of water. How about we go for a walk around the building?”

Walk beside the person at brisk pace and offer a drink of water. As the walk proceeds, they may naturally slow the pace – let them gradually have more control as their nervous system regulates.

“It sounds like what you experienced was upsetting and what you’re feeling is normal. I’m here for you. Would you like to tell me what happened?”

Let them know that they are safe, that their reaction to stress is normal, and that you are there to support them. Invite them to tell you the story of what happened in their own words. If they get stuck on a particular moment, prompt them to move on with a guiding statement such as: “and then what happened?”