

# Tips for Talking with Scam Survivors



Talking about their scam experiences can empower scam survivors and help address the stigma they may face during their recovery process. However, as scam survivors have lived through a crime, it is vitally important to approach these conversations with care and compassion.

## Here are some tips for supportive, respectful conversations:

- ***Avoid victim-blaming language.*** Never use phrases like “fell for,” “duped,” or “how much money did you give them?” (their money was stolen). These kinds of comments shift the blame from the criminals to the person who was victimized.
- ***Actively listen.*** If a scam survivor shares their story with you, listen carefully and make sure they feel heard.
- ***Never judge.*** Scams are sophisticated crimes involving psychological manipulation. They can happen to anyone. Remember you are seeing the situation with the benefit of the survivor’s hindsight.
- ***Lead with empathy.*** Scam survivors have lived through a crime and may carry feelings of shame, embarrassment, or even trauma. Kind words can reassure them the incident was not their fault.
- ***Recognize their courage.*** Sharing a scam experience takes courage. Thank them for sharing their story.