

Language Matters

Language is powerful – especially when talking about addictions.
Stigmatizing language perpetuates negative perceptions.

“Person first” language focuses on the person, not the disorder.

When Discussing Addictions...

SAY THIS

NOT THAT

Person with a substance use disorder	Addict, junkie, druggie
Person living in recovery	Ex-addict
Person living with an addiction	Battling/suffering from an addiction
Person arrested for drug violation	Drug offender
Chooses not to at this point	Non-compliant/bombed out
Medication is a treatment tool	Medication is a crutch
Had a setback	Relapsed
Maintained recovery	Stayed clean
Positive drug screen	Dirty drug screen