

LANGUAGE MATTERS

When words are used inappropriately to describe individuals with a substance use disorder, it not only negatively impacts the cultural perception of their disease, but creates stigma that can stop people from seeking help. Language matters. Let's replace terms like "addict" and "junkie" with smarter language that aligns with the science.

Say This

Not That

Person with a substance use disorder

~~Drug addict~~

In recovery

~~Clean~~

Currently using substances

~~Dirty~~

Substance use

~~Substance abuse~~

Not engaging with treatment

~~"Bombed out"~~

Recurrence of symptoms, return to use

~~Relapsed~~

Positive drug screen

~~Dirty drug test~~

Medication assisted treatment (MAT)

~~Medication replacement, substitution therapy~~