


# Language **MATTERS**

Let's talk in a way that reflects science and demonstrates respect!

## When discussing addiction ...

|  <b>Let's Say ...</b> |  <b>Instead of ...</b> |
|--|---|
| ✓ Substance Use Disorder   | ✗ Substance abuse / drug habit  |
| ✓ Person with an addiction / with a Substance Use Disorder   | ✗ Addict, junkie, druggie, alky, alcoholic  |
| ✓ Person in recovery / in remission  | ✗ Ex-addict, abstinent, clean, sober, used to be addicted   |
| ✓ Has an addiction / dependence  | ✗ Suffering from an addiction, battling booze   |
| ✓ Not engaged  | ✗ Non-compliant   |
| ✓ Medication is a treatment  | ✗ Medication is just another addiction  |
| ✓ Lapse / reoccurrence   | ✗ Using again, fell over, off the wagon   |
| ✓ Positive urine drug screen / drug test   | ✗ Dirty urine / dirty drug test   |
| ✓ Treatment / Intervention   | ✗ Rehab   |
| ✓ Intoxicated  | ✗ Drunk, pissed, stoned, out of it, wasted  |
| ✓ Distressed, agitated   | ✗ Crazy, off his / her rocker, lost it, acting out  |
| ✓ Person disagrees   | ✗ Denial  |
| ✓ Resourceful  | ✗ Manipulative  |
| ✓ Recovery residences  | ✗ Sober homes   |

Sources: Addiction Policy Forum; ONDCP: "Changing the Language of Addiction." Michael P. Botticelli; Language, Substance Use Disorders, and Policy: The need to Reach Consensus on an "Addiction-ary"; John F. Kelly PhD, Richard Saltz MD & Sarah Wakeman MD



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