

# Language Counts!!

## *In the table...*

- What types of messages might be communicated by the language on the left?
- For each word, try to identify a more strengths-based term or phrase while keeping in mind the principles noted above.
- After you have completed this exercise discuss/review the suggestions.
- Are there other words/phrases in your plans and/or language that you would like to change? Why?

*The Glass Half Empty...The Glass Half Full*

<b>Deficit-based Language</b>	<b>Strengths-based, Recovery-oriented Alternative</b>
A schizophrenic, a borderline	
An addict/junkie	
Clinical Case Manager	
Front-line staff/in the trenches	
Substance abuse/abuser	
Suffering from	
Treatment Team	
LMHA Local Mental Health AUTHORITY	
High-functioning vs. Low Functioning	
Acting-out	
Self-help	
Unrealistic	
Denial, unable to accept illness, lack of insight	
Weaknesses	
Unmotivated	
Resistant	
Clinical decompensation, relapse, failure	
Maintaining clinical stability/abstinence	
Untreated alcoholics	
Prevent suicide	
Puts self/recovery at risk	

Content of table derived from the following sources: Tondora and Davidson, 2006; White, 2001; and Meta Services, 2005.

Non-compliant with medications/treatment	
Minimize risk	
Consumer (in addictions community)	
Patient (in mental health community)	
Treatment works	
Treatment system	
Discharged to aftercare	
Enable	
Frequent Flyer	
Dangerous	
Manipulative	
Entitled	
DTO/DTS/GD	
Baseline	
Helpless	
Hopeless	
Grandiose	
User of the system	

Content of table derived from the following sources: Tondora and Davidson, 2006; White, 2001; and Meta Services, 2005.

## Language Counts “Answers”

### *The Glass Half Empty...The Glass Half Full*

<b>Deficit-based Language</b>	<b>Strengths-based, Recovery-oriented Alternative</b>
A schizophrenic, a borderline	A person diagnosed with schizophrenia who experiences the following...
An addict/junkie	**A person diagnosed with an addiction that experiences the following...
Clinical Case Manager	Recovery Coach/Recovery Guide ( <i>I'm not a case, and you're not my manager!</i> )
Front-line staff/in the trenches	Direct care/support staff providing compassionate care
Substance abuse/abuser	Person with an addiction to substances; substance use interferes with person's life
Suffering from	Working to recover from; experiencing; living with
Treatment Team	Recovery Team, Recovery Support System
LMHA Local Mental Health AUTHORITY	Recovery and Wellness Center
High-functioning vs. Low Functioning	Person's symptoms interfere with their relationship (work habits, etc.) in the following way...
Acting-out	Person disagrees with Recovery Team and prefers to use alternative coping strategies
Self-help	Recovery support groups/mutual aid groups
Unrealistic	Person has high expectations for self and recovery
Denial, unable to accept illness, lack of insight	Person disagrees with diagnosis; does not agree that they have a mental illness pre-contemplative stage of recovery
Weaknesses	Barriers to change; needs
Unmotivated	Person is not interested in what the system has to offer; interests and motivating incentives unclear; preferred options not available
Resistant	Not open to... Chooses not to...Has own ideas...
Clinical decompensation, relapse, failure	Person is re-experiencing symptoms of illness/addiction; an opportunity to develop and/or apply coping skills and to draw meaning from managing an adverse event: Re-occurrence

Maintaining clinical stability/abstinence	Promoting and sustaining recovery
Untreated alcoholics	People not yet in recovery; pre-contemplative/contemplative stage of recovery
Prevent suicide	Promote life
Puts self/recovery at risk	Takes chances to grow and experience new things
Non-compliant with medications/treatment	Prefers alternative coping strategies (e.g., exercise, structures time, spends time with family) to reduce reliance on medication; Has a crisis plan for when meds should be used; beginning to think for oneself
Minimize risk	Maximize growth
Consumer (in addictions community)	Person in recovery, person working on recovery
Patient (in mental health community)	Individual, consumer, person receiving services
Treatment works	Person uses treatment to support his/her recovery
Treatment system	Recovery Community
Discharged to aftercare	Connected to long-term recovery management
Enable	Empower the individual through empathy, emotional authenticity, and encouragement
Frequent Flyer	Takes advantage of services and supports as necessary
Dangerous	Specify behavior
Manipulative	Resourceful; really trying to get help
Entitled	Aware of one's rights
DTO/DTS/GD	Describe behaviors that render one danger to self/others, etc
Baseline	What a person looks like when they are doing well
Helpless	Unaware of capabilities
Hopeless	Unaware of opportunities
Grandiose	Has high hopes and expectations of self
User of the system	Resourceful; good self-advocate

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