

USE AND POWER OF LANGUAGE

Guide for Faculty and Field Placement Supervisors

NATIONAL COUNCIL
for Mental Wellbeing

Topic: Language

Possible discussion points

- Language evolves over time.
- The connection between language and thinking/action.
- Use of language as a tool vs. passive descriptor.
- Use of language in different settings (clinical, policymakers, everyday conversations).
- What do you do if you use or hear other terms?

Prep for students before call/video:

- Share Tom Hill's blog on language and stigma.
 - » Please read and review in advance of the call.

Resources to distribute after as a part of the call/assignment

- [Change Your Language](#) (Shatterproof)
- [Addictionary](#) (Recovery Research Institute)
- [Language and Stigma blog](#) by Tom Hill (National Council)

Sample Agenda for Class Discussion

- **Framing:** 15 minutes (use video)
 - » Address “why” behind selecting terms.
 - » What language do students hear used?
 - » This opens up the discussion rather than focusing on getting the “right” answer.
- Use Breakout Rooms if you want to have smaller group discussions: 15 minutes
 - » Reflection on Tom Hill's Blog and framing
 - What are you hearing in your field placement? In other classes?

Poll/Quiz to Prompt Discussion -

- Use Zoom polls, whiteboard, menti, etc.

Question Format	Words/Phrases	Platform Considerations	Notes
How frequently do you hear_____?	All the time Sometimes Never	Anything with multiple choice options.	Only address one word at a time when asking this question.
Fill in the blank	Could invite range of answers.	Not Zoom poll.	
Which term would you use/do you hear others use?	Best if there are any prompts around grey areas or more than 2 responses.	Anything with multiple choice options.	

This resource was created as a part of Social Workers on the Frontline of the Opioid Epidemic, a two-year initiative focused on preparing social work students across the country in addressing and treating substance use and opioid use disorders in practice. This initiative was made possible by funding from the New York Community Trust Community Trust. For questions, please contact Maura Gaswirth at MauraG@TheNationalCouncil.org.