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barriers. individuals  
addiction  
concerned  
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# **The Language of Recovery or The Language of Addiction Part #1**

**Mike Barry-PAR CEO**

**Tara Moseley Hyde-YPR-VP of Programs**



# Advocacy Organizations



**P**eople **A**dvocating **R**ecovery



# Many Pathways to Recovery

- Mutual Support groups
- Professional treatment
- Nontraditional methods
- Medical interventions
- Faith based
- On your own
- and many more...



# Language Matters

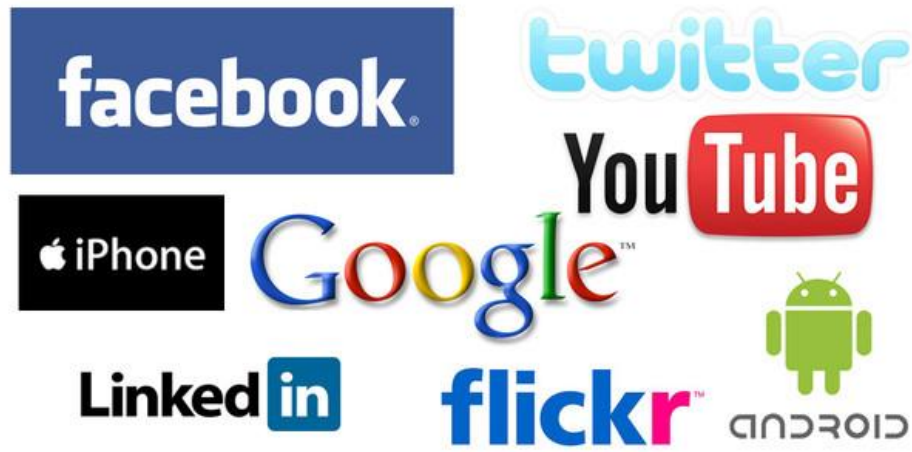
- Language is the key to changing the way people with substance use disorders and people with mental illness see themselves and the way they are seen by others.
- Words are important. If you want to care for something, you call it a flower; if you want to kill something, you call it a weed.

Don Coyhis/White Bison



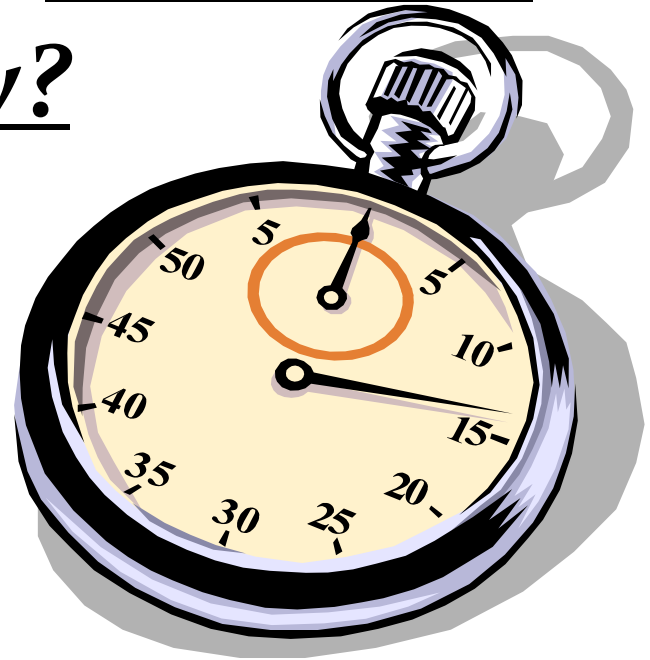


# 23 Million Americans in Recovery



# Addiction vs. Recovery

What is the percentage of time you spend telling stories of Addiction vs. stories of Recovery?

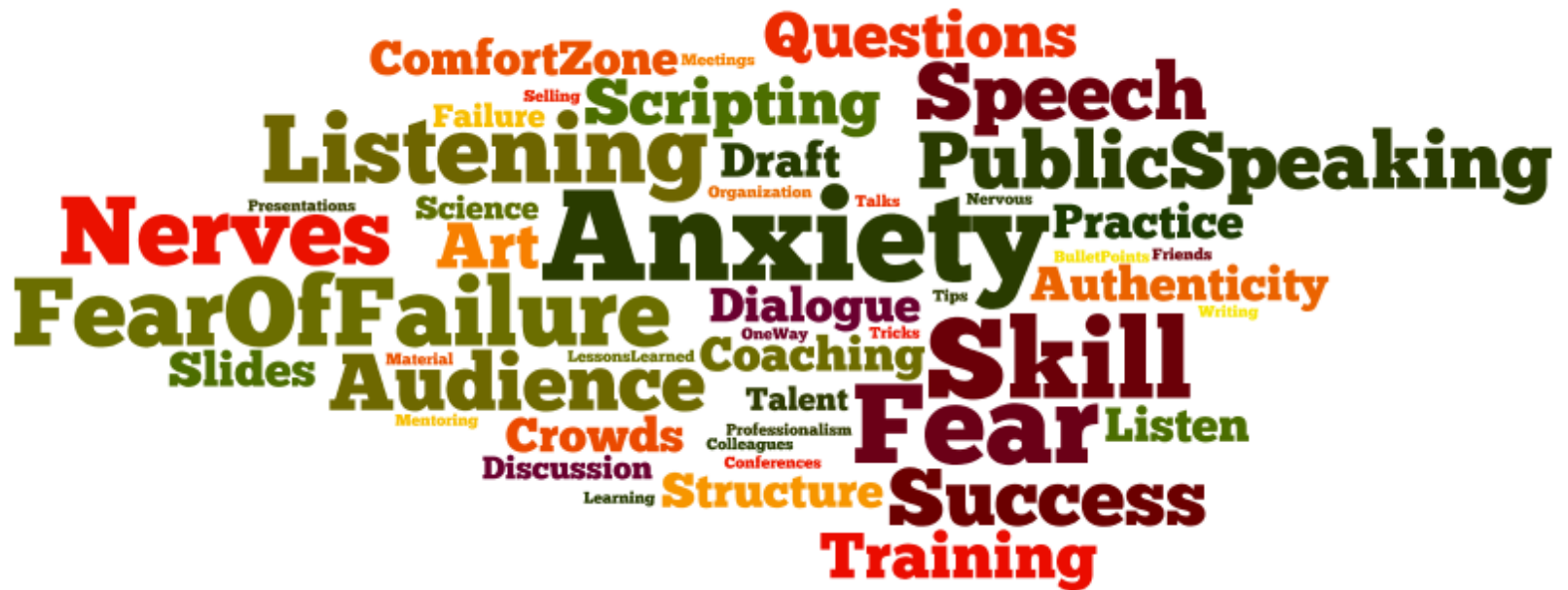


# Language Matters!





# Fear of Public Speaking



# What is a message?

The most important information  
you want your audience to hear.

# Why is a Message Important?

When you don't know what you are talking about it's hard to know when you are finished.

Tommy Smothers



# Celebrity Addiction

The media loves

**GOSSIP!**

- Lindsay Lohan
- Ted Williams
- Tiger Woods
- Charlie Sheen



# Celebrity Addiction



- When the actor Phillip Seymour Hoffman died the description was “found half naked on the bathroom floor with a needle hanging out of his arm.”
- If that had been a heart attack would they have said half naked on the bathroom floor with a BigMac in his hand and French fries scattered across the floor?



# Unbelievable!



Many of Facebook's 1.86 billion users turn to the social network for their news, but there's a little quirk with how it handles headlines.

(Feb 1, 2017)

# Illusion Of Choice

**There Are:**

**1,500 Newspapers**

**1,100 Magazines**

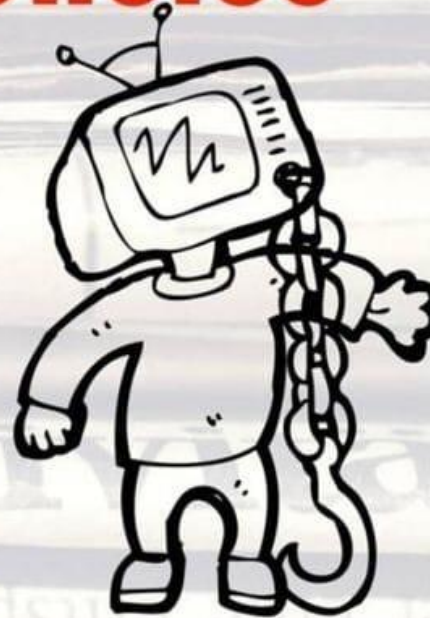
**9,000 Radio Stations**

**1,500 TV Stations**

**2,400 Publishers**

**Owned by 6 Corporations  
& 272 Executives**

**That control 90 % of what 277 million  
Americans SEE, HEAR & READ**



MINTPRESS

# Drunk-Addict-Dope Fiend Painting the **wrong** picture



# Phrases that should be banned

- My/Their drug of choice
- They have to want to change
- They have to hit rock bottom
- Some of them just have to die
- Drunk-Addict-Dope Fiend
- News stories talk of “fighting demons.” Life is a daily struggle against the demons
- These are old clichés from the early days of alcoholism

# What do you want them to hear?

- Do you really want to say: “Some are sicker than others.”
- If you think it’s all about “willingness” and “hitting bottom” and “surrender” then what do you tell a mom who has just lost a child to addiction.
- “Well ma’am he just didn’t want it....he just didn’t surrender and follow the program...half measures availed him nothing”.
- Do you say “some must die so others can live”?



# Other phrases that should be banned

- “The Mentally Ill” is used all the time in headlines
- What about using: “Equal coverage for *the* women.”  
Weird
- “New era for *the* gays.” Offensive
- You are not fat. You have fat.
- You also have fingernails but you are not fingernails

# Use “People First” language

- A person is not defined by a diagnosis. If you have a mental illness it doesn't define you any more than your heart disease defines you if you're a cardiac patient.
- A person is a person who happens to have depression or schizophrenia; the correct term is “people with mental illness.”

# Professionals Need to Stop Talking “Dirty”

- A clinician within the health care setting frequently is heard saying, “An addict is not clean. He’s been abusing drugs. He has a dirty urine sample.”
- This perpetuates the stigma and can always have a negative effect on the person who is trying to achieve recovery.

# Painting an InCorrect Picture



# Putting a Face & a Voice on Recovery-**The Message**

- I'm in long-term recovery which means...
- Committed to recovery and joining with thousands of others to organize so that we can expand the opportunities for others to achieve long-term recovery
- Long-term recovery has given me and my family new hope and stability
- My life and the lives of millions of others like me are better as a result



# Putting a Face & a Voice on Recovery: Message for a Family Member

- My family and I are in long-term recovery, which means ...
- (My son/daughter/husband/wife) hasn't used alcohol or other drugs for x years
- We've become healthier together, enjoying family life in our home
- Long-term recovery has given me and my family new purpose and hope for the future
- I want to make it possible for others to do the same

# Putting a Face & a Voice on Recovery: Message for a supporter

- “My name is Suzie Smith, and I am a long-term Recovery Advocate.
- For me, that means I've been a long-term supporter of the recovery efforts of people in and/or seeking recovery from alcohol & other drug problems.”

# What's not in the Message and Why

- *I'm an addict (or alcoholic)*
- *I'm a recovering addict (or alcoholic)*
- *Addiction is a disease*
- *Information about 12-step programs, for examples membership in AA or NA or Al-Anon*
- *A “definition” of recovery*

# Message Goals

- Expand opportunities for recovery
- Mobilize and organize the recovery community to advocate for own rights and needs
- Break down discriminatory barriers
- Build our national recovery advocacy movement
- Achieve a just response to addiction as a health crisis

# Your Mind

- Your inner space is yours alone.
- You are not required to take people on a tour of your imagination or your brain.





# People Advocating Recovery

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@ParRecovery

