# 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.

- After you have completed this exercise discuss/review the suggestions.

- Are there other words/phrases that you regularly use that you would like to change to be more strength based?  Why?

| The Glass Half Empty…The Glass Half Full | |
|---|---|
| **Deficit-based Language** | **Strengths-based, Recovery-oriented Alternative** |
| 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 | |

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