

STIGMA FREE LANGUAGE: PHRASES TO USE + AVOID WHEN TALKING ABOUT ADDICTION

INSTEAD OF...

SAY THIS...

<p>“You've been drinking a lot lately. Why can't you just stop? You know I'm concerned.”</p>	<p>“I notice you're drinking more than usual. Have you noticed the change, or do you have any concerns? If so, is there anything I can do to help?”</p>
<p>“I have been clean for six months.”</p>	<p>“I haven't taken any substances in six months.”</p>
<p>“Substance abuse affects Americans from all walks of life.”</p>	<p>“Americans from all walks of life are impacted by the use of substances.”</p>
<p>“Relapse means you need to restart the recovery process.” “They lied. They said they were sober but they're using again.”</p>	<p>“Life can be difficult. Emotional pain, trauma and changing life patterns can be challenging for a person navigating their recovery. I understand a person's pathway to well-being is often not linear and recurrences can and do occur with some people as they work on change.”</p>
<p>“Do you know what to do if you see an overdose?”</p>	<p>“Do you know how to help a person who's suffered an overdose?”</p>
<p>“I think they're high on the job; they should be fired.”</p>	<p>“I think they may have a substance use problem. We should explore whether there is anything we can do to help them get into a better space. Don't we have a policy that keeps the workplace safe and cares for someone who is ill?”</p>

Suggestions Provided By:

Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. (2018). *Overcoming Stigma Through Language*. Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. Retrieved May 2, 2022, from <https://www.ccsa.ca/sites/default/files/2019-09/CCSA-Language-and-Stigma-in-Substance-Use-Addiction-Guide-2019-en.pdf>