

Watch your Language!

Reducing Stigma by Recognizing the
Power of Language

Introductions

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Activity

- Open the envelope you received when you arrived.
- Do not show anyone else what is inside.
- Find a partner and place the label on their back.
- Get up and move around the room.
- Interact with each other the way society would treat a person with that label.

Objectives

- Illustrate the importance of language as it relates to stigma.
- Gain an understanding of the impact of stigma both from research and experience.
- Take away practical steps to reduce stigma in our communities.

Language

- Person First Language
 - Schizophrenic → Person with schizophrenia
 - He's bipolar → He has bipolar disorder
 - Alcoholic → She has an alcohol use disorder
- Other Stigmatizing Language
 - Committed suicide → died by suicide
- Labeling
 - She's crazy
 - He's "special"

Why Watch Your Language?

Aren't we just whitewashing the issue?

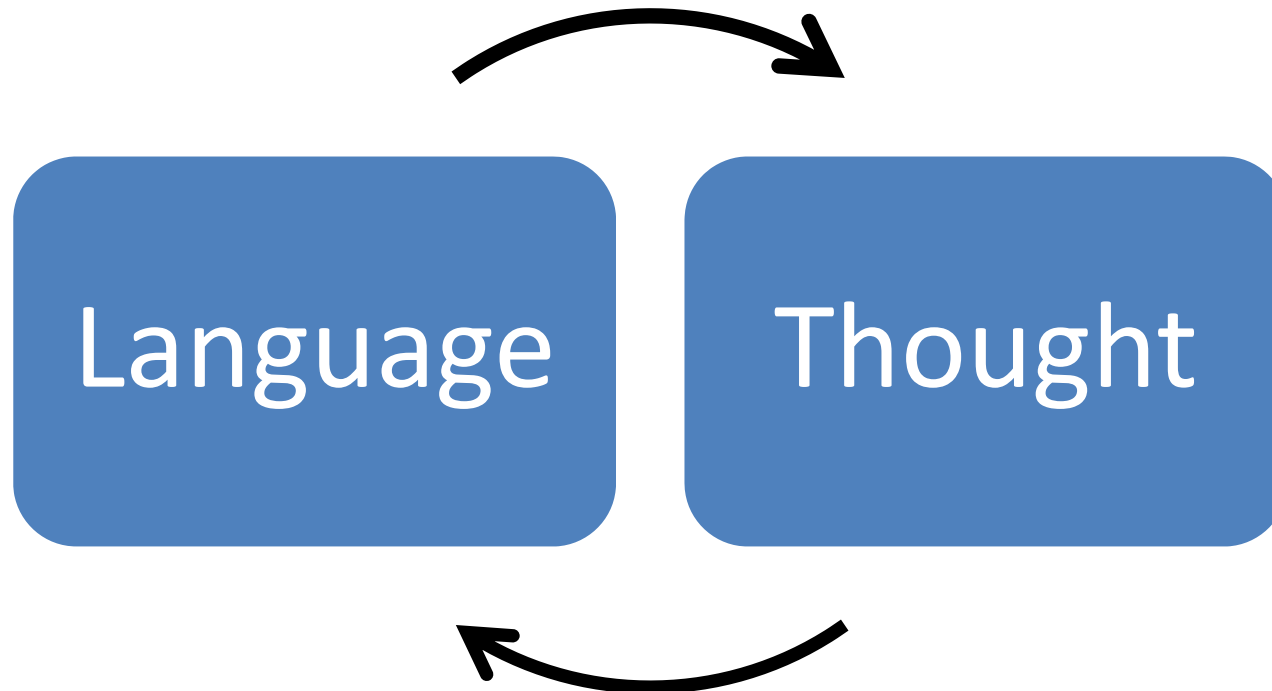
Does it really matter?

If my attitude is respectful, does my language make a difference?

In a stressful field, sometimes we need to use humor to unwind. We need to laugh about things that happened at work.

Does language effect thought?

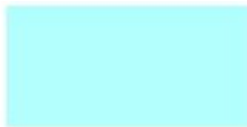
Linguistic Relativity



P. Wolff & Holmes, 2011,
Boroditsky, Schmidt & Phillips, 2003



Azure Blue



Celeste



Aqua (SVG)



Ocean Blue



Midnight Blue



Royal Blue



Royal Blue 1



Royal Blue 2



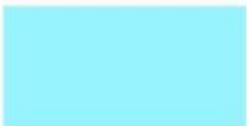
Royal Blue 3



Royal Blue 4



Cadet Blue 1



Cadet Blue 2



Cadet Blue 3



Cadet Blue 4



Cadet Blue 5



Sky Blue 1



Sky Blue 2



Sky Blue 3



Sky Blue 4



Sky Blue 5



Turquoise Blue



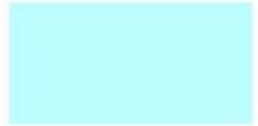
Turquoise 2



Turquoise 3



Light Turquoise



Paled Turquoise



NYPD Blue



Police Strobe



Air Force Blue



Navy Blue



Presidential Blue

How does language effect stigma?

Granello and Gibbs Study- 2016

Participants:

- Sample A:
 - 221 Undergraduate students
- Sample B:
 - 211 Adults in the community
- Sample C:
 - 269 professional counselors and counselors-in-training

Methods

- Community Attitudes Toward Mentally Ill (CAMI) self-report survey
 - Questions regarding their beliefs about mental illness and people with mental illnesses
 - Authoritarianism
 - Benevolence
 - Social Restrictiveness
 - Community Mental Health Ideology
 - 5-point Likert scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree
 - Half of respondents received premodified language—mentally ill person and the other half received postmodified (person-first) language— person with a mental illness

Differences in Pre and Postmodified Survey Participants of the CAMI

Population	Authoritarianism	Benevolence	Social Restrictiveness	Community Mental Health Ideology
Study A: Students	Premodified ↑ Postmodified ↓	~	Premodified ↑ Postmodified ↓	~
Study B: Community Adults	~	Postmodified ↑ Premodified ↓	~	Postmodified ↑ Premodified ↓
Study C: Professional Counselors and Counselors-in-Training	Premodified ↑ Postmodified ↓ <i>Especially for professional counselors</i>	~	Premodified ↑ Postmodified ↓	~

~ = no statistically significant difference

How does stigma effect people?

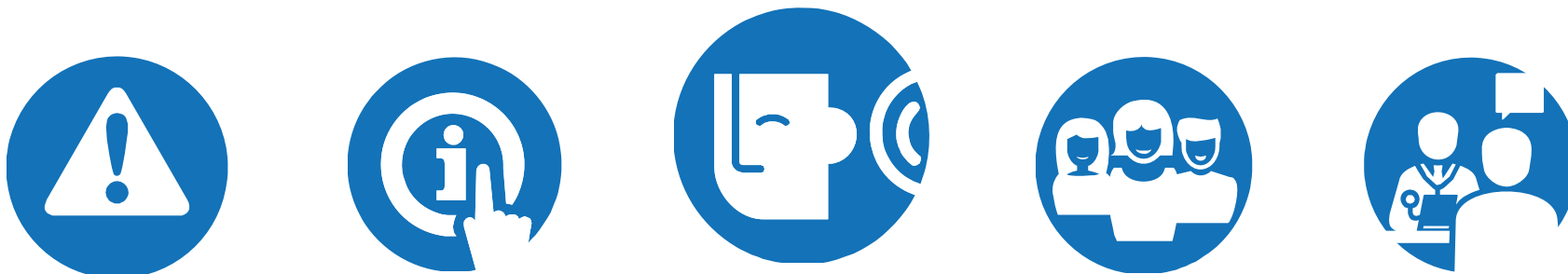
- Public Stigma
 - Stereotype- Negative belief about a group
 - Prejudice- Agreement with belief and/or negative emotional reaction
 - Discrimination- Behavior response to prejudice
- Self-Stigma
 - Stereotype- Negative belief about self
 - Prejudice- Agreement with belief, negative emotional reaction
 - Discrimination-Behavior response to prejudice

Corrigan & Watson, 2002





What can you do?

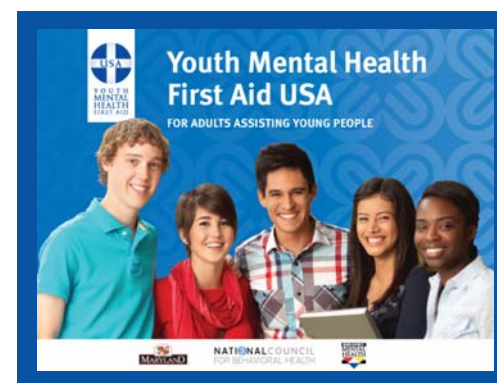
- Change your own language
- Talk about the language you choose and why you choose it
- Do a language presentation with colleagues
- Write your local newspaper
- Take Mental Health First Aid and tell a friend

Mental Health First Aid is the initial help offered to a person developing a mental health or substance use problem, or experiencing a mental health crisis. The first aid is given until appropriate treatment and support are received or until the crisis resolves.



What Participants Learn

-  Risk factors and warning signs of mental health and substance use problems
-  Information on depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis and substance use
-  A 5-step action plan to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or in crisis
-  Available evidence-based professional, peer and self-help resources



Evidence

Mental Health First Aid....



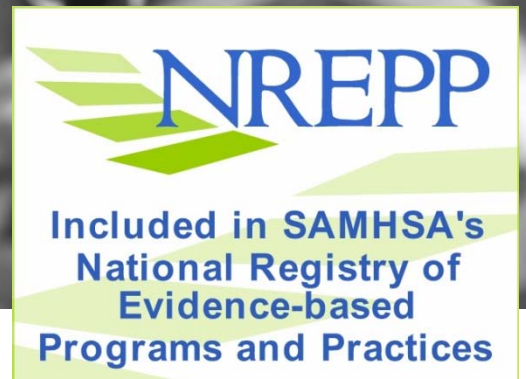
...Increases knowledge and understanding

...Encourages people helping people

...Supports people getting help

...Decreases social distance

...Increases mental wellness



References

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