THIS IS WHO WE ARE.

FACES & VOICES OF RECOVERY

ADVOCATE. ACT. ADVANCE.

NRI
National Recovery Institute

Introductions

- Dean LeMire, facilitator

- Review of Section One

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Overview of the Day

Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to …

Differentiate

- Effective recovery messaging from ineffective recovery messaging

Debate

- Appropriateness of common topical language choices

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Overview of the Day

AM

1. Welcome & Review of Part One

2. Overview of the Day

3. Recovery Messaging Section B

- Introductions
- Strategies
- Language
- Writing your story

4. Recovery Messaging in the Media

- Considerations
- Strategies

5. Closing

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Part 3

Recovery

Messaging

Section B

Recovery Messaging Section B: Existing Attitudes

Stigma results largely from blame:

- Belief that a substance use disorder is a result of the person's own behavior

 (Committee on the Science of Changing Behavioral Health Social Norms, 2016)

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Recovery Messaging Section B: Existing Attitudes

Global studies say general public think people with SUD are…

- **Violent**
- **Unpredictable**
- **Immoral**
- **Unfit for roles with responsibilities** (i.e. parenting, public office, driving)
- **Unable to make decisions for themselves**
- **Unable to control selves**, yet…
- **Able to "pull themselves together"**

Social Stigma → Self Stigma
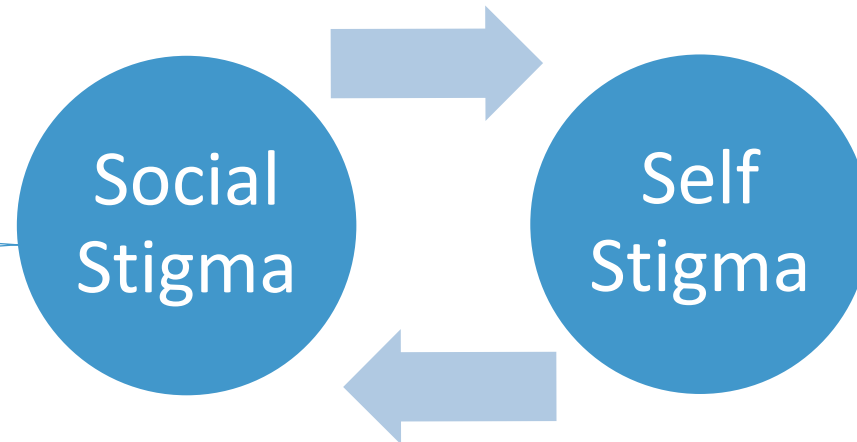
Studies show social stigma influences…

- **A person's view of themselves**
- **Their ability to recover**
- **Poorer recovery outcomes**

(Yang, L.H, et al, 2017)

(Crapanzano K.A., et al, 2018)

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Recovery Messaging

What are some examples of problematic recovery messaging?

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Recovery Messaging Section B: Leave it out

- **12-step language / membership**

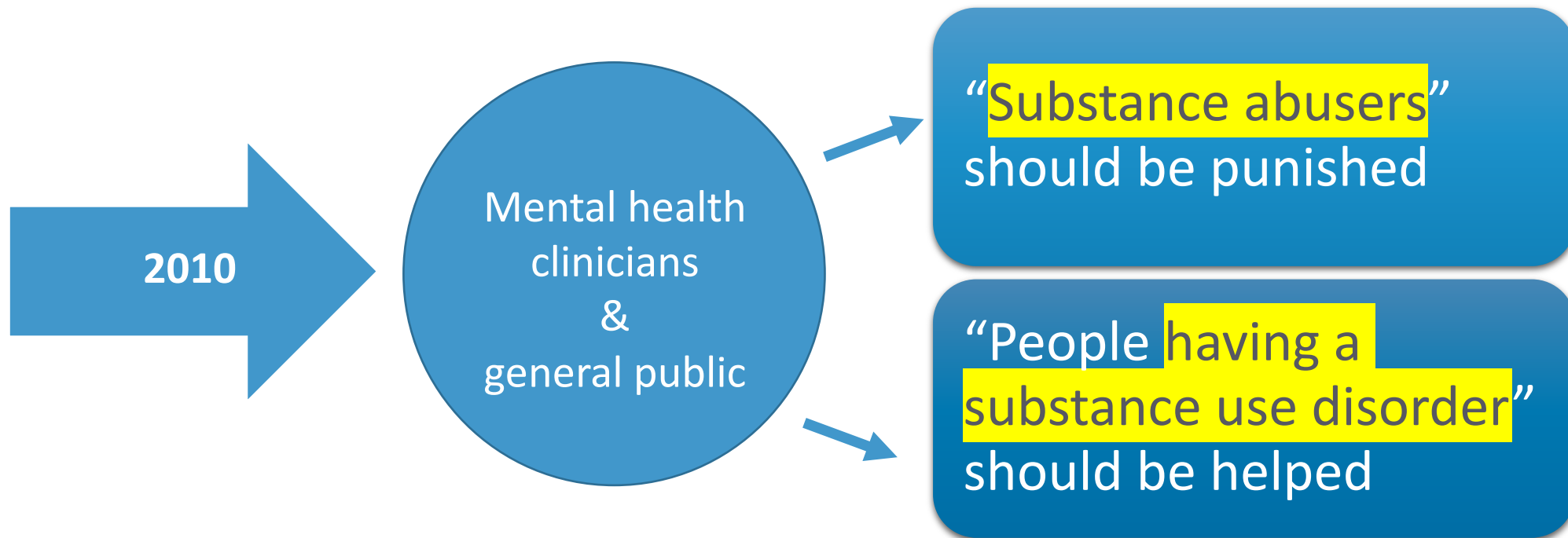- **"Addiction is a brain disease"** (Satel, S *et al*, 2013)

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Recovery Messaging Section B: Leave it out

- **Definition of recovery that leaves others out**
- **Redemption narrative**
- **Unnecessary / unexplained jargon**

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What **words** or **phrases** are used to describe a person with a substance use disorder / mental health disorder?

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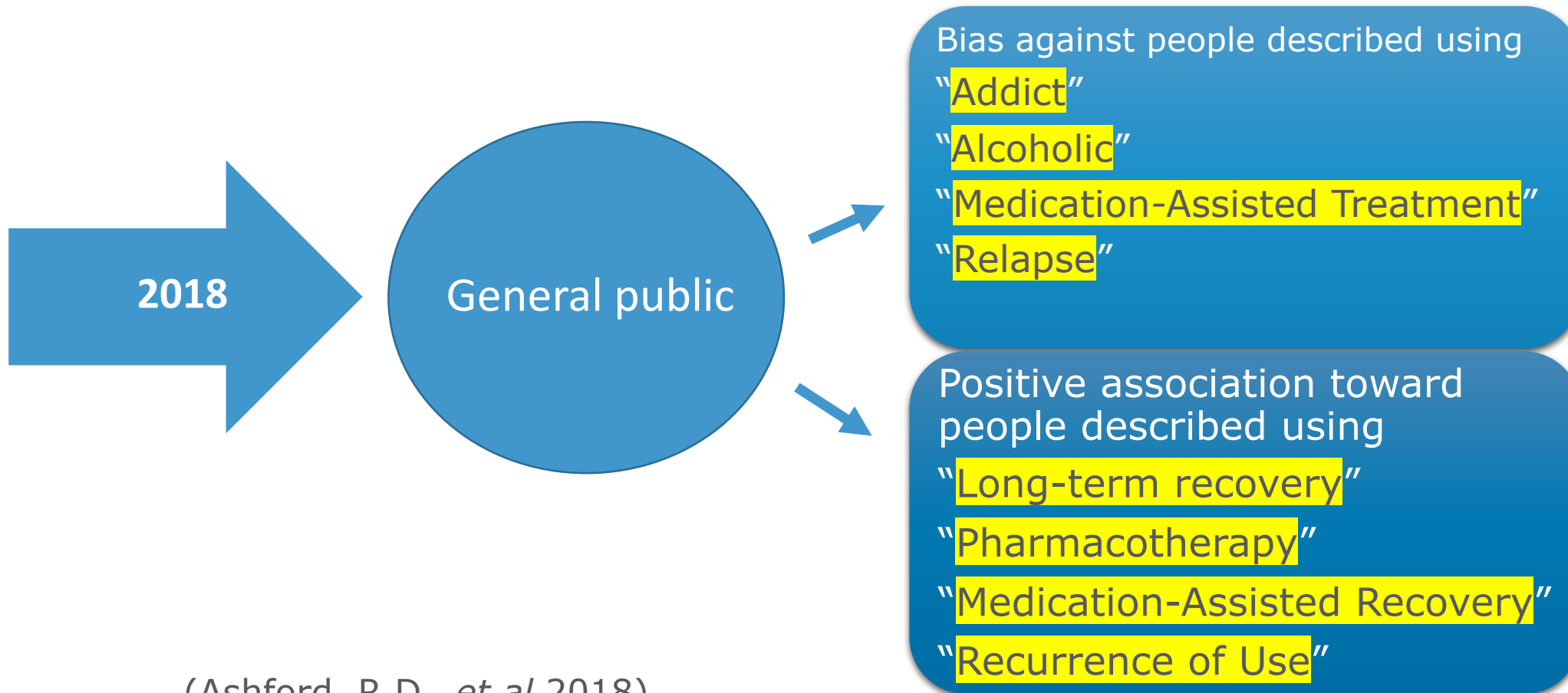
Recovery Messaging Section B: The Science of Language

2010 → Mental health clinicians & general public

→ "**Substance abusers**" should be punished

→ "People **having a substance use disorder**" should be helped

(Kelly, J. F., Bergman, *et al* 2010; Kelly, J.F., Westerhoff 2010)

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Recovery Messaging Section B: The Science of Language

2018 → General public

Bias against people described using
"Addict"
"Alcoholic"
"Medication-Assisted Treatment"
"Relapse"

Positive association toward people described using
"Long-term recovery"
"Pharmacotherapy"
"Medication-Assisted Recovery"
"Recurrence of Use"

(Ashford, R.D., *et al* 2018)

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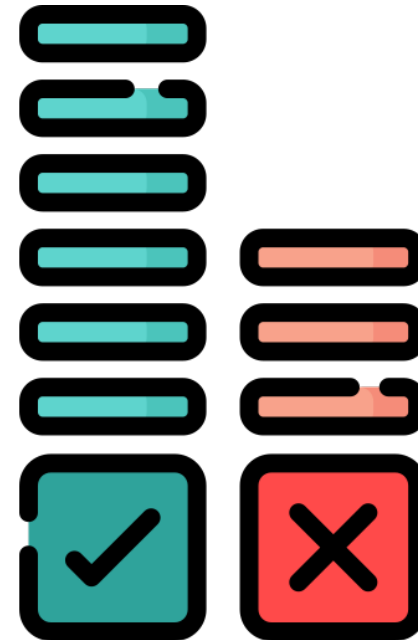
Recovery Messaging Section B: Disempowering Language

- **Discuss and debate**

  - "Treatment works"

  - Untreated alcoholism / addiction

  - Consumer

  - Enable / enabler

  - Noncompliant

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Recovery Messaging Sec. B: When Negative Language Arises

- **Elevate and Celebrate** recovery-positive concepts & language

Identity	Services	Systems	Policies:
• Person-first language • Recovery Community • Living proof • Dignity	• Person-centered • Evidence-based • Authentic • Responsive • Recovery Support Services • Recovery Community Organizations	• Recovery-Oriented Systems of Care • Integrated	• Effective • Responsible • Equitable • Humane • Sustainability • Accountability

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Recovery Messaging Sec. B: When Negative Language Arises

- **Remember**: What you say can raise others up or tear them down

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Part 4

Recovery

Messaging

In the Media

Recovery Messaging in the Media

- **The media** is a major influencer of narratives and perceptions about us and our issues.

- **The media** is a valuable tool for advancing our issues

- Includes TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, movies

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Old Narratives

The Washington Post headline: "Another parent's overdose, another child in the back seat: A 'new norm' for drug users?"

Whose story is this?

What is the motivation for telling it?

Recovery Messaging in the Media: Old Narratives

The Washington Post
Democracy Dies in Darkness

Inspired Life

A photo of her overdosing with her baby in her car went viral. Three years later, she's sober.

Whose story is this?

What is the motivation for telling it?

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Overview

- **Understand your role**

- **Know your audience**

- **Know the facts**

- **Know what you want to say**
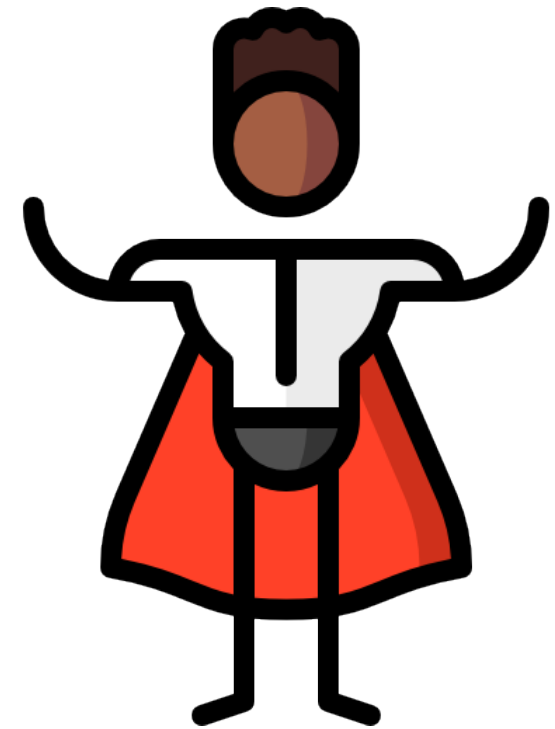
Recovery Messaging in the Media: Role Clarity

The reporter's role is

- To tell a story
- provide timely and interesting information
- Attract listeners and viewers
- Sell media

Your role is

- To tell your recovery story and build support for your position

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Know your audience

- What is their connection to recovery?

- What is important to them?

- What do they have to gain from recovery?

- Adapt to bias

- Assume willingness to learn

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Know the Facts

- **Recovery is the norm.**
  - Surveys continue to show that there are more people who are in recovery than people who have a substance use disorder.
  - Collective research shows that most people find recovery.

(White, W.L., 2012)

In the U.S.

20 million	• Experiencing SUD

22.3 million	• In recovery • 1 in 10 of all adults

(Kelly, J.F., *et al,* 2017)

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Know the Facts

- **Recovery is a community responsibility and benefit.**

  - People have the best chance of success when their recovery process is supported by neighbors, employers, institutions, and government.

    (Ashford, *et al*, 2019)

  - Recovery benefits all taxpayers, employers, the economy.

    (Sacks, 2015; NDIC, 2011)

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Know the Facts

- **Discriminatory attitudes and policies hinder recovery outcomes.**
  - Treating problematic substance use as a moral failing, and recovery as an earned privilege, leads to lost opportunities for recovery.

(Crapanzano, K. A., *et al*, 2019; NIDA 2018; Shabbar I. Ranapurwala, *et al* 2018)

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Know what you want to say

- **Use 2 - 3 key points**
  - Support with examples
- **Stick to your key points**
- **Offer the other side a platform by bringing up their position**
- **Write your talking points out**
  - Ask for feedback from other advocates / activists

Advocacy Notes

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Say it

- **Say it**
- **Say it again.**

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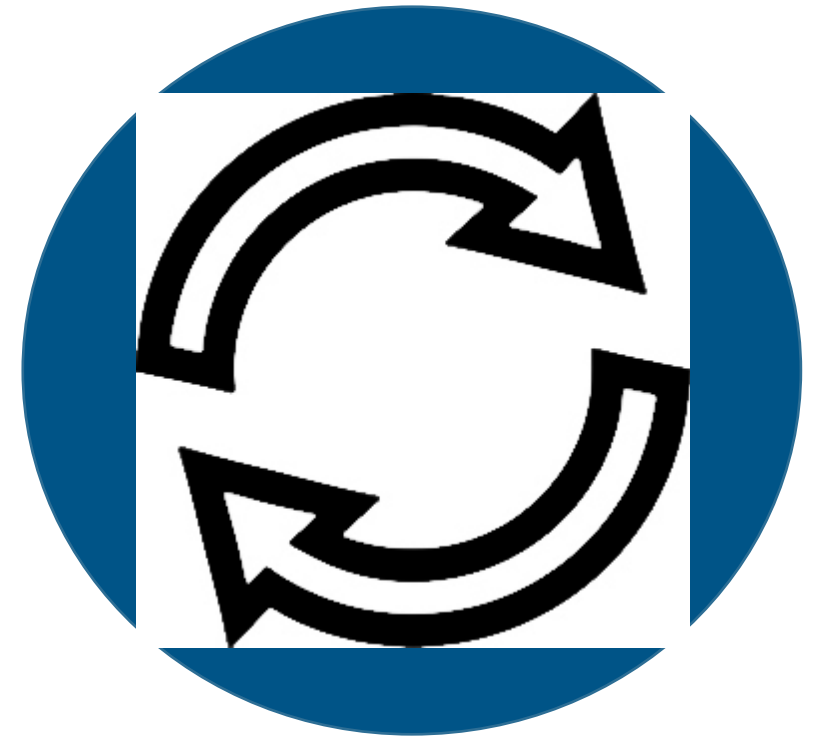
Recovery Messaging in the Media: Strategy

Use Caution

- On-the-record
- Background information

Use Never

- Speaking 'off-the-record'
- Being dishonest
- Opinion on a particular recovery pathway

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Strategy

- **Research** the interviewer beforehand to learn their style & possible bias

- **Control** the interview; don't allow interviewer to set the tone

- **Set a comfortable pace** for yourself by pausing and gather your thoughts

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Strategy

- **If you don't know an answer**, say so and tell the reporter that you will get the information

- **Request** to see your quotes before publication

- **Be confident** – thousands of people all across America are using recovery messaging

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Pivoting Phrases

- **If you don't want to or are unable to answer a question, use:**
  - "Another thing to remember…"
  - "That is not my area or expertise, but what I can tell you is…"
  - "Another way of thinking about this is…"
  - "Thank you for asking…"
  - "The most important thing to remember is…"

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Pivoting Phrases

Question

- "Some people believe addiction is a personal or moral weakness. How do you respond?"

Response

- "More important than the substance use disorder, is recovery. The fact is that access to appropriate treatment and recovery supports has proven to work for many of Americans like me."

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Recovery Messaging in the Media: Pivoting Phrases
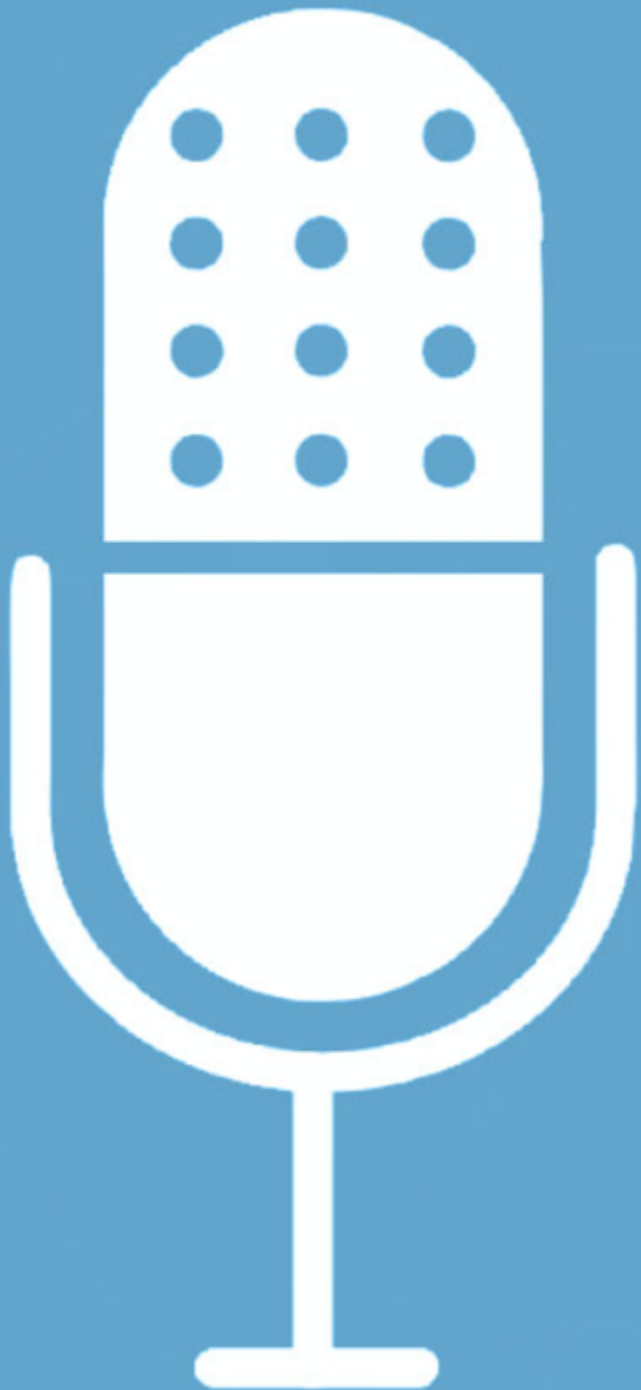
Question

- "What is it like to be an addict?"

Response

- "What I can tell you about is recovery. As a person in long-term recovery, I've been able to create a better life for myself and my family. I deserved help when I got it 10 years ago, and people who are struggling today deserve help now."

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Part 5

Closing

Closing: Recovery Messaging Resources

Available at www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org

- **Recovery Messaging from Faces & Voices of Recovery**

- **Recovery Messaging Questions and Answers**

- **Tip Sheet for Media Interviews**

- ***2018 Recovery Voices Count Toolkit***

- ***Our Stories Have Power DVD***

- ***Advocacy with Anonymity* pamphlet**

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Closing: Recovery Messaging Resources

- *Stigma Reduction Through Recovery Contact*
  - Written by Bill White, Tom Hill & Greg Williams

- *The Recovery Closet: Reflections on Coming Out, Part 1*
  - Written by Bill White, Tom Hill & Greg Williams

- *The Recovery Closet: Reflections on Coming Out, Part 2*
  - Written by Bill White, Tom Hill & Greg Williams

- Changing the Narrative: **www.changingthenarrative.news**

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Closing: Additional Recovery Resources

- *www.williamwhitepapers.com*

- *www.samhsa.gov*

- *www.recoveryanswers.org*

- *www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org*

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