Effects of Bias on Highly-stigmatized Health Conditions such as Substance Use Disorders

Appreciative Inquiry

> # "Words have immense power to wound or heal...the wrong words stigmatize and disempower"

Author, historian recovery advocate William White

According to White:

"Abuse" focuses on acts of willful mistreatment and not germane to substance use disorder
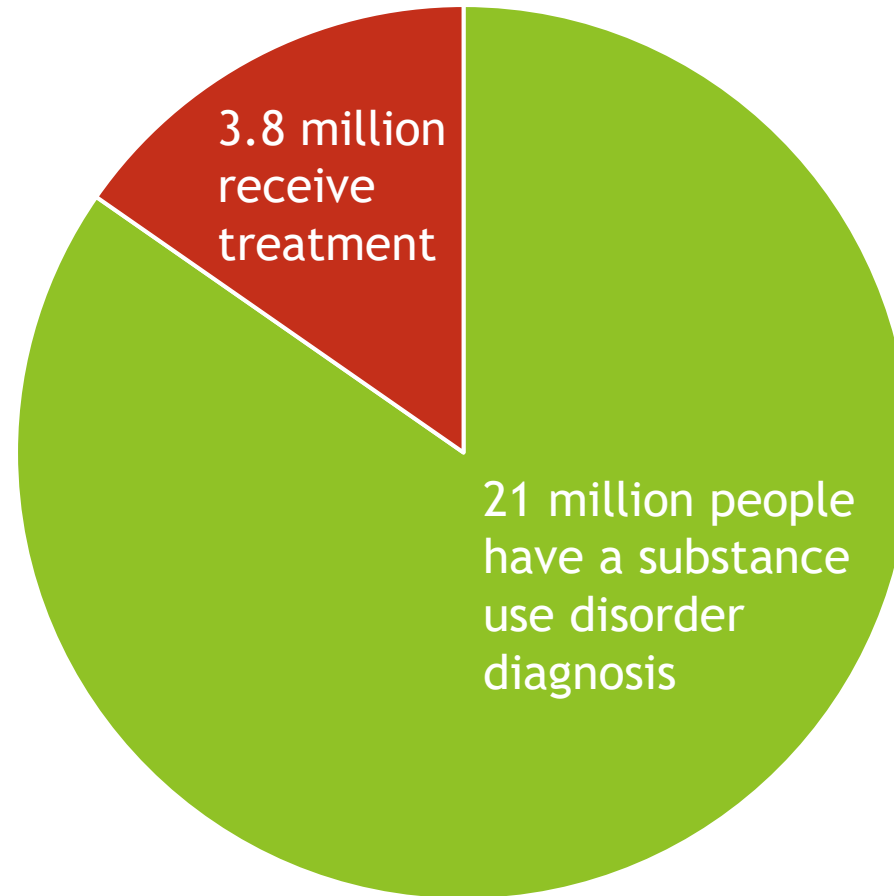
"Abuser" is morality-based language
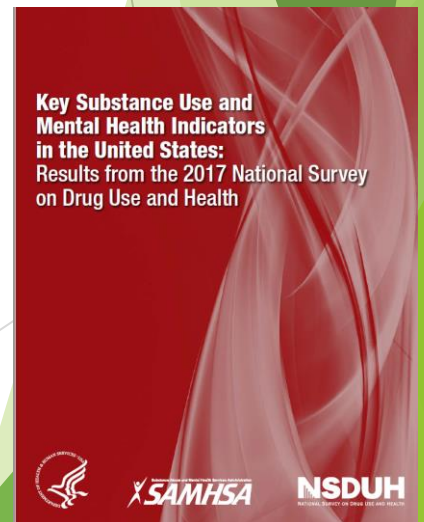
(White & Kelly, 2011)

Language used to describe substance use, substance use disorder and other related topics affect the types of explicit and implicit bias that people experience; pejorative terms that label and stereotype cause less people to seek help, increase people's social distance, and influence policy.

Ashford & Curtis. (2018)

2018

3.8 million receive treatment

21 million people have a substance use disorder diagnosis

■ People with SUD   ■ People who receive treatment

Key Substance Use and
Mental Health Indicators
in the United States:
Results from the 2017 National Survey
on Drug Use and Health

SAMHSA   NSDUH

28% who did not receive treatment

▶ Reasons related to stigma

▶ Quality of treatment services

Ashford & Curtis (2018)

Where
When
Why

Socially Constructed Ideas of Deviance

▶ Medical versus moral problems

▶ Labeling-interactionist perspective

   ▶ Attributes and labels put on people

   ▶ Significant events related to stigmatization of substance use disorder

      ▶ Marijuana Tax Act 1937

      ▶ Women's Christian Temperance Union's crusade for prohibition

Conrad & Schneider, 1992

Prohibition

▶ Alcohol was consumed because there was a lack of clean drinking water

▶ Women's Temperance Christian Union crusade to provide alternatives to demon alcohol

(Wikipedia, 2020)

"Words matter. 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, founder and pioneer White Bison and the Wellbriety Movement

RECOVERY RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Addictionary®

Promotes stigma

- Drug abuser
- Junkie
- Addict
- Alcoholic
- Clean
- Dirty
- Relapse
- Slip
- Substance Abuse
- Dope, Dope-sick
- Drug Habbit
- Accidental Addict

Words that elevate, promote healing

- Person with substance use disorder
- Person with alcohol disorder
- Person with opioid disorder
- Recovery, long-term recovery
- Advocacy
- Recovery-oriented systms of care
- Living proof
- Responsibility
- Multiple paths to recovery
- Patient
- Pharmacotherapy

Kelly, Saitz, & Wakeman, 2016

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Why Me?

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