

What You Say & How You Say It: The Impact of Language on Community & Clients

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**JUSTICE and equity For
COMMUNITY Health**

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DCengage™
harm reduction
CONFERENCE

[DCengage.org](https://dcengage.org)

About The Presenter

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- (Also known as Dr. Vivid)
- Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

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- Mental Health Consultant
- Mental Health Advocate
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- Author
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Resident Therapist, Psychological Wellness Services Arlington

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The Importance of Language

- Establishing Rapport
- Demonstrating Cultural Awareness
- Informing, Educating, & Alerting the Community
- Demonstrating Cultural Competence
 - Checking yourself: Bias
- Safety
 - What is a true safe space?

The Impact: It Hits Different

- Contributing to Sense of Self (Self-Efficacy vs. Self-Esteem)
- Creating Support Team Members
- Reducing Stigma
- Rearranging Schemas
- Negative Connotations Lead to Negative Behaviors
 - Learned Hopelessness, Learned Helplessness, Regression, Repression
 - "Othering"
 - Us vs. Them, Me vs. The World

The Name of the Game: Reframing

- Leaving Oppressive Language Behind
 - Humanizing Addiction & Harm Reduction
 - Meeting Clients Where They Are
 - Community Education
 - Highlight Individual and Collective Experiences
 - Educating (& Re-educating) Yourself
-
- Transparency Saves Lives
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