
The Power of Language

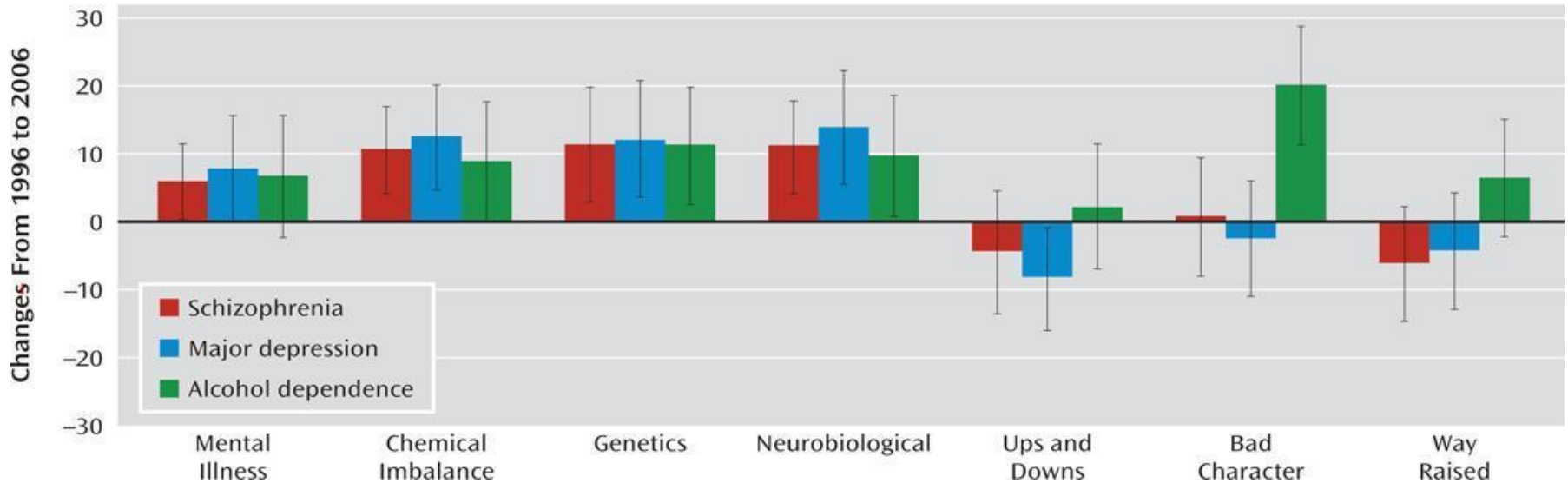
— Courtney Allen & Kayla Kaleb —

What is Young People in Recovery?

- YPR is a grassroots advocacy movement that works on local, state and national levels for destigmatized language, and access to housing, education, and employment for people living with Substance Use Disorder.
- YPR utilizes an advocacy-in-action model to create recovery-ready communities.
- Advocacy-in-action means providing direct service and building community amongst those in recovery and their allies through facilitating workshops, all-recovery meetings, leadership development, community forums, and more.
- YPR envisions a world where all people can access the necessary resources to recover from substance use disorder and associated high-risk behaviors.
- YPR's mission is to provide the training and networks all individuals, families, and communities need to recover and maximize their full potential.

Despite increased agreement that alcohol addiction is biomedical, more viewed it also as due to “bad character”

Thus, while emphasizing biomedical, need to talk about addiction as treatable disorder, recovery is likely...



Pescosolido, B. A., Martin, J. K., Long, J. S., Medina, T. R., Phelan, J. C., & Link, B. G. (2010). “A Disease Like Any Other”? A Decade of Change in Public Reactions to Schizophrenia, Depression, and Alcohol Dependence. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 167(11), 1321-1330. doi:doi:10.1176/appi.ajp.2010.09121743

Exploration of Concepts

Substance Use Disorder

- DSM -5, 2013
 - A diagnosis based on evidence of impaired control, social impairment, risky use and pharmacological criteria
 - Spectrum of symptoms from mild, moderate to severe

Criteria of Substance Use Disorder

Substance use disorders span a wide variety of problems arising from substance use, and cover 11 different criteria:

1. Taking the substance in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to.
2. Wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to.
3. Spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance.
4. Cravings and urges to use the substance.
5. Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of substance use.
6. Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships.
7. Giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use.
8. Using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger.
9. Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance.
10. Needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance).
11. Development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance.

Language in a Clinical Setting

- 500 doctoral-level clinicians exposed to a vignette:
 - man used drugs/alcohol for past few years
 - Court-mandated to treatment
 - program required abstinence
 - had complied with treatment program requirements
 - After 30 days was found with 2 positive urinalysis
 - now awaits his “appointment” with the judge
- “Substance abuser”
 - clinicians more likely to deny treatment
 - clinicians significantly more likely to judge person as deserving of blame and punishment
 - this effect is even stronger in the general public
- “Person with substance use disorder”
 - receive better treatment and more compassionate care

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect



International Journal of Drug Policy

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/drugpo



Research paper

**Does it matter how we refer to individuals with substance-related conditions?
A randomized study of two commonly used terms[☆]**

John F. Kelly^{*}, Cassandra M. Westerhoff

Center for Addiction Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, Massachusetts General Hospital, 60 Staniford Street, Boston, MA 02114, United States

Exploration of Concepts

Recovery

- A process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential: (SAMHSA, 2012)
 - **Health:** overcoming or managing one's disease(s) or symptoms... and making informed, healthy choices that support physical and emotional wellbeing
 - **Home:** a stable and safe place to live
 - **Purpose:** meaningful daily activities (e.g job, school, volunteerism, etc.) and the independence, income and resources to participate in society
 - **Community:** relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love and hope

The Guiding Principles of Recovery

The following principles provide a philosophical and conceptual framework for all who have been diagnosed with a mental health and/or substance use disorder. The principles guide us as we move towards the belief and reality that recovery is possible.

The Guiding Principles of Recovery

- There are many pathways to recovery.
- Recovery is self-directed and empowering.
- Recovery involves a personal recognition of the need for change and transformation.
- Recovery is holistic.
- Recovery has cultural dimensions.
- Recovery exists on a continuum of improved health and wellness.
- Recovery is supported by peers and allies.
- Recovery emerges from hope and gratitude.
- Recovery involves a process of healing and self-redefinition.
- Recovery involves addressing discrimination and transcending shame and stigma.
- Recovery involves (re)joining and (re)building a life in the community.

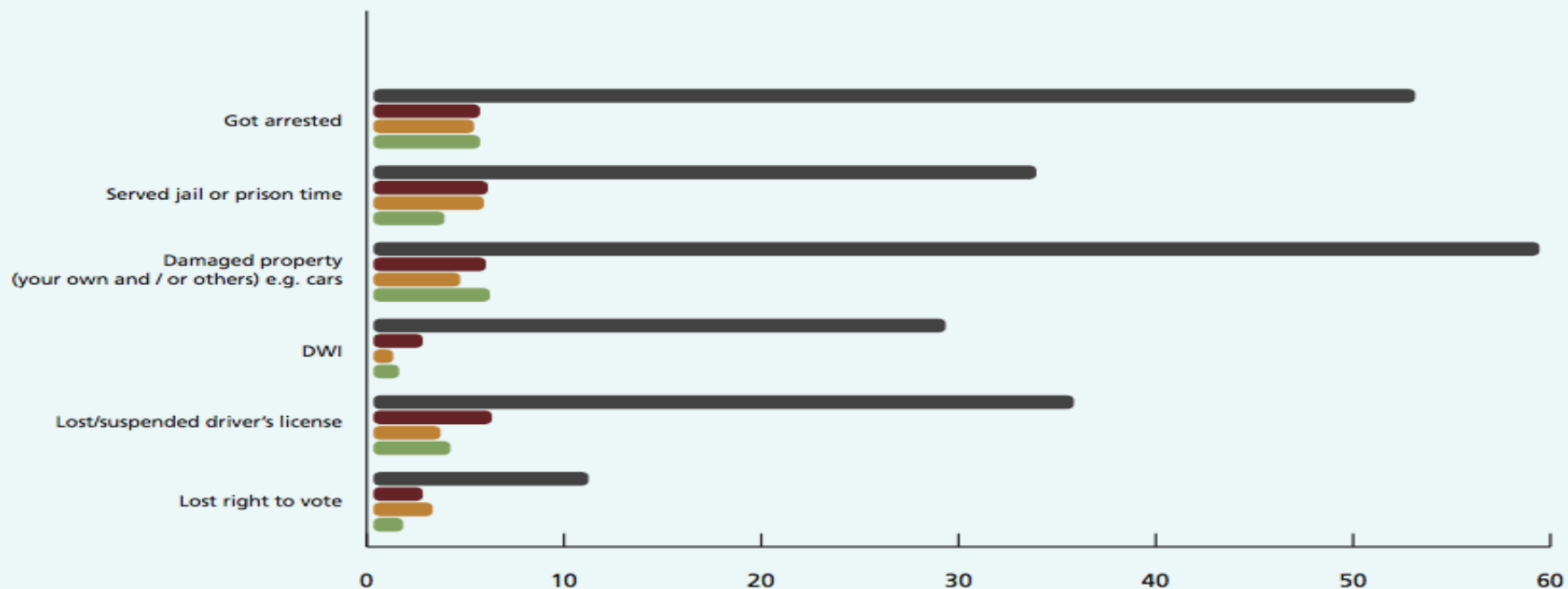
Recovery is a reality. It can, will, and does happen.

WHAT WOULD IT TAKE TO MAKE OUR
COMMUNITIES
RECOVERY-READY

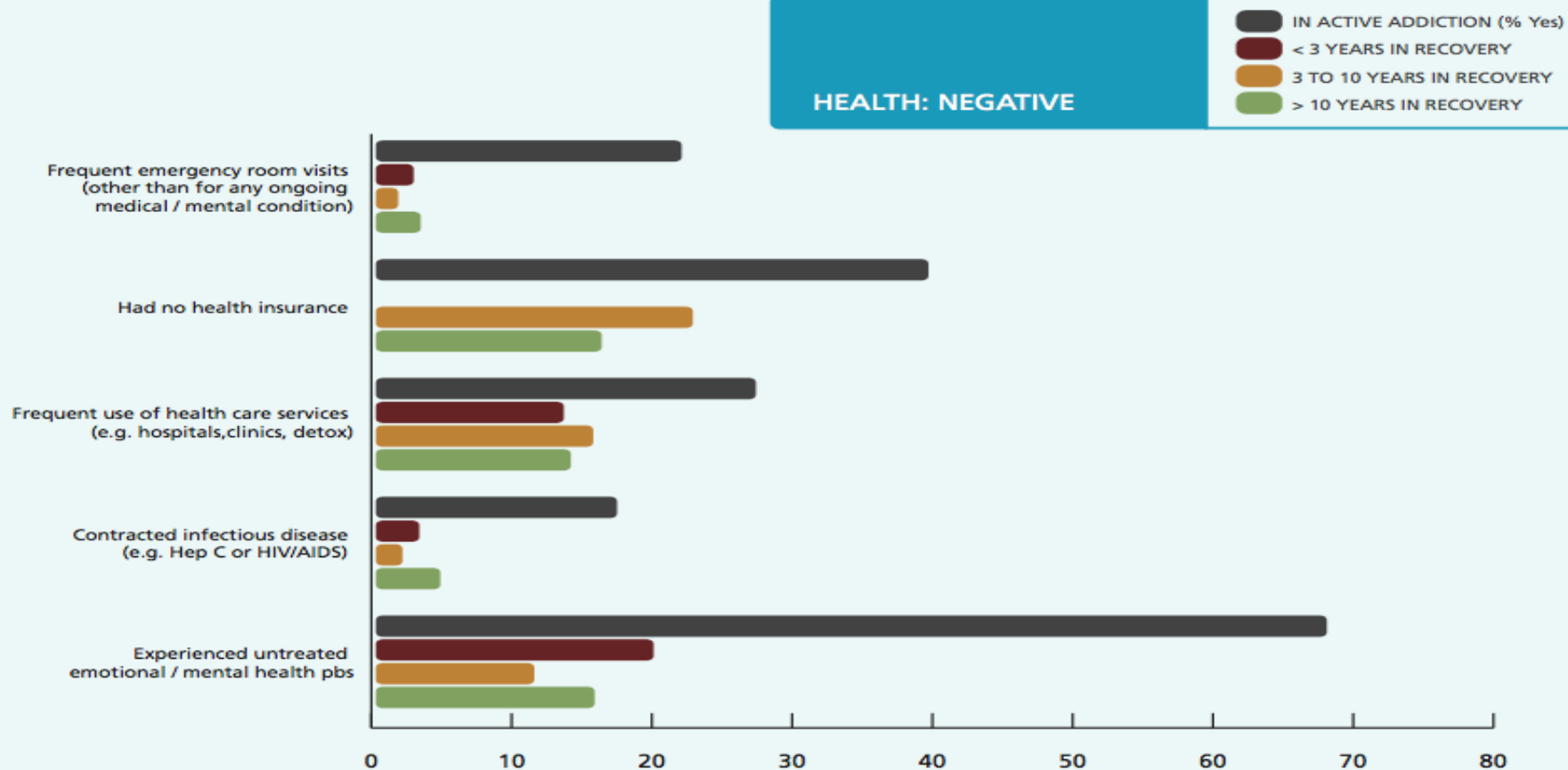


LEGAL: NEGATIVE

- IN ACTIVE ADDICTION (% Yes)
- < 3 YEARS IN RECOVERY
- 3 TO 10 YEARS IN RECOVERY
- > 10 YEARS IN RECOVERY

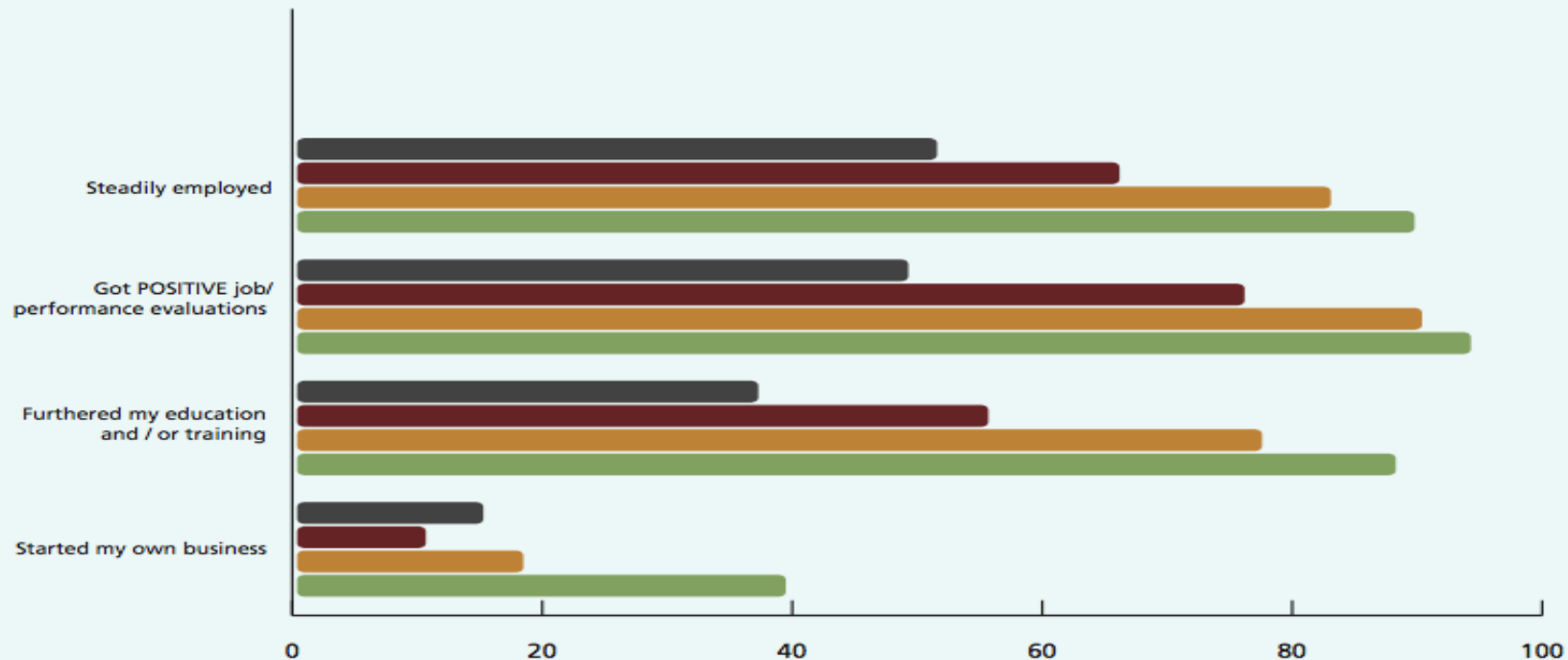


HEALTH: NEGATIVE

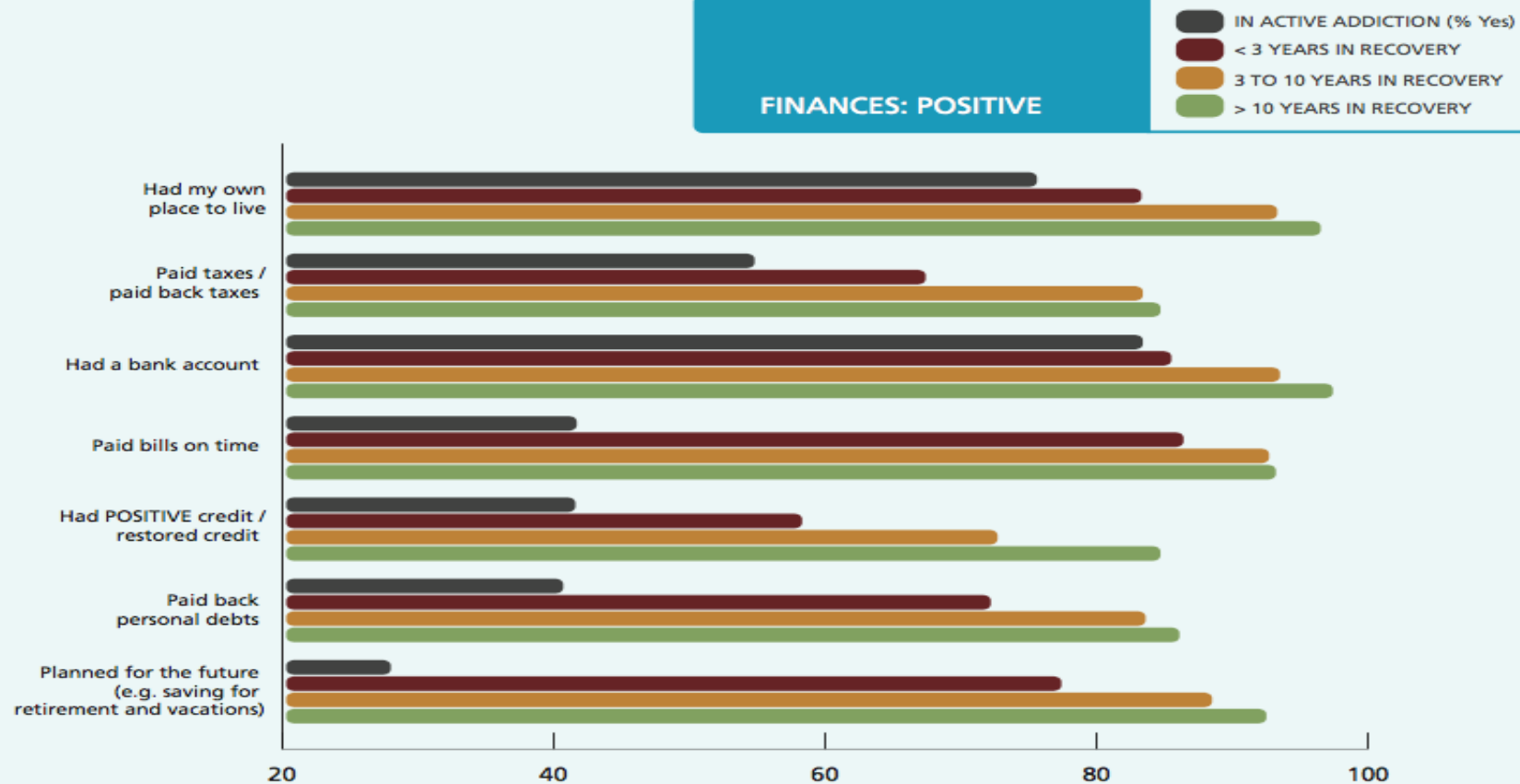


WORK: POSITIVE

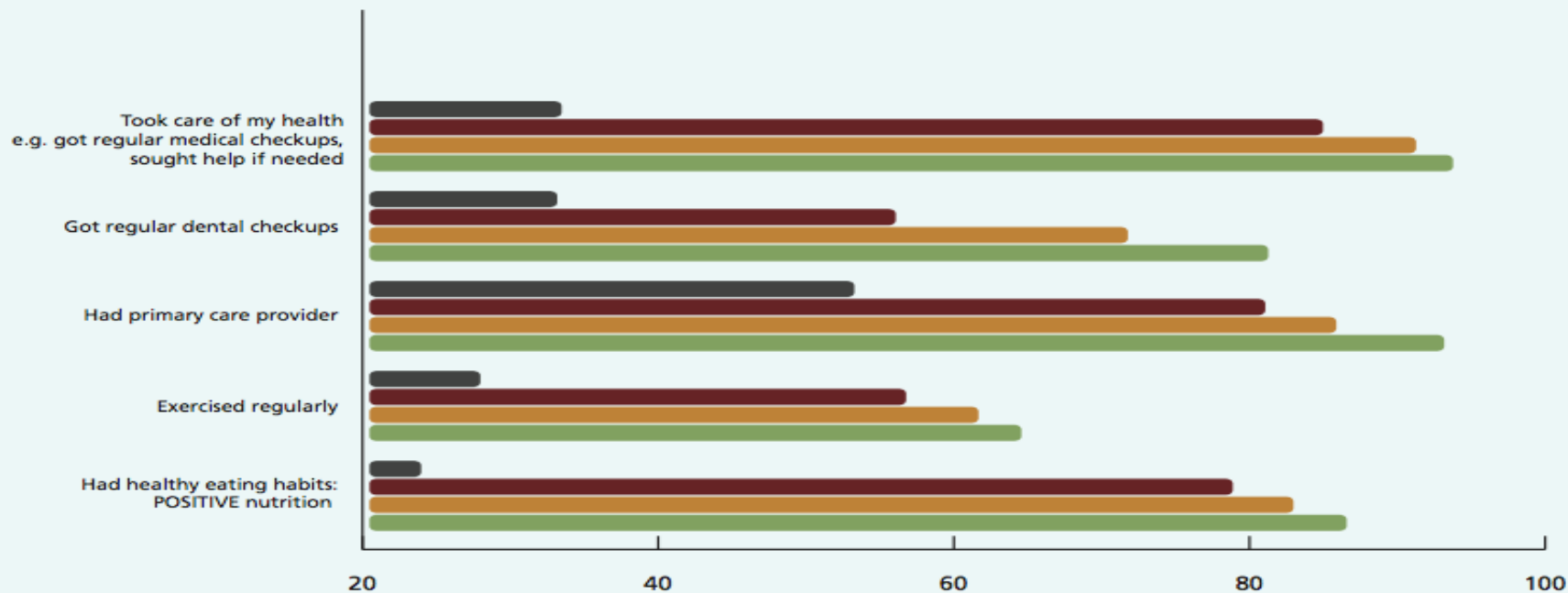
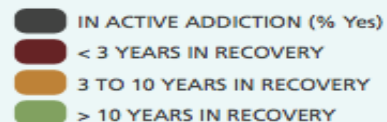
- IN ACTIVE ADDICTION (% Yes)
- < 3 YEARS IN RECOVERY
- 3 TO 10 YEARS IN RECOVERY
- > 10 YEARS IN RECOVERY



FINANCES: POSITIVE



HEALTH: POSITIVE



Words Have Power

“Words have immense power to wound or heal... The right words catalyze personal transformation and offer invitations to citizenship and community service. The wrong words stigmatize and dis-empower”

- William White, Author and Recovery Advocate

Visit williamwhitepapers.com

When you identify as something, it becomes your identity.

Stigma

'stimgə/noun:

A mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person

- Reduces a person to nothing more than their difficulties
- Leads systems to withhold appropriate services (effectively changing stigma into discrimination, discrimination based on disability is illegal)
 - Robs people of possible life opportunities
 - Exposes people to preventable traumatic experiences

Connotation

An emotional and imaginative association surrounding a word; a meaning given to a word through its use in a society or culture

Connotation = Meaning!!

Implicit Bias

Subtle cognitive process that influences decision making below the conscious level

If words have the immense power to wound or heal

What do these words do?

- Addict
- Recovery
- Addict in Recovery
 - Person
- Person in Recovery



Try This - Not That

Person in Recovery, Person Seeking Recovery	Addict in Recovery, Ex-Addict, Former Addict
Person actively consuming substances, Person with drug dependence, Person with problematic drug use, Person with Substance Use Disorder	Addict, Junkie, Drug User, Dope head, druggie, stoner, crackhead, crack whore
Medication Assisted Recovery (MAR), Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)	Medication is a crutch, “Your replacing one drug for a different one”
Positive/Negative Drug Screen	Clean/Dirty Drug Test, Passed/Failed the Test
Resumption of use, had a setback, the person symptoms have returned	Relapsed
Respond, program, address, manage	Fight, counter, combat drugs and other combatant language
A family member, a friend, a sister, a human, a parent, a child ect.	“Why do they deserve help? They did it to themselves”

Core Message for Recovery Allies

“My name is _____. I am a recovery ally and for me that means _____.”

Recovery is possible!

Our Core Message for a Person in Recovery

“My name is _____. I am a person in (long-term) recovery and for me that means _____.”

Focus on your recovery story.

You have power to change the world.

**If you become what you
identify as....**

Who do you want to be?

Contact Information

Kayla Kalel kaylamkalel@gmail.com

Courtney Allen courtney.elizabeth.allen@maine.edu

<http://youngpeopleinrecovery.org/>

All Recovery Meeting!

Every Tuesday at 9 Green St., Augusta, ME

From 5:45-6:45 PM

We accept all people from all pathways of recovery and our recovery allies. We will never define recovery for you, instead allowing you to define your recovery.