LANGUAGE MATTERS!

people with a lived experience of mental distress,
social issues or injustice told us

words and sayings I dislike

I would rather

words and sayings I dislike	I would rather
client | consumer | patient mental illness	**person** | human | individual | citizen distress | mental health experiences | the individual to define it themselves, anything else is disempowerment
schizophrenic | mad | crazy schizo | retarded borderline personality disorder so BPD	living with schizophrenia | person with a diagnosis of _ _ _ don't use it | just say nothing complex coping mechanisms. survivor of abuse | complex trauma struggle with emotions
non-compliant | attention-seeking high functioning | low functioning	a person for whom the current model of care doesn't work | the system is obviously not meeting this persons needs nothing, it's belittling and dismissive of an overall experience
failed suicide attempt suicide prevention	suicide survivor acceptance and recognition of extreme pain and distress
what's wrong with you today? just get over it	what's happening for you right now? i'm here to listen

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the words we use matter to me because...

words shape perceptions which drive actions and behaviours

they add to negative self talk, self stigma and hinder my recovery

impacts healthy, effective communication and understanding

perceptions | they are stigmatising

people shouldn't be labelled. they should be seen as people and respected

words can be used to empower or disempower people.
we need to empower each other

it brings the cultural shift towards an inclusive community that
respect the rights of everyone

people are more than labels & how 'society' defines them

i am not defined by my 'diagnosis'. my habits and reactions are due
to effective coping mechanisms, not personal faults

my story and distress are unique, contain strength and survival.
the language needs to reflect the complete story

appropriate use of language that is gentle and genuine makes all the difference

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