

🚫 Words & Phrases to Avoid

- “You promised...” – Feels accusatory and guilt-based
- “You’re ruining everything.” – Blame shuts down dialogue
- “What’s wrong with you?” – Implies character flaw, not struggle
- “Just stop using.” – Oversimplifies a complex issue
- “If you cared about us...” – Weaponizes relationships
- “You always...” / “You never...” – Extreme language fuels defensiveness
- “It’s your fault things are like this.” – Disregards context and triggers

A VISUAL GUIDE TO
FRAMING HEALTHIER
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT
SUBSTANCE USE —
DESIGNED FOR FAMILIES,
CLINICIANS, AND
RECOVERY SUPPORT
STAFF

Underrated
Superhero

THE BLAME GAME



IF YOU'D JUST GO BACK TO MEETINGS, EVERYTHING WOULD BE BETTER. I FOUND ONE FOR YOU TONIGHT.

OUTCOME: FEELS
PRESSURED,
AUTONOMY
OVERLOOKED

I SAID I'D FIGURE IT OUT. PLEASE STOP TRYING TO CONTROL EVERYTHING.

THE FIX-IT APPROACH

MAYBE... YEAH. I'VE JUST BEEN STUCK LATELY.

I'M NOT HERE TO JUDGE. I JUST CARE ABOUT YOU. WANT TO TALK ABOUT WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON—IF YOU'RE UP FOR IT?

OUTCOME: OPENS
DOOR FOR REAL
CONVERSATION

THE BRIDGE BUILDER (RECOMMENDED)