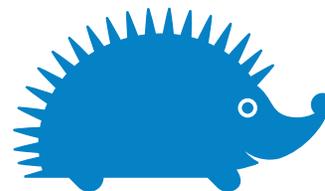


9:55 – 10:05 a.m.

### ACTIVITY | STIGMATIZING LANGUAGE: THE PORCUPINE MAP

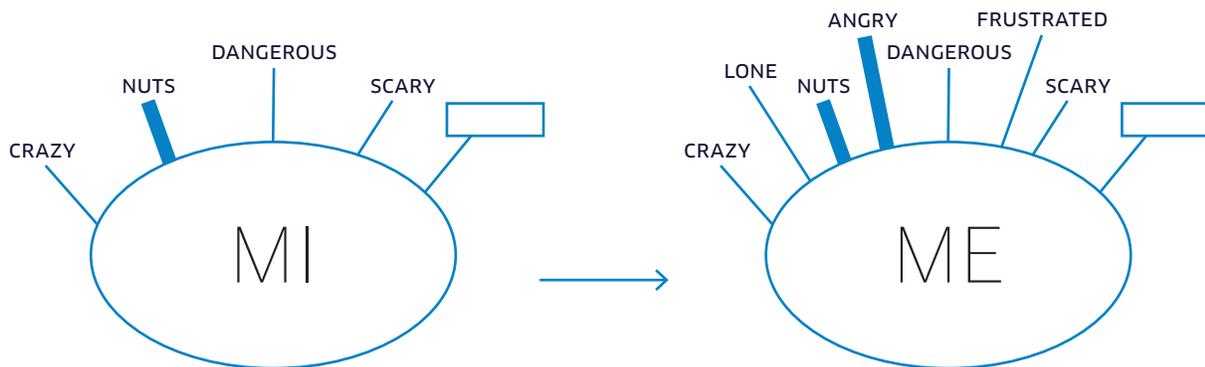
Facilitator's message for the Porcupine Map:

Step into Change: Walk the Talk



Make a connection for students as to how stigma and labels can prevent people from moving forward to build community awareness. How has stigma prevented us from stepping into change, particularly sustainable change? And how does stigma inhibit us from talking about mental health problems, mental illnesses, and ways to increase wellness?

- Draw an oval in the middle of the whiteboard or flipchart (or a porcupine if you are a good artist).
- In the oval write the letters MI (in capitals) to signify Mental Illness.
- Ask the group, “What words are used to describe people living with a mental illness? (e.g. *crazy*, *psycho*, etc.)
- Choose a brightly-coloured marker for this part. Each time a student comes up with a word, draw a line outwards from the oval (like porcupine quills) and write down the word at the end of the line (see example).
- After recording about 15 words, tell the group that you are now changing the letters from MI to ME (by drawing three short lines on the capital I).
- Choose a different coloured marker. Now ask the group how they would feel if the words on the board were used by peers, neighbours or even relatives to describe them. Some might say, “angry,” “sad,” etc. These are *feeling* words.
- With your new colour, draw a line from the oval to enter the feeling words. Each feeling line should be shorter than the description lines. You should put a *feeling* line in between each description line.
- When you have gone around the oval with the shorter *feeling* lines in between the longer lines, you will have a Porcupine Map.
- Emphasize that we are seeking to get to a time when positive words are used to talk about mental illness – e.g., “courageous,” “hopeful,” “resilient.”



#### NOTE:

Mention that 1 in 5 people in Canada lives with a mental illness each year. Ask students to reflect on how it would feel if they or a family member, were the recipient of stigmatizing language.