

REFRAME GUIDE

AVOID/INSTEAD



OVERVIEW OF ORIGINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

AVOID		INSTEAD
Images, definitions, and explanations that narrow the scope of oral health to teeth	→	Use images, definitions, and explanations that connect oral health to overall health
Language and images that narrow oral health care to dentists' offices and their staff	→	Advance the idea that oral health involves a team of professionals that work across the community
Illustrating systemic problems by zooming in on individual cases	→	Compare systemic barriers to locked doors and policies/programs that remove them to keys
Leaving the idea of prevention undefined, under-described, or individualized	→	Use Responsible Management to make an economic case for widespread prevention strategies
Unframed data about disparities	→	Frame data about disparities with either Targeted Justice or Responsible Management
Leaving solutions up to the public's imagination	→	Share concrete, collective solutions that show what works and why prevention matters

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AVOID/INSTEAD



OVERVIEW OF NEW, COMPLEMENTARY RECOMMENDATIONS

AVOID		INSTEAD
<i>Individualized Actor</i> advocacy stories	→	Share <i>Contextualized Actor</i> advocacy stories
Creating different messages for different audiences	→	Vary your communications goal to suit different audiences, but use the same fundamental framing strategies for all messages
Relying on crisis framing when creating messages that address the news cycle	→	Address pressing issues while simultaneously working toward longer-term goals, like changing narratives and cultural mindsets
Implying that science should be accepted without question	→	Talk about scientific research as a tool for advancing shared values like Dignity and Targeted Justice
Repeating dangerous or deceptive ideas	→	Talk about their harmful intent or impact and use an inclusive tone
Using partisan language — e.g. "Republicans are blocking health care access."	→	Focus on ideals like Dignity and Well-Being to remind people of common ground

ORAL HEALTH AND OVERALL HEALTH ARE LINKED



A reminder to be explicit about the two-way connection between oral health and overall health

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

Oral health is inextricably linked to overall health.

EXAMPLE:

Healthier mouths mean healthier people. And healthier people mean stronger communities.

ORAL HEALTH AND OVERALL HEALTH ARE LINKED



WHEN TO USE THIS MESSAGE:

- Early and often. FrameWorks research shows that people don't understand that oral health and overall health are linked, or how this two-way relationship works.
- When you need to elevate the importance of oral health.
- Whenever you're talking about solutions, because when the conversation about oral health is narrowed to teeth, the potential for substantive reform also narrows.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- Emphasize how problems in oral health relate to other health issues beyond the mouth, including behavioral and mental health issues.
- Select graphics/images that "widen the lens" and suggest a systemic perspective.
- Remember: The image that telegraphs the topic easily or efficiently is not always, from a reframing perspective, the most effective.

KEYS TO ORAL HEALTH



A tested metaphor that brings systemic barriers to oral health and policy solutions into view

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

Accessing good oral health is like going through a series of locked doors. Some people have the keys to unlock every door, while others are missing some or all of the keys they need. They can't access oral health no matter how hard they try.

EXAMPLE:

Access to stable housing, reliable public transportation, fluoridated water, job flexibility, and healthy school meals all unlock doors to oral health. But these conditions don't just happen. They're created and maintained through policies, laws, and collective decisions. Laws and policies that create health-promoting environments are the keys to a healthier and more productive society.

KEYS TO ORAL HEALTH



WHEN TO USE THIS EXPLANATORY METAPHOR:

- To show that solutions need to go beyond brushing, flossing, and visiting the dentist.
- To redirect conversations that zoom in on an individual's good or bad choices, behaviors, and decisions around oral health.
- To redirect thinking to the inequitable structures that cause disparities in oral health outcomes and away from stereotypes about groups that disproportionately experience poor oral health outcomes.
- As a way to talk about equity without saying the word equity.
- To characterize systemic solutions as both reasonable and feasible.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- To show systems (for both problems and solutions).
- To kick off a list of systemic positive influences on oral health like access to fluoridated water, nutritious food, and dentists who accept various kinds of dental coverage.
- Remember that this metaphor is a theme, not a script. You can invoke and express the idea with a light touch, by using words in the same metaphorical domain, like "unlock", "open", "unfettered".

RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT



A tested values message for making the case for prevention and expanding the timeframe of the work

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

**Using our nation's resources wisely means making smart decisions now to avoid problems later.
By making sure that all communities have strong prevention efforts in place, we can
reduce costs by stopping problems before they start.**

EXAMPLE:

We need to use our nation's resources efficiently and effectively. When it comes to oral health, we know we can reduce costs by stopping problems before they even start. This means making sure that all communities have strong prevention efforts in place, that oral health care is available in locations people can access, and that our approach to dental coverage includes everyone.

RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT



WHEN TO USE THIS VALUES MESSAGE:

- When making an economic argument and discussing avoidable costs.
- To prevent people from blaming “them” for driving up costs for the rest of “us.”
- To make visible that the choices we make now will yield benefits in the future.
- To overcome crisis thinking and *Fatalism* with pragmatism.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- *Responsible Management* is particularly effective when paired with economic arguments that address avoidable costs. For example: Our weak oral health care system drives people to defer treatment they need, which can lead to more serious problems that are more expensive to treat.
- When you find yourself wanting to make the case for prevention using workforce participation, reach for *Responsible Management* to situate workforce participation within its broader social and economic context.
- Remember that this values frame is a theme, not a script. You can invoke and express this value in multiple ways. For example: resource-wise governance, strategic allocation of resources, prudent planning, efficient stewardship, or long-term economic planning.
- Pair the value with specific descriptions of clear, collective, and concrete solutions.
- When setting this frame, be careful not to dehumanize people and communities by characterizing them as cost centers.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS



A tested values message that can boost support for policies and programs designed to strengthen well-being by reminding us that our fates are shared

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

Our futures are bound together, and so our communities benefit when the systems and policies designed to support our well-being are built to serve all of us.

EXAMPLE:

Our future prosperity depends upon ensuring that our systems and policies are designed to work for everyone, not just those who are already ahead.

INTERCONNECTEDNESS



WHEN TO USE THIS VALUES MESSAGE:

- To strategically redirect thinking away from patterns of thought associated with *Otherism* and *Individualism*.
- To elevate the salience of oral health and emphasize the fundamental necessity of collective action.
- To shift the emphasis from who's affected by inequities to who's responsible (us) for supporting the systemic improvements that can address them.
- When mentioning a specific group that faces barriers and/or lacks one or more *keys to oral health*.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- Use this value along with a well-crafted explanation or concrete example to help people imagine how closing disparities in oral health outcomes benefits us all.
- Use this value and plain language (in lieu of technical terms and shorthand phrases that have been developed by advocates) to talk about the complex ways that individual health and community health are related.
- Remember that this values frame is a theme, not a script. You can invoke and express this value in multiple ways. For example: "a rising tide lifts all boats," "we are stronger together," "what affects one of us affects all of us."

TARGETED JUSTICE



A tested values message that invokes productive thinking about justice and injustice, while helping to overcome thinking that inequities are inevitable and/or simply too big and intractable

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

In oral health care, a one-size-fits-all approach rarely works. People have different needs when it comes to their oral health, and different situations call for different responses.

EXAMPLE:

When it comes to oral health, some people may need to get care from places that are easy to get to by public transportation, can accommodate their work schedule, or have staff who are fluent in their language.

By making sure that our health system allows people to get the kind of care they need to support good oral health, we can create a more just and fair society.

TARGETED JUSTICE



WHEN TO USE THIS VALUES MESSAGE:

- Before mentioning a policy/support/intervention that addresses a specific community's needs.
- As a way to talk about equity without saying the word equity.
- When introducing data; left unframed, data about disparities may invite blame, laying responsibility for poor outcomes at the feet of those experiencing them.
- To redirect conversations that invoke negative stereotypes, harmful narratives, or dehumanizing language.
- When describing how specific supports, policies, or interventions work to address inequities.
- To describe proposed approaches to eliminating disparities as pragmatic.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- Use specific examples of different needs to help people understand that different external conditions create different needs.
- Remember that this values frame is a theme, not a script. That means you can invoke and express this value in multiple ways. You can, for example, reach for close synonyms for justice like integrity, doing what is right, or the honorable thing.

DIGNITY



A tested values message that invokes our shared humanity to help overcome resistance to policy-level solutions to disparities in oral health outcomes

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

Each and every person has inherent dignity and worth. Our oral health policies, practices, and programs should reflect and demonstrate respect for the dignity of people and communities.

EXAMPLE:

To truly treat people with dignity, we need to value each person and their overall well-being. When some communities don't have access to what they need to be healthy and well, we're not demonstrating respect for the people in those communities.

DIGNITY



WHEN TO USE THIS VALUES MESSAGE:

- Early in a communication about oral health.
- Before mentioning a particular community or specific policy to direct thinking toward our shared humanity and the inherent worth of all people.
- To emphasize that your proposed approach to eliminating disparities demonstrates greater respect for the dignity of people and communities.
- To redirect conversations that invoke negative stereotypes, harmful narratives, or dehumanizing language.
- In lieu of rights-based language, which tends to spark patterns of thought associated with *Otherism*.
- When you need to talk about scientific research. (To avoid triggering science skepticism, talk about scientific research as a tool for advancing dignity, rather than as something that should be accepted without question.)
- When you find yourself wanting to make a workforce participation argument, invoke this value to avoid dehumanizing people or activating *Consumerism*.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- Weave the idea of dignity throughout your communication.
- Avoid diluting your message by mixing in other ideas like vulnerability, protection, and crisis.
- Remember that this values frame is a theme, not a script. Invoke and express this value in multiple ways. You can, for example, reach for close synonyms like “respect,” “honor,” “inherent value,” or “innate worth.”
- To highlight the unique, additional challenges that face social groups that have been marginalized or excluded, talk about how inequities threaten dignity.

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INGENUITY



A tested values message that instills a sense of efficacy by reminding us that we have solved tough challenges before

THE BASIC MESSAGE:

We are resourceful, clever, and thoughtful, and we can find innovative solutions to challenges.

EXAMPLE:

By applying ingenuity to health care policy design, we can integrate medical and dental care to ensure patients receive comprehensive treatment that supports their overall well-being.

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INGENUITY



WHEN TO USE THIS VALUES MESSAGE:

- When talking about solutions, particularly when sharing innovations from other countries, states, or cities. There can be a powerful pull to invoke competition in these moments, but for lasting change, what we need is a greater sense of our *Interconnectedness*.
- To redirect conversations that are stuck in *Fatalism*, or the sense that problems are too big to solve.
- To place emphasis on specific policies or practices that are outdated.
- To remind people that we don't always need to reinvent the wheel.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR USE:

- Endings (of reports, presentations, etc.) are a powerful place to invoke *Ingenuity*.
- Remember that this values frame is a theme, not a script. You can invoke and express this value in multiple ways. You can, for example, reach for close synonyms like “inventiveness,” “innovation,” “resourcefulness,” “creativity”.
- Ingenuity pairs well with a call to action: “Let’s roll up our sleeves and get to work,” “We’re a community of problem-solvers,” “We can think outside the box; just look at how we responded to _____. We can do so again!”