

Value-Laden Words

“Loaded words” are loaded with the potential to generate strong emotions or feelings – positive or negative. Value-laden means that the words are influenced by personal opinions; thus, it is important for us to avoid them.

USE	INSTEAD OF	THIS
Activate	Trigger	
Effort	Good or Bad	
Struggling	Non-Compliant	
Connection-seeking	Attention-seeking	
Eloping for connection	Running away	
Struggling with follow through	Treatment resistant	
Exploring, finding their way	Oppositional	
Unprocessed grief	Defiant	
Need to discharge	Aggressive	
Pain-based behaviors	Shutting down	
Dysregulated	Self-harm	
Seeking ways to get needs met	Manipulate	
Difficulty with trust, feeling safe, fear	Sabotaging placements	
Ambivalent	Avoiding responsibility	
Need for control to feel safe	Disobey	
Sensory overload	Isolates or want to be left alone	
Fear of hunger	Hoarding or stealing food	
Development irregularity	Poor social skills	
Reacting from a place of stress	No conscience	
Dissociation due to feeling overwhelmed and/or overstimulated	Staring into space or no eye contact	

What might you add to this list?