

CORNERSTONE 2020 RESOURCE

Inclusion and Disabilities: A Love-Based Design Workshop, *Specialty Track 2*

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SUMMARY:	This session explores the ways that campers with disabilities can be made to feel like pioneers, and how everyone can step up to make sure no one needs to go it alone to have a great time at camp. - <i>Submitted by Ariella Rosen and Lauren Tuchman</i>
TOPIC(S):	Inclusion and Disabilities, Historic Jewish Figures
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will better understand ways in which community members with disabilities may feel isolated and responsible for making the changes they need to have a successful summer at camp. Participants will also better understand how to be an ally to someone in this situation.
AUDIENCE:	Older camper (13 and up) and staff, ideal size is no more than 20 people
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Nachshon story
MATERIALS NEEDED:	pieces of cardboard or rubber (1 ft. x 1 ft.), pieces of yarn or rope, AV capability
SET-UP DETAILS:	<p>This session can happen in any large, open space (indoors or outdoors). For an added twist, the Crossing the Sea activity could be set up in such a way that it extends to the pool or the lake, so that some or all of the activity is actually taking place in the water.</p> <p>Set up the Crossing the Sea activity: place two long pieces of string parallel to each other about 15 feet apart.</p> <p>Place the “stepping stones” (pieces of cardboard, paper, rubber, etc. about 1ft. x 1 ft.) in the space between the strings, far enough apart that it would be difficult to step from one to the other.</p> <p>Cut out the individual rules on little pieces of paper to hand out to participants.</p>

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 00:00-00:15- Introductions
- 00:15-00:45- Nachshon story
- 00:45-01:15-River Game
- 01:15-01:30- Wrap up and discussion

Introductions and Opening Prompt (25 min.)

Ask participants to think of a time that they experienced or witnessed courage.

Share with partners or with the entire group, and discuss:

- What commonalities do we notice between stories?
- What do you need to go against the grain? What are challenges?
- How do others benefit from one person making this choice?

Ask participants: In what ways does inclusion work require courage?

(Some answers may include: staff at camp advocating for inclusive programming, campers or staff with disabilities or other marginalized identity needing to be the “first” to do something at camp, etc.)

For first-hand perspective from a someone with a disability on courage and accomplishment, see:

https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en (TEDTalk by Stella Young called “I am not your inspiration.”))

Explain: For some campers with disabilities, coming to camp may take some extra courage, because camp was designed with people who are able-bodied and neurotypical in mind. It can sometimes take a lot of effort to shift the way camp works to make it fully accessible to everyone in the community.

Nachshon Story (30 min.)

There is a story in Jewish tradition of someone who took the risk of going first, to make it possible for everyone to join in the experience:

Share the Nachshon text (there are many versions of this story, the handout includes just one version), or tell the story without reading the text:

According to a Midrash (sort of like fan fiction writing about the Torah), when the Israelites were waiting for the Red Sea to split, they were stuck at the shore until a man named Nachshon started walking into the water. All the while, Moses was praying to God to split the sea to let the Israelites through. When the water was up to Nachshon’s nose, making it hard to breathe, God said to Moses (rough translation): “What are you doing praying for so long? Lift up your staff toward the sea and I will cause the waters to split so all of the people can walk through on dry land!”

General reactions to the text. (Invite participants to discuss in pairs)

- Unpack Nachshon’s character. What do you think he was thinking in that moment?
- Did he imagine/hope that others would come with him?
- How did the rest of the people feel watching him go into the sea?
- How might this story have unfolded differently if Nachshon wasn’t acting alone? What roles could other Israelites have taken to support him?

River Game (30 min.)

Play a Game Exploring Allyship: Crossing the Sea Game

The rules:

- To “win” (aka to make it to freedom), the **entire group** must make it across the Red Sea.
- In this version of the game the sea has split but the ground is super muddy. You can only step on stepping stones (pieces of cardboard or something similar) to get across.
- If a stepping stone is not in contact with at least one person, it will sink into the mud and disappear.
- Only one stepping stone can be picked up and moved at a time.
- If anyone touches the mud, the entire team will have to start over.
- Each participant will get their own special rule for the game. (Optional: allow participants the chance to exchange rules with one person only.)
- If the group is large, divide into two teams (of approx. 10 people each)

Individual special rules (one per person):

1. You must always cross first
2. You may not speak
3. Anything you want to say must be sung instead
4. You can only walk backwards
5. You are afraid to cross without a buddy
6. You may only speak in questions
7. You must always be the 4th person to cross
8. You must carry a box across with you.
9. You really want to play in the mud and will, unless someone stops you
10. You must cross with one of your shoes on your hand instead of your foot

Debrief:

- How was your experience of the game? Do you think you would have a different reaction with a different personal role? How did your role contribute to everyone else’s experience of the game?
- What helped your team be successful? What made things harder?
- For the person who went first, how did that feel? What were you thinking about? (You were our Nachshon!)
- How are people with disabilities at camp sometimes treated like Nachshon? How is that good? Bad?
- What changes need to happen in your camp to make it possible for everyone to “cross the sea” aka have a successful experience at camp?

Connect to experience of many with individuals with disabilities:

Think of a time when you noticed someone really struggling at camp because of a disability.

(Remember the social model of disability: they struggled not because they have a disability, but because camp wasn’t originally set up with their needs in mind. (See Stella Young’s TEDTalk linked above for more.)

Note: Don’t share names or other identifying information to protect privacy.

- What did you notice about how different people at camp responded (counselors, friends, division heads, etc)?
- What did you notice about how the person themselves responded?



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- How was that person supported? How could they have been supported better?
- What would it mean to be an ally for that person?

Point out: Everyone has a role, all of these roles are necessary. (Everyone needs to get across the sea, so the role they carry is essential.)

Wrap Up and Final Discussion (15 min.)

Final go-around: If you were to pick up a slip of paper with your role for making camp a more inclusive place for all, what would it say? What's your inclusion super power?

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

The post-game conversation about how it can be hard to be a pioneer with a disability at camp is meant for staff-only. This can be modified for campers, most importantly by not asking them to identify someone else who has been struggling at camp, but rather to have them look inward at their own experiences.