Smells Like Teen Spirit: Not Just a Deodorant

*Elective 1*

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| **Author(s):** | Akiko Yonekawa |
| **summary:** | Identity formation is a hallmark of teenage development. How can we use our understanding of what teenagers are experiencing as a result of adolescence to help them grow and develop their identities and independence? - *Submitted by* *Akiko Yonekawa* |
| **Topic(s):** | Understanding teen development and the unique way that camp supports the needs of teens |
| **Learning Objective:** | Participants will be able to identify the hallmarks of teen development and ways of using that understanding to help teens develop identity. |
| **Audience:** | Teenagers |
| **TIMING:** | 90 minutes |
| **AppendiCes:** |  |
| **Materials Needed:** | Four packs each of four different colors of Post-its  Pens  Video equipment for watching YouTube |
| **Set-UP DETAILS:** | A big room with no chairs or a circle of chairs and four walls with room for Post-its |

**Session Timeline & Outline:**

00:00-00:15 Group Two Truths and a Lie

00:15-00:30 Identity vs. Role Confusion

00:15-01:00 What Would You Do?

01:00-01:25 Identity Formation and Camp

01:25-01:30 Closure

**00:00-00:15 Group Two Truths and a Lie**

Have participants find groups of four or five. Instruct each group to come up with two things that they all have in common and one thing that is not common to anyone in the group. The last one is hard: each person should have something about them that is not true for anyone else in the group. The group will agree to take on one of the things that is not common to the whole group as their lie. This should be something that could be true for everyone, so nothing too crazy.

Have the entire group come back together. Each group will share their three facts: two that actually apply to everyone in the group and one that does not. The rest of the groups will decide which fact they think does not apply to everyone in the group.

**00:15-00:30 Identity vs. Role Confusion**

Show the video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJMXk5ibkQk&feature=youtu.be.

Have the group come back together and have them share reflections about the video. This leads to the “four I’s” of adolescence: Identity, Independence, Inclusion, and Intimacy.

In their quest for their essential identity, teenagers must establish their independence from others, while also finding their sense of belonging with affinity groups. This separation from their family group and identification with peers leads them to need to build close relationships with others to whom they are not related: Intimacy. In this phase of development, they will learn to make decisions based on their own personal sense of morality.

In what ways did our Two Truths and a Lie demonstrate this development?

**00:30-1:00 What Would You Do?**

Have the entire group stand in the middle of the room. Present to the group a series of dilemmas and two choices. For each dilemma, participants must move to one side of the room or the other depending on their answer to the dilemma. Participants have to pick a side. No standing in the middle. Take on the situation presented, even if you are unlikely to find yourself in that situation, and decide what you would genuinely do. Do not change the scenario in your head in order to make it an entirely different scenario.

Once people have chosen, each side will discuss with the others who chose like them what values they think informed their decisions. When groups are finished coming up with their values, one or two people from each side will have an opportunity to make a case for their side to try to entice people to switch sides.

The last two dilemmas will be presented by participants. During one of the rounds of values discussions, tell participants that they will be able to present a dilemma and have a person develop a dilemma with you while the groups discuss. That person will present the next dilemma.

When all of the dilemmas have been presented, ask participants to share what they noticed about their own decision-making, how they made decisions, and how they were influenced by others or tried to exert influence. Where did they see the “I’s” come in to play?

Dilemmas**:**

1. You are in the airport and you can buy either snacks or something to read for the plane on the way to Cornerstone. You can’t get both and once you don’t have a credit card, so you won’t be able to buy snacks on the plane. What would you do?
2. You agreed to go to a poetry slam to hear a friend perform and you know it would mean a lot to them, but you just got a way better offer from a different friend who is a film student to go to a movie screening for a movie you want to see and isn’t out in theaters yet. You don’t much care for poetry slams. What would you do?
3. You are sooooo exhausted. You haven’t slept since the summer started. You vowed to go to bed early tonight no matter what because you know you will get sick if you continue to stay up late, but on your way back to your bunk, you find a group of friends sitting by a campfire having the most fun anyone has ever had. What do you do?
4. At the end of this summer, your camp director tells you that you are guaranteed to have the one job at camp that you have wanted your whole life, but you would have to commit to being at camp next summer now in order to have that job. You were hoping to spend this year looking into other options for next summer that will help you get a good job and your parents were hoping this would be your last summer at camp. What would you do?
5. You are asked to make a *minyan* – a quorum for Jewish prayer – so that someone can say *kaddish* – the prayer for mourners, but this prayer service is in a format that it is not your custom to pray in (e.g., you only pray in egalitarian spaces, but this *minyan* is partnership with a *mechitza* – men and women separated or you only pray with a mechitza but this is egalitarian). You would be the last person to make the *minyan* and help this person say *kaddish*. What would you do?

**1:00-1:25 Identity Formation at Camp**

We hear people say that camp is a place where they can truly be themselves. What about camp supports this identity formation?

Present four colors of post-its and assign one of the “I’s” to each color. Have participants write a camp activity or experience that they think demonstrates each of the I’s and put them on the wall. Participants can write as many as they want and they can put one on more than one color. When everyone has put up all of their ideas, conduct an ideas tour of the walls and chose two or three experiences to workshop.

With the entire group, read through the experiences and explore which of the “I’s” those scenarios address, how they could address more of them, and how a counselor could help facilitate a camper’s identity formation through that experience.

**1:25-1:30 Closure**

Bless the group with a summer of Hineni: a summer where they are able to deepen their own ideas of who they are through helping others to do the same.

**Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp:**