

### The Power of Sport *Specialty Track*

<b>AUTHOR(S):</b>	Mara Berde
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	In this session we will: develop skills for creating a positive culture of sport at camp. Through redesigning and reimagining our favorite camp sports, we will learn how we can make sports more inclusive and use sports at camp to build community and teach valuable lessons to our campers and co-staff.
<b>ABC GOALS:</b>	<p><b>Affective:</b> Participants will feel....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excited about using sports to teach valuable lessons</li> </ul> <p><b>Behavior:</b> Participants will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use sports to teach lifelong skills to campers</li> <li>Recognize the elements of sports that people love and hate, removing the negative elements in order to make sports a positive experience for all participants</li> </ul> <p><b>Cognitive:</b> Participants will know...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How to make sports more inclusive at camp</li> <li>How to give clear instructions and explanations about rules</li> <li>How to redesign sports to achieve certain outcomes and teach valuable lessons</li> </ul>
<b>AUDIENCE:</b>	This session is meant for counselors and specialists who may be working in sports programs at camp. It is not intended to be taught to campers directly, but rather to staff who are leading sports programs.
<b>TIMING:</b>	3 separate sessions of 90 minutes each
<b>APPENDICES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Love/Hate/Learn/Jewish worksheet handout</li> <li>“Making Mensches” Periodic Table</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>	<p>General supplies: flip chart paper and markers, name tag stickers, sharpies, index cards, pens, index cards, scratch paper, Making Mensches periodic table</p> <p>Sports equipment: Frisbees, basketballs, footballs, soccer balls, dodge balls, hula hoops, gaga balls, flat cones, pinnies (colored sports jerseys), hand pump or electric pump (for balls and dice), access to other miscellaneous sports equipment.</p> <p><i>Note: if replicating this program at a camp during staff training, any sports equipment that the camp already owns should be used; there is no need to purchase specific equipment for this program, since the goal is to be able to use what already exists to make sports more accessible and inclusive.</i></p>

### SET-UP DETAILS:

A covered outdoor location adjacent to a sports field or court, as some parts will be sitting, while other segments will be out on the field/court.

For the seated portions, will need a semi-circle of chairs and an easel or access to a wall.

All sports equipment can be stored in boxes and placed nearby.

### SESSION TIMELINE

#### Session 1

00:00 – 00:20 Play Time (20 min)  
 00:20 – 00:35 Introduction & Welcome (15 min)  
 00:35 – 00:40 Unpacking Ultimate (5 min)  
 00:40 – 00:50 Love / Hate / Learn / Jewish (10 min)  
 00:50 – 01:00 Sports at Camp (10 min)  
 01:00 – 01:20 Ultimate Ball (20 min)  
 01:20 – 01:30 Closing (10 min)

#### Session 2

00:00 – 00:25 Icebreaker Gaga (20 min)  
 00:25 – 00:30 Walk back to field house (5 min)  
 00:30 – 00:45 Review & Questions (15 min)  
 00:40 – 01:00 Sport System Intro (20 min)  
 01:00 – 01:25 Sport Re-Design (30 min)  
 01:25 – 01:30 Closing (5 min)

#### Session 3

00:00 – 00:20 Finalize Sports Re-Design (20 min)  
 00:20 – 01:20 New Sport Presentations (60 min)  
 01:20 – 01:30 Closing (10 min)

### SESSION OUTLINE:

#### SESSION 1

##### *Background and framing for facilitator:*

The overarching goal of the first 90-minute session is help participants to understand that the way in which sports are perceived and experienced at camp may be vastly different than how they (the Specialty Track participants) experience sports at camp. That is, many/most Sports Specialty Track participants will likely self-identify as “athletic” or “sporty” or talented in a sports arena, whereas the average person at camp may or may not enjoy participating in and competing in sports at camp. It is important for the Sports Specialty Track participants to understand this, and begin to empathize with the experience of others vis-à-vis sports at camp; only then can they begin to think about using sports to actualize Jewish values and achieve desired outcomes at camp.

##### **Play Time (20 min) – Experiencing sport without facilitation or instructions**

The first Specialty Track session will begin by playing a short game of Ultimate Frisbee. The facilitator will intentionally not explain the rules and will basically just have the participants start a game. Some may find this strange, whereas others might jump right in and start playing. There are a few reasons why Ultimate Frisbee is a good sport for this experiment/experience:

1. Most camps play it, but have varying rules

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2. Some people will not know how to play, or will not be confident in their skills
3. Some people will consider themselves really good at this sport and take control

The goal here is to bring the group together, and to serve as a shared experience upon which to base the rest of our learning. The experience of playing Ultimate Frisbee together on Day 1 is meant to evoke a variety of emotions in various participants – feelings of comfort and discomfort; satisfaction and dissatisfaction; confidence and insecurity. It will also serve as an empathy building experience so that participants can begin understanding what others may be feeling when they are thrown into sports programs at camps.

Using these personal and shared experiences, we will create a common language and be able to dive into our goal of making sports at camp a powerfully positive experience for each participant, regardless of their ability, experience, or interest in sports.

### **Introduction and Welcome (15 min)**

After the playing session, we will gather for introductions and to unpack the playing experience. Go around in circle and do group introductions: name, camp, job at camp (counselor, sports specialist, other?), “triathlon” icebreaker.

Explain our goals and plan for the 3 specialty tracks; where will we go and how will we get there? (Have outline written on flip chart paper.)

### **Unpacking Ultimate (5 min)**

Reflect on the experience of playing ultimate at the beginning of this session. Ask participants to describe that experience. *What was challenging? What was fun?*

Have participants think about various components of the experience: *rules, teams, playing level, instructions*. This brief discussion will help them with the next activity.

### **Love / Hate / Learn / Jewish (10 min)**

Participants will use the worksheet with 4 columns – love, hate, learn, Jewish – to help them think about what sports has given them, and how we can use sports in camp to achieve those same things.

Facilitator should also pass out the Making Menschens periodic table for participants to use on the fourth column (Jewish).

**Love:** What are the elements of sports that you love? (Think about the minutiae, the tiny moments that happen so frequently that we hardly notice.)

Examples: striking a ball, catching an object, falling on the ground, hitting someone, running fast, jumping, the sound of a ball entering a net, being alone

**Hate:** What are the elements of sports that you hate? What are the moments or parts that are not-so-positive? (Think about sports that you have never played, or don’t enjoy playing.)

**Learn:** What has participating in sports taught us, about ourselves or about life?

**Jewish:** Connect what you’ve learned from sports to Jewish values from camp or the Making Menschens chart. Draw arrows from the “Learn” column directly to the Jewish value in the fourth column.

#### *Notes for facilitator:*

Participants can work individually or in partners. If they are having a difficult time thinking of things for a certain column it can be helpful to think about this from the perspective of others – what have they witnessed while coaching or playing? (A kid not feeling like they’re good enough; pressure to not let down teammates; just wanting to have fun while others are competitive, etc.)

The answers from the “hate” list (elements of sports that we don’t love) will become the foundation for thinking about how we re-Design sports to eliminate these negative elements and make sports a positive experience for everyone at camp.

The whole point of the above exercise is to get the group to a place of empathy and understanding the barriers to participating in sports at camp. Once we get to that place, we can begin to break down the barriers and make sports accessible to everyone, which is the only way that we can harness the power of sports to create positive change in camp.

Once everyone is done, create a list on flip-chart paper so that the group has a big visual for each column. Go around the circle and ask for responses until each column is filled.

### **Sports at Camp (10 min)**

The last element of the framing is creating a list of sports in our camps and having a discussion about the following, which is preparing us for Session 2 (tomorrow).

Ask questions one at a time: What sports do our camps offer? What are the goals of these programs? What’s working / not working with sports in camp? How do we remove barriers to allow campers or participants to achieve these goals?

### **Ultimate Ball (25 min)**

If time, play another round of Ultimate and this time explain rules, divide teams thoughtfully, and play with a ball instead of a Frisbee. After, gather briefly and discuss differences from the first game.

### **Closing (5 min)**

Pass out 2 index cards to each person, and have them answer the following questions:

- One important thing you learned today
- One question you have

Before everyone leaves, give them a preview of tomorrow’s sports re-design lab, and tell everyone to meet at the Gaga court (not at the field house).

## **SESSION 2**

*Background and framing for facilitator:*

The goal of the second 90-minute session is to dive into Sport System re-Design and begin looking deeply at the sports in our camps and how we can re-design them to achieve learning objectives as well as deepen our understanding of Jewish values.

### **Icebreaker Gaga (20 min)**

Use gaga as an opportunity to learn everyone’s name, as well as demonstrate a variation of rule changes and how they can affect the outcome and experience of one of the most popular camp games.

- Game 1: Name game gaga
- Game 2: Camper gaga
- Game 3: Silent gaga

After the 3<sup>rd</sup> game, ask for suggestions of other rule modifications. Have a brief discussion about why we did this and what they learned from this experience. What can campers gain from something like this? Would this work at camp? Why or why not?

### **Transition (5 min)**

Walk the group back to the field house and get settled in chairs.

### Review & Questions (15 min)

Depending on where exactly the group left off on Day 1, review “Love/Hate/Learn/Jewish” from yesterday and explain the focus of today’s session. Answer any questions to make sure the group really understands what we’ve done and where we’re going.

### Sport System Intro (25 min)

*Note: The Changing the Game Project – and the framework of Sport System re-Design – was created by Up2Us Sports, Edgework Consulting, and the Boston University School of Education. This section is intended to be taught at Cornerstone for the purpose of professional development of Cornerstone Fellows. It should not be reproduced or replicated without permission.*

Introduce participants to Sport System re-Design. Briefly explain methodology and goals.

Have the group define the following elements (domains) of sports. Facilitator will write the elements on a flip-chart and the group will define it, as well as provide an explanation as to why that element is important. If participants are having a hard time understanding, choose one sport like soccer to use as an example so that they understand each element and its purpose.

Sport System re-Design Domains:

1. **Playing Area:** dimensions and demarcations within the field of play
2. **Equipment:** utilized to enable or enhance play
3. **Rules:** of the game or contest
4. **Roles:** of all the participants (players, coaches, fans, referees)
5. **Structure:** of the league/competition

Once the group has an understanding of the elements of a sport, facilitator will transition to have them begin working on sport re-design for camp.

### Sport Re-Design (30 min)

The large group will now be divided into smaller groups 3-4 people ideally and focus on re-designing one particular sport. It doesn’t have to be the specific sport that they are teaching this summer, but it should be a sport that they are familiar with and one that other camps likely play too.

Once the participants have formed small groups, explain that they will need to take their sport and come up with this new version. In their re-designing, they should cover all of the sport elements (domains) that they learned previously, as well as determine the goal and values associated with their new sport.

Here is what they need to come up with in their small groups. In order to not limit their creativity, there is no formal template for this but their final poster must include the following:

- Name
- Values
- Goal
- Playing Area
- Equipment
- Rules
- Roles
- Structure

Groups will be provided with clipboards and scratch paper and their final product should be copied onto a flip-chart paper for presentation to the other groups.

### Closing (5 min)

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At the end of this session, have everyone clean up space and tell them about tomorrow, that they will have a short amount of time to finish their sport re-design and then they will be presenting it to the group. At least 3 groups will get to present, hopefully more, but everyone should be prepared to present and receive feedback from the facilitator and their peers.

### **SESSION 3**

*Background and framing for facilitator:*

The third 90-minute session is focused on finishing the sport re-design and presenting the new sports to their peers for feedback and practicing coaching and facilitation skills. Ideally every group will be able to present but there may only be time for 3-4 groups.

#### **Finalize Sport Re-Design (20 min)**

Groups will have time to finish their sport re-design and prepare for their presentations. Each group should be ready to teach their new sport to the rest of the group as if we were a group of campers arriving at their activity during camp. They will receive feedback from their peers as well as from the facilitator.

#### **New Sport Presentations (60 min)**

Each group will teach their new sport to the group and act as if we are a group of campers arriving at their activity during camp. They will receive feedback from their peers as well as from the facilitator.

Ideally 3-4 groups will be able to present and receive feedback during the hour-long block of time.

#### **Closing (10 min)**

Do a brief closing circle and have people share what they learned and what they will be bringing back to camp.

### **BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP:**

This Specialty Track is intended for Cornerstone Fellows to develop their skills in thinking about sports at camp and how we can use them to achieve certain outcomes with our campers or community. Parts of it can certainly be replicated at camp for sports specialists or anyone responsible for programming at camp. The concept of sport re-design and the new games/sports created during this track can definitely be used at camps without much modification.