

Don't Speak: A Nonverbal Counseling Workshop, Elective 2

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SUMMARY:	Participants will experience nonverbal communication as an alternative tool for teaching. Fellows will accomplish tasks over the course of the session without any verbal instruction using nonverbal games and exercises. And then we will explore how the intentionality of language is abused or ignored in our world today.- <i>Submitted by Jon Adam Ross (JAR)</i>
TOPICS:	Camp-wide/Large Group Programs, Communication Skills, Community Building, Group Dynamics, Jewish Text, Jewish Values, Leadership Development, Team Building
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	The participants will be able to take several exercises and games back to camp that can be played to help build group dynamics without talking. They will also be given skills to use when trying to develop programming to accomplish group tasks in a nonverbal way. This is a really great workshop to lead during staff week.
AUDIENCE:	Staff (great for staff week), CIT's
LENGTH:	30-60 Minutes
APPENDICES:	don't speak text
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paint brushes for every participant + leader (they can be real cheap skinny ones, and we can throw them away after) • 4 tubes of cheap paint (variety of colors) • 3' x 8' piece of white butcher paper • 4' x 9' piece of tarp or cloth to use under butcher paper A bucket of water (to put the brushes in when we're done)
SETTING:	wide open space where we can paint on tarp (not an indoor room)

Session Description:

Everyone will be sitting in a circle. I will pass the clap in a game where i clap and wait until the person next to me realizes that i want them to pass the clap around the circle. Once we successfully get that going, I'll add in a pat the lap to be passed in the opposite direction at the same time as the clap is going around. Then I'll stand the group up. I will play a game where i clap at someone and they clap back. And then i stomp my foot at someone and they stomp back. And then i say "bum" to someone and they "bum" back. This is a great way to get people in the 'ready position' as a warmup activity. Then I will sit down and everyone will sit down.

I will have the paintbrushes hidden behind me under a sweatshirt. I will verbally ask for everyone to put one object already in their possession in the middle of the circle (a shoe, a watch, a water bottle). I will then lead the group without instruction to play "this is a what". The way "this is a what" works is that everyone contributes one object in their possession to the middle of the circle. I take those objects and give them names (a brush, a hat, a shoe, etc.) I will then teach the group to say "This is a brush. A what? A hat. A what? A hat. Oh, a hat!" And the group will repeat it as a group until its time to start the game. I will pass the first object to the person next to me and we will say the conversational phrase. Then after the "oh" line, that person will grab what I'm holding and offer it to the person next to me in the same way as I offer a new object to the person again. In a couple of minutes, everyone in the circle is having a conversation with the only word different being the object they are passing. Eventually, as we play "this is a what" I will phase out the objects and replace them with paintbrushes.

I will then stand up with my paintbrush and begin to walk away from the circle. Nonverbally, I will ensure that

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the person to my right follows me, and so on, until the circle becomes a straight line of people marching/walking through the camp holding up their paintbrushes. The liaisons will gather the objects left in the circle and bring them to the art room.

I will lead the group all around the camp in a variety of marching that will include dance breaks, arm raising, tree hugging, etc. The group will march under trees, through buildings (it is best to map out the path ahead of time) before the fellows arrive on camp). This will be led completely nonverbally and the goal is to get the group to see the camp through different eyes while also seeing how easy it is to follow directions without verbal instruction – through modeling of course.

Eventually we will make our way into the art room where a long piece of butcher paper will be laid out on the ground with bowls of paint around the edges. I will take my paintbrush and lead everyone to stand in a circle around the butcher paper. I will then dip my paintbrush into the paint and make a mark on the paper. The hope is that everyone will follow suit and will paint lines (squiggly, straight, and other) on the paper.

I will then place my paintbrush in a bucket of water that will be nearby. Everyone will (hopefully by my lead) do the same with their brushes and I will lead them back outside to do a couple of exercises. “Can I have your space?” and “triangle” are usually great games for this non-verbal workshop because they are nonverbal in execution. “Can I have your space?” is a game in which all participants save for one are standing in a circle facing in. There is one person on the inside of the circle who goes to each person and asks for their space. The only thing the circle is allowed to say is “no.” But they should be communicating using eye contact and body language with other people in the circle to switch places. If the person in the middle gets to an empty space first, the odd man out is now the odd man in. And the game keeps going. The “triangle” game is part of series of exercises derived from the theater technique known as “viewpoints” in which floor pattern is used in exercises illustrating the building blocks of theater. These games deal with skills of group awareness.

The group will then sit to debrief and discuss how these exercises and the theory of nonverbal teaching/leading can be applied at camp. It is at this time that someone will be asked to read Genesis 11: 1-9 so they can discuss how the exercises that day in learning how to work together as a group nonverbally relate to the Tower of Babel.

I will take the conversation now into a different direction, to talk about language in the world and then at camp. I will ask everyone to think of an example of words/terms that different people use differently. I'll give the example of Isis/Daesh/Isil but also words that some cultures find offensive, but own for themselves. Then we'll talk about what this looks like at camp.

And we will discuss how the voice can mislead (יעקוב קל הקל), bringing it back to the fact that body language is many times more accurate than speech. One thing that's good to talk about here is a woodshop. If there's a woodshop in camp, and machines are humming loudly, saws, etc., then staff members cannot communicate with campers verbally. They have to use visual and physical cues – body language – to keep campers safe and following directions. So the group will talk about that and how that can apply in other places in camp, and how those skills can be taught.

Additional Notes for Bringing it Back to Camp: Each of the games could be done separately!