

<b>AUTHOR:</b>	Ariella Rosen
<b>SUMMARY:</b>	An exploration of how to make spaces and communities inclusive and accessible through the framework of building and welcoming guests into a Sukkah. - <i>Submitted by Ariella Rosen</i>
<b>TOPICS:</b>	Communication Skills, Community Building, Group Dynamics, Holidays and Celebrations, Inclusion- Special Needs, Jewish Culture, Jewish Text, Jewish Values, Leadership Development, Team Building
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b>	Participants will practice and internalize methods for making physical spaces and communities accepting and embracing of everyone.
<b>AUDIENCE:</b>	This session is best done in a group that is of medium size- around 20-30 people, but can be implemented for groups that are slightly larger or smaller. This session would benefit staff, but would also work well with campers of all ages.
<b>LENGTH:</b>	75-90 Minutes
<b>APPENDIXES:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ariella ST3 Handout 1</li> <li>● Ariella ST3 Handout 2</li> <li>● Ariella ST3 Handout 3</li> <li>● Ariella ST3 Handout 4</li> </ul>
<b>MATERIALS:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 copy Handout 1</li> <li>● Multiple copies of Handout 2 (per number of groups)</li> <li>● 1 copy Handout 3</li> <li>● 1 copy Handout 4 (Video clip)</li> <li>● approx. 50 feet of sturdy string</li> <li>● blankets</li> <li>● pillows</li> <li>● cardboard boxes of various sizes</li> <li>● blank white paper</li> <li>● assorted markers</li> <li>● glue sticks</li> <li>● tissue paper, construction paper, and any other materials one might use for decorating</li> <li>● scissors</li> <li>● tape</li> </ul>
<b>SETTING:</b>	Flipchart paper, markers, chairs set up in 2 circles on opposite ends of the room

#### Session Description:

##### **Strangers in a Strange Land Game (adapted from Sarra Alpert) (15 min)**

- Welcome participants and immediately split them into two groups, and send them to opposite sides of the room. Give members of each group a sticker to wear to distinguish them from one another. (Groups should be far enough apart so that they are unable to hear each other or even see clearly what the other group is doing, but close enough that you can easily switch people

between them.)

- Give each group the instructions listed in **Handout 1**. (Instructions for both groups are identical, but the customs are not. Each group should not know anything about what the other is being told.)
- Repeat the instructions and make sure they are understood (customs should not be written down). Then give each group a very basic discussion question – i.e. go around and describe something like an average day at school, discuss your thoughts on a recent world event, etc). They should start talking, keeping to their new society customs.
- After a few minutes of conversation, start moving people from one group to the other. Do not give any instructions either to the person you're switching or to the groups as a whole about how they should handle the new people or handle being in a new group. Let them make their own spontaneous decisions about their response.
- Let the conversation continue for 5-10 minutes. In that time, not everyone needs to be moved, and about half of each original group should remain in place.
- Bring the group back together and discuss:
  - How did you feel when you came into the new group? Did you feel welcomed? Comfortable? Overwhelmed? Did you ask someone to explain the things that were being said and done which were unfamiliar to you?
  - For everyone: How did the group react as a whole to having a new person in the circle? Did anyone try to explain your group's customs to the new people? If not, was it funny to watch someone who didn't "get" what was going on around them? How did you think the group was "supposed" to act in relating to a new person who didn't know your customs?
  - What are customs that you encounter regularly that are never explained? (At camp, in the Jewish world, in the world at large?)
  - How is this challenge intensified when involving individuals with disabilities?
  - How might we prevent anyone from feeling like a stranger?

### **Show Torrie Dunlap TEDTalk (through minute 2:40). (5 min)**

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJ7QaCFbizo>
- Ask participants: What questions do we forget to ask, or are afraid to ask when trying to make sure everyone feels included?
- Explain to participants that this summer, they have the opportunity to create a new culture and a new set of customs in their bunks, and they also have the opportunity to ask the questions that will enable everyone to participate in that culture. They will begin by practicing it now.

### **Sukkah-Building 101 (25 minutes)**

- Explain to participants: They will now engage in the age-old Jewish tradition of building a Sukkah. A Sukkah is a temporary hut that the ancient Israelites built to dwell in when managing their harvests out in the fields. Many Jews today build Sukkot during the holiday of Sukkot, and eat and dwell in them throughout the week.
- This challenge will include two components: actual Sukkah construction and development of an activity to take place within the Sukkah.
- Each group will strive to make their Sukkah as accessible and welcoming as possible, using the guidelines and materials they are handed.
- The activity should take the form of an icebreaker. The activity you plan should meet the goal of welcoming in anyone who enters your Sukkah.
- Participants will have 20 minutes to complete both tasks, following the guidelines they are given to the best of their abilities.

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- Divide participants into groups of 6-8, and give each group a copy of the Sukkah-building guidelines. In addition, hand each participant a strip of paper which indicates ways in which they are to behave throughout the activity. (The list can be found in Handout 2.) Participants should display this behavior for the duration of this activity.

### Welcoming in Ushpizin (20 min)

- Once groups have completed building their Sukkot, explain:  
There is a tradition during the holiday of Sukkot, of ushpizin (write on flipchart paper), of guests that each night come to visit the Sukkah. Traditionally they are biblical characters, but some also like to imagine other famous figures from history or from your family ancestry who come to pay a visit.  
Today, you are each others' ushpizin.
- Participants will have two rounds of visiting, each round lasting about 5 minutes. Each group should choose around 2 people who will stay behind to host in their Sukkah (this includes facilitating the icebreaker). If they would like, each group should choose 2 others who will take over as hosts for the second round.
- After both rounds of visiting, invite everyone back into one large group.
- Ask participants to share:
  - An example they saw of good inclusive practices from another group
  - An example of how inclusion could be improved, with a suggestion of how to do so.

### Bringing it Back to Camp (20 min)

Debrief the activity with participants:

- What felt challenging about the activity?
- What felt easy?
- Did you feel like you met your accessibility goals? If not, what obstacles were in the way?
- How did you respond to the behaviors of others? How did others respond to you? What (would have) helped you feel understood?
- When faced with a group task, what role do you normally fall into? How can you look out for some of the needs reflected on these cards and other "invisible disabilities" among your campers?
- Debrief the overall experience (invite participants to write or draw):
- What is something specific that you are bringing to camp
- What additional items should be added to the toolkit? options for how to participate, behavior is communication
- What questions do you still have about inclusion?

Congratulate participants on taking this journey!

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

This session can be used directly as a staff training program, especially with counselors who have campers with disabilities in their bunks. This session can be used to break down barriers between cliques and address other group dynamics issues among campers and/or staff.

### APPENDIXES:



## **CORNERSTONE 2016 RESOURCE**

**ARIELLA ST3 HANDOUT 1**

**ARIELLA ST3 HANDOUT 2**

**ARIELLA ST3 HANDOUT 3**

**ARIELLA ST3 HANDOUT 4**