



## CORNERSTONE 2016 RESOURCE

### That Stinks! What Can I Do About It?, *Elective 2*

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| <b>AUTHOR:</b>             | Sara Beth Berman  |
| <b>SUMMARY:</b>            | Bad things happen - at camp, at school, at home, in the world - and we're not always sure how to deal with them. And while "bad" can range from "ran out of grilled cheese at lunch today" to a serious, tragic loss, the truth is everybody needs a way to deal. As camp counselors, as college students, and as seasoned adults, we need a way to frame and process. In this elective, we'll play with some pop culture resources to help prepare for bad circumstances, and deal with them when they come up during the summer. - <i>Submitted by Sara Beth Berman</i>   |
| <b>TOPICS:</b>             | Communication Skills  |
| <b>LEARNING OBJECTIVE:</b> | <p><b><u>Broad Subject and Skills</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Being prepared to discuss bad things at camp is an important thing.</li> <li>2. Learning about the concept of theodicy – that God can exist while evil is in the world – is important for camp, where tragedy still occurs, from running out of grilled cheese at lunch to serious, tragic loss</li> <li>3. Discussions about God at camp, and elsewhere, fosters spiritual development in both staff and campers.</li> <li>4. Using pop culture texts (music, movies, etc.) can frame discussion topics that are hard for both staff and campers to swallow.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Understanding</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pop culture texts are good grabbers when trying to bridge into a serious conversation.</li> <li>2. There is a tension in our world between God existing and bad things happening.</li> <li>3. I am capable of discussing these challenging subjects with my campers in a meaningful way.</li> <li>4. I am capable of managing the feelings of campers by choosing, playing, and / or singing music that helps us feel feelings.</li> <li>5. Theodicy is a term that can be used to describe a wide range of evil things that happen in the world where God exists.</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Essential Questions</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is theodicy, and how does it play into life at camp?</li> <li>2. What do Jewish texts say about theodicy?</li> <li>3. How can pieces of pop culture help me open / facilitate discussions at camp?</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Knowledge and Skills</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Counselors will know how to define the concept of theodicy in an age-appropriate way for campers.</li> <li>2. Counselors will be able to discuss these issues with their campers.</li> <li>3. Counselors will be able to use pop culture to deal with heavy issues at camp and in their lives.</li> </ol> |
| <b>AUDIENCE:</b>           | Targeted for Staff.<br>Contains material for age groups 6th grade and older. Better for staff, older campers, but can be adapted  |
| <b>LENGTH:</b>             | 75-90 Minutes   |
| <b>APPENDICES:</b>         | <p><b><u>Essential Texts</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Mr. Hooper's Dead (Sesame Street)</a></li> </ol>   |



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|                           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. <a href="#">Telling Everyone that Someone Died (Grey's Anatomy)</a></li> <li>3. <a href="#">Dealing with Death - It's Scary (Grey's Anatomy)</a></li> <li>4. <a href="#">Cry It Out 2016 Spotify Playlist</a></li> <li>5. Other resources:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <a href="#">Biden talking about his son on Colbert</a></li> <li>b. <a href="#">Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close - Asking for Me</a></li> </ol> </li> </ol> |
| <b>MATERIALS NEEDED:</b>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="#">Grumpy Cat Image to Project</a></li> <li>2. AV Setup - to project video and also play music</li> <li>3. iPhone Speaker</li> </ol>  |
| <b>SETTING SUGGESTED:</b> | Nothing special, other than chairs and the AV. Can be run without the video projection by using printed Grumpy Cat pictures. Audio is excellent for the cry it out playlist.   |

### Session Description:

#### Opening Activity // Time: 25 minutes

Play [Cry It Out 2016 Spotify Playlist](#) as fellows walk into the room - we'll go back to this

1. The Worst (20 minutes):
  - a. AGREE: We're going to talk about stuff in this session that can be hard to talk about. I'd like to create a circle of trust. The topics we're broaching can be sensitive and I want you to feel safe discussing them. Can we get a thumbs up that we'll support the people in this session? Thank you!
  - b. The WORST:
    - i. Project image of Grumpy Cat, ask fellows to share what makes them "grumpy" at camp:
      1. Running out of a particular type of food, having a lingering cold, being really tired, co-counselor issues, camper issues, lightning storms, cliques...
    - ii. Play bits from: "Everybody Hurts" by REM / "Overkill" by Colin Hay / "Forever Young" by Alphaville (From the [Cry It Out 2016 Spotify Playlist](#))
      1. Why did I choose these songs?
      2. How does music work to help you bring out your feelings, and manage them?
      3. Can you think of different songs for different situations? How would you use them, and why?
      4. Here's a link to the [Cry It Out 2016 Spotify Playlist](#) that I made for Cornerstone this year, with input from about 160 Facebook commentators. You can add your own songs to it in the future.
    - iii. Now, more serious stuff. What's the WORST at camp:
      1. Loss in the family, bullying, people getting fired/sent home, injury...
  - c. OK so there's two parts to what is going to happen in this session today:
    - i. First, we're going to identify some real times in camp when having the words, music, or "seychel" (Yiddish for common sense) to deal with a situation will come in handy.
      1. For example:
        - a. The kitchen runs out of grilled cheese at lunch. What is your response?
        - b. Your camper's parent dies during the session and they have to

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go home. How do you help your campers process? (PLEASE include your social workers, leadership, and year-round staff in dealing with such a situation. You can't and should not do this alone!)

- ii. Second, we're going to identify how to prepare for such things, and contrast with what it would look like in real time. Meaning, you can prepare to deal with a tragedy, but pulling out a Grumpy Cat meme picture AFTER your co-counselor gets fired will not work out for you, probably.
- iii. PS - a third thing: There are spoilers in this session. I'll warn you, but ALSO, this is about dealing with TRAGEDY. Knowing who died in season whatever of whichever show is not as bad.
- d. Discussion questions (5 minutes):
  - i. What's up with the soundtrack?
    - 1. (The playlist contains songs that you could, in theory, pick through to play to deal with your feelings. It has all sorts of songs that work for different people with different experiences. The commonality in the playlist is that each song helps someone potentially struggle through a tough time, situation, or moment)
  - ii. So how did those meme pictures make you feel?
  - iii. How can images like these help you help your campers or co-staff process something that sucks?
  - iv. What is the one thing you hope to get out of this session? Please, let's keep that in mind as we move forward and target our discussions.

### Step-by-Step Session Description // Time: 50 minutes

- 1. Dealing with Death (20 minutes):
  - a. [Dealing with Death - It's Scary \(Grey's Anatomy\)](#) (1:04 clip - 8 minutes)
    - i. Discussion questions:
      - 1. Can you think of a time when you adhered to a superstition at camp, and how it guided the community?
      - 2. What from this clip is important to talk about when discussing bad things happening at camp?
      - 3. How does this clip help you understand some of your campers' feelings about bad things happening - at camp or outside of camp?
  - b. Jewish Text (12 minutes) There's a Jewish way to deal with this stuff, of course! Let's look at some texts. I pulled some texts that specifically have to do with treating the less fortunate in Judaism - the stranger, the widow, the oppressed.

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| Exodus 22:21-23   |  |
| <p>21 Do not mistreat a widow or an orphan. 22 If you mistreat them, and they cry out to Me, I will hear their cry. 23 I will [then] display My anger and kill you by the sword, so that your wives will be widows, and your children, orphans.</p> | <p>כא כָּל-אַלְמָנָה וְיָתוּם, לֹא תַעֲנוּן. כב<br/> אִם-עֲנִיהַ תַּעֲנֶנָּה, אֹתוֹ--כִּי אִם-צָעַק יִצְעַק<br/> אֵלַי, שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקָתוֹ. כג וְחָרָה<br/> אַפִּי, וְהִרְגֹתִי אֶתְכֶם בְּחָרֶב; וְהָיוּ נְשֵׁיכֶם<br/> אַלְמָנוֹת, וּבְנֵיכֶם יִתְמָיִם.</p> |

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| Isaiah 1:17   |   |
| Learn to do well; Seek justice, relieve the oppressed, Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.   | יֵז לְמַדּוּ הַיָּטִב דְּרָשׁוּ מִשְׁפָּט, אֲשֶׁרוּ<br>חֲמוּץ; שְׁפֹטוּ יָתוּם, רִיבוּ אֶלְמָנָה.   |
| Jeremiah 7:5-6  |   |
| <p>5 Nay, but if ye thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if ye thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbour;</p> <p>6 if ye oppress not the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, and shed not innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other gods to your hurt;7 then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, for ever and ever.</p> | הַ כִּי אִם-הַיָּטִיב תִּיטִיבוּ, אֶת-דְּרֹכֵיכֶם<br>וְאֶת-מַעַלְלֵיכֶם: אִם-עָשׂוּ תַעֲשׂוּ<br>מִשְׁפָּט, בֵּין אִישׁ וּבֵין רֵעֵהוּ.<br>וְגַר יָתוּם וְאֶלְמָנָה, לֹא תַעֲשִׁקוּ, וְדָם<br>נָקִי, אַל-תִּשְׁפְּכוּ בַמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה; וְאַחֲרֵי<br>אֱלֹהִים אַחֲרָיִם לֹא תֵלְכוּ, לְרַע לָכֶם. ז<br>וְשָׁכַנְתִּי אִתְּכֶם, בַּמָּקוֹם הַזֶּה--בְּאֶרֶץ,<br>אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְאֲבוֹתֵיכֶם: לְמֶן-עוֹלָם,<br>וְעַד-עוֹלָם. |

*Hebrew Texts from Mechon-Mamre.org / English from BibleORT and/or Sefaria.org. Texts compiled in this article: <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/widows-in-jewish-tradition/2/#>*

c. Discussion Questions:

- i. These texts talk specifically about populations that God and the prophets were interested in protecting. Why do you think these people are a focus for protection and care?
- ii. God gets really angry in the Exodus quote - why do you think the punishment is so severe in this case?
- iii. Based on your experiences as a staff member at your camp, who are the people you most feel the need to protect and care for, above and beyond the typical camper?
- iv. If you had to restate one of the texts above, using words that apply to the people in your camp you're trying to protect, what would it look and sound like?

2. Two Really Sad Clips + SPOILER ALERTS (20 minutes):

a. Mr. Hooper's Not Coming Back (Sesame Street):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gxli4Tk83xQ> (5:57 clip - 10 minutes)

i. Discussion Questions:

1. What does this video clip have to teach you about teaching about loss to your campers?
2. What are some of the lines that impacted you in this clip?
  - a. "It'll never be the same without him, but we were lucky to be with him, and have memories of him."
  - b. "Memories, that's how I drew this picture!"
  - c. "I don't like it. It makes me sad."
  - d. "It has to be this way...because." "Just because?" "Just because."



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3. How would you use this clip when talking to your kids?
  4. If you're not playing the clip, how could you use Big Bird's friends' advice to help your campers process something difficult?
- b. Derek's Dead (Grey's Anatomy): <http://www.hulu.com/watch/786139> (1:17 clip - 10 minutes)
- i. Discussion Questions
    1. What does this video clip have to teach you about teaching about loss to your campers?
    2. What about this clip helps you reflect on the experience at camp of having something bad happen to you? (loss at home, before or during camp / dealing with a catastrophic illness / etc.)
      - a. To one of your campers?
  - c. Discussion questions (5 minutes):
    - i. How can clips like these help you be a better counselor?
    - ii. How would you use clips like these at camp?
    - iii. How would you use clips like this to reach / teach other staff? Campers?

### **Bringing it Back to Camp (15 Minutes):**

- How would you use the texts we studied today with campers? With staff?
- Which of the media most surprised you?
- What's one thing you learned today that will help you be a better staff member - and how will you use that skill?

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

Adapting this program is better in parts. It's suggested that these pieces are chopped into manageable, bite-size pieces, for targeted use at camp. Preview the songs on the playlist to make sure they're appropriate for your age of campers, and also your camp's policies.

It's also suggested that these are done BEFORE dealing with a challenging loss.

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(Handout 1)

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| <p>Exodus 22:21-23</p> <p>21 Do not mistreat a widow or an orphan. 22 If you mistreat them, and they cry out to Me, I will hear their cry. 23 I will [then] display My anger and kill you by the sword, so that your wives will be widows, and your children, orphans.</p>   | <p>כא כָּל-אַלְמָנָה וַיְתוּם, לֹא תַעֲנוּן. כב<br/>אִם-עֲנִה תַעֲנֶה, אֲתוּ--כִּי אִם-צָעַק יִצְעַק<br/>אֵלַי, שָׁמַע אֲשַׁמַּע צַעֲקוֹתוֹ. כג וְחָרָה<br/>אָפִי, וְהִרְגַתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּחָרֶב; וְהָיוּ נְשִׁיכֶם<br/>אַלְמָנוֹת, וּבְנֵיכֶם יִתְמִים.</p>  |
| <p>Isaiah 1:17</p> <p>Learn to do well; Seek justice, relieve the oppressed, Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.</p>  | <p>יז לְמַדּוּ הַיֵּטֵב דַּרְשׁוּ מִשְׁפָּט, אֲשֶׁרוּ<br/>חֲמוּץ; שִׁפְטוּ יְתוּם, רִיבוּ אֶלְמָנָה.</p>  |
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