

CORNERSTONE 2017 RESOURCE

Inclusion and Disabilities

Specialty Track 2

AUTHOR(S):	Ariella Rosen
SUMMARY:	This session will explore participants' relationship with difference, and how difference can be celebrated rather than used to make someone feel like an "other." Participants will develop tools for being an ally to campers with disabilities. - <i>Submitted by Ariella Rosen</i>
TOPIC(S):	Disability "allyship," embracing and celebrating difference
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will be able to distinguish between activities, words, and ideas that objectify people with disabilities and those that celebrate the humanity in each person. Participants will develop the tools to celebrate their campers' true accomplishments.
AUDIENCE:	Target age range for the full session would be 15 and older, though individual activities can be modified for younger campers. Ideal group size is 10-30 individuals.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Handout 1 (Gallery Artifacts), Handout 2 (Feedback prompts), Handout 3 (Links to video clips used), Handout 4 (Ally Cards)
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Gallery handout printed, AV capability, Play-doh, pennies, "Set" (the game), fidgets, paper, pens, different color dot stickers, white shipping labels or other stickers that can be drawn on, markers, Handout 4 printed on cardstock and cut out
SET-UP DETAILS:	This session should be held in a medium-to-large indoor space. Set up the gallery by taping images to the walls and placing objects on a table. Place a blank piece of paper next to each object. Set up the computer and projector in a different part of the room. Arrange chairs in a circle away from the gallery, but near where the projector is set up (so everyone can see and hear).

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- 00:00-00:10- Welcome and Gallery Walk
- 00:10-00:25- Labeling Ourselves
- 00:25-00:35- Reacting to Our Labels
- 00:35-01:00- I Am Not Your Inspiration
- 01:00- 01:10- Blessings on Difference
- 01:10-01:30- Returning to the Gallery and Debrief

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Welcome and Gallery Walk (10 min.)

Welcome participants and invite them to begin by wandering through the gallery that has been set up on the other side of the room. Ask them to place stickers next to each artifact according to the color code (written on flip chart paper). Label different artifacts with different colored stickers:

- Blue: I like this
- Red: This makes me uncomfortable
- Green: This is a good example of inclusion
- Yellow: This example of inclusion could be improved

Labeling Ourselves (15 min.)

Invite participants to join the circle. Explain that they have just visited an exhibit in the “Celebrating Difference” museum and explain that the gallery will be revisited later.

Ask participants to write a “label” for themselves on a shipping label – a way that they have been made to feel different or other, or a way in which view themselves as different.

Note: these will be shared with the rest of the group. (Participants can put something cryptic on the label if they do not feel comfortable sharing their label with others.)

Ask participants to place the label on their forehead, chest, or elsewhere that it is visible.

Invite participants to go around and introduce yourself with your name, camp, pronoun, and label.

Ask participants to consider the answer to the following questions:

- What is something you’ve accomplished in your life of which you are especially proud?
- Why were you proud of yourself?

Participants may write, draw, or think deeply about their answer to that question. Let participants know that they will be invited, but not required, to share their moment with the group.

Reacting to Our Labels (10 min.)

Invite three volunteers to share their moment of pride. Hand out slips of paper (Handout 2) to everyone else, announcing that they are feedback instructions. Half of the slips will read:

“React to the speaker’s story only. Ignore their label.”

“React to the speaker’s story and their label. (For example, ‘Despite your [insert label here], you...’)”

Before volunteer storytellers begin, they should announce: “My name is _____ and I am [what is written on their label].”

After a participant is done speaking, invite others to react based on what was handed to them on their slip of paper. Participants will either give feedback based on story alone, or on the story and the label.

Ask volunteers:

- How did it feel to listen to people’s reactions and feedback?

Ask responders:

- Was it hard to ignore the label if you were asked to do so? Was it hard to respond to the label?

Ask everyone:

- What if you could not take your label off? What if the only thing anyone noticed about you was your label?

“I Am Not Your Inspiration” (25 min.)

Share Stella Young’s TEDTalk: “I am not your inspiration, thank you very much.” (Approx. 10 minutes)

https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en

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Ask participants for reactions to the video and debrief:

- How does it change or not change your approach to your job as a counselor this summer?
- What is the difference between inspiration and accomplishment? How can they as counselors enable all of their campers to truly shine?
- Based on Stella Young's words, what could it mean to be an ally? What would it look like to be an ally to a camper who has a disability?

Share two definitions of ally:

1. The Anti-Oppression Network defines an allyship as “an active, consistent and arduous practice of unlearning and reevaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group of people.”
2. Disability activist Anna Corbitt explains, “In summary, an ally is someone who supports the cause of a marginalized group — women, people of color, people with disabilities, people in the LGBTQ community, people with low income, etc. — and uses their privilege to learn from that group and amplify their cause.” (<http://www.paraquad.org/blog/how-to-be-an-ally-of-the-disability-community/>)

In Hebrew, the word for ally is “**baal brit**,” literally, someone who is upholding a promise.

- How do these two definitions help you understand what it means to be an ally?
- How can you be an ally and a counselor at the same time?
- How do we stand up for our campers and fellow staff in their differences?

Blessings on Difference (10 min.)

Judaism has a blessing for everything. It's a way of noticing things, making sure they are special and stand out in some way. Many camps have a culture of saying blessings at certain times. If your camp is one of them, what are they and when do you say them? (They are likely mostly on food.)

There's a blessing that the ancient rabbis said should be recited upon seeing someone who looks different, specifically with a disability. “Praised is the One Who diversifies creation.” [or, Who makes people different]. Show “Meshaneh et Habriyot” blessing written on flipchart paper.

Gather initial reactions among the group. Put up fingers 1-4. 4 is “I love this,” 1 is “I really dislike this,” and 2 and 3 are in the middle, leaning toward “dislike” or “like” respectively.

Ask participants to discuss their initial reactions with another person in the room who put up a different number of fingers than they did for 2 minutes.

Acknowledge mixed feelings about this blessing in the disabilities community.

Discuss:

- What do you like about this blessing? What about it is challenging?
- What might the sentiment behind the blessing be? (Why might someone have written it?)
- Who should it apply to? In what situations should it be said today?
- Can this blessing be reclaimed in a more positive way? If so, how?
- What are ways that we can celebrate differences among people, not erase disability, but also not “other” anyone?

Returning to the Gallery and Debrief (10 min.)

Invite participants back into the gallery. Ask them to notice their reactions.

- Which artifacts do you react to differently? Which artifacts feel the same?
- Which of these artifacts would you want to share with your campers this summer to teach them about allyship and inclusion?
- Go through the flow of the session: What were techniques and decisions that you noticed that made these activities more accessible and inclusive? Where did they fall short? (Add them to the “toolkit” by writing responses on flipchart paper.)

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Give each participant a card (Handout 4). On one side is written: Meshaneh et Habriyot – Who Makes People Different: Being an Ally.” Also written on the front is the question: “What is one way I can celebrate and elevate difference without “othering?” Ask participants to write their answer to that question on the back of the card, making sure their name is on it. Ask them to please return it to the facilitator.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

The gallery set-up can be used as a technique for a number of types of activities, including reflecting on the summer at the end of camp, celebrating someone’s birthday, etc. By using the gallery as is (or by selecting which specific artifacts you’d like to use), as well as the label activity, you can explore challenging bunk dynamics, bullying, etc. Ask campers to reflect on difference and on how it impacts them.