

Learning From Experience *Specialty Track 1*

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SUMMARY:	Where does learning come from? How do we make the most of camp experiences by harnessing the power of our campers' lived experiences? In this session, you will uncover the power of experience in achieving new understandings. - <i>Submitted by Akiko Yonekawa</i>
TOPIC(S):	Understanding how we move from experience to understanding Learning how we can facilitate development of understanding for other people
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will be able to identify how understanding and experience are linked and begin to make choices about aligning experiences with desired outcomes.
AUDIENCE:	This session is intended for people who are interested in creating learning environments such as programs where knowledge goals are aligned with participant experiences.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Learning from Experience.pdf
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Small booklets for journaling Flip Chart Ping Pong balls Cups
SET-UP DETAILS:	Big room with room to move around and chairs in a circle

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

00:00-00:10 Introductions
 00:10-00:30 Our Own Learning Experiences
 00:30-00:45 Action and Reflection
 00:45-1:00 What are Experiences?
 1:00-1:20 Text Study
 1:20-1:30 Closure

00:00-00:10 Introductions
 Participants will go around the room and introduce themselves with their names and camps and answer and tell the group why they chose this track.

00:10-00:30 Our Own Learning Experiences

Participants will be asked to think of one of their deeply held beliefs. They will have five minutes to write a journal entry about where they learned that value or when they had to apply it.

In pairs, participants will share the story of where they learned that value.

The group will come back together and share what they noticed about how people in the group came to learn something. Who was present? Was there a challenge involved? How did they transform an experience into an understanding?

00:30-00:45 Action and Reflection

Facilitator will ask for a volunteer. This person will get up in front of the group and try to throw a ping pong ball in a cup by banking it off the floor. After the first try, the person will explain to the group what they think they will do to get it in the next time. Once that person has gotten the ball in the cup a few times, the facilitator will ask the person to explain what they did each time to adjust their throw in order to get the ball in the cup the next time.

Facilitator will ask for another volunteer. This person will also try to land the ball in the cup and go through the same process of explaining.

Facilitator will ask the group why the second person didn't land the ball in the cup with the same precision as the person before? The second person heard the first person's explanation.

We learn from our ability to reflect on our experience and try again. Having someone else explain to us how to do something is a poor substitute for our own experience of trying it ourselves.

Facilitator will introduce the concept of an action reflection cycle where a person has a challenge situation and learns from it based on reflection.

How can our stories of learning be understood through the action reflection cycle?

00:45-1:00 What are Experiences?

In groups of four, participants will be asked to brainstorm experiences that they have had so far at Cornerstone by writing them on index cards. Each person will write as many experiences as they can identify. These can be any experience they have had: meeting someone new, eating dinner, opening program, registration, etc.

Together, the group will categorize the experiences that they have written by reading out the experiences and looking for similarities among them.

The whole group will come back together and share their categories.

1:00-1:20 Text Study

We can find models for categories of experiences from the Torah.

In pairs, read through the sources on the source sheet and ask what types of experiences people are learning from in each source.



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1:20-1:30 Closure

When it comes to camp, we have experiences that we create and experiences that we harness. We have experiences that ask people to experience what someone else experiences and ones that set people up to accept understanding in a certain way. The trick is to know which experience you are going to create and why.

Before closing the session, each person will share a question with which they are leaving the session.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP: