

Inclusion and Disabilities: Exhibit Ableism *Specialty Track 1*

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SUMMARY:	This session focuses on the different ways that we use language in particular to make individuals with disabilities feel marginalized, and how we can make change by accessing our own experiences with difference. - <i>Submitted by Ariella Rosen</i>
TOPIC(S):	Inclusion-Disabilities, Identity
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	Participants will be able to notice and articulate many of the subtle ways in which people with disabilities are made to feel “othered” through language and action, as well as ways they can participate in ending this.
AUDIENCE:	The various activities in this session can work for a variety of ages. Taken as a whole, this is best geared toward older campers (ages 13 and up) and staff. Ideal group size is 10-30.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	Museum Checklist and Art, Say It Right Poster
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<p>playdoh (5-6 small containers) koosh balls flipchart paper colorful yarn scissors large sheets of butcher paper markers devices for playing video clips Small drum, chime, or triangle colorful dot stickers (office supply-type) Assorted objects representing disability in our world (Special Olympics medal, the books “Wonder” and “The Reason I Jump,” the game “Set,” 2-3 small mirrors, assortment of coins, news articles, etc. See appendices for more ideas)</p>

SET-UP DETAILS:

This should take place in an indoor space with a lot of room to move around. Screen and projector should be set up as well.

In advance, place flipchart color key (for museum reactions) on the wall in a visible place.

Tables should be set up around the periphery of the room, and the artifacts for the museum should be placed on the tables and/or on the walls of the room if possible. The butcher paper should be set up on the floor either in the middle of the room or far away from the rest of the exhibit. Depending on the size of the space, tape arrows can be placed on the ground guiding participants through the museum.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Timeline:

00:00-00:10 Welcome

00:10-00:40 Museum Visit

00:40-01:00 I Am Not Your Inspiration

01:00- 01:20 Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof

01:20-01:30 Debrief

Welcome (10 min)

Welcome everyone to the specialty track. Go around and share name, camp, pronouns.

Establish communal norms:

- Fidgets are available for anyone who would like at any point
- Anyone is welcome at any time to stand up and take a break
- Agreed upon confidentiality
- Disclaimer 1 (if applicable): As an able-bodied person, it can be complicated to speak for and about a group which is not a part of my identity. It's important to bring in voices from the disabilities community as much as possible, and to have the humility to know that I cannot fully speak for the experience of having disability.
- Disclaimer 2: We may accidentally use language and/or make assumptions that are hurtful. Assume good intentions. Mistakes are okay, as are gentle corrections!

Museum Visit (30 min)

Give the following directions: Welcome to the Museum of Inclusion. In it, you'll find artifacts from both Jewish culture and modern popular culture. For the next several minutes, you're invited to move through this museum at your own pace. Each of you will have a sheet of stickers with which to react to the artifacts that you see. Please refer to the color key at the front of the room. At random intervals, you'll hear a drum beat or a chime. When you do, turn to the person standing closest to you and explore the nearest artifact together. When you hear the sound again, you can return to wandering the museum on your own. (Make the sound every 4 minutes or so for 1 minute. Participants will likely take 10-15 minutes to make their way through the museum.)

Color Code:

- Blue - This reminds me of something in my life
- Green - Love this!
- Red - This makes me feel uncomfortable or upset
- Yellow - hmmm, I don't get it

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At the end of the museum, participants will find a large piece of paper on the ground, along with markers and the following instructions:

- Draw two circles on the paper, each about the size of your hand.
 - In the first circle, write: A moment in which, or a part of my identity for which I have been made to feel different or “other” in my life.
 - In the second circle, write: A time, place, or person that made me feel like I truly belonged. (If you can, please be more specific than just “camp!”)
- When you are finished, stand on the edge of the paper near your circles and wait for the rest of the group to join you.

Sit down around the edge of the paper and debrief:

- Solicit reactions from the museum. What did you notice about how the experience was structured?
- What artifacts elicited the strongest reactions, both positive and negative?
- What is an artifact about which you have a question?
- How did it feel to contribute your own experiences to the museum exhibit?
- Why do you think we ended with this activity?

Now, we’re going to take this a step further. Instruct as follows: Keep your marker, and move around the paper. Each time you feel a connection between what you wrote and what another person wrote, draw a line from their circle to yours.

Come back together and reflect:

- What do you notice about the web?
- How can we use our own experiences to be more mindful of our campers’ experiences?
- What is the difference between Empathy and Sympathy?
 - Brene Brown: “Empathy is feeling WITH people...In order to connect with you, I have to connect with something in myself that knows that feeling (vs. “at least...” and sympathy as a way of causing more of a divide.)
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=34&v=1Evwgu369Jw for more on this)

Explain that even from a place of good intentions, it is easy to marginalize others.

Stella Young TED Talk: “I Am Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much” (20 min)

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

Ask participants for general reactions to the video and debrief:

- What is the difference between inspiration and accomplishment?
- Define ableism (one way of defining): “Ableism: The ideology that those who are of normative ability are the standard, and those who are not are different. This results in a form of privilege (benefiting those of normative ability and cognition), and both subtle and blatant discrimination against those with disabilities.”
 - How is inspiration porn a form of ableism?
 - What are examples of ableism that you notice in the language that we often use at camp? (How can we prevent campers and staff with disabilities from being infantilized or tokenized?)
 - What are other examples of ableism at camp? In other spaces?

- Based on Stella Young's words, what changes do you want to make in your own behavior? What changes do you want to make in your camp? Write down your answers to both of these questions, as well as 1-2 ideas for how you can make those changes.

Tzedek Tzedek Tirdof (20 min)

Why do this? Why do we care about inclusion?

Reveal these words written on flipchart paper: *Tzedek, Tzedek, Tirdof* - Justice, justice, you shall pursue (Deuteronomy 16:20).

- What does it mean to pursue justice? What happens when we catch it? Can we ever catch it?
- How is inclusion a matter of justice? (You can discuss this in contrast with *chesed*, or kindness. Also an important value, but when it comes to inclusion, can lead to the type of inspiration porn language that Stella Young warned about.)

Ask participants to return to the circles they drew on the giant paper on the floor.

Explain: We are now going to do an activity that is likely familiar to many of you. Each person will pass the ball of yarn to another person to whom they are connected on the web. Make eye contact with them, and if enough time remains, share what connection you've made to that person. If there is no one available who has a line drawn on your turn, consider how you might be connected to someone else in the circle, and toss them the yarn. Before tossing the yarn, wrap it around your wrist once. Once everyone has received the yarn, share the following idea: it is so easy to feel "othered," yet everyone deserves to feel like they truly belong. One way we can do that is by pursuing *tzedek*. Before cutting the string (leaving enough that participants can tie it on as a bracelet), point out the lines of the web. These are the lines that allow you to pursue justice. Follow them back to your own story, and forward to the story of another person. While you'll only wear a small part of it, the rest of that line is invisible, but there. Let this string be a reminder of the goals you wrote down earlier.

Debrief

- What did you notice about the way this session was designed that are mindful of inclusion? (point out fidgets, opportunity to move at one's own pace, some forced interaction, different modalities, etc.)
- Where did the session fall short?
- What other groups or individuals at camp (or in the world at large) do we marginalize through our language and other subtle choices we make? How can we improve ourselves and our communities?
- How do we correct and educate others around us?
- If time, do a go around. Share one word or phrase that you are taking with you.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

Play *Tzedek, Tzedek, Tirdof* as a form of Duck, Duck, Goose. *Tirdof* means to pursue, so the chosen person must literally pursue justice. If they catch justice, everyone should celebrate. If they don't, they must sit in the middle and allow someone else to try. When one person is able to successfully pursue justice, everyone (in the middle) is freed!

While this session was about disability, the same concepts of inclusion apply to other marginalized groups including race, gender, class, nationality, etc.

The museum activity can be used as a staff training activity. Younger campers might benefit from a docent guiding them through the museum.

The web (and the various activities with it) can be used for community building of all sorts at camp.