

CORNERSTONE 2019 RESOURCE

Spirit of the Game: Making Sports and Active Moments Accessible and Inclusive

Elective

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| AUTHOR(S): | Mara Berde, Ariella Rosen |
| SUMMARY: | Camp is full of sports, active programs, and other camp activities that may result in barriers to participation for campers and staff with disabilities. In this session we will model and design sports and activities that enable all members of our communities to shine. - <i>Submitted by Mara Berde and Ariella Rosen</i> |
| TOPIC(S): | Inclusion & Disability, Sports & Games |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVE: | Participants will be able to recognize programs and moments within camp that might be challenging for various participants. They will develop tools to modify existing programs and create new programs that are more inclusive and accessible. |
| AUDIENCE: | Camp counselors or leadership staff; up to 40 participants. (Elements of this program can be modified for teens or younger learners.) |
| TIMING: | 90 minutes |
| APPENDICES: | Guidelines for Design |
| MATERIALS NEEDED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Flipchart paper and markers ● Pinnies (2 colors, enough for all participants) ● Frisbees (4) ● Balls (6 gator balls, 6" size) ● Disc cones (20) ● Poster Board (3) ● Large inflatable dice (2) ● Rainbow flag 8"x 10" (2) ● Kitchen timer ● Whistles (2) |
| SET-UP DETAILS: | <p>Soccer field or large, flat surface (sport court, gym)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Write prompts & behaviors on poster board ● Write ultimate frisbee rules on poster board ● Set up ultimate frisbee fields (2 mini fields instead of one large field, depending on size of group) |

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

00:00 - 00:15 - Hit the Target & Discussion (15 min)

00:15 - 00:55 - Ultimate / Inclusion in Action (40 min)

00:45 - 01:15 - Planning for Camp (30 min)

01:15 - 01:30 - Debrief and Wrap Up (5 min)

Intro Activity: Hit the Target (15 min.)

Place a hula hoop on the ground and designate it as a target. Depending on surface, you can use chalk, string, cones, any other material that can mark a target.) Have additional materials available for making new targets (more on that below).

Invite a few participants forward and hand each of them a ball.

1. Stagger participants so each is a different distance from the hoop, and facing a different direction. Ask them to throw the ball into the target.
2. Ask participants to turn around and face away from the target. Without looking, try to hit the target once again.
3. One final time, ask participants to try to hit the target while facing away. While they aren't looking, draw/place new targets around the objects, no matter where they land.

Ask for a few observations:

- Who had an advantage? Who had a disadvantage?
- What did it mean to be successful in this game? Was it fair?

(Acknowledge that this is a variation on a well-known activity designed to illustrate privilege. [See more here](#). Along with race, class, religion, gender identity, etc. disability is a marginalized identity, and people with disabilities navigate a world designed for and by able-bodied people.)

Ask everyone to think of a time they were not able to operate at their best in an activity- it can be a sport, but doesn't have to be.

What happened? How did it feel? What was done to make it better/what do you wish had been done to make it better?

Use this moment as fuel for the rest of our conversations today.

Reveal the text on poster board, along with the synonyms for “Ruach”

Zecharia 4:6 (Haftarah for Chanukah and for the Torah portion Beha'alotcha)

לֹא בְחֵיל וְלֹא בְכֹחַ כִּי אִם-בְּרוּחֵי אֱמֶת ה' צְבָאוֹת:...

“...**Not by might, nor by power, but by My RUACH**—said God of Hosts.”

[Transliteration of the bold words: *Lo v'chayil v'lo v'choach ki im b'ruchi*]

Translations of the word RUACH (with thanks to Caroline Rothstein):

- spirit
- breeze
- air
- soul
- mind
- strain
- haunt
- shade
- ghost

How can different definitions of ruach be more useful or more important than strength or physical ability?

- What is the main message of this text?
- Look at the different definitions of *Ruach* - how might they be more useful/important than strength or physical ability?
- **Explain:** many sports require skill, strength for success, but as we start to notice how individuals are excluded when we focus on traditional definitions of success, ruach becomes the most essential ingredient, however you define it.

Ultimate / Inclusion in Action (45 min)

Round 1: Ultimate Frisbee

Gather group on the court and briefly explain that we'll be playing a series of mini games to experience inclusion (or exclusion) in action. The first game will be "box" style of Ultimate Frisbee (scoring happens in the center box, rather than the end zones.)

Explain the rules verbally; count off 1-2-1-2 to divide into teams. Distribute pinnies so that teams can be distinguished. Set timer for 7 minutes and have group start playing. (Adjust time as necessary, but this is only the first of 3 rounds, so it should not exceed 7 minutes.)

Blow whistle, bring group together into huddle, and discuss:

- Thinking back to your own experience of not being able to participate at your best: what was challenging or inaccessible about this game for you or for someone else?
- Break down the various elements to illustrate points of what we can make more inclusive:
 - *Giving instructions* - verbal only, assumed a level of knowledge of the game. Too often at camp do we expect that everyone knows how to play and is able to play. Show poster board with written rules, including diagram of the field. (This is something that camps only have to make once and can be used multiple times during the summer. Rules can be painted on wood and posted near fields or courts.)
 - *Breaking up into teams* - just counted off 1-2-1-2. This is at least better than having captains pick teams, but there are many more creative ways to choose teams. [Have the group get into a line by birthday, or alphabetically, and then count off. Use words to count off instead of numbers.]
 - *Game play* - field/court too large or too small? Frisbees hard to catch & throw, especially if you've never done it before.

Round 2: Ultimate Ball

For the second mini game, show poster of rules again. Instead of a frisbee, use a 6" gator ball instead. If needed, re-divide into teams using a more intentional or creative method.

Play another round of the game for 7 minutes.

At the end of Round 2, wave flag (instead of blowing whistle) to bring group back together. Discuss:

- How was round 2 (Ultimate ball) different than round 1 (Ultimate Frisbee)? Did it feel more inclusive and accessible? Why or why not?
- What can we modify to further meet the needs of participants? [Also note the difference between modifying an existing activity vs. proactively designing an activity based on anticipated inclusion needs.]
- Did you notice that instead of using a whistle, we waved flags to bring everyone together? This is another visual cue that can be used instead of a whistle, which is very high pitched and sometimes hard to hear. (On Saturdays at a certain set of soccer fields in San Francisco, the teams aren't allowed to use whistles because of the neighbors so they use flags instead.)

Have each group brainstorm another rule change for Round 3. Play for another 7 minutes.

At the end of Round 3, gather the group and discuss:

- How was round 3 more or less inclusive compared to rounds 1 and 2?
- Who won this game? How did we define success in this game?
- How did ruach differ from round to round? Where did you experience ruach best? [Note that ultimate frisbee is known for its strict adherence to [Spirit of the Game](#).]
- Essential question: how can we make it fun and appropriately challenging for everyone involved?
- Did you notice that there's often a lot of physical contact in sports? Not only incidental during the game, but also high fives and huddles. Can we brainstorm some alternatives to these that are non-contact?

Camp Programs / Small Group Work (30 min)

Camp is an active place, not just during times designated for playing sports.

Sports are part of camp, and now that we've gone through the previous exercises we're going to switch gears and talk about camp programs -- evening programs, cabin activities, all-camp programs or events like Maccabiah (Color War), talent shows, etc.

Break participants into small groups (4-5 people) based on what type of program they'd like to focus on.

Alternative: can roll large dice to determine type of activity and need to meet; use 2 different dice with different needs on each side. One has different types of activities (evening program, cabin activity, all-camp program) on each side, the other has different sorts of needs on each side, such as participants who:

- have difficulty listening to directions
- get physically exhausted quickly
- have trouble with surprises/changes in schedule
- walk with crutches
- don't speak English well
- are scared of loud noises
- prefer no physical contact

Important to acknowledge the following:

- The list above contains behaviors, not diagnoses (autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, etc.) so that we are able to think more expansively both about each individual (who is a full person and not just defined by their diagnosis if they have one) and program design.

Ask each group to focus on the following guiding questions (also on handout):

- What is “success” or “winning” in this program/activity? What skills are required? Who is included or excluded?
- What changes would you make to redefine success so that the most people possible can be shine?
- What do you feel you cannot change? Why?
- If you were at camp right now, who would you involve in this conversation?
- What does it look like to infuse this program/activity with more RUACH?
- If possible, try it out! Play/do/model your program/activity

After 15 minutes of group work time, bring the groups back together to share with the larger group. Each group should present their program, giving a brief overview of what they discussed and their ideas and/or 1-2 minute modeling for making this program more inclusive and accessible.

Congratulate participants for trying out a concept called Universal Design, which is based on the following idea: if we create an environment or experience that meets a variety of needs, then EVERYONE will benefit. [Sort of the “ruach” of the world of design.]

Debrief & Wrap-Up (15 min)

If previous activities takes longer, some of this time will be taken up, but the idea here is to give participants an opportunity to share, ask questions, revisit ruach/spirit of the game, discuss anything that we put in the “parking lot”, and share ideas with how they’re going to bring it back to camp. This can be done in a large group, or if there’s time, give people individual time for journaling and then close the program as a group.

Some focused debrief questions, time permitting:

- How do we make increasing RUACH authentic at camp? How can ruach points be real? How can everyone meaningfully participate in the game, and not just get points for standing on the sidelines?
- What are other examples of Universal Design in action at your camp?
- How can you design “with” instead of “for?” Who would you involve in the conversation at your camp?

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

This same structure could be used to assess all kinds of camp activities, both sport and non-sport alike. This could also be used as an activity with campers to enable them to contribute their ideas to camp programming.