

CORNERSTONE 2020 RESOURCE

Rise & Shine (a light on gender roles at camp) *Elective 1*

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SUMMARY:	How do gender roles show up at your camp? Are these patterns there for good? Are they for *the* good? We'll talk, we'll write, we'll move, we'll play, and we'll make a plan to dismantle the things that no longer need to be. - <i>Submitted by Erica Goldman, Caroline Rothstein</i>
TOPIC(S):	Gender, Community Building
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	The goal of this session is to help participants awaken to and explore what is and what could be with regards to gender norms at their camps.
AUDIENCE:	Staff or campers of any age. Group size can be any size. Think about what size - small or large - is best for your community and effectiveness.
TIMING:	90 minutes
APPENDICES:	N/A
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Blank paper ● Pens/writing utensils ● Markers of various colors ● Folding chairs ● Two folding tables ● A jug of water ● Paper towels
SET-UP DETAILS:	We recommend doing this session in a large room/space/area where chairs and tables can be spread out haphazardly. Before session begins, set up furniture - opened - around the room. Have materials - paper, pens, markers - on the sides, prepared to use when needed.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

- Before participants arrive, set up folding chairs all over the room.
- Welcome participants; ‘notice’ that the room isn’t set up for us.
- Ask everyone to please help with folding the chairs and tables, and help with cleaning up a (simulated) water spill by moving everything to the side in an organized pile. **(15 minutes)**
- NOTE: Facilitators will busy themselves setting something else up on the side so that they are not active participants or role modeling the “cleaning up” process.
- Once the clean-up is complete, invite everyone to sit in a circle on the ground.
 - Facilitators share names and: “My name is...and during the clean-up process I...”
 - Each participant follows that lead and goes around the circle introducing themselves and naming what they did during the clean-up process.
 - Ask participants to reflect on what happened and what was shared. Keep an experimental mindset - maybe something gender-normative happened and maybe not, but regardless, discuss how you can use the experience to get into our topic: What just happened? Did you act in a certain way because of the topic of this session? Do you think what happened here is typical? Do you see any patterns here that align with societal norms or expectations? Use this conversation to transition into where and when similar situations play out at camp.
- Transition to next activity.
- Hand out blank paper and pens/writing utensils and colored markers. **(15 minutes)**
 - Ask participants to grab two pieces of blank paper, a pen, and a colored marker.
 - Ask participants to draw a map of their camp with the pen.
 - Ask participants to create a code of some sort (shape, number, letter, etc.) that indicates a self-generated rubric of how gender roles and expression typically play out at camp. *(NOTE: Facilitators give examples. Feel free to use the guiding questions provided at the bottom of the session write-up).
 - Ask participants to use their code to indicate on their camp map the places, times, and moments where they witness and experience particular gender dynamics playing out.
 - Break out into small groups to discuss what they see on their maps.
 - Come back together as a larger group to share out what came up.
 - Invite people to add to their maps if someone shares something and they realize that happens at their camp too.
- Transition to next activity.
- Share the term “Ezer k’negdo” and elicit what anyone knows about this term and where it comes **(5 minutes)**
 - Share text from Genesis 2:18 that is often translated as:
 - “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help-meet for him” (Genesis 2:18) -
 “לא טוב היות האדם לבדו אעשה לו עזר כנגדו”
 - Ask if anyone can explain what “Ezer k’negdo” literally means: a helper *against* him - Is this a term that contradicts itself? What could it mean?

CORNERSTONE 2020 RESOURCE

- Discussion: **(10 minutes)**
 - When is that tension productive?
 - When is that tension not productive?
 - What informs where we are today is a historical understanding of how this used to be interpreted. What is the result of that? What is the opportunity from that?
- Writing activity: **(20 minutes)**
 - On a new piece of blank paper, tell participants: Now that we've discussed where this lives in the world, at camp, and historical interpretation, we're going to take time to reflect on our individual and/or our personal roles in this.
 - We are going to invite you to think about the ways that you act in accordance with or in opposition to the prevailing normative ways that gender plays out in society.
 - Make a list of 3 to 5 actions from your daily and routine life activities that *promulgate* gendered historical norms.
 - Make a list of 3 to 5 actions from your daily and routine life activities that *disrupt* gendered historical norms.
 - Make a list of 3 to 5 aspects of your speech/ways you communicate that *enable* these historical norms.
 - Make a list of 3 to 5 aspects of your speech/ways you communicate that *disrupt* these historical norms.
 - Now look at the lists of things you're enabling and promulgating. Ask yourself:
 - Are you comfortable with this?
 - Do you need or want to make changes?
 - Do you feel you have permission to be comfortable with this?
 - How do we acknowledge that it's not all bad?
 - How do I understand the permissions?
 - Who decides?
 - How do we decide in an equitable and inclusive way?
- Transition to next activity.
- Return to maps. **(15 minutes)**
 - Pick two new colors of marker.
 - Zone/highlight/circle all parts of camp where you feel you are doing things in a way that is comfortable and supportive to all aspects of inclusivity regarding gender identity and expression and camp.
 - With another color, locate/highlight those areas of camp where you'd like to see change and think you can be an agent of that change.
 - Ask volunteers to share.

- Closing (**10 minutes**)
 - Tell participants: As you go off into the rest of this week, perhaps you've woken up to behaviors, speech patterns, body language, and more that enforces a certain gender normativity. Are there ways you want to choose to disrupt that, notice it, or support it this week?
Ask each participant to share one of these around the circle in closing.

* Potential examples - facilitators should take care not to put out too many of these in a way that could become prescriptive; they are just here as idea-starters if group is stuck or some participants think there are no gendered spaces at their camp:

- Which group of people is sent to move the chairs when a big room needs re-setting?
- Who has a Friday activity of baking or braiding challah?
- Who is on the sports staff?
- What is happening at the very entrance to camp: who is driving the cars that arrive; who are the security guards?
- What language is used to get the attention of a group (is it, for example, "Guys"?)
- If there is a rabbi, who is that?
- If everyone is generally addressed by their first name, who is the exception to this rule?
- Who builds the campfire?
- Who cleans up the s'mores debris after the campfire?
- Where and how does changing for the pool or lake take place?
- What happens during Friday night rituals regarding blessings, including candles and wine?
- Who would you call for if you saw a snake or other animal?
- Is there a dress code and is it the same for everyone?
- Who is on the dance staff?
- What pronouns are used for G-d by the rabbi, staff, and leaders?

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

- One way to expand upon this program is to imagine yourself in another role at camp, in another age group, or at a different camp. Does that change how you fill out your map and answer the prompts?
- Adapt this from camp to any other community of which you are a part (college campus, school, synagogue, youth group, etc.)