

Highs and Lows: Holding Space for All of the Feels at Camp, *Start Your Day*

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TOPIC (S)	Mental health, wellness
SUMMARY	In this session, participants will explore how to make space for what feels easy and for what feels hard through discussion and learning tools & frameworks for managing both the highs and lows.
GOALS:	Participants should leave this session feeling like they have new tools and ways to navigate moving through difficult and easier moments during a day at camp.
AUDIENCE:	Camp staff or campers (could be adapted for a younger population) group of any size.
TIMING:	30 minutes
APPENDICES:	Reflections of the Day, Reflection and Transition Tools
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Pen and paper (or something to write on) Clip boards if necessary
SET-UP DETAILS:	Group sitting in a circle.

SESSION TIMELINE

Total time: 30 minutes

Introduction - 5 minutes

Grounding activity - 2 minutes

Personal Reflection - 5 minutes

Tools and Activities - 16 minutes

Closing- 2 minutes

SESSION OUTLINE:

Introductions and setting group norms (5 minutes)

Facilitator introduces the session topic and leads the group in a round of introductions (name, pronouns, camp).

Facilitator suggests group norms and guidelines and opens an opportunity for input from participants. Guidelines and group agreements for the session, offer opportunity for anyone to add guidelines or to ask clarifying questions.

- Ask clarifying questions
- Self regulate and self care (ie it's ok to step away)
- Facilitator is available after
- It's ok to be raggedy
- Be mindful and intentional about what you share
- Privacy
- This is a judgement free space
- Use "I" statements

Grounding Activity (2 minutes)

Once guidelines and group agreements are all set, the facilitator will lead participants through a grounding activity. Participants can close their eyes or softly gaze at a spot. Instruct participants to feel their feet on the ground or their body on the surface below them. Let participants know you will be leading them through a breathing exercise, if it is not comfortable for them, they do not have to participate but suggest they do an alternative grounding practice that works well for them.

Breathing exercise, breathing in for 4 seconds, holding for 1 second and breathing out for 4 seconds. Lead participants through 4 rounds of this. Ask participants to

notice what they're feeling now and to look around the space they're in and identify something that brings them a sense of calm.

Bring the group back to the present moment together to transition to individual reflection questions.

Personal Reflection (5 minutes)

Facilitator shares that there are many different experiences and emotions that can happen in a day at camp. Days at camp are packed with many activities and many different transitions. This personal reflection is a space to identify the challenging and the not challenging aspects of this for them at camp. Then have the participants take a few minutes to reflect on the following prompt:

Describe a day at camp where you had both positive and negative experiences throughout the day (or think of an average day at camp and identify the things that are easier and harder for you). Then answer, what helps you transition through all of the different experiences throughout a day?

Tools and Activities (12 minutes)

Facilitator leads the group through a few highs/lows reflection activities (or explains them dependent on time) and transition tools which are all included on the handout. The value of these activities is taking an opportunity to reflect on what felt good and hard. This allows space for us to process those things and to help recognize that days can be nuances, that they aren't necessarily all bad or all good. The transition tools are great ways to shift from one activity to the next. These activities/tools can also be helpful for all different things but for the purpose of this session specifically about reflection and transition. A lot of these activities are great to do at the end of the day. They can also be used as a midday check in (ie after lunch) - this offers a helpful way to reset and slow down during a day and assess where you're at. They also can be helpful to write down or keep in a notebook.

Share this quote "There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do and mostly live."- The Dalai Lama.

Reflection

- **Rose, Bud, Thorn, Gardener** - Something good from the day, something you're looking forward to, something that was hard from the day, someone who brightened your day or that you're grateful for
- **High and Low** -A good thing and a hard thing from the day
- **Gratitude** - Express 3-5 things you're grateful for from the day (anything on the spectrum: from painting a beautiful picture, your favorite lunch, someone holding a

door for you, sunshine)

- **1 word to describe high and 1 word to describe low** - example: Sunshine and Rain
- **Journaling Activity-** (appendix: Reflections of the Day) if you want participants to do this and the session is earlier in the day, have them reflect on the day so far or the previous day.
- **Let Go and Hold On** - What is one thing from the day you want to let go of? What is one thing from the day you want to hold onto?

Transition

- **Intention Setting** (a good way to start the day) - What are 3 intentions you have for today (examples: My intention for today is to take a deep breath during each transition of the day. My intention for today is to laugh. My intention for today is to make 1 new connection. My intention for today is to learn a new skill (no matter how big or small_
- **Grounding Practice**
 - Name 5 things you can see or are in the room
 - Name 4 things you can feel (ex- chair on back or feet on floor)
 - Name 3 things you can hear right now
 - Name 2 things you can smell or like the smell of
 - Name 1 good thing about yourself
- **Present Moment Awareness** – Take 5 deep breaths, name 5 facts about this moment right now (ie it is 2:55 pm, I am at Arts & Crafts, I’m wearing a blue t shirt, it’s partly cloudy, I just left my cabin)
- **Breathing exercise-** Breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 1 second and breath out for 4 seconds. Go through at least 4 rounds of this. Notice what you’re feeling after you finish and look around the space you’re in and identify something that brings you a sense of calm.
- **Mindful Walking** – If you are moving from one space to another during a transition, use that time for a mindful walking practice. Practicing mindful walking looks like using your walking as a mindfulness practice and paying attention to your body in different ways as you walk-
 - what it feels like for your foot to hit the ground
 - being intentional about the pressure you put onto the ground with each step
 - feeling your whole foot on the ground
 - paying attention to your breathing – considering matching your breaths to each step you take (1 breath in with 1 step, 1 breath out with 1 step)

Optional thoughts to share with participants of ways to manage the harder and easier parts of a day:

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- awareness of situational shifts- shifting from being with peers to being with campers to being with supervisors, sometimes it can be helpful to take a deep breath or to signal to yourself that you are making those transitions to help with your present moment awareness
- compartmentalizing - accepting that sometimes something will not be resolved when you switch to the next activity and giving yourself permission to come back to it later, if it feels too overwhelming, that may be a time to ask to step away
- present moment awareness - practicing being present can be helpful in making transitions and shifts throughout the day - breathing exercises like we did at the beginning can be helpful, grounding activities (connecting with your senses)
- self care in 1-2 minutes
- Self assessment. When can you transition into the next thing? When do you need to take a time out? When is it important to slow down?

Closing - 1 minute

Thank participants for joining and if there's enough time, lead them through 1 word highs and lows