

CORNERSTONE 2022 RESOURCE

SQUIRREL! (Are you paying attention?)

Start Your Morning

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SUMMARY:	In this session we will: tease and train our attention skills to attend intently to the three E's: environment, element, and equipment and the 4H's: heads, hearts, hands, and heels.
ABC GOALS:	<p>Affective: Participants will feel...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calm & Open • Awake & Aware • Joyful & Jungley <p>Behavior: Participants will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice the relevant variables in their environment • Notice the relevant stimuli in their environment • Notice the relevant values in their environment <p>Cognitive: Participants will know...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That our attention is our freedom • That our attention has limits • That our attention can be trained
AUDIENCE:	Counselors, Campers, and Supervisors
TIMING:	45 minutes
APPENDICES:	1) Attention Source Sheet
MATERIALS NEEDED:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copies of the Attention Source Sheet for every 2 participants, cut in half - A webbing or rope tied in a circle with a water knot
SET-UP DETAILS:	<p>This session begins with a walk out from a central location to one a bit more secluded, preferably on the edge of an outdoor area with activity going on in a central location that the group can wander away from and then back to (e.g., starting in Kikar, walking to the woods on the edge of it, and then walking back to the Kikar to end)</p> <p>Tie the rope into a circle (rec: water knot), have source sheets in an easy to reach and easy to carry bag, and gather the group in a preferably outdoor space.</p>

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:15 - SQUIRREL Walk
- 00:15-00:30 - SQUIRREL Circle
- 00:30-00:45 - RE-SQUIRREL Walk

SESSION OUTLINE:

[Learning Facilitator (LF); Group (G); Small Group's (SGs); Partners (Ps); Individuals (I's)]

00:00-00:15 - SQUIRREL Walk

LF will welcome G, introduce the purpose and some basic norms for the session, with each offering the opportunity for others to add any more or clarification:

- Purpose: To Become Someone's Who Notice Things
- Norms: Five Finger Contract – Thumb: Positive Outlook; Pointer: Before Pointing at Others, Consider Your Own Self; Middle: Choose Respect; Ring: Commit to Be Here; Pinkie: Look Out for the Little One

LF will then invite G to high five the I's to their left, right, and center (air fives if necessary) to 'sign the contract' together.

LF will then introduce the 3 E's concept: that of looking out for things in the Environment, Element, and Equipment, and challenge the G to play SQUIRREL with anything in one of these 3 categories (rules below).

- 1) Any two (or more) SQUIRREL at the same time, no SQUIRREL
- 2) SQUIRREL and no one looks, no SQUIRREL
- 3) SQUIRREL something already SQUIRRELED, no SQUIRREL (Daybreak reset)
- 4) Honor system: you get SQUIRRELED, you give a high five
 - a. Count your fives by ones

Once the rules are explained, the walk begins, with LF pointing in the general direction of a more secluded and quiet location reachable by the 15-20 minute mark.

00:15-00:30 - SQUIRREL Circle

LF will invite participants to make an eagle wing circle (fingertips barely touching), then ask I's to turn around and face the outside of the circle (ish in the woods or far away from others). Play SQUIRREL as above, with additional rule:

- If you don't hear another's SQUIRREL, there is no overlap (you still get the points if someone else (nearby, looks)

After 1-2 minutes of this, or when the energy calms / settles, LF will invite I's to turn around and face inward, and then introduce the 4H's concept (for camp, not the challenge course, though it works there too).

- Hearts: What are people (including you) feeling?
- Hands: What are people (including you) doing?
- Heels: What are people (including you) moving towards, or away from?
- Heads: What are people (including you) thinking about, or reflecting on?

LF will then invite a second round of SQUIRREL Circle to be played with the same rule as before, looking for the 4H's. 2-3 minutes, until energy settles.

Then, LF will invite I's to continue playing, ignoring the rules, just saying what they notice, while stepping into shoulder-to-shoulder circle, as slowly or as quickly as they please.

Once the G is in a tight circle, LF will hand out Appendix 1, ask for 2-3 I's to read a text they find interesting / inspiring / relevant to the activity of noticing.

00:30-00:45 - RE-SQUIRREL Walk

LF will lead the G back towards the starting point, this time starting in a straight line, noticing 3E and 4H elements without SQUIRREL rules, first while standing still and looking from afar, then walking back (mostly) evenly, stopping at various distances (not too many) to notice carefully, and upon re-arrival, standing in a chicken-wing / elbow distance circle, noticing at will.

LF will offer final words around a story of noticing: "My camp director once said that one of the highest compliments he felt he gave to one of (if not the) most effective assistant directors: 'He's someone who notices things'. Be someone who notices things. Thanks for Starting Your Morning with the Squirrels in all of us."

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP:

[Use this space to recommend possible adaptations, modifications, creative twists, or other suggestions. Please be sure to replace the example]

- Try to think of a time and place where there is a lot of activity going on around you to be observed, but not so much that you won't be able to communicate (and workable level of distraction is good, but make sure to take into consideration the group you're working with)
- This can be done with any age group, modified for the time, energy, and attention of the group, some helpful things to start with could be a mindful breathing exercise to calm overly reactive minds, or inserting a "team breath" where everyone breathes together before and after every round to re-center.
- Keep in mind, this is a game! Think about what things you might notice that make the point of the 4Hs without making it too heavy or serious (e.g., "Becca's hat is on backwards" is much better than "Becca's hair is all messed up"; similarly, rather "the little kids' hearts are full of play" than "the little kids' hearts are annoying" – see the Five Finger contract norms!)
- For a rainy day, play inside with small groups around the edges while the main crowd is immersed in another activity! Great for building counselor-unit leader relationships with a game and skill that works for both groups! (e.g., even if they're snickering to one another, its about the things they're noticing in their campers and their environment!)