

### Collaborating With Our Mistakes

**AUTHOR(S):** JessAnn Smith

**SUMMARY:** In this session we will explore the edges of our comfort zone using interactive art activities and circle games to uncover the awesomeness that can happen when we make a mistake - and then collaborate with it!

**GOALS:**

- Participants may feel more empowered in and excited to use their imagination
- Participants will practice staying in the moment and problem solving as an alternative to self-judgement when making a mistake or experiencing something unexpected
- Participants will gain confidence to try new things, think outside the box, and have fun together.

**AUDIENCE:** All campers ages 8 and up, 20-30 people.

**TIMING:** 60 minutes

**MATERIALS:**

- Construction paper (2pp)
- Thin markers (1pp)
- Cardstock or notecards (1pp)
- Multicolor pencils ([link](#))
- White drawing paper
- Crayons (1pp)

**SET-UP:** Set up tables and chairs for each person in a square around the room with a large enough space in the center for everyone to stand in a circle. OR, if tables are not available, 1 clipboard per participant, and folks can sit on the floor or in chairs as they are able.

## SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – Introductions, setting group norms
- 00:05-00:30 – Circle Games
- 00:30-00:55 – Interactive Art
- 00:55-01:00 – Closing

## SESSION OUTLINE

### 00:00-00:05 – Introductions, setting group norms

The session leader introduces the session topic and leads the group in a round of introductions (name & pronouns we can use for you in the space, camp, and the last mistake you made that you are comfortable sharing)

### 00:05-00:30 – Circle Games (all done standing in a circle in an open space)

#### Group Mirror

Participants will stand in a circle. This is a non-verbal game. The goal of this game is to practice noticing, observation, and specificity. The session leader will model slowly touching their face or their head and invite the participants to mirror it exactly, picking up on every detail. Eventually, encourage participants to notice and mirror each other's small movements (laughing, itching, shifting, blinking, etc.) and eventually bring other bigger movements. The idea is that no one will know who is leading or following.

#### Rhyme Game

This is a spoken pattern game that takes place going around the circle one at a time in a counterclockwise direction. Participants use this rhyming pattern: **"It's like a \_\_ without a \_\_\_\_, it's like a \_\_\_\_ without a \_\_\_\_."** The goal is to think quickly and not judge any of the words that come out (of course, a reminder for group-appropriate words is helpful!). Nonsense words or sounds are okay! Encourage folks to support each other and to keep going! You can start with this example:

Person 1 – It's like a NIGHT without a DAY

Person 2 – It's like a HORSE without some HAY

(Then person 2 starts again with a new rhyme and passes it around the circle)

Person 2 – It's like an UP without a DOWN

Person 3 – It's like a SMILE without a FROWN

#### One Word Story

This is a spoken narrative game that takes place going around the circle one at a time in a counterclockwise direction. The goal is for participants to tell a story one word at a time (or one sentence if this is too difficult based on the group) that has a beginning, middle, and end. Based on the size of the group, explain how many chances they have to go around the circle (with 10 people, probably a few times. With 30-40 people, once might be enough).

Before you start, decide as a group (or ask for suggestions and decide then) WHO and WHERE and WHAT this story is about. For example, it's about BOB, and he's at WORK, and he just WON THE LOTTO.

### 00:30-00:55 – INTERACTIVE ART (done seated in chairs/table or on floor with writing surface)

#### Ready, Set...DRAW!!!

(Supplies: 1 marker/crayon/colored pencil per student, thick drawing paper)

Participants will be divided into pairs and seated across from each other. They will each have a thin marker (or pencil) and TWO pieces of paper, construction on the bottom and white printer paper on the top. With the cap on, instruct the participants to make a hole in the middle of the white printer paper. This will be the "cover" so they can't see what they're drawing (see image below). Explain that it is VERY important not to look! When everyone is ready and has agreed, reveal what they will be

instructed to draw. DON'T reveal it ahead of time. Explain they will have 3 mins to draw, and that they should avoid pausing, making sure to add lots of details. Now say, "ready, set...Draw a portrait of the person across from you!" After the 3 minutes is up, make a big deal out of the 'reveal.' No peaking! Give the pairs a few moments to enjoy and debrief.



**Pencils UP!**

(Supplies: multicolor pencils, cardstock or notecards, paper plates can also be use and the ridged 'frame' decorated later!)

This activity is a solo challenge. The goal is to NEVER take the pencil off of the paper and keep moving it. It is important to use multicolor pencils for this as it adds to the lack of planning and control the participants have over the images. They can either draw a self-portrait, another object in the room/environment, or their favorite place at camp. Allow up to 5 mins of nonstop drawing for this activity, then do a 'gallery walk' around the room for everyone to see the drawings (use best judgement, if appropriate for the group, or if an optional share to the group in a circle, or small group sharing is better).

**Musical Chairs, Artist Edition!**

(Supplies: 1 marker/crayon/colored pencil per student, thick drawing paper)

Each participant will be seated in a circle with a hard surface like a table to draw on, in reach of the people on either side. They will each have 1 marker and start with one piece of paper. They will put their name on it and start drawing as music plays. Whenever the music stops or changes, they will pass their paper around the room (or smaller circle, maybe groups of 8 depending on room and group size) until it comes back to them.

**\*\*Additional Challenge if time - groups of 3-5 draw a face (for example) one line at a time, taking turns, without talking\*\***

**00:55-01:00 – Closing**

The session leader facilitates a group dialogue using the following prompts and reading the room.

- What did you notice in your mind and in body when you were 'making a mistake'? What was it like around other people?
- What surprised you about "collaborating" with the parts of the games you couldn't control?
- How can you use this the next time you're writing, or drawing, and a "mistake" happens?

You can end the circle time with One Word Gratitude Circle. Each person will go around the circle and share one word they are feeling or thinking about the session (ex. "energized" "overwhelmed" "fun!" "goofy"). Announce that they can also say "pass." After everyone has shared a word into the circle, the circle is closed, and the session is over.

You can also end with sharing that "Mistakes" are often "Missed Takes"!

**BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP**

All of these activities can be played together or separately, especially depending on what kind of space you're in! All these games are, of course, FUN, and it is also very encouraged to invite self-

reflection and discussion about what inter- and intra- personal dynamics are at play in each of these exercises! The surprise portrait game can also be used to draw other objects, landscapes, or to write words or letters, not just draw portraits!