

Marking Moments to Build Resilience

AUTHOR(S): Zach Snyder

SUMMARY: In this session we will discover new tools to build resiliency at camp through the merging of Jewish and psychological knowledge.

GOALS:

- Understand resilience and its importance
- Learn at least one tool for practicing resiliency in a camp setting and with campers

AUDIENCE: Counselors and cabins age 9+

TIMING: 75 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Posterboard
- Sharpies

SET-UP: N/A

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:05 – Introduction/hellos
- 00:05-00:10 – Introduction of Resilience
- 00:10-00:30 – Butterfly story and Chevruta time
- 00:30-00:45 – Mindfulness as a resilience tool
- 00:45-00:59 – Shehechianu moments
- 00:59-00:70 – Shehechianu moments in the cabin
- 00:70-00:75 – Wrap up

SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:05 – Introduction/hellos

The session leader introduces themselves and plans for the program

00:05-00:10 – Introduction of Resilience

The session leader defines Resilience and asks participants for examples of resilience in life, then at camp.

Resiliency is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, or significant sources of stress. Noting resilience as a short-term aspect (vs. Grit which is a long-term aspect). Time should be given to the distinction between 'little t' trauma (everyday stressors that may leave short term emotional bruises) and 'big T' trauma (significant emotional phenomena or events that impact a person critically). In this definition of resiliency, we are speaking to little t-trauma, which is different for each person (as we each feel distinctly) but may include falling on the ground, failing a test, or getting honked at aggressively.

00:10-00:30 – Butterfly story and Chevruta time

The session leader tells the butterfly story, consisting of a young child holding the life of a butterfly in their hands. The child then ponders what next steps to take and receives sage advice from a village elder.

The story reads:

A wizened elder lived at the top of a hill in a small village. One day a clever little kid from the village set out to prove that they were indeed smarter than that wizened elder. The child climbed the hill and when they got there, caught a butterfly and cupped it between their hands. The child approached the elder and challenged them to say if the butterfly was alive or dead. If the elder were to say it was alive the child planned to crush it and show off the dead butterfly. If the elder said it was dead, the child was planning to open their hands and allow the butterfly to fly away. Either way, the child would have fooled the elderly! The wizened elder turned to the child and answered "Child, it's all in your hands".

Following the story participants will break into small share pairs, or groups, and discuss the relevance this story has on resilience and resilience at camp.

- Does this story have anything to do with resiliency at camp?
- If so, how may this story touch upon resiliency at camp?
- Who demonstrates resilience in the story

00:30-00:45 – Mindfulness as a resilience tool

Mindfulness will be defined and discussed in relation to resiliency

00:45-00:59 – Shehechianu moments

The Session leader will speak to *Shehechianu* moments as a tool for mindfulness and the promotion of resiliency:

Shehechianu moments: The time in which we mark and celebrate significant moments in time in the Jewish culture and faith. It is a traditionally spoken as a prayer:

HEBREW TEXT

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שְׁהַחֲיֵנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעַנוּ לְזֶמַן הַזֶּה.

TRANSLITERATION

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu, v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

TRANSLATION

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Shehechianu can exist without the prayer, the moments in which we would traditionally speak the *Shehechianu* prayer still offers a way for us to notice with intention, mark it in in our community and selves, and keep moving. These steps are simplified tools of Mindfulness (noticing with intention) and Resiliency (feeling what you are feeling and then keep going), through a Jewish lens. If we are able to practice *Shehechianu* moments at camp it will become easier over time to mark moments, appreciate any significance, and then move forward.

Question and answer period.

00:59-00:70 – Shehechianu moments in the cabin

Session leader will model two ways of utilizing *Shehechianu* moments, one as personal practice and one as a cabin experience.

An example of utilizing in cabin *Shehechianu* moments would be to have a poster board with *Shehechianu* moments and at the end of each day the cabin would come together around the board and celebrate any *Shehechianu* moments in the day.

A personal practice example of utilizing *Shehechianu* moments would be to set a few new or more advanced goals/ experiences at the beginning of meeting your campers and celebrate those goals when achieved with unit head and friends.

00:70-00:75 – Wrap up

Shehechianu can exist without the prayer attached, the moments in which we would traditionally speak the *Shehechianu* prayer still offers a way for us to notice with intention, mark it in in our community and selves, and keep moving. These steps are simplified tools of Mindfulness (noticing with intention) and Resiliency (feeling what you are feeling and then keep going), through a Jewish lens.

When we are able to mark moments of importance, we are then able to add intention to what comes next.

Using *Shehechianu* moments to move through celebration and big emotions can be another tool for both you and your campers at camp.

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

At camp we can easily get caught up in the strong tides of the moment. If we pause and set our intentions and notice and wonder at impactful moments (*Shehechianu* moments) we will be better able to move through strong tides of camp life. As a counselor setting *Shehechianu* moment goals or even keeping track of *Shehechianu* moments and rewarding the sharing of them can promote resiliency.