

The Bonfire Conspiracy

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SUMMARY: In this immersive staffer hours experience, players will navigate a series of exhilarating challenges, relying on teamwork to outmaneuver opponents to complete their secret mission before the bonfire extinguishes.

GOALS:

1. Participants will cultivate a sense of connection and belonging within a community of camp professionals.
2. Participants will engage in a series of challenges designed to expand their comfort and connection within a new community.
3. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of the opportunities and complexities of belonging, how it takes shape within a group, and effective strategies to nurture it at camp.

AUDIENCE: 20-30 participants

TIMING: 60 minutes

MATERIALS:

- Firewood, fire-starters, lighter
- 3 gallons apple cider
- 35 hot cups
- Large pot (that can be used in the fire)
- Ladle
- Ball of string
- Costumes (is there a costume box?)
- Small plastic deer figurines
- 5 cans of olives
- Material to build floating device
- string

SET-UP:

Fire set up in the fire pit by farm

SESSION TIMELINE

- 00:00-00:10 – Introduction to Bonfire Conspiracy Game

- *Game Introduction*
 - *Setting the metaphorical scene*
 - *Each person is given a biblical character to embody and a personal mission to complete throughout the game.*
- *00:10-00:20 – Mission 1: Task to Trophy*
- *00:20-00:40 – Mission 2: Group Challenge (Transition from Nesiya to Campfire)*
- *00:40-01:00 – Debrief: Debriefing game at Bonfire*

SESSION OUTLINE

00:00-00:10 – Introduction to Bonfire Conspiracy Game

- Facilitator introduces the Bonfire Conspiracy Game by sharing the following:
 - Welcome to the Bonfire Conspiracy Game, a game with missions and challenges and no one will leave here the same! Today we will embark on a journey traveling back thousands of years into the biblical era.
 - As you embark on this journey to the past, you will be tasked with both group and individual missions that you must complete. If you successfully complete the missions, you will be propelled forward into the biblical future.
 - Each of you will be handed a biblical character with a personality that you must embody throughout the entirety of the game. You can share with others the name of your character, but your unique personality must not be revealed by name only through your personality.
 - Additionally, each of you will be handed a personal mission, that you must complete throughout the game. This personal mission is a secret. You must not share it with anyone, not even your closest biblical allies.
 - Invite participants to share any questions that they have about the game before moving forward.
- **Getting into Character:** Right now, each of you will have about 5 minutes to get into character, utilizing different costumes provided for you to embody your character before the mission begins.

00:10-00:20 – Mission 1: Task to Trophy

- Participants will be given a character card as they are welcomed into the space
- On each character card there will be a corresponding tribe, one of three. Naphtali, Asher, and Zebulan. Participants will group with their corresponding tribe
- Facilitators will give out challenge cards to each tribe with 3 distinct challenges that the tribes will endeavor to complete
- Tribes will begin to complete challenges
- When a tribe completes all 3 challenges – they will remark in “*Siamnu*” meaning “we are done” in Hebrew
- The first team to finish will be rewarded

00:20-00:40 – Mission 2: Group Challenge (Transition from Nesiya to Campfire)

The next step in The Bonfire Conspiracy is to successfully get everyone safely to the bonfire. The group that “won” the game inside goes first, the second-place winners go second, and the third place brings up the rear. We are all connected for this part of the mission. Everyone holds onto the string – and don’t let go! The person at the front of the line gets an envelope with the instructions – this envelope includes your next challenge, do not open it until you are on the second platform of the stairs. (Inside the envelope – Together the group must decide on a song you could sing around a campfire.)

00:40-1:00: Debrief: Debriefing at Bonfire

- Everyone who has “won” a cup of cider is asked to find a partner who does not have a cup of cider
- **Partner Question #1** – How does it feel to complete your challenge and how does it feel not to complete your challenge? Did anyone help or hinder you? Do you think everyone was honest when asked if they successfully completed their challenge when there was the expectation of a prize? What are some of the individual challenges your campers come to camp with? How honest are campers about the challenges they bring to camp? Ask for a few to share thoughts about individual challenges they were up against tonight?
- Find someone who was in a different group (had a different color dot)
- **Partner Question #2** – When at camp do individual needs take precedence over the needs of the group? And when do the needs of the group take precedence over the individual? Do you feel a different sense of loyalty to the group vs the full large group vs your new partner? How can group challenges help or hinder a group's sense of belonging? Ask for a few to share thoughts about group challenges and how they can help or hinder creating a sense of belonging?
- **Partner (or small group) Question #3** – What was the same and different in how you portray your character? Each group at camp is unique because it is created by unique individuals coming together – no two people are the same, no two groups are the same? Did you learn something new about yourself or someone else during this activity? How did aspects of what we did this evening help create connections & belonging? Ask for a few to share thoughts about how you might take what we did this evening back to your camp to help staff or campers create a sense of belonging?
- **A Mindfulness Belonging Reflection**

BRINGING IT TO YOUR CAMP

Summer camp is a magical mechanism for practicing the art of building community. This program endeavors to demonstrate the unique opportunities of fostering belonging at different levels. Community building requires navigating the tension between meeting individual needs and alignment around a common purpose or mission. Use this program for staff in training programming and or for older campers in burgeoning leadership roles at camp. Have fun.

Biblical Characters:

1. Adam

- a. **Description:** The first human, created by God and placed in the Garden of Eden. Adam was tasked with naming the animals and living in harmony with creation. He was best known for eating from the Tree of Knowledge after being told it was forbidden.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Adam was best known for doing the opposite of what God requested him to do. In order to embody his character, anytime someone asks you to do something, do the opposite of what is being requested of you.

2. Eve

- a. **Description:** The first woman, created to be Adam's "helper", and the mother of all living things. Best known for
- b. **Personal Mission:** Eve was best known for being Adam's "ezer knegdo" or "helper." In order to embody her character, find a person who seems to be working alone and team up with them to accomplish a task.

3. Noah

- a. **Description:** A righteous man in a world of chaos, Noah listened to divine instruction and built the ark to save his family and the animals from the flood.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Noah was best known for following God's commandments by pairing up animals two by two and inviting them on the ship. In order to embody his character, you are trying to pair people up throughout the game based on similarities.

4. Abraham

- a. **Description:** Abraham is known as the father of many nations and a model of faith, leadership, and hospitality. He courageously left his homeland to follow an unknown path, welcomed strangers into his tent with open arms, and stood up for justice, even challenging God to spare the innocent.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Abraham was best known for leaving his homeland to go to the land of Canaan. In order to embody his character, anytime someone gives instructions in the game, just walk in the other direction.

5. Sarah

- a. **Description:** Sarah, the matriarch of the Jewish people, was known for her beauty, wisdom, and resilience. She journeyed alongside Abraham, faced challenges with faith, and became a mother at 90, laughing in disbelief at the idea.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Sarah was best known for laughing at age 90 when she found out she was going to have a baby! In order to embody her character,

anytime someone speaks to you, please respond by laughing! ***[or try to make three people laugh throughout the game]***

6. Moses

- a. **Description:** Moses is one of the greatest leaders in Jewish history, known for his courage, humility, and determination. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, received the Ten Commandments, and guided his people through the wilderness.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Moses was one of the greatest leaders of the Jewish people who led them out of Egypt. In order to embody his character, create a “red sea rally” aka a team team huddle in order to strategize the next moves in the game.

7. Aaron

- a. **Description:** Aaron, Moses' older brother, served as Moses' spokesperson, helped lead the Israelites out of Egypt, and played a key role in maintaining harmony amongst the people. Aaron was also known for his role in creating the golden calf.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Aaron was best known for convincing the Israelites to give up their gold in order to create an idol, the golden calf. In order to embody his personality, convince three group members to sing “you're so golden” by Harry Styles with you.

8. Miriam

- a. **Description:** Miriam, the sister of Moses and Aaron, was a leader, prophetess, and source of strength for the Israelites. She watched over baby Moses in the Nile, led the Israelites in song and dance after crossing the Red Sea, and ensured they had water in the wilderness. She was a symbol of resilience, joy, and community care.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Miriam was best known for leading the Israelites in joyous song and dance with timbrels after crossing the Red Sea. In order to embody her personality, anytime someone speaks to you, just start dancing!

9. Jacob:

- a. **Description:** Jacob, later renamed Israel, was a resilient, strategic, and transformative leader. He wrestled with an angel, worked hard for what he wanted, and became the father of the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Jacob was known as the father of the 12 Tribes of Israel. In order to embody his personality, continuously count participants from 1-12 and then start over!

10. Joseph

- a. **Description:** Joseph was a dreamer, interpreter, and leader who overcame betrayal to rise to power in Egypt. He was sold by his brothers, imprisoned, and

later became Pharaoh's advisor, using his wisdom to save Egypt and his family from famine. He was known for his resilience, foresight, and ability to bring people together despite hardships.

- b. **Personal Mission:** Joseph was best known for becoming Pharaoh's adviser in Egypt. In order to embody his profession as a dream interpreter, whenever someone has an idea, act it out as if you are bringing their dream to life!

11. Joshua

- a. **Description:** Joshua was a fearless leader, warrior, and spy who succeeded Moses in leading the Israelites into the Promised Land. He was one of the twelve spies sent by Moses, but unlike most of them, he brought back a positive and courageous report, trusting in God's promise. He later led the Israelites in the Battle of Jericho, where their faith and strategy helped them conquer the city.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Joshua was best known for being sent as a spy to scout out the land of Israel. In order to embody his profession as a spy, act suspicious of your fellow teammates, and encourage them to be as quiet as possible.

12. Esau:

- a. **Description:** Esau was the eldest son of Isaac and Rebecca and the twin brother of Jacob. He was a skilled hunter and was known for his impulsiveness, especially when he sold his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of lentil stew. Later, after years of separation, he surprisingly forgave Jacob and reunited with him peacefully.
- b. **Personal Mission:** Esau is best known for selling his brother's birthright for a meal. In order to embody his personality, try to convince the group to do the opposite of what they want to do.