



Communicating & Building Relationships Through a Partner With Lens

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Session requested by Sami Eron, MDA Camps

SESSION SUMMARY

This session is designed to address cabin culture, camper/counselor relationships, communication, and conflict management through a partner with lens.

TIME NEEDED

~60 minutes

MATERIALS

THE PLAN

Pair & Share (10 minutes)

- Have people think about positive relationships they've been in - could be friendships, romantic relationships, family relationships, work relationships, etc. and have them think about what makes that relationship could.
- Have people pair and share while they walk.
- When people return, ask for shareouts.

Partner With vs. Power Over Overview & Activity (30ish minutes)

- As you're wrapping up, point out that two things you've heard and/or two things that are important when it comes to camp is that positive relationships:
 - Positively impact both people

- Function more as a partnership than a dictatorship
- Introduce the concept of partner with vs. power over
 - In a VERY simple way: Partner with is all working together toward the same goal and asking others how to get there; power over is a certain person or group of people deciding how we'll all get there
 - Power does exist and sometimes we do have to make decisions, but transparency around reasoning makes a difference
- Put people into groups of 3-5. Read through scenarios and have groups discuss how they may present as “power over” and how they may present as “partner with”
 - *Some I might use (you can change):*
 - Helping campers get to know each other and feel like part of one group (cabin culture)
 - Explaining camp or activity rules to campers (communication)
 - *There just HAS to be power here BUT we can check in with people, repeat things, ask others to help, etc.*
 - *Come up with your own ideas, too!*
 - Conversations addressing camper behavior (behavior management)
 - Conversations addressing counselors feeling frustrated (relationships)
 - Navigating through camper conflict (conflict & communication)
 - *I would debrief each ones as a group and during that debrief I'd have a list of things I wanted to touch on in each category. For example, when talking about camper behavior, I'd outline our behavior policies and some best practices. For navigating through camper conflict, I'd overview restorative justice.*

Challenges & Scaries (20 minutes)

- Have people pair up again and walk for a bit, discussing the challenges or scary things they see with communicating and building relationships with campers.
- Have pairs come back and pair up with one more group. Spend the rest of the time talking about how they can meet those challenges or defeat their scaries.

- Make sure to walk around so you can address challenges OR at least make a note of challenges you need to address later.