

Responding to Situations around Race and Racism at Camp

A Maine Summer Camps Webinar

With Lisa Graustein, MEd.

lisa@neym.org

& Anna Hopkins, Director, Friends Camp

Goals & Agenda

- To grow our ability to interrupt racism

AND

- To act in ways that promote racial justice & healthy youth experiences

- Overview & Introductions

- Framework

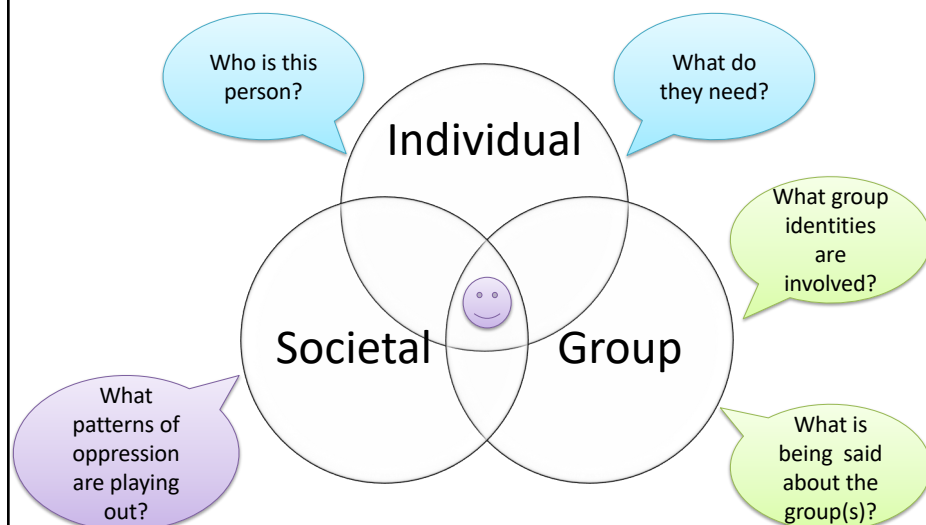
- Scenarios & Application

- Discussion

Introductions

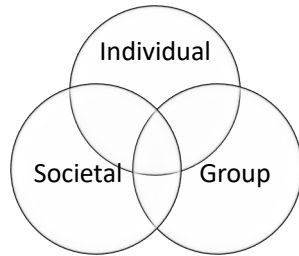
- Name, camp, & identity you hold that you are proud of

3 Circles*



* From Niyonu Spann, Beyond Diversity 101, www.bd101.org

Applying the 3 Circles



We had a camper tell another camper that she wasn't allowed to be friends anymore because of her race. When prompted, she said that it is because her dad doesn't like people of that race.

We worked with both families to make sure that they knew that camp was a space where we don't exclude people because of their race and that campers can play together as much as they like.

Scenario #2

Last summer we had a complex bullying scenario where one camper, Abe (a white camper) told Juan (a Hispanic camper) to tell Benjamin (an African American camper) a racist joke. Juan was not the most popular and Abe was very popular, but in a different bunk in his age group. Juan also claimed he didn't realize the weight of the joke and was just repeating it. Then Benjamin was obviously very upset especially because he thought of Juan as a friend (they were in the same bunk).

Scenario #3

In our oldest girls' cabin, there was one black counselor and one white counselor with bunks on different sides of the cabin. At move in day, by no specific design, the black campers in the cabin moved in on the side with the black counselor, and the white campers moved in on the side with the white counselor. After a few days, a white camper brought the issue up to the counselors. The counselors told the camp director but also wanted to discuss the issue with the cabin themselves. The cabin had a group discussion and eventually decided to move around their bunks so it wasn't divided in that way.

Additional Scenarios to Discuss:

- A camper used the "N" word - he said he was joking...but was he?
- A group of the oldest boys had an opening night campfire that got a little rowdy. We also had a rental group of students of color who were leaving for their trip the next morning, camping within sight of the boys campfire. We found out the next morning that rental group students (people of color) felt unsafe in that situation. History indicates to less privileged populations that this event (a large group of mostly white men, chanting around a fire) is not safe.