The Most Powerful Thing

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The Most Powerful Thing

By Caitlin Jankiewicz

WHEN I SIGNED UP TO WORK AT CAMP WAKONDA, I couldn’t have imagined the experiences I’d have, perhaps fortunately, for if I had, I never in my wildest dreams would have agreed to be a counselor. In the weeks leading up to kids’ camps, I and 18 other counselors were given fair warning: counseling was likely going to be the hardest three weeks of our lives. Already exhausted from a month of staff training and camp meeting, I began to question whether I could actually do it. However, upon meeting my adorable junior campers, who named our cabin “Ca’tiln’s Cute Kittens” and made paper ears to match, I began to relax. Despite my initial doubts, I began to question whether I could actually do it.

The next day, I briefly admonished D for the previous night’s behavior, and then went back to showing her as much love as I possibly could. It was almost as if she needed to see I would love her regardless of her behavior before I let her trust me, because from that time on, D’s tough girl shell fell away and her spunky, insipid personality came out. D became the girl who loved me the most that week, a major change from the beginning. She started hanging back from the rest of the group to walk with me, even putting her arm around my waist and pulling my arm around her shoulders. On my rough day, she organized the other girls to make cards telling me how amazing I was, even locking me out of our room so it would be a surprise. By the end of the week, D was a completely different person. The only thing I did was to love her, regardless of her behavior. I think that, as Christians, we often try to reach people by the warning: counseling was likely needed to see I would love her regardless of her behavior. I think that, as Christians, we often try to reach people by the way we show God is to show love. Love changes people. The only thing I did was to love her, regardless of her behavior.

I determined I would try to draw out her true self. This was challenging, as her attitude remained the same, despite my efforts to connect with her. However, halfway through the week, something happened. Our cabin went on a nature walk, a run-down, bug-infested bungalow in the middle of the woods. When I refused to take the girls back to our cabin, D threw a tantrum. She was sent back to the main part of camp and slept elsewhere.

In the last few days of camp, I decided to try to draw out her true self. This was challenging, as her attitude remained the same, despite my efforts to connect with her. However, halfway through the week, something happened. Our cabin went on a nature walk, a run-down, bug-infested bungalow in the middle of the woods. When I refused to take the girls back to our cabin, D threw a tantrum. She was sent back to the main part of camp and slept elsewhere.

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