

# Trust, Integrity and Fear Embers

**Theme:** Trusting others with your secrets

**Age of campers:** 11+

**Time allotted/actual:** 30+ minutes

**Location:** Anywhere with an open fire

**Props/Materials/Symbols:** 6 sheets of paper, 6 pens, lighter, fire materials, campfire pit

**Prep done:** Build a fire and arrange enough seating for everyone.

**Opening/Mood set:** “This embers will be about secrets, and no one will learn or misuse yours as long as you trust the process.”

**WARNING:** This embers is a moderate risk for a high payoff, but it can bomb if not handled carefully and with intention. Campers can easily become intimidated if care is not taken to frontload carefully.

## **Questions/Activities:**

**1<sup>st</sup> activity:** Pass out the papers. Ask each person in the group to write a deep secret, one that they want NO ONE to know, on their sheet of paper and fold it up securely. DO NOT OPEN. Stand in a circle and look the person opposite you in the eye for 30 seconds. Now trade papers with them! DO NOT OPEN.

**2<sup>nd</sup> activity:** Hold the papers in hand and discuss the level of trust that it takes to let someone else hold that secret of yours. What integrity do they hold in not opening the paper? Do you fear that trust can easily be betrayed in this moment? Do you stave off curiosity because you know they have collateral? What do you feel?

**3<sup>rd</sup> activity:** Pass the papers back to the facilitator. Mix them up and hand out at random. Now you don't even know who holds your secret. How does it feel? Emulates misplaced trust---what happens when your secret is released and you don't even know who has it?

**Closing:** In the center is the fire. Finally, release all the papers into the fire. Discuss the obvious relief felt by the group when the papers are burning. Do our secrets define us by their liability?

**Were other people involved?** None needed.

**Thoughts on pacing?** Give the campers time to react to your requests. Despite any assurance, they will be hesitant to pass forward their secrets. Take it slow and restate the limitations and guidelines if needed.

**What would you change next time / what did you learn / how would you enhance it?** Frontload very carefully and ensure that everything is clear. Make it clear what each of the title words MEAN: trust is about the guidance and the process, you must trust that everyone else will follow the rules too; integrity is about you holding to your agreement to respect the privacy of others; fear is about what you have at stake. All have a place in the process and are important for debriefing at the end!

**Camper feedback:** “Scary but cool in the end.”