

Vanity vs. Pride

Theme: Vanity vs. Pride

Age of campers: 13-16

Time allotted/actual: 25-40 minutes

Location: Any with comfortable seating.

Props/Materials/Symbols: Pens and paper

Prep done: Print this quote and cut out one for each person:

"Vanity and pride are different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person may be proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves; vanity, to what we would have others think of us."

-Jane Austen

Opening/Mood set: Reflection and time spent with the quote in silence, pondering its meaning and how it relates to you and your attitude toward each concept in your life.

Questions/Activities:

1st phase: Do you agree that these words are used synonymously, and if so, in error? Do you agree with Austen that pride and vanity can be defined as such, in matters of opinion? Present dictionary definitions of each word. Compare them to everyone's thoughts.

2nd phase: How do you experience either or both of these concepts in your life? How do you view others experiencing them? What do you feel are the limits of healthy expression of each? What triggers you when you see others (or yourself) step over those limits?

3rd phase: Write out some notes to yourself about the things you are proud to be proud of about yourself. Write below it some of the things that you know you are vain about, and wish to be more aware of working on and working with to find balance and health in yourself.

Closing: A few avenues depending on the energy the group touched on and what came up: collective burning of the papers with a group commitment to hold in the awareness discussed; moments of silence and reflection on what has been said; processing and affirmations for those who struggled with intense emotions surrounding their pride or vanity.

Were other people involved? It can be very useful here to include another interested staff member who has worked through issues pertaining to these concepts, and is now in a strong place with them.

Thoughts on pacing? Give campers time to be comfortable discussing what comes up.

What would you change next time / what did you learn / how would you enhance it? Ensure before doing this one that it is pertinent to the campers it is being offered to. If the campers are humble and straightforward in most of their endeavors, this will likely be a short and shallow experience. However, on the flip side if you are offering it to campers who very much need to process it but are miles away from truly grasping the most salient essence of the discussion, then it very much helps to have poignant personal stories and discussion to offer in order to inspire opening up.

Camper feedback: To be obtained and entered.