



ACCEPTANCE

Roger* enjoys being outdoors and playing sports. Soccer, basketball, volleyball, swimming, it doesn't matter to him. He loves it all!

Roger did not ask to go to camp--his parents sent him! He was not interested in interacting with others, and Wanake was not on his wish list.

Roger was miserable when his parents checked him in at camp. The other campers in his group were friendly and excited to start the fun of this sports-themed camp. "As soon as we started our first game of soccer, problems began to develop," Roger's counselor Sam remembers. "Roger got angry when things didn't go his way. He often stomped off and sat by himself. He refused our attempts to talk with him."

"By day two of camp, as there was no improvement in Roger's behavior, I talked with the camp program director. I suggested that maybe it would be best for everyone if we simply left him out of games or sent him home. My program director, John, suggested a different way."

"Let's accept Roger as he is," John suggested, "and give him positive ways to use his talents. Let's start with Roger's ability to lay out a game plan for the team. I will take Roger for a walk with the health director to talk about his talents, while you and your co-counselor talk with the group about acceptance."

"We prayed together and then put this plan into action," Sam said. "The other campers were skeptical, but when we shared that this is what Jesus meant by loving our

neighbor, they were open to trying to take direction from Roger. The campers also planned to walk with Roger and sit by him at meals. We prayed for God to fill us with His Holy Spirit to accept and love Roger.”

“We put the plan into action--Roger was open to invitations to walk, talk and eat together. Then after supper we had a volleyball game. We all looked to Roger for our game plan. We practiced some of the moves and then started the game. It didn’t go smoothly for the whole game, but Roger stuck with his team. When he started to get upset, one of us would ask him to direct the team. As the week closed, Roger had made friends. The campers were not pretending to put up with Roger. They enjoyed his company.”

“This was a week where everyone won,” Sam exclaimed! “Roger found ways to make and hold friendships, be a part of a team, and cope with his emotions. The group learned to accept and love people who are hard to live with. As a leader, I saw how God can work through each of us to be the Body of Christ. What a week of camp!”

Your generosity makes it possible for Wanake to hire and train positive, Christ-like summer camp counselors who can help all campers grow in faith and in relationship with God and others. Thank you for your generosity.

*Name changed to protect the privacy of the camper.

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