

You thought you knew, and then you knew that you didn't, but it was too late

The three-and-a-half-week-staff training was awesome, and will be remembered for years to come. You're psyched; you're ready . . . this is what you wanted. Your love of children is tested and not in question. You are goal oriented, you're up for a challenge, and you love the philosophy of the camp. . . . Flash forward to the end of the first week of camp.

The most physically, emotionally, and mentally tired you've ever been is either a tie with how you feel now, or this beats it. You can't believe you're this tired and that 23 hours a day with kids for 6 days could do this to anyone. Your expectations and preparations paled in comparison to reality. All your plans for an exciting day off melt away as you realize that rest is all you're capable of.

Is eight more weeks of this possible? Will you be ready for a rubber room (rubber walls in insane asylums so can't hurt yourself)? Can you maintain your level of energy, dedication, and creativity for the remaining weeks, or will you disappoint the children and yourself?

Many first-year counselors felt like this, and so did some who had already worked at camp for several summers elsewhere. That isn't good for you, the camp, or the children. Although there are 54 staff overall for 90-95 campers, the schedule and demands are probably a 7 out of 10 on the summer camp intensity scale. You could very, very easily find camps that are less intense and demanding.

Reflect. Deeply reflect, over a day or two. Do children give you energy, rather than sap it? Have you been with children this intensely for long periods of time? Does your physical stamina allow you to rock on when others similar to you have fallen away? Could your emotional skills, endurance for frustration, and social skills earn you a place at the UN?

Finally, sometimes people are up for a challenge so they can push themselves and grow. While admirable, you need to be ready for this challenge already. We'll teach you an enormous amount, but you need to be physically, emotionally, and mentally ready for Camp Augusta when you arrive, and not after the 3rd week of camp. Be realistic, and don't let your Ego or your desires cloud your character and better judgment.

Thank you for reflecting. If you think and feel that you'd be at home and happy here, then we'd love to hear from you!

Campingly yours,
Randy