

*Josh Olsen on **Community, Connection, and Living Free (shortened)***

When we leave camp, we are thrust back into a world where close, interpersonal relationships are hard to find and one in which we often feel disconnected from the people around us.

This lack of connection or sense of community leaves us with no base for our actions and behaviors and leaves us susceptible to the influences of the crowd. How do we find a sense of community where none seems to exist? How can we free ourselves from the sarcasm, the cynicism, and the jaded attitude we sometimes encounter in the world outside of camp? How do we free ourselves to live and behave in the ways which make us most fulfilled? The answer I believe is to always think of yourself as part of a big community. Everything that we do and every attitude that we take eventually touches everyone in the world. If you think about it long enough, you can find the connections between you and everyone and everything else in the entire world. This means that we always have an excuse to live the way that we do at camp. The feeling of freedom and self-respect that you feel when you are always looking out for someone else, and that you feel when you know that you have the power to influence a community, will always be with you. If you take things that you have learned at camp and apply them to your everyday lives, you will be free. You will allow others around you to be free as well. Because just being around someone who lives freely and who respects the world community makes things seem brighter and more positive. A lesson is most valuable when it is universal. The lessons that we learn at Pasquaney are universal.