



## Being a Young Women Mentor | An Interview with Scharman Grimmer

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Speaker 1 00:00:01 Attention youth leaders. If you have recently been called to lead the rising generation, I have a next step for you. Listen to an awesome presentation by Yvonne Hubert and Peter Vidmar, who are both respective members of the young Women and Young Men General Advisory Council for the church. Their presentation really helps clarify ways on how to effectively lead the youth using the Children and youth program. They also cover topics like Youth-led groups, how to lead through personal ministry, how to meet youth, where they are identifying the youth's strengths and capacities. This presentation is part of the Young Saints Virtual Library, and you can access it at no cost by going to [leading-saints.org/fourteen](https://leading-saints.org/fourteen). Again, simply click the link in the show notes or go to [leading-saints.org/one-four](https://leading-saints.org/one-four).

Speaker 1 00:00:52 If you wanted further insight into a come Follow Me lesson, you'd probably search in YouTube or get the We Believe app, tough church history questions. You'd reach out to the BH Roberts Foundation. But what if you wanted to learn to be a better leader? Well, I'm glad you asked. You'd come to Leading Saints. That's why we exist to help Latter Day Saints be better prepared to lead by being familiar with others leadership experiences. Understand the latest leadership research, and finding a community to share ideas. That's why I'm glad you found the Leading Saints podcast. We hope you will dive into the archives and visit [leading-saints.org](https://leading-saints.org) to find out what are the top most listened to episodes on the podcast. Welcome. You're gonna love it.

Speaker 1 00:01:38 I love these interviews. When we get to invite in a member of the General Advisory Council for the young women, I've had the opportunity to do this before, and I just love their insight, their perspective. They come to these general callings with a wealth of

knowledge and experience. And Charman Grimmer is who we have in the studio today to talk about young women being a young women's leader. How do we mentor young women's or even youth in general? And, and by the way, this is a, an episode that isn't just for young women's leaders, it's for young men's leaders as well, and really parents of the young teenagers that, that we have in our lives. But the mentorship role, like how do we really, what, how do we step into these mentor roles and help them find support and encouragement? She interesting dynamic she brought up is that just because youth are coming to a weekly activity or coming to a Sunday church experience doesn't necessarily mean they're feeling belonging. So what are some things that we can do to help them feel like they belong? Such helpful advice for all youth leaders. You're gonna love this and this is one to maybe listen to a couple times or share it around. So here's my interview with Scharmin Grimmer.

Speaker 1 00:02:54 Today I'm looking in ScharminGrimmer, how are you? I'm so good today. Good. Now you are a member. Let me see if I can get this right. The, a member of the Young Women's Advisory Council. Did I get so close? Oh, what advisory?

Speaker 2 00:03:08 The general. The general advisory council's. That's right.

Speaker 1 00:03:11 I'll get it. I'll get it. We used to call it the board, the owners boards. It shifted that and it totally messed my brain up, but that's right. Um, now tell me, like most people are, we see maybe the, the news announcement about the, the new council and you see the pictures and we can read the bios, but we don't often hear How did this come to be? So for your journey, like what's the story behind this calling?

Speaker 2 00:03:32 Well, my husband teases me because I don't always listen to my voicemails. Yeah. Very quickly. And so maybe <laugh>, it might have been two days later, <laugh>. Oh wow. I received a phone call from Elder Ya's secretary asking for myself and my husband to go meet with Elder Yata, and I responded after, immediately after I heard the voicemail. And then my daughter was graduating from high school the next day, so that didn't work. And then I was gonna be outta town for a week, and then Elder Yata was gonna be outta town. So for two weeks I was wondering, what is this about

Speaker 1 00:04:12 <laugh>? Wow. That was a long two weeks. It was interesting. And so they called your phone. So did it, were you feeling like this was a calling for you then? Or?

Speaker 2 00:04:21 My mother kept saying, Scharmin this isn't for you. This is for Matt <laugh>. And I said, mom, why did they call my cell phone? <laugh>? Yeah. Nice. Why did they say you and your husband <laugh>? Mm-Hmm. I think they would've called Matt. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:04:33 And any idea how your name got on a list that ended up with you on, on the, the council or,

Speaker 2 00:04:38 You know, that is interesting. Actually, information and knowledge precedes inspiration. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, right? Yeah. And so you often wonder, well, how, and sometimes the people aren't known, but they're known by the church and the churches give gives a list, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> of individuals who are worthy and willing and able.

But you might know someone Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> who's been in the presidency. So generally speaking, if you look at our entire council, um, in some way they were connected. Even if it was tiny connection Yeah. To some, one of the members of the presidency.

Speaker 1 00:05:15 Gotcha. Gotcha.

Speaker 2 00:05:16 So I was connected with President Freeman. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:05:19 Cool. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. That's awesome. Now, like what does the calling entail? I don't think a lot of people understand like the week to week or month to month. I mean, what is it you're doing?

Speaker 2 00:05:29 We have council meetings. Right. And at the beginning we had an in-person council meeting. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> every single week. And then as we got more established and we were learning what we were doing, then we moved to one week in person. The next week virtual and the virtual ones, sometimes the presidency is traveling and they can't join us. And so as a council we will be discussing different topics and kind of have our agenda set forth. But additionally to the council meetings, we also sit on working groups. And so each of us is assigned to different working groups. And I knew the church was true when I saw the ginormous spreadsheet with all the council members and all the assignments. And as I slid my fingers to see that I was assigned to the life help working groups. Hmm. Which means I sit on six different working groups in the life help area.

Speaker 2 00:06:30 Mainly mental, emotional health, addiction recovery, anti-abuse, those types of working groups where we are asked to be a trusted voice. I, when Elder Yata was meeting with myself and my husband, he counseled me to be a trusted voice. And that sometimes that would be in the role of a young women's council member. And sometimes it would just be as a, a woman in the church and to use my gifts and my, the spirit to contribute. And it has been such a beautiful learning experience. It has been incredible to watch employees who have covenanted or consecrated their professional lives to building up God's kingdom and then also intermixed with those who are called. That's been fascinating and very humbling and an honor to watch.

Speaker 1 00:07:30 Yeah. Wow. And nano, you have some strong educational background when it comes to life help stuff. Maybe explain that for us.

Speaker 2 00:07:37 I feel very blessed to professionally and personally have had the opportunity to support guide, teach people in mental health arena. Hmm. I have a master's degree in child and teen development. Wow. So I have been a child teen development specialist for decades. And specifically right now work with parents professionally who are trying to problem solve, problem solve maybe different things in their parenting or concerns that they have for their children or teenagers or family dynamics. And I like to say I help them find wholly healthy habits as a family, as parents, as they're trying to guide and raise their children. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:08:22 So working with the, the life help dynamic of the church. I mean, you're contributing or reviewing resources that church is putting out around some of these tough concepts. Right. That that's right. That we face in mortality.

Speaker 2 00:08:34 That's right. That's cool. Awesome. Listening to incredible research that is done. Learning and then being able to help take that information and apply it, whether it's in the youth programs or just at the church at large. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:08:46 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Awesome. Now imagine this wasn't your first go at the young women's uh, world, right, right. In the church. Had you had a lot of experience in young women's?

Speaker 2 00:08:57 Yes. So just as a girl, I sure loved young women's. I grew up in Humble Texas. Tiny spelled humble. But you say humble but humble. Yes. My Texas accent has faded <laugh>. Um, tiny. Tiny whereabouts

Speaker 1 00:09:11 Is it

Speaker 2 00:09:12 In Texas? Right outside of Houston. Okay. North northeast of Houston. Wow. Right in the Kingwood area. And so tiny youth program. And the youth program was a lifeline for me. Hmm. My friends, we were small but mighty and early morning seminary at 5 45 because that's how early we had to do it in order to make it to high school in time. 'cause it was, we went to many different high schools, but young women's was a special, special place. Girls camp personal progress. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. I really loved it. And watched my mom for the majority of my life be in young women's leading ward level, young, uh, stake level and just learning and watching her. So that's cool. When my husband and I went to Syracuse, New York, we graduated from BYU and headed out to Syracuse, new New York for law school. And for my graduate work, I was called to be the young woman's counselor.

Speaker 2 00:10:07 And I was in my early twen, excuse me, the young women's president. And I was in my early twenties. Wow. So I felt like I was just barely older than <laugh>. You're just one of them than they were. Yes. Yes. It was such a beautiful learning experience Wow. For me. And these girls were resilient and it was inner city and came from incredible families who had lots of challenges and I learned and grew with them. I grew up with them <laugh>. Yeah. Really in that first experience. Yeah. And then throughout my time I've had other opportunities to be counselor and advisors and young women's presidencies. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:10:48 What do you remember from those early years as a, you know, in your twenties, like walking into that calling? I mean, where did you begin? Or did do any memories come back?

Speaker 2 00:10:56 Overwhelm. Yeah. <laugh>. We were a tiny branch that then we got moved into a ward. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> a lot of driving. My husband and I, gratefully, we both had cars. And my husband would drive one loop and I would drive the other loop to pick up these youth to get them, whether it was to seminary. 'cause I, I then taught seminary Uhhuh <affirmative> right after young early morning. Yes. Uhhuh <affirmative>. Yes. And so a lot of

mentoring. Yeah. I think that that's where my passion came for mentoring the youth, trying to see them understand where they're at and meet them there. That really has always been a passion of mine. And I've tried to incorporate that into my leadership. If they do not feel loved Yeah. Then they don't wanna be there. If they do not feel like they belong, then they don't wanna participate.

Speaker 1 00:11:50 Yeah. And I mean, just over those years of refining that mentoring approach, like, 'cause I feel some people, they wanna be that strong mentor, but sometimes <laugh>, they don't know where to start or how, how to do that. Right. So what advice would you give to a young women's leader or youth leader on actually becoming a mentor? Not just some, you know, figurehead. That's the adult in the room.

Speaker 2 00:12:11 That's right. President Freeman has been a beautiful teacher to us. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> on the council. And as we're going out and doing trainings worldwide, she has really helped us to take examples from the scriptures. So can I share? Yeah. A couple of my favorites with you. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> one is from Acts eight, and it's Philip in the eunuch. And it's when Philip is told by the spirit, just told by the spirit, you need to go. And he did as the mentor, he followed the spirit, really not knowing where he was going. And maybe he could have questioned. But he went down to the desert and followed that spiritual guiding. And the spirit said, go near unto him. He saw eunuch sitting there and the spirit said, go, go near. So he did. And then the spirit said, guide him. And what was he doing? He was sitting there trying to read Isaiah <laugh>.

Speaker 2 00:13:06 That's right. Isaiah. And what could the mentor, what could Philip have wanted to do? Oh, let's back up a little bit. Let's go to the Book of Mormon. That's a little easier to understand. We might skip the Isaiah chapters there, but let's go there. Yeah. That's easier to understand. But he didn't, he said, you wanna read Isaiah? You wanna study Isaiah? Let's do it. So he met him where he was, he didn't correct him. Mm-Hmm. He just said, if this is what you're interested in, I'm here for it. Let's do this. And then when he did that, he started preaching. It says, preaching Jesus. But I like to say preaching can sound, I understand what the meaning is, but it can sound preachy like we're preaching. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:13:50 Lecturing.

Speaker 2 00:13:51 Lecturing. Yeah. Right. He just spoke of Jesus. He talked of Jesus. What a beautiful model for us. And he said, okay, let's do this. Let me talk to you about Jesus. Let me explain the context, what this means. And then he didn't just leave it there. It then says in verses 36 through 38, he led him into baptism. He led him to a covenant relationship. So beautiful. Yeah. So many pieces that we can take and apply right now to mentor. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And then if you flip a little bit backwards to Acts three, this is one of my favorite scriptures stories. When Peter and John are walking to the temple and they see a man in need sitting on the steps. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. And I like to just make this general just someone in need sitting on the steps. And first what did they do?

Speaker 2 00:14:50 It says, Peter fastened his eyes on that individual. Hmm. He saw him, he looked at him, he tried to know who he was. Right. And then he took him by the hand. So that shows familiarity. Right. And then he lifted him up. What does that look like for us? How are we lifting our youth or lifting anyone? We're trying to mentor? And it says, when he took him by the hand and lifted him up, he received strength and he jumped up and previously hadn't been able to walk. So he jumped up, received that strength, and it said that Peter and John then walked with him into the temple. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And on so many levels. How beautiful is that? I would say from the years that I was in Syracuse, New York to Austin, Texas to Alpine, Utah, the young women's program has grown for me in understanding how better to lead youth to covenant relationship.

Speaker 2 00:15:52 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. And so what is the focus right now of the young women and the young men general programs? It is to build on Christ a foundation of Jesus Christ. It is to gather to Christ and gathering to Christ. Yes. We could talk about the gathering of Israel Uhhuh, which our prophet has just told us. Most important thing we can be focused on right now. Right. That's missionary work. But the most important missionary work that needs to happen in our wards and branches is with our youth to gather them to Jesus Christ. And that looks like activities, right? Yeah. That looks like how do we on a weekly basis interact? How do we gather together? How do we create that unity. Unity as we're trying to build on Jesus Christ. So it's building on him, gathering to him. And how do we help our youth lead out?

Speaker 2 00:16:54 They know what's fun. Mm-Hmm. They know what activities will bring out their peers and their non-member friends. Right. Or their friends in other wards and branches. Like they know what will bring them. So really a huge emphasis is on helping our youth be the idea generators. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> for what is interesting and thinking outside the box Right. Of what that looks like. I have a very wise friend who served not too many years ago as a young women's president in a neighboring ward. And she was with the oldest young women. And they were busy. They are busy with work, with school, with activities. And they really couldn't come to that Wednesday night, seven o'clock. So every Sunday they started this tradition where they would ask, okay, what's the night that most people are available? And she would pivot and she had the ability to do so.

Speaker 2 00:17:52 And geographically it worked out. They would pivot. Maybe it'd be on a Tuesday night instead of a Wednesday night. Maybe it would be sometimes at nine o'clock at night. And they would come in their pajamas and they would be together. And she said she went from low participation to a hundred percent. Wow. Because those girls felt seen and loved that their leader was like, how can we make this work for you? Yeah. Girls, we want you. We need you. And they were coming and they didn't wanna miss because of that effort that was put in. And I like that example because maybe that exact can't apply, but thinking outside the box with the spirit to determine what is best for your group of young women that you are loving and serving right now. Yeah. And they can come up with those ideas and we can guide them.

Speaker 2 00:18:43 Right. Like Absolutely. And then the third part really is covenant with Christ. So if you build on Christ, you gather to Christ and then you covenant with Christ. And

really having that experience in young women's where they learn what covenant making is. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And what keeping covenants looks like and knowing that Jesus Christ is their strength. I love the for the strength of Youth guide. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I love that it really has shifted from when I was a youth and when I was a younger youth leader. Yeah. Right. From the rules in the check boxes, just the title for the Strength of Youth, A Guide for Making Choices. And as we've been taught so beautifully by Elder Updo, Jesus Christ is the strength of youth. So Jesus Christ is their guide for making choices. The letter from the first presidency, as you open up the guidebook, it says, we love you.

Speaker 2 00:19:46 We have confidence in you right there. That is beautiful for our youth to know that they are loved and we have confidence in them, tremendous confidence in them. And that Jesus is your guide. And that when you use him as your guide, you will be able to make choices that will build that covenant relationship with Jesus. And then it says, and this is gonna prepare you for life. It's gonna prepare you to enter into the temple to make those next covenants. It's gonna prepare you for your missions. It's a practicing, they're practicing as their teenagers. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:20:25 Yeah. That's so helpful and powerful. And with this like, and I appreciate that, you know, the, the emphasis on how that, the first presidency message there. 'cause youth leaders can be sort of, they can make sure they project those things. And oftentimes maybe it says on paper that the first presidency has confidence in 'em, but maybe they don't feel that from their That's right. Their local leaders, you know, because again, it's harder, you know, they That's right. Adult leaders are trying and have an impact, but to really help them feel that love, that confidence, and then guiding them to towards Jesus can be powerful.

Speaker 2 00:20:56 When you look at our prophet's eyes. Yeah. He is so loving those piercing blue eyes. Yeah. When he is looking on the conference screen, or I had a very special experience where I was walking out of one of the buildings into the parking garage and there he was Oh wow. <laugh>. And as he really just a hello and a wave were exchanged. But the love in the piercingly loving Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> look in from his eyes that he gave to me really undeniable. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> that he is a prophet of God and that he loves all of God's children. Yeah. And that he so wants them to come to Jesus Christ. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:40 So with this, the build to Christ, gather to Christ. Yes. Or build foundation of Christ is that

Speaker 2 00:21:45 Build on Christ, on build on Christ as your foundation. That's right.

Speaker 1 00:21:48 And then gather to Christ and then covenant with Christ. Are these the principles that President Freeman is sort of, sort of the vision that she's developed? Or is this more from your background or

Speaker 2 00:21:57 President Freeman and President Lund at general young men's president through much counseling. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> with their presidencies, with the councils. It is a beautiful thing that the young men, young women programs work hand in hand

together. Sometimes when we walk in for a meeting, there's the young men's council and presidency and we are all together counseling and really studying and working hard. And these pieces are the foundation of the training that both the young men and the young women's organizations are teaching to the new stake residents stake presidencies. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and the new young men and young women stake presidencies. And then that goes throughout the world. Yeah. One of my other assignments is to, I'm over North America southeast, so I work under the direction of elder Stan and his area presidency. Same trainings. Hmm. Go there. And one of my other areas is Mexico. And I had no idea about aas. Have you heard of aas?

Speaker 1 00:23:04 I do not know what that is. <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:23:06 Aas are area organization advisors. Okay. Wow. And they're women think of this beautiful piece. This came about right before Covid hit. Hmm. There are women around the world who are called to train, they're like the liaisons between the general level and the stakes. Gotcha. And they serve for three years. And they not only do young women's, they do primary young Women's and Relief society. Oh, cool. And they train whatever is coming from the general presidencies and councils. Yeah. And it's beautiful. And then they go out and minister to their stake leaders and their stake leaders or area leaders are ministering to their wards and branches. Mm. That's cool. It's really special. That's

Speaker 1 00:23:56 Awesome. You mentioned this, uh, dynamic of working with the, the young men's general advisory board council.

Speaker 2 00:24:03 God <laugh>,

Speaker 1 00:24:03 God, it just comes that general advisory council and like, 'cause you know, obviously now in wards there's no young men's presidency, but it's the bishop work that maybe that the young women's presidency is working with. Anything you'd say is like how, because I know that there's some tension there in some wards of like working together and any principles that come to mind of how to best get these two groups working together.

Speaker 2 00:24:26 Can I share what President Lund just, uh, taught Yeah. In an area training. So it went to hundreds and hundreds of youth leaders. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> young men and young women and bishop bricks and stake presidencies who were gathered there. He talked about the handbook says frequent meetings. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, he said frequent means lots. <laugh> <laugh>. Nice. Frequent means lots. He gave the example of a stake presidency or a bishop brick who meet weekly. Right. Generally speaking, they meet weekly. And he asked for all who were in attendance to please counsel together to see how often, and that means often I was just visiting with a stake president in a different part of the country. And, and he said, we're asking them to do like multiple times a month. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, right. Where the bishop rick over young men's and then the young women's presidency are counseling together.



Speaker 2 00:25:28 Really? That must happen. Or President Lund said, we're going to fall in some of the areas that we wanna be lifting. Right. So that is important to be meeting very regularly. So I'm gonna stick to the handbook and say, you counsel together and you decide. But he also, in that training, talked about the bishops using their bishop storehouse. He said every member of the ward is part of the bishop storehouse. Hmm. So he begged the bishops to delegate to please call in advisors, specialists to help him because he has a lot, a lot to oversee. A lot of that has shifted to relief society and elder scorn presidents. And it's still, you know, they're still working it through because that is still on the newer side. Right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> it's been in place now for several years, but people are still trying to figure out what that means.

Speaker 2 00:26:30 But he said, utilize everyone through ministering through special assignments, through official callings. You utilize them. Just look at your entire ward and say, who's in my storehouse? Hmm. Maybe this brother or this sister would be able to teach this concept to our youth beautifully. So mm-Hmm. Really be creative there. He also, uh, were a different idea that was given to me from a a, a bishop who's in Utah County. He has called his empty nesters to literally be ministers and mentors to young men and women. Oh, that's cool. So these empty nest couples are going to sporting or music events and people are thinking that they're the grandparents. <laugh> <laugh>. That's cool. How beautiful is that? Yeah. A few months ago we were presented with some research, which we get to do. And my social scientists heart kind

Speaker 1 00:27:24 Geek

Speaker 2 00:27:25 Out it. Yeah. It's really excited. So this was a study that had been done across Christian faiths in our country. And the study showed that participation in religion for teenagers does not equal belonging.

Speaker 1 00:27:41 Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:27:41 Right. And I had to sit with that. Yeah. So participation, just because you participate and you're active and you are always a part of, doesn't necessarily mean you feel like you belong. There are still high levels of loneliness. Di disconnectedness, the commonality of what brings belonging blew my mind away. And this has to do with mentoring. When youth are connected with five or more members of their congregation, five or more adult members of their congregation. Hmm. They feel known, feel, seen, feel loved, feel cared about. Then their belonging goes sky high. Oh, wow.

Speaker 1 00:28:22 Wow. Yeah. And that connection, sometimes we think, well, let's just call five advisors or whatever. But it's almost like if there's more than one adult in the context of the activity, youth may not see that as multiple connections. But if the empty nester is also showing up in their life in some dynamic, that's one more point of support and contact. Right?

Speaker 2 00:28:42 That's right. Wow. They're a minister. Right. Someone who is asked to do that. Maybe it's a neighbor. Yeah. Maybe it's someone who hires them to mow their lawn, but

they're in the congregation. They love them, they're interested in them, they care about them, and the teenager knows it. Yeah. How beautiful is that? It makes every point of contact. I, my husband and I have talked often about how in a, we have five children, and in their teenage years, or in their youth program years, there are finite number of connection points Mm-Hmm. That they can have. And every connection point does matter. And so when we as leaders, we're tired, we balance a lot. Yeah. And maybe we're a little exhausted when we come to that activity. Sometimes we can feel the desire to just hang back on the perimeter and visit with the other adults. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> while the youth do their thing. Really that is a missed opportunity. If we can enter in, go find that youth who's sitting by himself, go ask that youth about her test or her game, or how her new job is going. Those pieces help them to feel like this is their church and they belong. And in the, for the strength of youth guide, it says, from the first presidency, you belong. Mm-Hmm. We need you. We need

Speaker 1 00:30:03 You. Yeah. And then these are practical ways of actually stimulating that belonging rather than sometimes you feel like, well, I said they belong like 10 times on Sunday. They

Speaker 2 00:30:10 Come, they come all the time. Yeah, exactly. Yeah. Yeah. They know it, right. <laugh>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:30:14 Yeah. And I just think, I mean, lot of times I went to do activities 'cause of my mother said, you're going, I'm like, okay, I'll go <laugh>

Speaker 2 00:30:20 My senior in high school who has senioritis right now. Yes. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:30:23 <laugh>. Right. Again, that's, that's fine. But, uh, again, we wanna stimulate this belonging. Right? That's right. There's been this emphasis on, on youth led. Right. And I've talked to other advisory council members about that, but, 'cause this is one thing I hear, I get emails about and people, I hear people struggle with youth leaders of like, well, how do we make this youth led? And what's too much? And again, there's like a balance there. Uh, any advice or perspective you give on, on those that maybe struggle with that? Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:30:50 We talk a lot about this. The youth are the idea Generators and in the children and Youth guidebook for parents and leaders. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. It has a beautiful spread both for young women and young men. And it highlights what our role is. We are the support team. So if this young women's presidency, the youth class presidency comes up with this fantastic idea to make vision boards, right? They're so excited about this beginning of the year and Yeah. You know, their 13 or 14 year olds are so excited. And then they've come out up with the idea and they think that their peers are really gonna be excited about this. So then what are the adults in this planning meeting? What can they do to be the support team? They're like, oh, I'm really good at going to Hobby Lobby. Or, I'm really good at saving magazines.

Speaker 2 00:31:43 I've got you <laugh>. I'm gonna bring my box of magazines and I'll ask Sister. So-and-So to bring her box of magazines, and I'll bring the poster board from Hobby

Lobby and I'll bring the glue so we've got it all there. How do you want it set up? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. Should we do it at someone's house? Should we do it at the church? Should we do it in the nursery room where it's a little bit messy? What cleaning supplies. Okay. What do we need? How do you want it set up? All right. And then maybe you say, oh, you're gonna be coming from soccer practice. So I know it's really hard to get there by seven, but don't you worry, we're gonna have this set up. You just draw a little Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> diagram of how you want it set up and we'll have it set up.

Speaker 2 00:32:22 So when you come in, you can lead the activity. You can tell the girls what your idea is and what the goal is of the activity. And then you can kick it off. Right. And we're there, we're there to help. Oh, the activity's over and you have a math test the next day. So you guys leave. You guys leave. We'll clean up for you. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Right. We are the support team. This is not a sink or swim program. This is not a Let Them Fail program. And in years past, maybe that's what the idea was of Youth-led, right? Yeah. Where nope, they are the idea generators. We are there to support them. Do you want to be at an activity where you constantly are feeling like you are the failure? And you're right. Not living up to what all everyone's expectations are. No. You wanna be there when you feel like, ah, I can do this. Like this is scaffolding, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, we are preparing them and we are mentoring them through this process.

Speaker 1 00:33:20 Yeah. And again, goes back to that mentorship, right? Yes. It can be so important.

Speaker 2 00:33:23 Yes. Same thing when they plan lessons, like maybe they can come up with what area of this scripture block do you feel like the girls really need to understand? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, who do you think should teach this? Right. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:33:35 Yeah. And going back to the idea generator, which I appreciate about a year ago, I was the Deacon Corps advisor, and I remember this feeling of I was wanting them, I'm stimulating the ideas from them, but sometimes then I felt this pressure of like, well, I need, like, they came up with this activity, but I don't know how I'm gonna like insert some purpose in there. Is it just an act or we just having fun? You know? Which is fine. I mean Right. Right. There should be lots of fun. Right? Right. But, uh, sometimes I, or there wasn't a lot of ideas coming from them. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so as a leader, you're like, well, what about this? And then suddenly it's my idea. Right. So Right. As far as like stimulating ideas or maybe they're not flowing and then creating like, should we feel this pressure of inserting purpose or making sure there's a, a reason behind what we're doing?

Speaker 2 00:34:19 Such a great question. I was a EFY counselor decades and decades ago. Uhhuh <laugh> <laugh>. One of my favorite takeaways from those years was that we can feel the spirit while we're having an awesome loud time. Yeah. Right, right. Playing games and cheering, you can feel the spirit and we don't have to just feel the spirit. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> when we're being reverent and sitting still on a pew in church. And so sometimes that activity, the purpose is to be together, to feel the unity and then point out what they're feeling Mm-Hmm. And how good it feels to be together and to have fun and to laugh. So sometimes that is like the

core purpose that helps them to want to gather right to Christ. But this for the strength of youth guide, we are encouraging leaders and that means leaders, adult leaders, and youth leaders.

Speaker 2 00:35:16 So the adults can lead the way in the different sections of this book. Maybe you get together at a leadership breakfast for your youth and maybe as they're eating delicious crepes <laugh> because we feed the youth. Right. That's right. Like, they love that. Maybe you go through every section of the book and the whole purpose of your leadership breakfast together is brainstorming with each section of the book. What are some ideas that could help Jesus Christ will help you? What are some ideas for activities that would help get that point across? What are some ideas for love thy neighbor, or ideas for how to take care of your body? Or ideas for fellowshiping friendship, others just following along in these six like sections or chapters of the, for the strength of youth guide and brainstorm. Adults can be an active part of that brainstorming process.

Speaker 2 00:36:17 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> adults understand the timing of things and the budget of things. Right. Yeah. The budget is always a big thing, but I think that brainstorming process, once the creative juices start flowing, and I think it is fun in my experience to do that separate from a class presidency or quorum presidency meeting when like, you've gotta get it done. Like you have 15 minutes left in this meeting, you gotta have brainstormed an activity together. Right. <laugh>. So kind of giving that overview, but like, oh, let's go to our list of like the brainstormed ideas that we had that we thought would sound really fun. Yeah. Or my sons are both in their pre quo together and my husband's in there with them. And a couple weeks ago they did, they took the first part of the class on Sunday when they're supposed to counsel together. Yeah. What did they counsel about? They counseled about activities and they had the idea of service. That's what they were feeling like as a quorum, they really needed to focus on. So they counseled together with the whole quorum and they brainstormed activities and then that quorum leadership group can then take it and go implement it. And the boys are more excited about that. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:37:26 I appreciate hearing those stories of, you know, taking time in core meeting. Sometimes we're too rigid on like, well, it's sort of just another Sunday school class, let's get to the lesson. Right. So when in reality, let's take a few minutes and council together. Right.

Speaker 2 00:37:37 Right. That can be every once in a while that can be the council, right? Yeah. Every, if we're doing that every week and then actually planning that week's activity in that time. Right. I don't think that that's what that Yeah. Yeah. That's not ideal. Hey, it happens, but maybe not ideal. Uhhuh. <affirmative>. Right.

Speaker 1 00:37:55 Yeah. That's really good. Anything else that, any other principle we haven't covered as far as youth mentoring that you wanna make sure we cover? Do we,

Speaker 2 00:38:02 Youth can tell when you're genuine. Hmm. And when you're authentic. And one thing I like to talk about with leaders is let's talk about our own spiritual holy habits that we're in. Like, let's be really honest and vulnerable about, I was in this visiting award on Sunday

and this week, and the young woman's leader, we were like in a little small group counseling together. She's like, yeah, I've really been struggling with my morning prayers this week. And the young woman said, yeah, me too. Like, there was such vulnerability. Wow. And then the young woman's leader said, so this is my plan. This is what I'm gonna do to really focus on that time with God before I start my day. And the young woman said, yeah, me too. Like really connecting with them and being able to share with them what is working and what isn't working. And that you're figuring it out too. Yeah. Or maybe saying, well, yeah, last week when I was listening to the prophets address re-listening to that conference talk, my mind was blown. I, I missed this the first time I heard his talk. And Right. We're just modeling for them that we're on this journey too. And I think it's really strengthening and connecting for them. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:39:18 Because there is that pressure that youth leaders feel of setting the strong example. Right? Mm-Hmm mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, I can't mention my mission enough. And how you should really consider going on a mission. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> or, you know, there's this feeling that we don't want to get vulnerable because we wanna make sure they get a clear, strong example. And so any other advice you'd have on like, being real and vulnerable? Like what are some best practices to do that? Uh, so that they don't get a fake image of just for the sake of having an ex strong example in the room. Right.

Speaker 2 00:39:46 I think we have to really be prayerful and follow the spirit on this. I'm not saying disclose, like we don't disclose our laundry list of, of sins. Right? Yeah. We don't. But we want to be real. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, we want to help them understand that it's not perfection, but it's a holy rhythm that we're trying to create. And when we explain what we do to problem solve when, oh, you know, I really have fallen out of the habit of going to the temple on a regular basis, so I'm going to, or I, and this is how I felt when I did that. Right. Or really inviting them into the conversation of, well, what do you do? What can we do as a class? You mentioned you've been wanting to get to the temple. Could we have that to be one of our class activities? Could we do that? Right. So there's a, a culture of supporting one another. So I think that best practice is to be real, to listen to not overshare <laugh>. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, but to constantly be setting forth that example Yeah. Of progress.

Speaker 1 00:40:59 Yeah. Any other point? Principle concept. We cover all the, the main ones.

Speaker 2 00:41:04 So one of the questions I get asked the most is emotional resilience. Mental health is on everyone's mind. Yeah. Right. Across organizations at the church, across leadership at the church, across parents, across leaders, across teachers at school <laugh>. And for our youth, um, mental health is on their minds. I love in doctrine, cov covenants 1 0 4, it says that I, the Lord will provide resources. And I have come to learn that the church's emotional resilience curriculum, it's called Finding Strength in Jesus Christ. Emotional resilience is such an inspired curriculum and resource with my work that I'm doing right now on these life help groups. I'm also learning about resources on the church website, on the gospel library app that are underutilized, beautiful resources that will help us understand how to support youth's mental health, which specifically is emotional resilience. So with that, the emotional resilience curriculum is approved to be used from ages 16 on up.

Speaker 2 00:42:21 And it has been beautiful to listen and learn of stakes and wards around the world who are utilizing prayerfully their counseling together as ward councils, as youth councils, as stake councils, how to utilize this curriculum. I was able on Sunday to visit a class locally who is doing this with their seniors in high school. And I was able to ask the youth afterwards their thoughts on this emotional resilience class that they are halfway through right now. And one girl who had a, a very challenging mental health crisis in junior high is now a senior in high school. And she said, my life changed when I found Jesus Christ. And she talked about how mental health skills are over here and Jesus on one end of the spectrum. And then Jesus Christ is on the other end of the spectrum. And she knew the gospel. Jesus Christ.

Speaker 2 00:43:24 She knew the principles. But combining the skills of mental health with the gospel of Jesus Christ's eternal truths has given her so much power. Hmm. One of the young men told me, this is my mission prep. I am going to be more prepared for my mission because of participating in this curriculum and learning these foundational skills for his mental health. Another girl said, I understand the gospel of Jesus Christ better, and I can apply the gospel of Jesus Christ better because I'm getting the skills from this emotional resilience class. I talked with the facilitators afterwards and they said, you wanna increase activity of your youth offer this course? Hmm. Five of the class of 13. Were not regularly actively participating in young men or young women's. A hundred percent attendance now. Wow. A hundred percent attendance because they feel united and they feel like their needs are being met.

Speaker 2 00:44:27 And these are youth, some diagnosed with mental health challenges, some undiagnosed, we all have mental health <laugh>, all of us. Right. It's part of our mortal experience. But when we have those principles to understand what is normal, elder Holland teaches us about it. What is normal sadness and what has crossed the line into really some clinical depression? What's the difference? When do I get help? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, where do I go for help and how can Jesus Christ support me in all of that? That's power. Yeah. That is power. And this is going to help our youth transition to college, to missions, to jobs, to their adult lives with a stronger emotional resilience. I'm working on a professional project called Bounce Back better. Hmm. It's just focusing on getting youth skills, like bite-sized skills and helping their parents to support learning those skills. Right. Ah, that's great. That's power. And then these youth can go and be who God needs and wants 'em to be and they can find true resilience and joy. Yeah. In the hearts of life.

Speaker 1 00:45:37 Now is this course in the, like the self-reliance library type of, it's,

Speaker 2 00:45:42 It's, it's under the welfare and self-reliance arm of the church. Gotcha. Right. And brilliant professionals wrote this curriculum. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and Family Services. So important. This has been vetted by incredible professionals as well as spiritual leaders. Yeah. It's incredible. And

Speaker 1 00:46:02 So the Youth 16 and Up can participate in this along with adults? Or would you recommend there's a special youth class

Speaker 2 00:46:09 Separate. Okay. Separate adults do their own thing. Gotcha. Adults you go do your own thing <laugh>. Yeah. Yeah. We do this. Yeah. As I talk with the facilitators, there are a few like examples or videos that pertain more to adults. Yeah. Right. And so you don't need to watch those or you can reword a question or two. Right. To be more applicable to the youth. But the principles they said, don't skip a principle. They thought maybe they could kind of condense. They said don't, don't do it.

Speaker 1 00:46:39 Interesting. Great. Great advice. So I, and I asked this to President Freeman when I interviewed her a few years ago, that gimme like your best girls camp. Like hacks. Like what? <laugh> any general guidance or ideas or thoughts on girls camp?

Speaker 2 00:46:52 I love girls camp. I love it. You need to have that strong YCL, the youth camp leader. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. You need to have a good strong YCL group and you want to utilize those youth leaders. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, the girls, the younger girls want to hear from them. They want to see them. They are the great idea Generators I was just sitting in, have the privilege of sitting in youth a, a young woman's camp planning meeting with ward. Hmm. And the camp director came in and it was the oldest girls Right. The youth camp leaders. And she had ideas. Right. She had three different places that they could go for their camp. And she gave them time to talk about the pros and cons. And she had listed some of the things that you could do in each place. Right. And she thought that they would choose the location that would be closer because it was less drive time. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Nope, they didn't, they chose one that was further drive time, but it had the best hikes and it didn't have wifi, <laugh>, <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:48:02 Nice. That's always

Speaker 2 00:48:03 Helpful. Right? Yeah. And so they came up with the ideas. Another best hack would be to have your youth leaders help you choose a spiritual scriptural theme and base that camp on that theme. Really utilize it as a time to unplug Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And leave your regular habits and rhythms of the world detox digitally and be together, but also be a part of God's creations and really take that in. I think it is another important thing. I also love mixed age groups. I really love the beautiful interaction between older girls and younger girls and the friendships that are formed. And my goodness, those younger girls are so excited to spend time with the older girls. Hmm. And I really like to lean in into that. Yeah. Yeah. And food. You gotta have the best food, right? Yeah. Yeah. When I was a young woman's president in New York, New York stake really regulated that, so Oh really? We had to go to camps that had cooks.

Speaker 1 00:49:10 Oh yeah. Mm. It was insane.

Speaker 2 00:49:12 It was rough. It was rough. Yes. They would always SOS on bishop's night tell 'em to bring more food. We're starving <laugh>.

Speaker 1 00:49:20 Interesting. So in this role, do you have opportunity to go to girls camp at different places? Or is that something you still get experience at? Yes. Oh, that's

Speaker 2 00:49:27 Cool. Super exciting. That's awesome. We get invited and, and if it works out with scheduling and gets approved. Okay. They have to, they have to have their stake president ask their area Yeah. Authority and then, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:49:37 Yeah. That's great.

Speaker 2 00:49:38 I'm excited

Speaker 1 00:49:39 For that. And then, and then most weekends, are you trying to visit or are you asked to visit different young women's places, you know, classes and, and whatnot? Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:49:48 <affirmative> we are, we're, we're asked to perfectly consider that. Oh, that's cool. Sometimes there are area assignments, um, from our area Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> presidency that we serve on under who kind of assigned this out. But generally speaking, we're local to where we live. Yeah. Right. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:50:03 Yeah. Yeah. And is there anything of, like, questions you're hearing more often than others that you find yourself responding to? Anything like that, that would be interesting maybe sharing?

Speaker 2 00:50:13 I think we've hit on a lot of them. I think the questions of how to counsel together with the young men's leaders really, really is one of the ones I hear the most and how to, to do that. And the other question I hear a lot is, what is the balance between leaders sharing and girls sharing in class? Some stakes are like telling the leaders, please, please don't say anything. Hmm. It's just only girls. And I think there's a sweet balance because those leaders have been called and they have a stewardship to love and to testify to those girls of, of their testimony of the savior Jesus Christ. And we want them to have time and opportunity to do that. I love to say, let's keep it at 80 20. <laugh> <laugh>, let's have the girls talking 80% of the time. And when moved upon by the spirit, the adults can testify and share Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But let's really build a class environment where the girls are teaching and sharing with each other. And if you do that, they will, they will share.

Speaker 1 00:51:23 That's great. Mm. That's great. Well, we so much appreciate what you're doing. Many times we have no idea what's going on behind this. Just magically this manual or theme just comes outta nowhere. But there's a lot of hard work that that's having behind the scenes. And so we're praying for you and we appreciate all, all you do there with, with the young women's general presidency. So last question I have for you is, as you reflect on your time as a leader Mm-Hmm. How has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:51:50 Hmm. That's a great question. Leading and the stewardship and responsibility of leading takes me to my knees. And as I'm on my knees and in that constant conversation with God, I am always directed to my savior, Jesus Christ. Everything about leading and teaching youth, everything about building their emotional resilience, everything about helping them enter into covenant relationship is all about and focused on Jesus Christ.



Speaker 1 00:52:30 Now that we've reached the end of the episode, I quickly wanna thank you for supporting the Leading Saints podcast. There's so much content out there to consider, and you picked this one. If Leading Saints has made an impact in your life, we would sure like to hear about it at [leading-saints.org/contact](http://leading-saints.org/contact). And if you could quickly text or email this episode to a leader, you know, I bet it will bless their life. You can mark off your good turn daily and let's even call it ministering. Okay. Maybe not that far, but seriously, thank you. And help us share this content. Remember, check the show notes to listen to the powerful presentation by the general young men, young Women Advisory Council members, or go to [leading-saints.org/fourteen](http://leading-saints.org/fourteen).

Speaker 3 00:53:22 It came as a result of the position of leadership, which was imposed upon us by the God of Heaven, who brought forth a restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And when the Declaration was made concerning the own and only true and living church upon the face of the earth, we were immediately put in a position of loneliness. The loneliness of leadership from which we cannot shrink nor run away. And to which we must face up with boldness and courage and ability.