



I Hesitated Being Called, Mourned Being Released | An Interview with Kayla Shields

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Speaker 1 00:00:04 How do you help someone tell their spouse that they have secretly been viewing pornography? Wow. These are tough situations. Thankfully, one of my favorite and most effective therapists, Jeff Streger, put together a presentation about disclosing betrayal. Jeff explains how disclosing betrayal can make recovery and repentance so much more difficult if it isn't handled correctly. This isn't a rip the bandaid off quickly type of situation. With a better understanding of betrayal, church leaders can be a strong resource in helping couples navigate the awful effects of pornography usage. You can watch Jeff's entire presentation at no cost in the Liberating Saints Virtual Library. Simply go to leading-saints.org/fourteen, and you can sign up for 14 days of free access to Jeff's presentation and the entire library. It's one of my favorite interviews.

Speaker 1 00:01:25 So my name is Kurt Francom, and I am the founder and executive director of Leading Saints, and obviously the host of the Leading Saints Podcast. Now, I started Leading Saints back in 2010. It was just a hobby blog, and it grew from there. By the time, uh, 2014 came around, we started the podcast, and that's really when it got some, uh, traction and took off. Uh, 2016, we became a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and we've been growing ever since. And now I get the opportunity of interviewing and talking with remarkable people all over the world. Now, this is a segment we do on the Leading Saints podcast called How I Lead, and we reach out to everyday leaders. They're not experts, gurus, authors, PhDs. They're just everyday leaders who've been asked to serve in a specific leadership calling. And we simply ask them, how is it that you lead? And they go through some remarkable principles that should be in a book that should be behind a PhD. They're usually that good. And, uh, we just talk about, uh, sharing what the other guy's doing. And I remember being a leader just simply

wanting to know, okay, I know what I'm trying to do, but what's the other guy doing? What's working for him? And so that's why every Wednesday or so we publish these how I lead Segments to share.

Speaker 1 00:03:06 Today I am talking with Kayla Shields from Sandy, Utah about her recent experience as a Relief Society president, and, uh, pay attention to just her approach of being somebody who maybe didn't feel like the ideal leader walking into this role as a Relief Society president. But nonetheless, she, she leaned in and got, uh, engaged with ministering interviews, started connecting with many of the women in, in her, uh, Relief Society. And this is a question that comes up a lot for individuals is just, how do I go about doing the ministering thing? What questions should I ask? Uh, how, how do I build a, a routine around it? And Kayla, I think figured out a great way to do that. Uh, she turns the tables on me at the end. You'll have to, to pay attention where she asked me a question just about the struggle that she's experiencing now that she's released as a Relief Society president. So definitely wanted to share. Here's my interview with Kayla Shields. This is a How I Lead interview where I invite individuals like Kayla Shields here with me. How are you?

Speaker 2 00:04:34 I'm great. How are you?

Speaker 1 00:04:35 Great. And we're gonna talk about your time as Relief Society President.

Speaker 2 00:04:38 Let's

Speaker 1 00:04:38 Do it. And how long were you Relief Society President?

Speaker 2 00:04:41 Let's see. I was president for two and a half years, but I was the first counselor for two years before that. Cool. So just

Speaker 1 00:04:46 Now, some people may not know this, 'cause the first time you were on Leading Saints, it was not a video interview. No, it was actually a live fire side <laugh>. Yeah. It's like all the components that you would hate, like live audience being recorded. Yes. All those things. Right. Because you're Steve Shield's wife. Yes. And

Speaker 2 00:05:01 We talked about your doing, I feel like I need to call you kf like right now, <laugh>. Just get it out. You

Speaker 1 00:05:06 Will hear from him if you don't, so Yeah, exactly. I will be KF for the remainder of this episode and Steve says for eternity, but, uh, we'll see <laugh>. So, uh, yeah, definitely we'll link to that to hear more your story and Steve's story. And, uh, that story continues. So that's a beautiful thing, right?

Speaker 2 00:05:22 Uh, yeah. Yeah. Right. It's

Speaker 1 00:05:23 Beautiful. Right? Cool. Yeah. Um, so tell me, because you were, I, I don't know, like do you just from our friendship Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, like you don't see yourself as the leader, like,

Speaker 2 00:05:34 Right? No.

Speaker 1 00:05:35 So was it kind of a shock to be called as Relief Society president or?

Speaker 2 00:05:38 Totally. So, um, we were going into the office. They asked for my husband and I to come and I thought they were gonna call us to be like the emotional resilience, um, self reliance like specialist?

Speaker 1 00:05:50 Yeah. Oh yeah. Self-reliance.

Speaker 2 00:05:50 Uh, 'cause because Steve's a therapist, and I was like, oh my goodness. Like, I don't want one more thing. So I go into the office and like the whole bishopric's sitting there and they're like, we wanna call you Kayla to be the Relief Society president. And I was like, what? Like, you know, I'm 31. Right. Uhhuh <affirmative>. Like, it, it was a total shock. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:06:08 Yeah. And, and it wasn't just one thing. It was like, here's dozens of things to, to worry about it. Yeah. Oh yeah. <laugh> how a Relief Society president can feel. Right.

Speaker 2 00:06:17 Yeah, for

Speaker 1 00:06:18 Sure. And so, like, going into that, like what did you, did you feel nervous upfront or was it more of like just super getting organized or where do you, where did you begin with that, that role?

Speaker 2 00:06:29 Yeah, so it was hard because I was called in like the beginning of August, but then not set apart until the middle of September. So I had like this month and a half where I was just like, like my mind was just going, going, going, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, and,

Speaker 1 00:06:41 And nobody knew that you were

Speaker 2 00:06:42 Called. Right? No one knew. And I was, I was so worried 'cause I was, I was just more worried about my age and I was like, these old women like aren't gonna like me, and how am I gonna connect with them? And the Relief Society president before me was in her mid sixties, so I was like, man, I'm just gonna be a shock and I'm not gonna know what to do and people aren't gonna like me. And, and all of that. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I went through that for that solid month and a half up until I was set apart. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:07:07 Yeah. And you're showing up to your Relief Society. Is it, I mean, is it a different experience knowing that you're gonna be leading things in a few weeks?

Speaker 2 00:07:14 Totally. Yeah. And I was in the presidency. Oh,

Speaker 1 00:07:16 Okay.

Speaker 2 00:07:17 And so that kind of felt weird, you know, because he called me before he released the Current Relief Society President. So like, that all kind of felt awkward. And so yeah, there was some mumble jumble Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> for a little

Speaker 1 00:07:30 Bit. And then you finally get, get called Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and sustained and set apart. Yeah. And then where did you begin at that point?

Speaker 2 00:07:38 Um, see, I feel like I can't already cry at the beginning, you know? But my setting apart was so beautiful, um, and a lot of that fear just like went away and I felt like an immediate love for all the women in my ward. Mm. Like from that blessing forward. So I, and I did have like, you know, like imposter syndrome the first little bit and like, oh, I don't know, like if everyone loves me and all that, but I just felt such a love for the sisters that I was like, yeah, I can do it. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:08:08 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:08:08 And that was pretty instant, which was amazing.

Speaker 1 00:08:11 Was there any story behind, uh, calling the counselors? You did, or?

Speaker 2 00:08:15 Um, so in my, in the presidency before, there was a counselor that was called in like a little bit, just a little bit before I was called as president. And I felt strong to keep her. Um, and then it just, it just kind of fell, fell into place. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> like, um, like I would go to church 'cause I had a month and a half right. And I was like, man, like that lady would stand out to me. And I was actually doing a ministering interview with, I was looking for it would be my second counselor, and praying about it and fasting about it. And I did a ministering interview with this lady and she was like, you know, like, I just think you're awesome. Like this young mom serving as a counselor. And she's like, you could be a relief society president. And I was like, I'm, and I'm getting called in like three weeks and you dunno, but like, you need to be my counselor. And so that was, you know, fun and it was fun to serve with her and she was awesome. So. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:09:09 Yeah. Um, anything like, looking back now with hindsight of the ministering interview dynamic? Like what worked, what didn't, what was hard? Yeah. What comes to

Speaker 2 00:09:19 Mind? So you got in my head actually with the ministering interviews. 'cause I, I listened to a few podcasts where you said the president should be doing all the interviews, you know, and I was like, oh my gosh. Like, should I be doing all? And I think I even like talked to you when you were talking to Steve one time, Uhhuh <affirmative>. And I was like, Kurt, like, they're not doing all the interviews, like, should I be doing 'em? And, um, but we kind of got in a rhythm Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> of it. And we like had it all like, calendared out and

our system and it worked well. And, um, ministering interviews were hands down my favorite part of my calling. Wow. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:09:51 Nice. Would you have expected that from the beginning or no?

Speaker 2 00:09:53 Yeah. No. 'cause I kind of just looked at it as like a checklist item. Yeah. You know?

Speaker 1 00:09:57 Yeah. And so what, uh, what made them so enriching? Like what, did you have certain questions you asked or?

Speaker 2 00:10:04 Yeah, so, um, the elders quorum president that was serving with me at the beginning, he was just like super clear on what he did, and I really loved it. He was saying that he would ask how God would show up for these people in their life and if they're witnessing that and if not, like, how can he help? And I just took that on and I really loved, um, having like the actual ministering be like a secondary part of the interview and just checking in with these women and seeing how they're really doing personally with their relationship with Jesus Christ and Heavenly Father. And if they, you know, need support around any of that, or if they're feeling of his love and just how I could step into that with them. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And the first couple of times I'd be like, is God showing up for you? And they'd be like, oh my gosh, I'm doing my ministering, like Uhhuh <affirmative>, you know, Uhhuh <affirmative>. And then at the end it was just like, like we would all look forward to him. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:10:57 Because there was like a relationship that Yeah. Informed there. Yeah. Yeah. That's awesome. Um, and then, uh, so so you get going and then just with the, the ministering interviews that that sort of created some connection and relationship with everybody. Were there other ways that you felt like you were able to connect with the women in your Relief Society?

Speaker 2 00:11:16 Um, yeah. There, there were a lot. Um, so as you mentioned, Steve and I were on here before. Steve and I have a big story of, um, sexual addiction and recovery and just what that's looked like. And I think, um, I've been pretty open about that in our, in our ward and in our inner circle. And, um, I think just them, the sisters knowing that like, Hey, I've been through really hard things too, and I know you are. And like, let's talk about 'em and let's mourn with those. That mourn and comfort those, that sanity of comfort like really was just like the perfect segue into me connecting to them and Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> them letting me in. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:11:59 Because a good portion of your time as Relief Society president Steve was still working on getting Rebaptized. Right. And so he wasn't technically a member type. Yeah. You could almost say. Right? Yeah. So

Speaker 2 00:12:08 He was, he was rebaptized, but he didn't get his priesthood back Okay. Until almost the end of me being Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> Relief Society president. And

Speaker 1 00:12:15 So did that, I mean, obviously people generally knew your story, so it would come up and maybe did you feel like women just had a more of like, oh, well she gets it, type of thing. Like she's Yeah. She's been to some of these places.

Speaker 2 00:12:27 Yeah, I think so. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:12:28 And that naturally connected you? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. Was there any other dynamics that came up with that? The, I mean, were there times of like, you felt shame of like, you felt like this pressure of having your family all put together and perfect or anything, or, yeah.

Speaker 2 00:12:42 Um, I feel like, like there, there was probably stuff going around, like going along behind the scenes that I didn't like know about, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I think I had that in the back of my head, like, oh man, I'm sure a lot of these sisters are having a hard time that like, I'm speaking more publicly about my story and, but I just like really clung onto the positive that it did and it didn't seem to matter as much.

Speaker 1 00:13:08 Yeah. And did you find that, like, parts of your own personal experience, that story specific, that part of your story specifically or elsewhere? Was it coming out like in like formal lessons that you were giving or in the ministering interviews or Yeah. Like how was that manifesting itself?

Speaker 2 00:13:22 Um, well I spoke in sacrament meeting because, um, and I didn't have a topic. It was just, you know, speak on whatever you feel called to. And yeah, this was when I was pretty early on in being the president and, um, I just kind of went there. 'cause I was like, I just like don't want church to be this place where we go and we don't bring up the heart and we don't talk about the heart and we don't really see each other, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So I, I said like, when we first moved into this ward, I was 24 years old and my husband had just served as a bishop or counselor, and he was a young high priest. And I think that most people just thought we had our life together, you know, and that 24-year-old was just like, so broken and so hurt and so lonely. And then I, um, just kind of said like, I wish I would've let you all know what I was going through, because at that time I needed, um, support and I needed friends and I needed people in. And so I just more like invited them to like, help me fulfill my calling as Relief Society president by letting me know they're hard. Yeah. And then I feel like that opened the floodgates, you know? Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:14:36 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so did you witness sort of a shift in how women were talking to you or opening up to you then? Totally.

Speaker 2 00:14:41 Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:14:42 Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:14:43 Yeah. I feel like from that week forward, like people were much more open with me. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:14:47 And I almost like that format of like, of a sa meaning Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> like a little more formal, but it's like, you know, and you, you really have that attention to tell your story rather than in a relief society, you know, lesson or whatever that Right. You know, you can really get to know somebody and their, their testimony and their journey by Yeah. In that part. Right. Nice. Yeah. Um, as far as like, and this plays in one of the principles you put down is just leading out with this acceptance of, all right. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative> Like any stories or dynamics coming to mind when you think of that principle?

Speaker 2 00:15:18 Um, I think, yeah, I feel like there's a lot of examples of that. Um, I think just going back to like, I feel like my story, it made me, uh, it made it easier for me to accept other people with what they were going through. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and I just really wanted to make sure that that was known. Like, um, there was a sister who her husband was currently like, leaving the church and she was just like, it was huge for her. 'cause as that would be Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, and I just really wanted to like, make sure that she knew that she was love and accepted wherever she was at, and so was he. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And like, we didn't wanna make her feel anything less than enough in our relief society. And I just, I really tried to be very accepting of what everyone was going through because I didn't want people to judge me for what I was going through personally. So why would I, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> why would I judge them for what they're going through?

Speaker 1 00:16:18 Yeah. Yeah. And did, as you reach out to someone like that, like, is it, uh, was there anything outside of those maybe more standard routines of like doing visits or dropping in on somebody or, uh, and maybe they're just promptings that came, but anything outside of the, the typical stuff that a relief site president does that helped you connect?

Speaker 2 00:16:37 Um, it was weird. I feel like I almost like could walk into relief society and just be like, man, like that person needs some extra love this week. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, you know, or when I would go to church, I would really just pray to like, sit by the person who needed someone or, you know, just be led to led to that person. And I feel like it was amazing, like, the way that I would just be led to them and just plug into them a little bit extra that week and see, you know, what's going on with them and how, and how the Relief Society or how I could help them out. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:17:10 That's awesome. Yeah. Um, going back to ministering interviews. What, so what was the, like with your counselors in the works? Like what was the, the cadence you had as far as how, how often and then you, like where would you, did you do it at church or how would you get people to actually show up?

Speaker 2 00:17:28 Yeah. Um, we did 'em at the church and I did use my counselors. Um, but we, so we just like put it on a calendar. 'cause I was like, when I, I hated being called as like when I wasn't the president being called in March for a ministering interview and then being called in April, you know, and I'm like, whoa, I just had one. But like, I know that we're in a new quarter, Uhhuh <affirmative>, so we just calendared like each district out and we just did district one in January, district two in February and district three in March, and then we would start over in April. Oh, cool. And I would actually only meet with one member of the companionship.

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So you're only having two, I don't know if you need to cut that out, but you're only having two minutes during interviews a year,

Speaker 1 00:18:07 <laugh>. Yeah. Well, and that's, I I know that the, I think the wording's like, preferably with in Companionships and I see a lot of, yeah. Elcor presidents for site presidents, like make this extra effort at getting 'em to, but at the same time, if I was to do it again, like there's just so much power in a one-to-one Right. Dynamic right. Where the companion's not there. And, and you'll still meet with the other person and, and maybe it's a little extra work, but it's so much worth it just, you know, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> not putting the pressure on yourself of having both companions there. Yeah. You

Speaker 2 00:18:37 Know, well, I think about that 24-year-old Kayla who would go to these ministering interviews with my companion, and I'm never gonna be like, Hey, actually Relief Society president Like, I'm having a really hard time Right. With my husband's betrayal and I feel super alone and super scared, and I don't know where I stand with all of this, and I could use that support. Right. I'm never gonna do that when my companion that I don't know is sitting there, you know? Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:18:58 Nor were you necessarily gonna walk into the bishop's office and Right. And un unload all that, that emotion there either. Right. Yeah. So, yeah.

Speaker 2 00:19:05 That's awesome. Yeah. So I felt very strong about doing them one-on-one, and I really loved them. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:19:10 Cool. And how many, about how many women are, are in your Relief Society, generally

Speaker 2 00:19:15 Speaking? Um, in our Relief Society or have ministering Well,

Speaker 1 00:19:19 That you were trying to Yeah. That you were trying to get that, you know, meet on a regular basis?

Speaker 2 00:19:24 Yeah, so we had about 200 women at the end, like 1, 1 90. Um, and then we had 60 companionships of ministers Yeah. Ministering.

Speaker 1 00:19:35 Yeah. So, I mean, that's a good, good.

Speaker 2 00:19:37 So we latest about 20, 20 a month. Cool.

Speaker 1 00:19:40 Yeah. Awesome. Um, lean into the awkward, you love a good awkward moment. Right?

Speaker 2 00:19:46 I love it, <laugh>. Yeah. And I feel like I make 'em awkward when I'm like, is that awkward?

Speaker 1 00:19:50 Right. So tell tell me more about that or if we haven't covered it already. Um,

Speaker 2 00:19:55 I think it goes along with the accepting, you know, um, I had a lot of shame and awkwardness around our story and, and I just wanted to like lean into those tough conversations with the women Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> that, that were in our relief society. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:20:11 And so I I bet it's almost like the skill where you get more comfortable with awkwardness, right? Yeah. Or the, the outside the mold story.

Speaker 2 00:20:19 Yeah. Yeah. And I feel like I was super like, clear on, Hey, nothing you're gonna say to me is uncomfortable. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I feel like I can, I can hold that, those awkward conversations like free of shame. So, yeah.

Speaker 1 00:20:32 Yeah. Um, and then kinda through your journey, you sort of talked about that throughout this th throughout All right. I mean, that, that really was at the core of, of, of leading. And, and I think obviously nobody wishes your story <laugh> on anybody else, but, um, at the same time, it almost forced you to like, bring your humanness lead out with your humanness, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> that a lot of people's like, well, my life's put together, so I'm gonna maybe put a facade forward. Right. Just because that's what's expected of me. Right. And then they wonder, why, why aren't I connecting with people? Well, you haven't really shown your brokenness here where, where it hurts.

Speaker 2 00:21:09 Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:10 Yeah. So any, any advice on, I don't know if there's, it's so difficult as far as being that Relief Society president willing to, to put that out there, put your heart out there if it, somebody struggling with that. I mean, is there any advice that comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:21:25 I just think that women especially are, well, I don't know men. I don't, I don't know men as well as I know women, but I think that if you're serving as relief said president, and you can be a little bit vulnerable, like just even a little bit, it will, it'll connect you so much better to the women and they'll feel like that instant bond to you, and you'll be able to share your testimony in a much, you know, real or light. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:21:52 Yeah. Just give it a little bit. Right. Just an inch <laugh> and see where it goes. Right. Yeah. Um, anything worth mentioning as far as working with the bishop, the elders quorum? Just that dynamic, that administrative dynamic that Yeah. That worked or didn't work or,

Speaker 2 00:22:05 Um, I, I really loved our, our bishop and our bishopric. They were, they were fun to meet with. Um, and, and our elders quorum presidents. I, I was able to have two while we were, um, while I was serving Israeli side president. And it was funny because they, they're so different from each other, you know? And it was just kind of funny, like seeing the different dynamic of, of each person. Um, like we would, we would have like this joking

relationship that was so fun. And then also like, when things got real and things got hard, like they were there Yeah. You know, to support me in that and that we could all work together. Um, so I just knew that like they had, they had my back Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> and I had theirs and we worked well together that way. Yeah. Um, I did laugh sometimes when I was like, oh man, this just seems like a bunch of dudes came up with these crazy ideas in bishopric meeting and like, let me give you a women's perspective, Uhhuh on some of these, you know, and we would laugh and joke about that a little bit,

Speaker 1 00:23:06 But Uhhuh <affirmative>. So you usually felt comfortable like stepping in and being like, wait, wait, wait before you move forward, <laugh>. Yeah. Let me, let me give you some perspective. Right.

Speaker 2 00:23:12 Yeah. And they would do the same for me, you know? Yeah, yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:23:17 Um, anything about, um, did, well, did you meet, like, did you have a regular monthly meeting with the bishop? Did, was it mainly just ward council settings or that happened

Speaker 2 00:23:28 Or, yeah, so we had Ward Council on the first and third weeks of the month. And then on the second I had, um, a personal PPI with the bishop. It was also hard 'cause the bishop was my next door neighbor. Oh, yeah. <laugh>. So like, I feel like every Tuesday afternoon was an individual PPI, you know, uh, like, Hey, let's talk about this real quick, or, um, but I really loved those moments. I feel like we talked a lot during the week, and those PPIs were really just for like, where I was at personally and the things that I'm struggling with. Um, 'cause there were, I mean, Steve and I weren't perfect, you know, he didn't have his priesthood. That was hard. And sometimes I would just cry in those PPIs, like, man, like, yeah, I feel like I'm supposed to be there for everyone else, and like, I need someone here for me right now. And he held that really well. Hmm. And that was really great. And then, so that was the second, um, Sunday. And then on the fourth Sunday we had a correlation meeting with the bishop, this elders quorum president and me. Yeah. And we would kind of just discuss the, the needs more in depth. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:24:33 Um, tell me about different activities you had. 'cause there was one activity you invited me to come speak. Was that before you were called?

Speaker 2 00:24:37 That was before I was president. You were a counselor. I was a counselor, that's right.

Speaker 1 00:24:40 Okay. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But I mean, I felt like you did some unique things. Anything with activities that, that work didn't work? Or what comes to mind?

Speaker 2 00:24:46 Um, yeah. So I was, I was very strong on we will have an activity every month, you know? And I think a lot of people were like, oh my gosh. Like, that's a lot of activities. And I think even just the activities committee would be like, this is a lot, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I think that I loved them. 'cause I was like, even if we get three

people, then like, I can really connect to those three people. And sometimes we would get 50 people, but we would just have an activity. And it didn't have to be big, but I would make sure that we had one every, every month. Um, and they were all good, except for when we got salmonella <laugh>. Yeah. We, we had some, we had some food poisoning at one of our events.

Speaker 1 00:25:26 I mean, what word hasn't Right?

Speaker 2 00:25:28 I mean,

Speaker 1 00:25:29 In the world of potlucks, you just,

Speaker 2 00:25:31 It was pretty extreme. So other than that one, I feel pretty great about the activities and the way it connected us as the

Speaker 1 00:25:37 Board. So, uh, it was a, it was a potato salad or something. What was

Speaker 2 00:25:40 It? Well, I don't wanna put 'em on blast, but it was a company Oh. A company that we had catered. Okay. But then there were a couple potluck items, so it wasn't like a for sure thing, but yeah, I didn't,

Speaker 1 00:25:52 It came from somewhere.

Speaker 2 00:25:53 I didn't eat any of the potluck items. I'm just saying that <laugh>, and I've never been that sick. Wow. Wow. So, but even that, I'm like, we can joke about it, but I'm like, I have like all these new group texts from people who just started with like, these salmonella symptoms, you know? And it's like been relationships that have kept going. So I have like this new little friend group that started as like a, oh my gosh, my stomach hurts so bad. Like, are you guys experiencing these symptoms? And they like continued, you know, Uhhuh <affirmative>. So I'm like, I hate to say that Salmonella <laugh>, um, formed friendships, but it did.

Speaker 1 00:26:26 There's the title of this episode, salmonella and Salmonella Forms Friendships. Yeah. That's beautiful. Yeah. Yeah. Called it the Leona. The, the story needs to be in there. Oh. So yeah, <laugh>. Nice. Uh, anything else with the activities that, that come to mind or

Speaker 2 00:26:40 Cover it? Um, no,

Speaker 1 00:26:42 And I love just the, the monthly. I think my new ward has that with, uh, uh, my wife just a monthly, I think it's the second Thursday, right? It's like, yeah,

Speaker 2 00:26:50 We need a second Tuesday.

Speaker 1 00:26:51 Okay. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And sometimes they're grandiose, other times they're very simple. Yeah. And, but the really, the reason we go to activities is that

connection point. Right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, not that you wanna learn that recipe or paint that block of wood or whatever. <laugh>. Right, right, right. So, um, did, how did you, so you had like a Relief Society activities committee that would just spearhead that?

Speaker 2 00:27:10 Yeah. So one of my counselors, um, was like the head of that. And then we had a, well, we had an activities chair, and then she had a few people to help. And then one of my counselors overseed them. Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:27:22 <affirmative>. And you just knew like clockwork it was happening.

Speaker 2 00:27:25 Yeah, I just showed up. Yeah. I was like, what are we doing? Yeah. Where's the food?

Speaker 1 00:27:29 <laugh> Nice to salmonella. Yeah. Um, so then the activity, then the Sunday, as far as like it hadn Relief Society, you had a, did you have set teachers that just rotated through? Or was there anything unique you did with the Sunday meeting?

Speaker 2 00:27:42 Um, so the first year I didn't have any teachers called. And we, we just asked different women to, to teach, which was great. And then, and then it started to be a little much, you know, and I'm like, okay, let's just get teachers. But I really did love hearing from different women. Um, there was one that went a little bit, like, I don't know if we should be saying that. Uhhuh <affirmative>. So, so after that I did call teachers, but the first, the first year of it, we just had different people teach every week. Yeah. And it was great to hear, you know, different, different voices and different testimonies and different experiences. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. But then we did call, um, we had two teachers, so they would just teach once a month. And then we combined stakes last year, so we called a third teacher. So yeah, they would just rotate.

Speaker 1 00:28:28 And that stake, uh, combination, Uhhuh <affirmative>, put more people in your ward. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> is that

Speaker 2 00:28:35 We about doubled. Oh, wow. Yeah. Wow. Cool. It was crazy.

Speaker 1 00:28:40 Was there anything you did during that time with, suddenly you have a li the new list of people? Yeah. I mean, did you visit 'em or like just put 'em in the ministering rotation or,

Speaker 2 00:28:49 Oh, man. Yeah. It was, it was hard and scary. Um, well, they, the first part is that they combined the ward, and then I went on like an 11 day vacation, like four days after that. So I missed the next two Sundays. And I was like, oh my gosh, like, what are we gonna do? But in those four days, we have an old folks home. And so I made sure to visit all the new women in the old folks home because they're, they're the ones that really like clinging to the Relief Society president, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So I made sure to visit all of them. And then yeah. Just as, as time went on, then the next few months I, we made sure to get over to as many as we could. Yeah. And then I did rearrange my presidency then, and I called, um,

two new women from that side of the, the Ward. So we literally just printed out every name and just plugged them all in.

Speaker 1 00:29:41 Yeah. Any other advice you'd give to the relief study presidency, experiencing that? Like, come Yeah. You know, new, new Ward members all at once.

Speaker 2 00:29:50 Um, so I was, I was terrified over the ministering routes. I was like, how am I gonna do this? Like, I don't even know these women. And I think I would just say, you know what, just plug 'em in and then the inspiration will come because mm-Hmm. I plugged them in and then like, through interviews and through just getting to know these women, I'd be like, oh, like, that's not a good fit. And I would, we would just move them around and, you know, yeah. Receive, receive inspiration as it comes, but at the beginning it just feels super overwhelming and just don't stress about that. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:30:22 Just start organizing and Yeah. And it'll come. Right. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. That's awesome. Uh, with this assisted living place, was it Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> any like, dynamics there? Did you have to, were there extra responsibilities or you were just more aware of them?

Speaker 2 00:30:36 Um, oh yeah, they were, it's a lot. 'cause there were about, um, like 30 apartments that have active, maybe not 30, but quite a few that have active, um, sisters in there. And I just know, like from the time that I would go visit, like they were just so lonely, you know? And just so happy to have anyone come visit them. And so when I heard that we were taking on like, double the amount of them, I just like was stressed about that because I love, I love the connections that I had with those older women. And I was like, I don't know if I have time to have double the connection. Um, so we did, we called the, we called it a Silver Pines committee, and they would go, that's

Speaker 1 00:31:23 The name of the place. I see. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:31:24 Yeah. Okay. So they would, they each had a few apartments and they would, you know, check in on them, and then I would get over there as often as I could, but, Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:31:32 And then you knew that they were taking care of at least like Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. They had a touch point to the East Society. Yeah. Yeah. And, and imagine none of them actually came to church.

Speaker 2 00:31:40 Um, yeah, they do. Oh, cool. Let's see. About, probably about seven to 10. Okay. Come. Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>.

Speaker 1 00:31:45 Cool. Do they have services at the facility as well, or No?

Speaker 2 00:31:49 So it's like a, um, it's kind of like an assisted, not assisted. The government helps subsidize. Okay. And so they're not allowed to have, um, anything church there. Oh, okay. So yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:32:03 Yeah. Makes sense. Um, well, I don't know. It's, Steve's gonna get mad if you don't like, plug his podcast or something. Right? Oh,

Speaker 2 00:32:10 I'm ashamed. Unafraid,

Speaker 1 00:32:11 Unashamed, unafraid. And you've been on there several times. Yeah. You love that, don't you? Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 2 00:32:16 <affirmative>. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:32:17 So,

Speaker 2 00:32:17 Wait, I have a question for you. Can I ask you a question? Whoa.

Speaker 1 00:32:19 What just happened?

Speaker 2 00:32:20 I know. Can we switch roles for a second? Okay.

Speaker 1 00:32:22 All right.

Speaker 2 00:32:22 Give it. So I have had, so I've been released for like a month. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And I have had like a real grief come from that. Yeah. Did you

Speaker 1 00:32:29 Experience, what's that felt like

Speaker 2 00:32:30 For you? Like, it has shocked me. Yeah. Um, I've just been like, at first it was like, did I do enough? Did I, you know? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And now I'm just like, man, like I loved my calling. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> as relief Society president. And I feel like it helped, it just helped me personally so much. Um, it helped me connect with women. It helped me build my relationship with Jesus Christ. And it helped my testimony. And I've almost just had like this shocking grief that's come since then. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. So did you experience that?

Speaker 1 00:33:00 Absolutely. And I even, I'm probably like, let's see, I was, I mean, I'm eight years Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> removed from being bishop, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And, uh, I, one, I think it's just good to vocalize it. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And, and I get those emails, a lot of people being like, nobody knows this, but this really hurts. Like Yeah. Like to be released. And we've done several episodes on it, which we'll link to. Hmm. Um, I often reframe it like, you know, you were college police site president. I was 31, I was 28 when I was a Right. A bishop. And, but I look at it, what a blessing it was for me to get that role at such a young age. Because from here on out, I'll be a much better member of any ward I'm a part of. Oh

Speaker 2 00:33:38 Yeah. I've always said I will be the best minister from here on out for the rest of my life. Yeah.

Speaker 1 00:33:42 And so, um, you know, I, I've had sort of these moments where, and obviously I, you know, swim in leadership thinking and thoughts and interviewing people Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, but just this feeling of like, well, what, what does the relief society president do really that you can't do is just Kayla. Right.

Speaker 2 00:34:00 Right. Exactly.

Speaker 1 00:34:02 Um, even at the point of you could still do ministering interviews. Right. And you may not ask specific, like, well, how's your ministering? But it's like, you can still connect that way. Right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Um, and so I find myself like, um, you know, just that, um, gathering people like that, that was a big part of, uh, being a bishop that I really appreciated. Or, or hearing people's stories. And, and you know, there's, uh, every, every Saturday I have a, an alert on my phone that says ministering something, and I'll like text my, my people or other people. And I've built this list on my phone. 'cause you can do, uh, in the tools app, you can do Yeah. Lists, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So I've started building a list of men who live by me Mm. Who just maybe I could connect with, right? Mm-Hmm.

Speaker 1 00:34:49 <affirmative>. And so, uh, I, I had a, a, what was it? Uh, last week on a Thursday night, I invited a bunch of guys over to my house, looked like I had nothing planned. Mm. I went to Costco and bought a bag of something frozen, and I was gonna cook that up. And Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> just invited the men over and it was phenomenal. But I, uh, texted this one guy, I said, Hey, we're getting together at nine. You should come. Mm-Hmm. He's like, oh, actually I'm at, uh, the, the NICU with our, my baby. I'm like, whoa, whoa, whoa. What is happening? What's going on? Yeah. And he is like, yeah, this, my baby is like nine months old and he's on a second round of heart surgery. I'm like, oh my goodness. I'm like, whoa. Right. And so now I'm this, I'm in this bishop state.

Speaker 1 00:35:30 Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> of like, I can be like, well, good luck, man. Like, yeah, we'll be praying for you. Or I could like really step into that. And so a few days later I reach out to him like, how's he doing? Like, what's up? Right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> now for that individual, he's had a shepherding moment from the ward, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so, um, you know, we sometimes in our culture, we, we really put these, like the Relief Society president up on a pedestal. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> or the bishop. Like, these people are great. But at the end of the day, and this is one of the many heretical things I say, nobody has it easier than the recite president and the bishop. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> because they, the service opportunities come to you on a platter. Uhhuh <affirmative>. It's like, here they are. Which one would you like to choose today?

Speaker 1 00:36:11 Totally. Totally. But when you're out of that, you gotta work for it. Right? Yeah. It doesn't just come to you. But it's, it's so rewarding to still class. You know, the old at, you know, once a bishop, always a bishop Mm-Hmm. Once Relief Society president, always Relief Society president. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And so it really is of, of just this being proactive of uh, you know, inserting yourself into the lives of people and why know society, hey, that sister Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> needs something and I don't even have to sit in the front anymore. Yeah. I don't have to worry about the lesson. I can literally sit by her and do that.

Right. Yeah. But the morning's real. Yeah. And I think it's part of just with all things in life of like, you just kind of feel it and Yeah. Recognize the blessing it was, and hopefully something like that happens again, but

Speaker 2 00:36:56 Yeah. Yeah. No, I, there's always something you do. I've been shocked by how hard that took me, even though I knew that it was the right thing and the right time for me to be released. Right.

Speaker 1 00:37:03 But yeah. And there almost needs to be like a support group.

Speaker 2 00:37:06 Yeah. That's what I'm saying. Maybe I'll start one. Hey, a post society,

Speaker 1 00:37:10 We'll sponsor it. Society.

Speaker 2 00:37:11 Yeah. Okay.

Speaker 1 00:37:12 But, but it really is, um, like I often tell stake presidency members, like, uh, who's the last bishop you released in your ward? Like, when's the last time you talked to 'em? Mm-Hmm. Like, there should be a bishop who's released or Relief Society president who's released, should have somebody connect with them at least every other week for at least six to 12 months. Oh, I like that. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> that morning. It can be, there can be some shame behind it. Like, oh, like, yeah. Why do I feel like I gotta be the leader? You know? Yeah. When it rally, it's not that you Yeah. You want the leadership. You, it's such a beautiful experience to be part of, you know. Yeah.

Speaker 2 00:37:44 I love that.

Speaker 1 00:37:45 Anything else for the Kayla, uh, podcast? You wanna ask

Speaker 2 00:37:48 <laugh>? Any other questions that I have? No, no. Thanks for answering that.

Speaker 1 00:37:52 Yeah. Alright. Last question I have for you Yes. Is as you reflect on your time as Relief Society president Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Speaker 2 00:38:02 Oh, how has being a leader helped me be a better follower of Jesus Christ? Um, I just think without, without Christ, I'm like, nothing <laugh>. Right. Um, I really have just clung to his atonement and just, just held onto the fact that because he has the scars, he has, like, I, I can make mistakes and that I can learn and grow and still be, still be a good person. And so I think that I've just really clung to, um, the atonement of Jesus Christ and just really held true to the fact that I'm not gonna do things perfectly, but I can, you know, try again and just work a little bit harder. And, and God loves me no matter what.

Speaker 1 00:39:02 And that concludes this how I lead interview. I hope you enjoyed it. And, uh, I would ask you, could you take a minute and drop this link in an email, on social media, in a

text, wherever it makes the most sense, and share it with somebody who could relate to this, this experience. And this is how we develop as leaders, just hearing what the other guy's doing, trying some things out, testing, adjusting for your area. And, uh, that's, that's where great leadership's discover, right? So we would love to have you, uh, share this with, uh, somebody in this calling or a related calling and that would be great. And also, if you know somebody, uh, any type of leader who would be a fantastic guest on the How I Lead segment, uh, reach out to us. Go to leading saints.org/contact. Maybe send this in individual an email letting them know that you're going to be suggesting their name for this interview. We'll reach out to them and, uh, see if we can line 'em up. So again, go to leading saints.org/contact and there you can submit all the information and let us know, and maybe they will be on a feature how I lead Segment on the Leading Saints podcast. Remember, learn more about disclosing betrayal from Jeff Reer by visiting leading saints.org/fourteen.

Speaker 3 00:40:19 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 only 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.