



How I Lead as a Young Single Adult in London | An Interview with Andy Rosas

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Kurt Francom:

Does a youth leader ever feel like they haven't figured it out? This hasn't been my experience. However, I couldn't be an effective youth leader today without Dan Duckworth's presentation about going from youth worker to youth mentor. Mentorship is a key concept to understand when leading youth. In his presentation, Dan talks about ways to really turn the traditional approach to leading youth on its head. How can you better know your purpose? How can you find out their life goals? How can you build a relationship that is transformational rather than simply filling time during the weekly youth activity? You can watch Dan's presentation in the Young Saints virtual library by going to leadingsaints.org/14. You'll get free access for 14 days and that will give you plenty of time to watch Dan's presentation a few times. Let's give youth the leadership they deserve. 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 2014 came around, we started the podcast, and that's really when it got some Traction and took off 2016, we became a 501c3 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 we just talk about 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.

Another episode of the Leading Saints podcast. I'm excited to welcome in a European or is he South American or is he? What is he exactly? This is Andy Rosas. I know that that's his name. Andy Rosas. He was so kind while visiting Utah to step into the studio and he helps help us understand the world of YSAs in the UK. He lives just outside of London and has such a unique journey that led him to Ireland and then London. And he talks about not only his personal experience as a YSA, what's the makeup, what's the dynamic happening in the UK with YSAs, and then just from his personal experience as a bishopric counselor. as a high counselor, as a elders quorum president, what are some things that he's learned about leadership? And it's a phenomenal journey, a phenomenal discourse, a phenomenal perspective about leadership. So here's my interview with Andy Rosas. All the way from just outside London, England, Andy Rosas is with us. How are you? Good. Thank you. You fell into my trap. You see, anytime I get a listener outside of Utah, especially outside of the country, and they come to Utah, I make them come to the studio and record an interview. So here you are. How do you feel about that?

Andy Rosas:

Good. Yeah. I mean, some variety is good.

Kurt Francom:

Nice. Now, how long have you been aware of listening to Leading Saints?

Andy Rosas:

I think it's been at least three years. It could be four.

Kurt Francom:

Yes.

Andy Rosas:

Cool. Yeah. Someone recommended it to me. So yeah, one of the best.

Kurt Francom:

Now your British accent is lacking. So I love your story. So you were born in Chile, right? That's like the worst thing I could have said. It's like me calling you Canadian. In Argentina. Argentina. I'm sorry. Yeah. Argentina, Southern South America. Yeah. But you moved, your family moved there when you were four, right? So I can tell you. Yeah. Give us a story.

Andy Rosas:

So when I was six, we moved to Utah from Argentina. and we were here for maybe four, no, five years, maybe six, and then we moved to Italy, to a small village outside of Milan. We were there for a year and a half, and then Ireland, so Dublin. for the rest. So it's been a while. And now currently I live in London, but yeah.

Kurt Francom:

Nice. Now, um, what's the word? You're not trilingual. You're quadrilingual.

SPEAKER_00:

Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

So you obviously were raised in a Spanish speaking home from Argentina and then learned English just a long time in school, living here. Right. And then you learn Italian. Yep. Uh, pretty fluent in Italian. I can speak it. Yeah. And then you're called on a mission to France? Yeah, France, Lyon. So, I mean, when you got that call, were you excited to learn another language?

Andy Rosas:

No, I actually didn't like French. And I, yeah, my parents took me and my sister Cecilia to French lessons when we were small and we both said we didn't like it. And our parents were like, okay, you don't have to go anymore. And so, yeah, I didn't, but I do like it now. Yeah. I love the language.

Kurt Francom:

And then moved to Dublin. So you speak a unique approach to English there, right?

SPEAKER_00:

Nice.

Kurt Francom:

That's fascinating. And so you are, I mean, do people see you, I mean, how do you identify? Because you're, you're Latino, but you know, by blood, right? But I mean, what do you feel like, you know, the most like home?

Andy Rosas:

I don't know. It just depends. It depends who's asking. Can I change up the story? Nah, I just, I think it's in between Argentine and Irish, maybe just from what I'm used to, what I grew up with, you know, friends and going to school there for the majority of my life. So yeah, a mix of the two maybe.

Kurt Francom:

Cool. Now you are, just to put you in the context today, like you are a young single adult, maybe on the edge of young. How would you describe your current state in life?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. So I'd say young single adult. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

And you've been involved in that.

Andy Rosas:

I've been for a while, so I just turned 32, like four days ago. And so I've been in the YSA scene for a while now, and it's been mostly in Dublin and London. So that's been my experience in church in the YSA.

Kurt Francom:

Now, I'm mainly familiar, obviously, with just sort of the YSA experience in Utah. You know, just obviously, I live here and I associate with YSAs. I've been to the church's YSA conference here. I'm going to be there here in a few weeks. How would you describe like, what is it like being a YSA in Europe or in the UK?

Andy Rosas:

Well, I was trying to think of that the other day and I don't really have anything to compare with. It's kind of what I know. But I'd say she's small and it's very intimate. You usually know all the YSA in the country you live in. So in Ireland, even though I was living in Dublin, I'd know or have some sort of relationship or friendship with all the YSA in all of Ireland. Because the church is just so small. So it just feels a little lonely, a little, you know, there's few of us, feels more family like maybe, even though, you know, when there's less of you, you feel more connected, even though you may be super different in character. So it's very much like that.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But I mean, you attended a YSA ward?

Andy Rosas:

I mean, do they have YSA wards? There's only two in Europe. So there's Manchester and London. Those are the only two YSA wards that I know of.

Kurt Francom:

Oh, and they're both in the UK? Wow.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, they're both in UK. Dublin doesn't have one, no. There's too few.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Yeah. And so you, but you've lived in just outside of London for how long now? Almost five years. Okay. And during that time, you're quite involved in the ward there. What are some of the callings, leadership roles and callings you've had There?

Andy Rosas:

So I had, okay, so I came in, I was asked to be clerk almost three months in. And then after a few months, I was in the bishopric. So second counselor in the bishopric of the YSA ward. And then high council and then elders quorum present. And so that was, yeah, back to back. Nice.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Nice. And is it, I mean, is it typical thing that you're, everybody sort of takes their turn with those things just because there's not a lot of members.

Andy Rosas:

I think it's more common. Yeah. Cause it's just so few of us. And, um, I don't think. Yeah, it's I have friends who have after I finished up in the bishopric, you know, they took my place and they were YSA. And there's been three now that have gone through the similar experience. Yeah, so it's not super rare.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. So with this experience, I mean, if you were to be surveyed, maybe by, you know, departments in the church, they say, Okay, give us like, what is the What are the biggest issues or concerns that you've seen, you've witnessed as far as the YSA demographic in the UK? Wow. That's a loaded question, right?

Andy Rosas:

But I mean, what comes to mind first? I think just very similar to things here. I don't think that it changes too much. It's usually to do with current events, current concerns about how inclusive we are of diversity, maybe, and people have different, let's say, backgrounds or even different sex attractions that, you know, the church kind of, you know, Are those questions trying to clarify where the church stands and how they stand, you know, how they feel in the church, if they feel welcomed or not? You know, I have in London, we have a very inclusive group. We have so many YSA of different countries and even beliefs that some people have converted, you know, from different religions. And so everyone's trying to find their place in London and everyone's

different. And even though they're in the same city, everyone's situation is so different. And background has to do a lot with that.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. And I imagine just like here, I mean, you, you've probably had close friends or acquaintances that have maybe stepped away from the church and, you know, sort of deliver that news. And I mean, is, is there anything, anything to say to that or your experience seeing that or how you encourage or what comes to mind? how to encourage those people. Yeah, or just like, what's that experience been like? I mean, would you say that happens a lot or?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, I think like many big cities, London is, you know, very distracting. It has a lot of things going on. And if, and there's, there's a place for everyone. And in a way, that's a great thing. But at the same time, I think it's also a place where people try and find their identity. And they try different things, or they may, whether it's a different religion or a different lifestyle that they've grown up with. But yeah, I've had quite a few friends who have come back or are kind of unsure or maybe they've kind of left. The good thing about the YSA in London is that even if someone's, you know, I felt like a lot of friends that maybe were questioning things or questioned whether they should keep going to church, They still attend, they still feel welcomed. It's not as intense, maybe, the church culture. And so they still feel more welcomed, maybe. I don't know what it's like here, but I could see how in Utah with such a huge concentration of members, it could feel a bit overwhelming or like you're being judged or watched, you know?

SPEAKER_00:

Yeah.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, it's always hard to see a friend, you know, kind of lose their faith after you've seen them grow or seen them share their testimony. But I try not to focus on that. I just focus on the friendship and what we still have in common. And that doesn't really change much for me in terms of my relationship with Them.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. How does the, like the, any, like the basics of how a YSA, either the ward or just the YSA community functions, you know, here, Monday night, there's usually some type of activity or You know, lots of activities going on, focuses, maybe mingles after church. I mean, is that similar? Anything you'd add to that as far as how the YSA organizations function There?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. So it's, from my experience, it's mostly run at the stake level. So because there are no YSA wards, you usually have stake reps. You might have some ward reps, but usually it kind of falls on the stake reps to organize things like Institute, Family Home Evening, because there's just such a lot less people, right? And so, yeah, usually Mondays FHE, Thursdays Institute. In London, we have that. One big thing in Europe, and you might have heard of them, and you've just mentioned our conventions. Conventions are a massive thing. They've been around since forever, you know.

Kurt Francom:

So these are YSA conventions?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, YSA. And they're held in different cities all over Europe. And the UK in particular is really good at having them. They've been having them since forever. So almost every major city has a convention once a year, or at least they try. And so, and they invite, it's a multi-stake thing. So they, and even people from other countries come and that's always welcome. Cause the church is so small that, you know, we don't mind the more the better. So conventions are really the main way people get to know each other. They get to meet each other and why say get to together and conventions, usually the average size conventions, maybe two, 300 people. Yeah. Wow.

Kurt Francom:

And so this is the type of thing that maybe it's in London or, and they bring in speakers and it's, is it like a one day thing on a Saturday or how do they generally function?

Andy Rosas:

Is that? It's a weekend usually. So it can start on a Friday night and ends on a Sunday afternoon or kind of after church, you know, they might do a devotional and yeah, sometimes they have speakers come in. Sometimes it's just the stake president, you know, the local leaders. They try and do some temple conventions now. They're trying to do that. So similar, but at the temple, focusing on the temple. And it's just a way to really, it's only, it's actually one of the only ways the YSA get together like en masse in Europe is through conventions. Because otherwise, institute and FHE, they're just smaller stake gatherings.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. So are these managed and directed sort of by the area presidency or by each individual stake?

Andy Rosas:

It's each stake. So I say themselves usually organize them, they lead them. The stake obviously helps and they can help and with the budget or, you know, providing, you know, facilitating things. But the Area 70 is always aware of every, they have a whole calendar for the year of every conventions can happen, whether it's in London, Sheffield, Leeds, Manchester, whatever it is.

Kurt Francom:

So are there conventions that happen maybe in Germany that you would travel to as well? Those are separate kind of different area that's handling those?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, the Ys are kind of free. I feel like there's a lot of ward hopping here and over there you'd have more convention hopping. Germans, I guess German YSA would have their own conventions and they're probably in German, although everyone speaks perfect English. They might have some parts in English, but, but yeah, if you know about it, you could just fly to Germany, cheap flights. And if it works out, you can go to, they won't reject you, you know, you can go to a German convention.

Kurt Francom:

And then how often, like just in the UK, are these conventions happening?

Andy Rosas:

So I think they used to be more common just before COVID. And I think now they're still trying to get that momentum. I'd say there's one every at least, I think, four or five months now. And it used to be more. So yeah, I think it normally was like three months. Every three months, there was something going on.

Kurt Francom:

Interesting. Attending like this, was it more blatant than other times or what was that like that emphasis on marriage?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, I'd say Yeah, again, it's hard to compare because I haven't, you know, I haven't grown up.

Kurt Francom:

What have you felt in your experience?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. Yeah. I try to always go into the comparison. I think because you always hear that, right? You always hear, oh, Mormons or Latter-day Saints get married young, you know, or they're pushed to get married young. And I guess compared to, you know, outside the church, that's kind of true. It tends to be generally very true. And even in Europe, it is like people do get married young compared to, you know, just society in general, outside the church. I don't think, not as much, yeah, I think you're right. I think these last couple of years, it's not the main topic, I don't think. It's been more a focus on your testimony, your relationship with Christ, your activity in the church. But I think it's in, of course, it's in everyone's mind, in the back of their mind anyway. Maybe, you know, marriage is probably one of the bigger points people go to YSA or they, you know, to meet other members of the same, you know, with the same beliefs and values to, you know, to date and then maybe eventually marry. So it's not spoken of as much, but I think maybe older generations still kind of talk about it more and yeah.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. What's the dating experience just as a Latter-day Saint, a YSA, you know, here there's such emphasis, you know, it's not, it's not, it's not odd for me to meet a new married couple in my ward and say, Oh, how'd you meet? And they say, Oh, mutual. Like, Oh, okay. Like is mutual a thing there? I mean, or what, what's that experience like as far as the dating experience?

Andy Rosas:

Oh, well, I'm the wrong person to ask, but it depends. I'm going to get a lot of stick for this and back home. But, um, I'd say mutual is a thing over there, it is. Again, I'd say you'd find more Europeans, you know, it's not like if there might not be many people in your local area on mutual. There might be more European wine and people date between countries in Europe in the YSA. That is kind of common and it is considered long distance, but it's kind of like, you know, it is one of the biggest options if you want, you know, if you want to date within the church. But yeah, I think I can speak for British culture and Irish culture, because every country is very different in Europe. And in some ways they're very similar, but generally speaking, dating in the YSA and in church is really more of a uh it's more it's taken way more seriously it's always people like to make friends first they like to hang out get to know each other and then when you know you like someone that's when you ask them on the first thing so it's just a whole different pace it's a slow game it's just it's a it's a lot more you know time commitment yeah and it's a longer run kind of thing whereas i feel here it's more like a I don't know you. I'm just going to ask you out. I get to know you on my first date, which in Europe, it's like, whoa, slow down. That's not right.

Kurt Francom:

It's just different culture. That first date may feel to us more like a third date because like, I already know you. I know your background.

Andy Rosas:

We have common friends. That's the thing because the church is so small. You know each other, right? You've either grown up in the same stake. or you know a friend of a friend who's dated, you know. And so it's different. It's not as, yeah, it's not as many people. And so I think it's just a different way to navigate it. And there's also a different culture to it. Asking someone a first date right away for a British person or an Irish person might be a bit too fast or too, I don't know. It's just how it is over There.

Kurt Francom:

The other day when we went to lunch, you alluded to something. I don't know if you want to go here, but we can cut this out if you want. Like in Utah, and again, it's been 18 years since I was in the dating world, but there's a feeling of Like, yeah, I want to get married in the church, and I haven't really found the right person or I'm waiting or, but there's this feeling of, you know, we're in Utah, or even just in the United States, generally, there's can be maybe more of a feeling of like, there's plenty of options here. So I'm going to just take it slow and get to know different people where You alluded to something and maybe you can correct how I articulate this, but just in, you know, in the UK, it's more of like, you know, people and your peers get to this realization of like, okay, I want to marry in the church, but I've kind of, you know, I've seen the field and I'm not encouraged by it. I don't know. And so they kind of get the discourse point of like, well, maybe, you know, as much as I want to get married in the church, I may just not. Right. I mean, how would you articulate that?

Andy Rosas:

Actually, what you said is essentially I have loads of friends that have had different journeys in their dating life and I have some that have done that. They've dated outside the church after a while because they felt, you know, oh, you know, there's nothing here for me or I don't find someone that gets me. Although they may have similar values, we don't vibe or we don't click or whatever. And there's great people outside the church. It's amazing. There's great people everywhere. And so they meet someone and they get married. And that's great for them. And I wish them all the best, just like I would anyone in the church. So anyone getting married in the church. But yeah, I think that probably happens maybe more than compared to here, because I have quite a few friends who've married outside the church and to great people. They're just not members of the church. Yeah.

Kurt Francom:

My heart goes out to them. It's such a paradox at times where even if they marry outside of the church, it's hard to frame it as this, you know, we put such emphasis on covenants, but it's not like that's an act of rebellion, per se, they're just trying to like, you know, I want to have a family I want to get going. And so and yeah, You can still stay engaged in the church as a mixed faith marriage. So, yeah, my heart goes out to those individuals. And I just imagine, especially maybe in Europe, it's maybe more of a thing that people have to really sit with and process.

Andy Rosas:

And some people get to that conclusion pretty quickly. You know, they say, oh, well, there's no one here for me. And when I look outside and and some people take a while and they really struggle with that because they've always had that intention and that desire to marry in the church and, you know, be married in the temple and not have that huge question mark in their head, you know, as to, oh, is this person one day going to get baptized or are they going to lead me away from the church? And those are big questions someone has to ask themselves. They get to know someone.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, really interesting. That's that's one of those things like there's not like a perfect answer or but I think it's helpful just to recognize it and validate that it exists. And that's a really difficult part of this faith tradition we have, you know. So is there anything else as far as that YSA experience, your involvement? I know you've been on different committees and things. Anything else you would add to sort of paint the picture of the YSA experience in the UK?

Andy Rosas:

I don't think there is. I think it's just, again, the emphasis on there's few of us. And so with that brings, you have to keep in mind that members of the church in Europe, just in general, NY say, they come to church usually because they have a sense of family or community. It's not, and they may not be converted. People are different. you know, paths in their testimony. But there's people that go to church and friends and I've been one myself that go to YSA activities because it's, you have friends and you have, you probably grew up with someone in that stake and it's a, you know, it's a familiar place but I What I'm trying to say is because in a way you could say we're exposed to the outside world more. I was the only young man in my branch in Dublin. So I was the only young man for four years. I was the only member in my school. So there isn't really a, you know, oh, I have an LDS friend in my school I can hang out with, or it's just, you're exposed to, your friends are, of the world, you know, and I say that in the sense that they're not members of the church and they may not share your values. My best friend, or yeah, best friend was atheist. He's a guy who's Polish. We were so different. He was super atheist, but we got along really well. And so I was from a very young age, I was exposed to questions like, all right, like, what do I really believe in? Like, why do I believe in God? Does that make sense? And so Yeah, I think it's just small. And so with that brings all those nuances.

Kurt Francom:

Cool. Well, you mentioned some of the calling the leadership callings you've had, which is awesome experiences. And you've given me some leadership principles that we'll go over. And I'm excited to unpack these. The first one is an acronym SPARC, S-P-A-R-C. Yeah, break that down for me.

Andy Rosas:

Okay, so in my mission, we had this saying or this acronym we used all the time, which is SPARC. you know, like sparking a fire or, you know, spark that starts a fire. And the acronym

stands for, it's, it's, it's like French and English. It's kind of like a mix because it's French speaking. So the S stands for smile. The P stands for present yourself. So like introduce yourself as a missionary or whoever you are. And then A, which in French is améliorer, which means to better someone's day or like give them a little compliment, you know, you know, make them laugh.

Kurt Francom:

Like admire maybe.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. Okay. Exactly. Yeah. And then the R is for represent Christ. And so how you are and your demeanor, the way you dress, or maybe the way you act, the way you speak. And then the last, The last one is a C, it's not a K, it's Christ. So it's to testify of Christ. Especially as a missionary, and that's the point of talking to people as well, was to not only make friends and represent Christ, but to testify of Him. And maybe share your testimony, essentially. Just a simple testimony of your belief in Christ.

Kurt Francom:

Nice. So I love this is sort of a mindset reset, right, where I'm walking into a new situation, I'm meeting somebody new, I'm going to smile, present myself and give them a compliment or admire them. And then the R was? Represent Christ. Represent Christ, right. And obviously lead them to Christ. So any story or any other dynamic of this SPARC approach that's helped you in leadership or?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, so I really liked SPARK. And funny enough, after the mission, we, me and my companions, a lot of them were British. And so we still use that acronym when we speak, in a joking way, but it kind of sticks, you know, stick to us. And we usually, in the mission, and even after the mission, we'd say, Oh, did you SPARK that person? Or, you know, they got SPARKed really hard, you know, they got, you know, And, and yeah, we've had great examples of, you know, people in the street we've met, we've talked to, where maybe initially, you know, Swiss people can be very, you know, reserved, to say the least, and not interested, and they'll just pass by saying, you know, Oh, I'm busy. I'm like, I'm in a rush, you know, I don't want to talk and maybe not the people most into religion these days. But if we manage to catch their attention or to really find something in common and just normalize who we are, like we're just people just like you and we're missionaries just doing the best we can to kind of share something that's important to us and if by the end we made them smile or or laugh to us as a spark. And yeah, I'm trying to think of an example, but right now I can't think of one. I can come back to it if I think of one.

Kurt Francom:

Well, I just love it that, again, you're trying to, because it's so easy to get hyper-focused, especially in a mission context on the end result of we need baptisms, right? How can we baptize? And that's, that's like a heavy burden to like start your day with. But it's like if, but if I create sparks throughout my day, over time, it'll lead to that, right? Or it'll lead to a relationship or it will lead to an opportunity to serve, right?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. And it's the whole idea. of igniting a fire, igniting that candle. We can only do so much. We can give the spark, but they got to provide the fuel. They got to ignite their own fire. And we have to be those little sparks walking around. And that's the mindset we had in the mission. And it was a baptizing mission. We had baptisms, maybe not compared to places like the Philippines. South America, but like you said, that's not the way to measure a mission or the success of a mission. So our mindset was, let's light up the world as much as we can through sparking people.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Yeah. And I love this. This comes up from time to time in various interviews that we've done is, like a leader will share like an acronym or a phrase or like a sort of almost like a rally cry around this one concept. And so your mission president, I mean, you can show up to a reunion, he can say, you know, how many, how's the sparking going? Right. And you know, like, there's, there's so much data in that. And it's like a, it's a cultural seed that They can give you a 10-minute lesson with one phrase or reminding you of that thing. I love that. I want to underscore that. Never underestimate the power of condensing what you want your culture to be in a phrase or a moment that you can continually come back to remind people. It's really powerful.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, I agree. And just, even if you don't have an acronym, just creating a culture or, you know, of a common goal is very powerful.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah. Yeah. Awesome. The next principle is grow a personality, not just a testimony. I love that. I love how this is framed.

Andy Rosas:

Oh yeah. Tell us more. I got a lot to say about this.

Kurt Francom:

Okay. But, um, I love it when I want to highlight every once in a while you get your accent comes, your Irish accent comes through. I love it.

Andy Rosas:

It's a mix. It's a, it's a terrible mess. So cool. Let's see. So, um, initially I sent you this phrase and I, and I put in get a personality, not just a testimony. A little more direct. Yeah. I thought maybe let's soften it and be nicer and just say grow. Because it's true. I think I'm a big believer in it. I've thought I remember a few years ago thinking this, it was maybe in a leadership meeting, we were talking about the importance of testimony and how can we help strengthen YSA's testimony. And someone had mentioned how in another conversation, how they felt at church, people were kind of the same. And I just kind of made, I kind of brought those two conversations in my head. I'm like, oh, I think getting a personality is probably really important. Like it's, I really believe, you know, we believe we existed in the, you know, pre-existence. We lived with God before he created us. So surely we had a personality. Surely we had a persona or characteristics and we've brought that with us. So, and maybe to some extent we had a testimony, right? I guess we just forgotten. And so I think maybe we forgot our personality sometimes. I don't know. I think people sometimes they go to church and that's great. And we get testimonies because that's what we were told to do. And that's also great. That's exactly what we should be doing. But we forget to kind of add a little texture to church, to our lives, and to include diversity. Get a personality. Grow on your talents. There's scripture about it. Grow your talents. you know, get a hobby, you know, don't make church your hobby. Cause that's one sad and two, not a good idea.

Kurt Francom:

There's a lot of bishops out there that need to hear that.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. Well, I'm going to, yeah, it's true though. Right. I think it's important to, um, don't make church your only social aspect of your life or circle. Don't make it just your only hobby. Don't make it your only, your only, right? Just get, get out there in the world, make connections with people outside and grow your talents. And I think, I think one of the people I really admire is Mr. Rogers. You guys, of course, British people don't know him very well. Cause you know, he's American and he had a kid's show here. And in the UK, that wasn't a thing. I don't think they ever aired it. And he was great. And I even remember seeing him as a kid when we first moved to the US. And he impressed me because I didn't speak English. But he spoke English in the show, but the way he spoke and the way he was, he didn't need to communicate through words, it was actions. Anyways, in an interview, there's a great interview you can find on YouTube. I think it's, yeah, I forget the name of the interviewer, but he explains how important it is for kids and people in general to see their parents do something they love. So whether it's playing the guitar and they're really good at it, it's showing them that love for that talent is very contagious. And I think as a good leader in the church or anywhere, you want to have something contagious about you. Or at least show people that you can be in this gospel despite of whatever kind of personality or characteristics you have. and they can, you know, they can compliment the church and your leadership. You don't have to be cookie cutter. And if you are, that's great. But if, I don't really know what that means actually, because I think everyone is very different, but I

think focusing on your strengths as a person will come across in your leadership. So I actually think I found a quote that I really liked. So it's actually in that book I was showing you called God Never Blinks. And it's a chapter that talks about just hard times this lady had. And it's a paragraph from her book and it says, life is a series of problems. The reason for this is that God is more interested in your character than your comfort. He's more interested in making your life holy than he is in making your life happy. Not to make it sound like life is depressing, but I think the point is to get a personality. Your book mentions it. we're all going to get the dysfunctional card one day dealt to us in life, you know. And those are definitely opportunities for God to work with us. And a lot of personalities build through those trials, or at least they can, right? They can really build personality. And just as a leader, I'd say, just don't take yourself too seriously. I think we take callings way too seriously and it just gets boring. Just make it fun because it's not, you know, you're not getting paid.

Kurt Francom:

So have fun doing it. It's a volunteer thing. That's great encouragement. And I love this emphasis on personality. you know, as a marketing guy, I have such a strong belief in branding, you know, and even personal branding. And what does that branding bring to your ward or that personality, right? And then let it be what it is that God gave you that it's a gift, right? Rather than trying to fit in a box or, you know, of course, there's general boundaries that, you know, we stay in and societal boundaries, but and I love just that emphasis of like, lead lead out, it goes back to spark earlier, you're leading out with a personality first before you, you know, lead out with that testimony, because sometimes that testimony can be, it's a sacred thing that maybe you don't want to, you know, throw those pearls before swine type of thing, you know.

Andy Rosas:

It's powerful. And I'd say just to highlight part of what you said, it's not, you know, not everyone in leadership or just in church, not even leadership. I really feel like your podcast is for everyone, not just leaders. I agree. I think you don't need to have a great, a huge persona. You don't need to have the best lessons in the world to be to lead or to shepherd people or to, you know, bring people to Christ. You don't need to have the best, you know, voice or the best presentation skills or the best personality. I think you just, I think it helps us when we don't make church our sole identity. And because I think that can be dangerous because if one church disappoints or someone disappoints you at church, you can really get offended very easily and you don't really have anything to fall back on. And that's been my experience. It's important to in a good way, and you know what I mean by this, have a life outside of church. I'm not saying have a different life with different standards or principles, but have, you know, really work. I think God gave us talents. God gave us our personas, our minds, our bodies, all these gifts. not just to get a testimony, but to develop. If you like basketball, go play basketball. Make friends while you play basketball. Connect. Maybe teach the gospel through basketball. You see on TikTok and on Instagram, all these missionaries now, they rap gospel verses. Or they play basketball with random people in the street, and then they teach the gospel through that. And I think, if anything, the church should go more that direction. You know, not like I'm saying, you know, I'm not telling the prophet what to do, but I think service missions are the future. I think we need to

serve and we need to really connect with people on normal daily things that they deal with. And they'll see our testimony. They'll see our light, our spark. And that, you know, that's how that is contagious. But yeah, I think it's just being real and just being of the world in some way.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, I love that. It's really, really helpful. Anything else as far as growing personality, not just testimony? Or do we cover it all?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, actually, one last thing. Okay. So I was attending a YSA award here, and someone and I'll connect to your book again, I'm really putting in these I really studied it and it's got lots of good stuff and I think I showed you, but I got all these pages folded in. I got notes. It means a lot. And I got a favorite page. So for whoever read it. You have a favorite page? Page 76. Okay.

Kurt Francom:

It's like completely underlined.

Andy Rosas:

Half of it. And you go into relationships and the difference between expectations and relationships. And actually someone in the ward I went to the other day said this and I'll read it out. He said, relationships, I don't know if this is doctrinal, but anyways.

Kurt Francom:

We'll give it a go.

Andy Rosas:

Relationship with Christ is not reciprocal. We give our worst to Christ and Christ gives back our best. And I don't know where he got that from, but it was a cool quote, you know, kind of to do with repentance. We can give God anything we have and he'll make it better. It's not about, you know, performance. It's not about how good are you or measurements to then, you know, measure your identity and who you are. Your identity's already been established. You are a child of God. God's going to love you regardless. So it's not about outcomes. It's about that relationship. And I think page 76, people can read it. It has, I think, a little more insight into that. And I really enjoyed that. I'm intrigued. I wonder what I said on page 76.

Kurt Francom:

I got to go check that. I can read part of it or I can, yeah, we can let people find themselves. Cool. Cool. The last principle is let people lead themselves. What do you mean by that?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, well, I also edited that. I edited it a tiny bit, but not much. I kind of changed it to let people lead. And whether it's themselves, so that's included, or just in general, like the point of a leader, in my opinion, in my leadership experience has been an enabler more than not telling people what to do. It's really just give people opportunities and give them an opportunity to find themselves in the church through service. And I think when we invite people to participate, and they choose to participate that lead that participation leads to conversion and it's not necessarily just to do with covenants it can do you know it can be simple invitations it can be you know can do the prayer or can you help us with this you know putting out the hymns whatever it is or Even just an invite on, you know, if you're an elders quorum president or whoever you are, just add them on Facebook or Instagram, send them a message and be like, how's it going? Don't even ask about church. Just because, you know, I think just, you don't have to be best friends with everyone. I think that's not the role of a leader. You don't need to have, you know, the best friendships in the world with everyone you help in church and your organization. It's mostly, To me, it's been more of be aware of people and reach out, but in a sincere, real way, not because you have to. In my time in leadership, I've tried to focus on the people who come to church. I'm not saying I didn't focus on people who didn't go to church, that's not what I'm saying. But when they were at church, it was a good opportunity to kind of see who's out there and feel who is the next person I should text, maybe. Maybe later on Sunday night, I dedicate five minutes to send a few texts to like, hey, Mark, how's it going? You know, are you OK? You know, it's nice to see at church. That's it. And leading, I think, again, it doesn't have to be anything big. Oh, sorry. There's Yeah, I'd say the main thing is just to give space, make it a safe space to come to church. When you're a leader, it's, or anyone, not just leaders, make sure people feel okay or comfortable when they come to church. Don't do anything that won't make them uncomfortable. Everyone is in such a different mindset all the time. So you, and it's hard to know how they're feeling. So again, going back to your book, just lower your expectations. That's not what you said.

Kurt Francom:

I'm ruining your book for you. That was good.

Andy Rosas:

I know what you mean in the context of my book, but yeah. In relationships, it's important to sometimes, maybe not in your marriage. I don't know. I'm not married, but lower expectations a bit. Maybe that works too. I don't know. in leadership, in my experience, don't, you know, and again, it goes back to like, just chill out, like have fun in your calling. Things don't need to be like clockwork. Being in Utah, I feel like there's everything's so clockwork and it's great. It's really cool. But the church culture here is very clockwork. And we can kind of forget the spirit of things. We've become very, you know, pharisaical. And the Pharisees, all they did was, you know, they, they kind of got rid of Christ. And they wouldn't listen to Him. They shut Him out. And so let's not shut out Christ through our own practices that can be kind of pharisaical. We don't need to be on time all the time. We don't need to finish on the minute. It's not a big deal. Let others have that safe space to also teach. You know, lessons should be guided, but in my opinion, the best lessons have been the ones where I've let others really do most of the talking. And recently, I

had a great experience in Sunday school back in London, where a friend of mine was teaching. Shout out to David. Nice. Love it. And he got us to reenact the trial of

Kurt Francom:

The Abenadai? Abenadai. Okay, King Noah. King Noah.

Andy Rosas:

Abenadai and Alma. Yeah. And he got us to reenact it. And it was fun. It was a fun lesson. The time went really fast. And he helped us teach ourselves. He helped us lead the lesson ourselves because we were teaching the class and ourselves at the same time and those are the best lessons in my opinion. And everyone has different learning styles and teaching styles, but I definitely think that giving space to others to speak, Church is a place to come in and talk and share, it is. Personally, I think it's more of a place to share than it is to teach. I think at home is where the teaching should happen, to kids, to youth, in our own personal scripture time, that should be teaching moments, that should be the priority. But I think church is a place where we go and hear silly, crazy testimonies or give space to that. I don't think it's a big deal. I think we need to relax when someone goes off on tangents. That's a good thing. It's a great thing that they're at church in the first place. And so we should celebrate that more so than tell people, oh no, we don't do this at church or we don't go over this time or whatever.

Kurt Francom:

Yeah, that's awesome. Anything else as far as leading, let people lead? Does that cover it?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. One last thing I can think of, I have a friend here and he was telling me about him and his wife and they had different opinions. Oh, really?

Kurt Francom:

That's odd.

Andy Rosas:

Yeah. On a particular subject, in terms of how they wanted to raise their child. And it was a big topic. And he was just worried, he was telling me, I don't know what to do, I don't know what to think. And they're great people, they're good members of the church, they try, they're not perfect, no one is perfect. And he was like, I don't know what's going to happen when they get older and how we're going to have that discussion. And then I remember we talked about it and we realized, well, as long as you try your best to live the gospel, do the things you know you

should do, you're gonna have another member in your parenting. It's gonna be the Holy Ghost. It's gonna be the Godhead. And so that, again, going back to leadership, going back to being an example, letting others see your spark, that example is going to resonate, it's going to show, it's going to glow. You don't need to say certain things to comfort someone. Your children will see it and they'll figure it out. You have God on your side. He's going to help you parent your child. And same with leaders. If you're trying your best, God is on your side. And I think It's not about becoming this perfect leader or this perfect lesson. It's just about building confidence in people. I think we say a lot of times at church, you know, church is about perfecting the saints. Actually, well, I don't like it is, but it isn't. I think it's about building confidence in the saints, confidence in Christ and the Holy Ghost and those basics, because we know we're not going to be perfect. Yeah. And if we're so busy and so worried about becoming perfect, which again, in your book, you mentioned so many times.

Kurt Francom:

I really didn't pay him. No, you didn't. He gave me a free book though. I didn't give him a free book.

Andy Rosas:

But yeah, I think if we emphasize too much on action and a checklist, we lose the vision of, oh, actually the Holy Ghost is really important in this decision or in this relationship. Yeah, we shouldn't forget how important it is to grow in confidence with the Holy Ghost and feel better instead of just feeling like, oh, you know, I know I did this checklist, so I'm good. It's more of a learning how to feel confident about you and your relationship with Christ.

Kurt Francom:

Awesome. Andy, this is such a pleasure to learn from you and hear about the Saints over in the UK and your experience, your insights, all those things. Any other point, principle, concept that you want to make sure we fit in here? Do we cover it all?

Andy Rosas:

Yeah, I think so. I think as I was preparing or kind of preparing, I'll be honest, to come here and speak to you, I kept thinking of the scripture that talks about weaknesses and you know, how Christ will make our weaknesses strengths. And I remember a mission companion tell me he hated that scripture. He's like, I don't think it makes sense. And I was, I think of that because I think we're given weaknesses and that in turn those weaknesses can actually be our strengths. Because what we think we lack, it kind of makes us aware and open to correction. And if we are humble enough to follow that correction and that guidance from the Holy Ghost to how to improve and how to repent. That attitude in itself is a strength and that's all you need. You don't need to overcome weakness tomorrow. It's like an attitude thing. Yeah, I always think of a little analogy someone gave me, but we don't have to go into that. It might be long. I don't know.

Kurt Francom:

Well, if you're teasing us with the analogy, what's here?

Andy Rosas:

It's a little story someone made up. And so there's this little story someone gave. I don't know who it was, but it's about this girl who goes and does karate lessons or wrestling. I don't know what it is. You can tell I didn't prepare the story. And she was missing a left arm and from a tragic accident, you know, but she wanted to take up, you know, these lessons and do, you know, self-defense and be stronger. So she starts going to lessons and her coach is this wise guy and, you know, he sees her and he also sees, you know, she's missing a left arm. And so he teaches her a few moves and then he focuses on just one move and it's her taking him down a certain way in this wrestling move or whatever it is. And he teaches her that and that was the first lesson and then she comes for the second and he's like, great, like, did you practice? You know, are you ready to move on? But funny enough, he still does the same move. He wants to perfect it. He's like, we should work on it more. And then the third lesson, She does the same move like the whole practice and she's like wondering. Okay, like why are we just doing this? This is pretty boring. This is really repetitive Like does he think I'm really, you know, not great at this and then the next There was some tournament coming up and he tells her, you know, get you know, don't worry about it Just stick to what you know, like the one or two things, you know and and And so she goes to this first tournament, you know, very novice people, and she starts fighting or wrestling these other opponents. And she takes them down, all of them, one after the other. And she's amazed. She's like, wow, these guys are either really bad or, you know, something, you know, this is the magic move that no one knows about. And then after that, she goes to the coach, like, I don't get it. Like, you taught me one move and I've won, you know, I've taken down all these opponents. And he's like, yeah, the only way to defend yourself from that move is to grab the other person by the left arm, which you don't have. And so I think it's a cool analogy, a cool story, because we have weaknesses as people, we have faults, we are missing things, we might be incomplete in many ways, but back in a weird kind of funny way, with God's help can turn to our advantage. And when I read that scripture, weaknesses can become strengths. I don't always look at it as, oh, I can repent and I can fix my weaknesses. It's like, OK, I can own my weaknesses and through my weaknesses, through obedience or trying to, you know, do everything I can. It's going to be a strength. I can I can overcome the adversary. So.

Kurt Francom:

Love it. I'm so glad you shared the story. Yeah, the analogy. That's awesome. Well, Andy, as you reflect on your time as a leader, how has being a leader helped you become a better follower of Jesus Christ?

Andy Rosas:

Hmm. Uh, you always ask this, don't you?

Kurt Francom:

I do.

Andy Rosas:

You weren't ready for it. I do listen to your podcast. No, it wasn't funny enough, but, um, I'd say the best leaders from my experience that have led me or been examples to me have been the best followers. They're usually the, the ones that are the humble ones, the ones that try and to be compassionate and, uh, always providing, you know, some space to others. Um, It's, yeah, I think it's as simple as that. It's how can I, as a leader, be the best follower? And then don't worry too much about the leading bit. Just delegate more. Let others lead more. Don't take yourself too seriously. And just, yeah, just help others, you know, through your talents. And I think those are the best leaders. I don't think there's any magic potion or magic formula to become a good follower of Christ. There's so many types of followers of Christ and so many different levels. Just being a follower of Christ is good enough, I think.

Kurt Francom:

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, 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 is discovered. So we would love to have you share this with somebody in this calling or a related calling, and that would be great. And also, if you know somebody, any type of leader, who would be a fantastic guest on the How I Lead segment, reach out to us. Go to leadingsaints.org contact. Maybe send this 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 see if we can line them up. So again, go to leadingsaints.org slash contact, and there you can submit all the information and let us know. And maybe they will be on a future How I Lead segment on the Leading Saints podcast. Remember, go listen to Dan Duckwood's presentation about youth mentorship by visiting leadingsaints.org slash 14.

Gordon B. Hinckley:

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 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.