

# W04-Gathering Agenda

PC 103 University Skills Gathering Agenda for Week 04 Overcoming Obstacles			
<b>Gathering Purposes</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss how you can overcome obstacles with good habits, faith, and growth mindset</li> </ul>			
<b>Preparation</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For <i>face-to-face Gatherings</i>, arrive early to setup the room, prepare any visual aids, and greet students as they arrive.</li> <li>For <i>virtual Gatherings</i>, start the meeting early, share your screen with a message welcoming them to the gathering and letting them know you will start soon.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the Gathering Agenda asks that students meet in small groups, use <a href="#">Breakout Rooms</a>.</li> <li>When the Gathering Agenda asks you to display things on “the board,” you can use the <a href="#">whiteboard</a>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
Min.	Activities		Teaching Tips
<b>Welcome and Devotional</b>			
10	Welcome	Welcome, announcements, and housekeeping	
	Hymn or Thought, Prayer	Please sing one or two verses of a hymn. If you meet with a virtual gathering, the lead student or another student should be invited to share a brief spiritual thought. A volunteer will then give an opening prayer.	
	BYU-Pathway Worldwide Devotional	Students were asked to watch the BYU-Pathway Worldwide devotional this week, as contained in the course. They should have done this prior to the gathering. As a class discuss the devotional using the discussion questions provided in the course	Look up the questions in advance so you are ready.
<b>Student Success Discussion</b>			
15	Next Steps Reminder	Remind students to be working on the Next Steps portion of the course. Encourage students to continue working to complete their application and engage with Degree Planner.	
	Read and Discuss	<p>Read about Elisha Joseph to see what he did to overcome the challenges he faced as he worked to complete a degree. Then discuss the questions that follow.</p> <p><a href="#">Click here to share/read the article</a>. If that does not work, you can share the text below called “From Nigeria To Ghana: Immigration for Education.”</p> <p><b>Discussion Questions:</b></p>	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elisha had to move to a different country to pursue an education. When have you had to sacrifice something now for a goal that was important to you?</li> <li>• Elisha decided to do volunteer work for 8 hours a day at a call center because finding a paying job was so difficult. What benefits do you think he got from volunteering this way? Why?</li> <li>• Elisha had trouble affording the internet, so he did his work at night when buying data was cheap. Even then, the power would sometimes shut off. These are big obstacles that would seriously challenge any online student. What kept him going? What keeps you going?</li> <li>• Elisha said, "It was not easy combining 10, 12, and sometimes 15 credits with 8 hours of volunteer work per day, but because of my faith in God...I was able to make the sacrifice." If faith is a principle of action, what do you suppose Elisha did to successfully take up to 15 credits a semester and work 8 hours a day volunteering?</li> <li>• You don't have to answer, but what obstacles have you encountered in your educational journey so far? What are you willing to do to finish your online program? How can you involve Heavenly Father?</li> </ul>	
<b>Student Skills Review and Discussion</b>			
20	Share	<p>For one to two minutes, tell the class about one big thing you learned in this week's Student Skills.</p> <p>Invite a class member to read the following story:</p> <p>"It's not the obstacle that counts but how you overcome it. Consider, for a moment, that you are the engineer of a train. As your locomotive races down the tracks, you look out the window. In the distance you see a great pile of debris blocking your way. What do you do? Radio ahead for help? Stop the train and take care of the problem yourself? Pour coal into the engine and plow on through? Temporal obstacles make eternal development possible. So we must decide how to meet those obstacles."</p> <p style="text-align: center;">--Elder Robert D. Hales, "Living Life by Axioms", BYU Speeches, Aug. 2003</p>	Come prepared to share your 1-2 minute introduction.
	Discuss	<p><b>Ask:</b> What connections can you make between this story and your own life?</p> <p>After discussion, finish the story from Elder Hales:</p>	

		<p>“Like the engineer, we can call for help. By prayer, fasting, and diligent study, we can obtain the assistance of our Heavenly Father. He will comfort us, strengthen us, and enlighten us by His Holy Spirit. Often He will give us inspired counsel through parents and priesthood leaders. Sometimes He will smooth our path by removing the obstacle. Sometimes, like a switchman, He will help us get on a different track. <i>But from time to time, the only way to clear debris from the track is to stop the train and remove the problem.</i>”</p>					
	Write and Discuss	<p>Invite the class to write their answers to the writing prompt below. Write for 60-90 seconds. Then discuss the questions that follow.</p> <p><b>Writing Prompt.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write about a time in your life that you had to “stop and remove the problem.”</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion Questions.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What did you write? Why?</li> <li>Where do you find strength and perseverance in challenging times?</li> </ul>					
<b>Student Skills Application- Overcome Obstacles with Growth Mindset</b>							
15	Read	<p>“A mindset, according to Dweck, is a self-perception or “self-theory” that people hold about themselves. Believing that you are either “intelligent” or “unintelligent” is a simple example of a mindset. People may also have a mindset related their personal or professional lives—“I’m a good teacher” or “I’m a bad parent,” for example. People can be aware or unaware of their mindsets, according to Dweck, but they can have profound effect on learning achievement, skill acquisition, personal relationships, professional success, and many other dimensions of life.” (<a href="https://www.edglossary.org/growth-mindset/">https://www.edglossary.org/growth-mindset/</a>)</p>					
	Write	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make 2 columns on the board.</li> <li>Label one column “Fixed Mindset”</li> <li>Label the second column “Growth Mindset”</li> <li>Have students in the class copy the chart onto their own sheet of paper</li> </ul> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Fixed Mindset</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Growth Mindset</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> <td style="height: 20px;"></td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite the class to take 3 minutes and brainstorm statements or characteristics on their own that could fit under each category.</li> </ul>	Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset			<p>See a list of sample statements at the bottom of the agenda if you need additional ideas.</p> <p>Be sure to plan to have 4-5 minutes to discuss the questions below.</p>
Fixed Mindset	Growth Mindset						

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take 2 minutes and ask the class to share some of the ideas on their list.</li> <li>• If needed, discuss which column the statement would go under.</li> </ul>	
	Ask and Discuss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can a growth or fixed mindset affect your academic success?</li> <li>• In what specific ways will having a growth mindset help you overcome obstacles?</li> <li>• Can you think of an example from your own life of a time when you have had either a growth or fixed mindset? What was the result?</li> </ul>	Choose any or all of these based on time.
	Testimony and Prayer	<p>Bear a 30-90 second testimony of overcoming obstacles and uplifting and encouraging others. Invite the class to ponder how to incorporate the suggestions they were given into their pacing guides.</p> <p>End with a prayer by invitation.</p>	

### **From Nigeria To Ghana: Immigration for Education**

Elisha Joseph is willing to do whatever it takes — even move countries — to reach his educational goals.

### **The beginning of Elisha’s PathwayConnect journey**

Elisha was called to serve a mission in Enugu, Nigeria, where he first heard about BYU-Pathway Worldwide from one of his companions. He realized he could go to law school if he completed his bachelor’s degree online through BYU-Pathway’s programs. “This insight made me shout for joy,” he said. After returning from his mission, Elisha learned that PathwayConnect would soon be available for the first time in Odorkor, Ghana — the nearest location to his home. He immediately enrolled.

Participating in PathwayConnect required many sacrifices for Elisha. Because virtual gatherings weren’t available at that time, he chose to relocate to pursue his education.\* “I had to move from Nigeria to Ghana,” he said. “The exodus was not pleasant, as it unfolded lots of hard times economically.”

### **Gaining new skills and experience through volunteer work**

In addition to his coursework, Elisha also spent eight hours a day volunteering. “When I started PathwayConnect, I knew I needed a job, and getting one was very difficult. With no certificate or skills to get a job, I decided to do volunteer work,” he explained.

Elisha volunteered as an assistant call center supervisor for the Perpetual Education Fund (PEF), training other call center employees and assisting PEF participants across West Africa over the phone. In exchange for his volunteer work, he was allowed to use an office computer to work on his school assignments.

All of Elisha's sacrifices were made with faith and optimism. "The PathwayConnect program was something I desired ... so I was super excited when it was time for me to start, and I clung on to it with all the energy of my being," he said. "With faith in God, determination, and help from my dear friend [who introduced me to PathwayConnect], I survived my challenges."

### **Volunteer by day, student by night**

Elisha completed PathwayConnect in 2013 and chose to pursue a bachelor's degree in applied management online through BYU-Idaho, supported by BYU-Pathway, which came with its own challenges.

"I spent all my online degree days continuing my volunteer work," he said. "It was not easy combining 10, 12, and sometimes 15 credits with 8 hours of volunteer work per day, but because of my faith in God ... I was able to make the sacrifice."

Finding reliable internet access and electricity were also challenges for Elisha. "It was cheaper buying data at night, so I stayed awake at night to do my assignments and then prepared to go to work in the morning," he said. "Sometimes in the process of doing my assignments, the power would go off."

### **The rewards of hard work and sacrifice**

Although Elisha certainly faced adversity, he never gave up. In fact, his faith was strengthened as he overcame his trials and continued working toward his degree. "I had faith that God would help me achieve my educational goals," he said. "I put in my best, and God took care of the rest."

"Of course, there were days I felt dispirited with my studies, but with the help of fellow course mates and friends, my spirit was energized to continue and persevere until I graduated, despite the challenges I encountered," Elisha said.

Elisha graduated with his bachelor's degree in July 2017 and got his first job in November of the same year. Elisha still dreams of becoming a lawyer eventually, but for right now, his goal is to earn a master's degree in public administration. He is working on starting his own business using his experience and training to manage businesses across Africa.

When he's not doing schoolwork, Elisha loves playing the piano, singing, and dancing. He also enjoys spending time with family, friends, and other Church members.

**See below for the Sample Statements.**

## **Sample Statements of Growth & Fixed Mindset**

I can learn anything I want to.

I can improve with lots of practice.

I like to challenge myself.

When I fail, I learn.

I like being told that I try hard.

I haven't figured it out yet.

My effort and attitude determine everything.

I'm either good at, or I'm not.

When I'm frustrated, I give up.

I don't like to be challenged.

When I fail, I'm no good.

I like being told that I'm smart.

If my classmates succeed, I feel threatened.

My abilities determine everything.