SELF-RELIANCE INITIATIVE: TRAINING FOR STAKE COMMITTEES, BISHOPS, AND WARD COUNCILS
“Self-reliance is the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. As members become self-reliant, they are also better able to serve and care for others.”

(Handbook 2: Administering the Church [2010], 6.1.1)

What do you feel is important or meaningful about this definition of self-reliance?
A PROPHET’S VISION

“Where there is widespread poverty among our people, we must do all we can to help them to lift themselves, to establish their lives upon a foundation of self-reliance that can come of training. Education is the key to opportunity.”

President Gordon B. Hinckley
“Self-reliance . . . is an essential element in our spiritual as well as our temporal well-being. . . . President Marion G. Romney has said: ‘Let us work for what we need. Let us be self-reliant and independent. We must work out our own salvation in temporal as well as in spiritual things.’”

President Thomas S. Monson

In what way is self-reliance a principle of salvation?
WHAT THOUGHTS OR IMPRESSIONS DID YOU HAVE WHILE WATCHING DEBORAH’S STORY?
THE LORD PROMISES TO HELP

“And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine. But it must needs be done in mine own way . . . that the poor shall be exalted, in that the rich are made low.

“For the earth is full, and there is enough and to spare; yea, I prepared all things.”

D&C 104:15–17

What can we learn from this scripture about the Lord’s way of providing for His Saints?
Building spiritual and temporal self-reliance is part of the Area Plan for the United States and Canada.
The Self-Reliance Initiative

• Strengthens members with temporal challenges.
• Combines doctrine and practical skills.
• Offers a peer-supported group learning process.
• Is guided and directed by leaders who hold priesthood keys.
• Offers support to members through stake self-reliance resource centers as needed.
STAKE RESPONSIBILITY

1. Teach the doctrines and principles of self-reliance.
2. Organize a stake self-reliance committee.
3. Invite members to participate.
4. Develop a plan for providing needed resources to stake members.
MEMBER RESPONSIBILITY

1. Attend a self-reliance devotional.
2. Join a self-reliance group.
3. Listen to the Spirit, make commitments, and take action.
Members are *invited* to participate in a specific group by their bishop or ward council.

Members attend a stake *self-reliance devotional*.

Members join a 12-week *self-reliance group*.

For 12 weeks members work together & improve their temporal & spiritual self-reliance.
THE SELF-RELIANCE PROCESS

IDENTIFY
ATTEND
JOIN
COMPLETE

1
2
3
4

Continuous Cycle
THE GROUP LEARNING PROCESS

DOCTRINE  +  SKILLS  =  IMPROVED SELF-RELIANCE
THE POWER OF THE GROUP
WHAT ARE SOME WAYS THAT MEMBERS’ LIVES ARE AFFECTED BOTH SPIRITUALLY AND TEMPORALLY BY BEING PART OF A SELF-RELIANCE GROUP?
### WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

*Six months after the end of a self-reliance group: United States*

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<tr>
<th>SELF-RELIANCE</th>
<th>FINANCIAL SITUATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Improved their ability to provide the necessities of life for themselves and their families</td>
<td>Kept a budget after finishing the course</td>
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<td><strong>32%</strong></td>
<td><strong>44%</strong></td>
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*results based on August 2017 surveys of at least 200 group participants*
PEOPLE TO CONSIDER INVITING.

- Fast-offering recipients
- Unemployed or underemployed
- Returning missionaries
- Single parents
- Less-active members
- Recent converts
- Young single adults
Members are personally invited to participate by their bishop or a member of the ward council.
THE INVITATION

The Lord has declared, “It is my purpose to provide for my saints” (D&C 104:15). This revelation is a promise from the Lord that He is ready to extend to you the blessings of self-reliance. We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles. As you do so you will be blessed with greater hope, peace, and progress.

—The First Presidency

As a member of a self-reliance group, you will...

- Attend group meetings weekly for 12 weeks (typically 2 hours each week).
- Act on personal commitments to achieve your self-reliance goals (3-6 hours each week).
- Learn, counsel together, and provide support to other group members.
- Practice gospel principles and habits that lead to temporal and spiritual self-reliance.

YOU’RE INVITED

TO JOIN A SELF-RELIANCE GROUP

FOUR DIFFERENT SELF-RELIANCE GROUPS AVAILABLE

- Personal Finances
- Find a Better Job
- Education for Better Work
- Starting and Growing My Business

Promises

Commitments

Date: ____________________
Time: ____________________
Place: ____________________
ACTIVITY

As a council we invite you to pray now, and listen to the Spirit. Then, write down the names of any individuals or families that may come to your mind whose lives may be blessed by participating in the self-reliance initiative.
SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

- Study *My Foundation for Self-Reliance manual*.
- Set a date for a stake self-reliance devotional.
- Train all ward councils in the stake.
- Identify facilitators for the self-reliance groups.
- Work with the self-reliance manager to train facilitators.
- Plan an agenda and prepare for a self-reliance devotional.
- **Counsel together to identify**, by name, individuals in the ward who would benefit from being a part of a self-reliance group.
- Extend **personal** invitations to attend the next self-reliance devotional and participate in a 12-week self-reliance group.
SEE OUR LATEST VIDEOS, BLOGS, NEWS, AND RESOURCES.

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Appendix
How it works: Stake Implementation Plan

**STAKE**
1. Organize stake self-reliance committee
   Committee will be trained by Self-Reliance Services Manager: ___/__/___
2. Train Bishops and Ward Councils
   Committee will train bishops and ward councils: ___/__/___
3. Plan and Host Self-Reliance devotionals
   Devotionals should be offered as needed.
   Next devotional: ___/__/___
4. Organize and run groups
   Self-reliance groups begin weekly meetings: ___/__/___
5. Establish a self-reliance resource center
   (physical or virtual) as needed

**WARD**
1. Teach the doctrine of self-reliance
2. Identify and invite members to the devotional and group process
3. Develop and share resources with members

**MEMBER**
1. Learn and apply doctrine of self-reliance
2. Attend self-reliance groups and act in faith to fulfill commitments
3. Share principles with family and serve others

* Process usually spans 6 to 10 weeks
THE WAY WE TEACH IN SELF-RELIANCE GROUPS

**LEARN**
During the group meeting, participants **LEARN** both *doctrine AND skills*. (Groups have a facilitator, not a teacher or “expert.”)

**PONDER & COMMIT**
Participants **PONDER** and invite the Spirit throughout the process. During the meetings, they **COMMIT** to act.

**ACT**
During the week, participants **ACT** on commitments. (Group members support each other during the week as “action partners.”)

**SHARE**
Participants **SHARE** what they are learning with their friends, family, and others.

**REPORT**
At the beginning of each group meeting, participants **REPORT** the actions they took during the week.
“Man cannot be an agent unto himself if he is not self-reliant. . . Whenever we get into a situation which threatens our self-reliance, we will find our freedom threatened as well. If we increase our dependence, we will find an immediate decrease in our freedom to act.

“Service is not something we endure on this earth so we can earn the right to live in the celestial kingdom. Service is the very fiber of which an exalted life in the celestial kingdom is made.

“Can we see how critical self-reliance becomes when looked upon as the prerequisite to service, when we also know service is what godhood is all about?” (Marion G. Romney, “THE CELESTIAL NATURE OF SELF-RELIANCE,” Ensign, Mar. 2009, 64–65).

In what way is self-reliance critical to our spiritual growth and development?
“It has always been a cardinal teaching with the Latter-day Saints, that a religion which has not the power to save people temporally and make them prosperous and happy here, cannot be depended upon to save them spiritually, to exalt them in the life to come.”

President Joseph F. Smith

What does this teach us about our responsibility to help save people both spiritually and temporally?
“It is God's will that we be free men and women enabled to rise to our full potential both temporally and spiritually, that we be free from the humiliating limitations of poverty and the bondage of sin, that we enjoy self-respect and independence, that we be prepared in all things to join Him in His celestial kingdom.”

Elder D. Todd Christofferson

How does a lack of self-reliance prevent someone from rising to their full potential both temporally and spiritually?
Video Links to Success Stories from North America: Click below

Personal Finances - Castanedas: Financial planning for our future

Starting and Growing My Business - Merrills: Growing my business

Find a Better Job - Tamisha: Finding a better job

Education for Better Work - Jackson: Learning for a lifetime
YOU’RE INVITED

Share My Foundation principles with your family
Attend a self-reliance devotional
Join a self-reliance group
Help others grow by sharing what you have learned
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS