



MY PATH

FOR SELF-RELIANCE



FACILITATOR INSTRUCTIONS

Devotional facilitator instructions will always appear in the purple boxes. For additional help conducting a devotional, see page 13.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet is designed for use in a devotional format. However, it may also be used in other group or individual settings, including:

- Fifth-Sunday lessons.
- Quorum or Relief Society meetings.
- In the home.
- Other appropriate settings.

WHEN YOU SEE THESE PROMPTS, FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS				
Read	Watch	Discuss	Ponder	Activity
One person reads aloud for the whole group.	The whole group watches the video.	As a small group (2–8 people), share thoughts for about 2–4 minutes.	Individually ponder and write quietly for about 2–3 minutes.	Work individually or together as a small group (2–8 people) for the specified time.

A My Path devotional should last no more than 90 minutes.

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MESSAGE FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

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 will provide temporal blessings and open the door of self-reliance, which is the ability for us to provide the necessities of life for ourselves and our family members.

This booklet has been prepared to help members of the Church learn and put into practice principles of faith, education, hard work, and trust in the Lord. Accepting and living these principles will better enable you to receive the temporal blessings promised by the Lord.

We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles and teach them to your family members. As you do so, your life will be blessed. You will learn how to act on your path toward greater self-reliance. You will be blessed with greater hope, peace, and progress.

Please be assured that you are a child of our Father in Heaven. He loves you and will never forsake you. He knows you and is ready to extend to you the spiritual and temporal blessings of self-reliance.

Sincerely,

The First Presidency

MY PATH FOR SELF-RELIANCE

GETTING STARTED

- Facilitator:**
1. Begin with a prayer (and hymn, if desired).
 2. A member of the stake presidency may provide a 3- to 5-minute introduction and testimony.
 3. A member of the stake self-reliance committee invites the entire group to open their booklets to page 2 and follow along as the committee member reads the three paragraphs below.

Welcome to this My Path for Self-Reliance devotional. The purpose of this meeting is to help you understand why and how you can become more self-reliant. Instead of one speaker presenting to the group, we will be discussing principles in small groups, reading together, pondering, and writing our thoughts.

The most important part of this experience will be the promptings you receive through the Spirit as the Lord shows you what you can do to become more like Him. We encourage you to write these impressions as you receive them and then to act on them.

At the end of this meeting, you will be invited to choose a self-reliance group that can help you achieve one of the following:

- Find a job or improve your current employment
- Better manage your personal and family finances
- Choose an education path and succeed in school
- Grow your small business

But for now, let's get to know each other a little better.

Facilitator: Ask participants at each table to take a moment and briefly introduce themselves to others at their table. Each introduction should take no more than 30 or 40 seconds.

WHAT IS SELF-RELIANCE?

Read: The aim of the self-reliance initiative is to help individuals help themselves become self-reliant. Self-reliance is more than having a good job, food storage, or money in the bank. Self-reliance is “the **ability, commitment, and effort** to provide for 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,” and work is enthroned as a ruling principle in their lives (*Handbook 2: Administering the Church* [2010], 6.1.1).

Discuss: What are characteristics of a self-reliant individual? Would self-reliant individuals rely on government or Church assistance if they could instead work for what they need themselves?

SELF-RELIANCE IS ESSENTIAL FOR SALVATION

Read: President Thomas S. Monson taught: “Let us be self-reliant and independent. Salvation can be obtained on no other principle” (“Guiding Principles of Personal and Family Welfare,” *Ensign*, Sept. 1986, 3; quoting Marion G. Romney, in Conference Report, Oct. 1976, 167).

Discuss: As you become more self-reliant, how are you becoming like Heavenly Father?

THE SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL ARE ONE

GROUP ACTIVITY (3-4 minutes)

As a group, discuss some temporal and spiritual necessities of life. List some below.

TEMPORAL NECESSITIES OF LIFE	SPIRITUAL NECESSITIES OF LIFE

Read: President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught, “Like two sides of a coin, the temporal and spiritual are inseparable” (“Providing in the Lord’s Way,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 53). In the scriptures, the Lord declared, “All things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal” (D&C 29:34).

Discuss: How can finding a job and earning a living be both a temporal and spiritual matter?

HOW TEMPORALLY AND SPIRITUALLY SELF-RELIANT ARE YOU?

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Self-reliance requires **ability, commitment,** and **effort.** On your own, put a check mark in each box that best applies to you. Be honest with yourself. If you are uncomfortable marking these in public, cover your answers.

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I have the skills to provide for my needs.					
I have a budget and follow it.					
I save money.					
I am free of debt (except education or a home).					
My life is centered on things that matter most.					
I pray and study the scriptures daily.					
I feel daily promptings from the Spirit in my life.					
I pay tithing and fast offerings.					
I take the sacrament weekly.					
I am worthy of a temple recommend.					
I have a job or work that provides for my needs.					
I meet my needs without depending on government programs.					
I pay my monthly rent or mortgage.					
I get adequate medical care.					
My children have access to education.					
I am able to serve others in their time of need.					

Ponder: Are there other things you need to change to become self-reliant?
What will your life be like as you improve the items above?

HOW DO I BECOME MORE SELF-RELIANT?

1. The Lord Can Help You Become Self-Reliant

Watch: “I Will Provide for My Saints,” available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Continue reading.)

GROUP ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Below is the letter shared by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf in the video.

As a group:

1. Take turns reading each paragraph.
 2. For each paragraph, do the following:
 - Underline the specific blessings promised by the First Presidency.
 - Circle what you must do to receive those blessings.
 - Briefly discuss what you are learning.
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This booklet has been prepared to help members of the Church learn and put into practice principles of faith, education, hard work, and trust in the Lord. Accepting and living these principles will better enable you to receive the temporal blessings promised by the Lord.

We invite you to diligently study and apply these principles and teach them to your family members. As you do so, your life will be blessed. You will learn how to act on your path toward greater self-reliance. You will be blessed with greater hope, peace, and progress.

Please be assured that you are a child of our Father in Heaven. He loves you and will never forsake you. He knows you and is ready to extend to you the spiritual and temporal blessings of self-reliance.

Sincerely,

The First Presidency

Ponder: What can I do personally to receive the “greater hope, peace, and progress” promised by the First Presidency?

2. The Scriptures Can Help You Become Self-Reliant

Read: The Lord helps us in many ways as we exercise faith in Him. One of the tools He has given us is the scriptures. The prophet Nephi taught, “Feast upon the words of Christ; for behold, the words of Christ will tell you all things what ye should do” (2 Nephi 32:3).

Discuss: When have the scriptures provided personal guidance in your life?

GROUP ACTIVITY (5–7 minutes)

The Book of Mormon was given as a tool for our day. If we liken the verses of the Book of Mormon to our own lives, we will receive all necessary guidance. As a group, **read** and **discuss** each of the statements below from prophets and apostles. Underline the blessings promised for studying and applying the scriptures.

Henry B. Eyring: “Going to the scriptures to learn what to do makes all the difference. . . . We will find answers in the scriptures. The Lord seemed to anticipate all of our problems and all of our needs, and He put help in the scriptures for us—if only we seek it” (“A Discussion on Scripture Study,” *Ensign*, July 2005, 24).

Boyd K. Packer: “There isn’t a major problem we face that we can’t be immunized against if we know the revelations” (“Teach the Scriptures,” *Teaching Seminary Preservice Readings Religion 370, 471, and 475* [2004], 75).

Richard G. Scott: “The Book of Mormon holds answers for the problems we face in everyday life” (“The Power of the Book of Mormon in My Life,” *Ensign*, Oct. 1984, 10).

M. Russell Ballard: “The Book of Mormon, above all other books that I know of, is the greatest source we have for answers to real-life problems” (in “We Add Our Witness,” *Ensign*, Mar. 1989, 8).

Russell M. Nelson: “Do you want to get rid of a bad habit? Do you want to improve relationships in your family? Do you want to increase your spiritual capacity? Read the Book of Mormon! It will bring you closer to the Lord and His loving power” (“A Testimony of the Book of Mormon,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1999, 71).

Ponder: As I seek to become more self-reliant, what can I do to receive more personal guidance from the scriptures?

3. Joining a Self-Reliance Group Can Help You Get Started

Read: To help you become more self-reliant, you have an opportunity to join a self-reliance group in your ward or stake. A self-reliance group is a group of individuals who meet together to learn and apply practical skills for employment, education, and finances.

Self-reliance groups typically meet each week for two hours over a three-month period. Meetings follow the same process as this devotional. Group members read and discuss together, complete activities, and individually ponder so the Holy Ghost can inspire them how to act.

A self-reliance group is different from most Church classes. There is no teacher! Instead, the group works as a council with the Holy Ghost as the teacher. Group members counsel together as they learn new skills, solve problems, commit to do things during the week, and report their progress.

Group members also develop strong friendships and feel God's love as they work together. By joining a group, not only will you benefit, but you can be of great service in helping others on their path to self-reliance!

Watch: "The Power of the Group," available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Continue reading.)

Facilitator: If available, invite someone who has previously participated in a self-reliance group to briefly share (up to three minutes) his or her experience.

Which Self-Reliance Group Should You Join?

Watch: "Choosing a Self-Reliance Group," available at srs.lds.org/videos. (No video? Read the group summaries on page 11.)

INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY (3-4 minutes)

On your own, read through the statements below, and **circle** the statement(s) that apply to you. A summary of each group is on page 11.

	Find a Better Job	Personal Finances	Education for Better Work	Starting and Growing My Business
1. I need money immediately.	✓			
2. I am unemployed.	✓			
3. I need a better job.	✓			
4. I want to save money.		✓		
5. I want to eliminate debts.		✓		
6. I want to be financially prepared for the future.		✓		
7. I need education or training to get a better job or start a new career.			✓	
8. I need help choosing my education path.			✓	
9. I want to succeed in school.			✓	
10. I want to learn more about Church education offerings, such as Pathway (see page 12).			✓	
11. I have an existing business.				✓
12. I have resources to start a business.				✓
13. I can support myself while starting a business.				✓
14. I want to increase my faith in Jesus Christ.	✓	✓	✓	✓

- Read:** Making changes in our lives requires faith and effort. For you to make progress, you need to be committed to do the following:
- Attend every week (typically 2 hours each week for 3 months).
 - Act on commitments during the week.
 - Encourage others in the group to succeed.
 - Do about 4 to 10 hours of work weekly outside group meetings.

Ponder: Which group best fits my situation? Am I willing to make these commitments in order to become more self-reliant?

GROUP SUMMARIES

In each of the four self-reliance groups, members study and practice principles from the booklet *My Foundation for Self-Reliance*. This is done at the beginning of each group meeting, as learning these foundational principles and skills helps group members progress temporally and spiritually, regardless of the chosen path. Group members will gain greater faith in Jesus Christ's power to provide for them. They will also practice life skills, including time management, communication, and problem solving.

Find a Better Job



For those who are looking for work or a better job. Group members will learn to identify opportunities, network, present themselves professionally, and prepare for job interviews. They will also set goals for contacts and interviews.

Personal Finances



For those who want better control over their finances. Group members will learn how to eliminate debt, protect against financial hardship, and invest for the future. They will create a financial plan and follow a budget. Spouses are encouraged to attend together.

Education for Better Work



For those who need additional education or training to get a job. Group members will research, create, and present career and education plans. They will also spend time each week practicing skills that will help them be more effective learners.

Starting and Growing My Business



For those who already have a business or resources to start a business. Group members learn the traits and skills of successful small business owners. They practice record keeping, marketing, and cash management. They will talk with business owners, customers, and suppliers and develop plans to grow their business.

CHOOSE A GROUP

A member of the self-reliance committee will now help you organize into self-reliance groups. Once you have selected your group, write down the following information.

MY SELF-RELIANCE GROUP MEETINGS

Day: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Facilitator name: _____

Phone number: _____

Facilitator: The presiding authority may want to share a brief testimony.

End with a prayer.

CES EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Church Educational System (CES) offers low-cost educational opportunities that may lead to better work. They include:

- Online micro courses and training from LDS Business College that help you qualify for a specific job, advance in your current employment, or earn a certification. Courses range from 15 minutes to 12 weeks and can lead to a guaranteed job interview.
- Pathway is a one-year program that helps you prepare for or return to college. Students take online courses and participate in local gatherings. Upon completion, students can work toward a certificate or degree at local schools, BYU–Idaho, or LDS Business College. Pathway requires intermediate English.

To find out what is available in your area, visit churcheducation.lds.org.

HOW TO HOLD A MY PATH DEVOTIONAL

Instructions for a Stake Self-Reliance Committee

- Before the Devotional:**
- Review and complete this booklet yourself.
 - Order enough *My Path for Self-Reliance* booklets for participants (store.lds.org).
 - Have enough pens or pencils for participants.
 - Set up enough round tables in the cultural hall.
 - Have members of the self-reliance committee at each door to greet those who attend and to join participants at the tables.
 - Invite someone who has participated in a previous group to share his or her experience in the devotional if possible (see page 9).
 - Visit srs.lds.org/report to download the Devotional Report Form to be completed during the devotional.
- During the Devotional:**
- Have a committee member at each table to encourage group participation and keep things on track.
 - Remind participants to silence their cell phones.
 - Consider starting the devotional with a song, a prayer, and a brief welcome (3–5 minutes) from a priesthood leader or member of the stake self-reliance committee.
 - Follow the material as it is written in the booklet.
 - Have each group facilitator write the name and phone number of each person who joined his or her group. At the first group meeting, each facilitator will complete a more detailed group registration form.
 - If the stake covers a large geographical area, the stake committee may consider splitting up groups according to where group members are located.
- After the Devotional:**
- Visit srs.lds.org/report to enter information from the Devotional Report Form.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Self-Reliance Services
PERPETUAL EDUCATION FUND

