

PC 101 Life Skills
Gathering Agenda for Week 11
Overcoming Thinking Errors

Gathering Purposes

- Discuss the BYU-Pathway Worldwide devotional
- Teach one another about the enabling power of the Atonement of Jesus Christ
- Practice STAR to overcome thinking errors

Preparation

- For *face-to-face Gatherings*, arrive early to setup the room, prepare any visual aids, and greet students as they arrive.
- For *virtual Gatherings*, start the meeting early, share your screen with a message welcoming them to the gathering and letting them know you'll start soon.
 - When the Gathering Agenda asks that students meet in small groups, use [Breakout Rooms](#).
 - When the Gathering Agenda asks you to display things on “the board,” you can use the [whiteboard](#).

Min.	Activities	Teaching Tips
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Welcome and Devotional

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.

Math Gathering Activity

10	Read and Discuss	Sandra recently realized that she has been making excuses for not furthering her education. She found herself falling into the category of “The Basic Survivor” and thought she was too busy to continue her education. She has been overcoming this thought process by realizing that a formal education will bless her life and help her go farther in her chosen career. Sandra is making a plan to attend school as soon as possible. Part of her planning involves budgeting for her first semester of school and she is trying to determine her total cost of attending for one semester.	
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		<p>Sandra’s total cost of attending for one semester will include tuition, books, and some other fees. Sandra knows that one semester of tuition will equal about $\frac{3}{4}$ of her total cost and her books will be around \$320. If she knows that her tuition plus her books equals \$2600, what is the total cost each semester?</p> <p>Hints - Start by organizing the information we know: Let C = Total Cost = Tuition + Books + Fees Tuition + books = 2600 Tuition = $\frac{3}{4}$ Total Cost = $\frac{3}{4}$ C Substitute the things we know into the equation. $\frac{3}{4}$ C + 320 = 2600 Solve for Total Cost [C]</p> <p>Answer: Let C = Total Cost $\frac{3}{4}$ C + 320 = 2600 Total Cost (C) = \$3040</p> <p>What is the cost of the fees each semester?</p> <p>Hints-Solve for fees: Let F = Fees Total Cost = Tuition + Books + Fees (Answer for total cost from previous question) = 2600 + F Solve for F</p> <p>Answer: Total Cost (C) = \$3040 = 2600 + F F = 3040 - 2600 = 440</p>	
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The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality

20	Small Group Study and Summary	Have the large group divide into five small groups. Hand each group a portion of the article you printed and cut out already (or provide a digital copy, if virtual). Allow each group to read their portion to each other for about 5-10 minutes. They should then spend an additional 5-10 minutes preparing a summary of their portion of the article. They should select someone who will present their summary to the entire gathering. The group leader should make sure the group stays on task.	If virtual, use breakout rooms and assign each group an excerpt from the article.
	Large Group Summary and Discussion	For the last 10 minutes of this activity, have each group take 30 seconds to present their summary. Make sure they go in order. When each group has presented, discuss the following questions. Follow the question and answer format below carefully:	

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Question:</i> Why do we need enabling power of the atonement to handle the stresses of our lives? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Invite students to answer first in their small groups. b. After about 30-60 seconds, ask for a few students to share their responses with the large group. 2. <i>Question:</i> When Heavenly Father helps us, that doesn't necessarily mean we will have our pain or afflictions removed, but we can have power to bear them. Why would Heavenly Father do that? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Invite students to answer first in their small groups. b. After about 30-60 seconds, ask for a few students to share their responses with the large group. 3. <i>Question:</i> Do you really believe you are eligible for the redeeming power of the atonement in your life? Why are we reluctant to believe this sometimes? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Invite students to answer first in their small groups. b. After about 30-60 seconds, ask for a few students to share their responses with the large group. 	
STAR			
20	Large Group Discussion	<p>Write "STAR" on the board, and ask the gathering to review what it stands for (Stop, Think, Act, Reflect).</p> <p>Explain to the gathering that you are going to review some of the thinking error examples from last week and use STAR to overcome them.</p> <p>Instructions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For each example below, ask a volunteer to come up to the front. 2. Read the example to the everyone. The volunteer will role-play the person from the example. 3. Ask the gathering to identify the thinking error from the example. 4. Ask the volunteer to "think out loud" by telling the gathering what they will do to use STAR to overcome the thinking error. <p>Example #1</p> <p>Julia feels rejected by a group of popular women at her workplace. She copes with her feeling of rejection by characterizing the popular women as shallow and unfeeling. "They aren't good enough to be my friends anyway," she reasons in her mind.</p>	<p>Don't worry too much about coming to a consensus on which thinking error each example is showing. The most important part of this activity is to show how STAR works.</p>

*The volunteer playing Julia now uses STAR to overcome the thinking error of **pride**. The class can help if needed.*

Example #2

It is Friday night and Joao is tired from a long week of work. Upon arriving home, Joao sees his wife busily working on dinner, laundry, and caring for the children. "I could help, but I think I deserve a little rest," he says to himself.

*The volunteer playing Joao now uses STAR to overcome the thinking error of **entitlement**. The class can help if needed.*

Example #3

Natasha has played all day long, putting off her homework until late at night. Now, she is afraid of working late into the night. "I can't do this homework! It's too hard!" Natasha reasons to herself.

*The volunteer playing Natasha now uses STAR to overcome the thinking error of **powerlessness**. The class can help if needed.*

Example #4

Tanya has made a goal to not look at social media during Church. One Sunday afternoon, she begins to feel disappointed that the speaker is not more entertaining. As he drones on, she feels trapped in the chapel with nothing to do. Tanya pulls out her smartphone and scrolls a social media app for a few minutes. "It's just a little bit," she says to herself.

*The volunteer playing Tanya now uses STAR to overcome the thinking error of **justification**. The class can help if needed.*

Example #5

Selso, Raúl's boss, surprises Raúl by personally visiting him to deliver some minor feedback about his work on an ongoing project. Once he delivers the feedback to Raúl, Selso smiles, pats him on the back, gives him some encouragement, and leaves. Sensing that Selso's feedback, is more negative than positive, Raúl begins to worry that he is going to be fired. He searches his mind, and recalls other such instances of feedback. "I must be a terrible worker," Raúl laments.

	Read	Thank you for your attendance at tonight's gathering. Overcoming thinking errors strengthens our ability to move along our pathway.	
	Testimony and Prayer	Bear a 30-90 second testimony of the power of God to help us deal with stress, and end with a prayer by invitation.	

Excerpts from The Atonement and the Journey of Mortality

By Elder David A. Bednar

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Group 1

I suspect that many Church members are much more familiar with the nature of the redeeming and cleansing power of the Atonement than they are with the strengthening and enabling power. It is one thing to know that Jesus Christ came to earth to die for us—that is fundamental and foundational to the doctrine of Christ. But we also need to appreciate that the Lord desires, through His Atonement and by the power of the Holy Ghost, to live in us—not only to direct us but also to empower us.

The gospel of the Savior is not simply about avoiding bad in our lives; it also is essentially about doing and becoming good. And the Atonement provides help for us to overcome and avoid bad and to do and become good. Help from the Savior is available for the entire journey of mortality—from bad to good to better and to change our very nature.

I am not suggesting that the redeeming and enabling powers of the Atonement are separate and discrete. Rather, these two dimensions of the Atonement are connected and complementary; they both need to be operational during all phases of the journey of life. And it is eternally important for all of us to recognize that both of these essential elements of the journey of mortality—both putting off the natural man and becoming a saint, both overcoming bad and becoming good—are accomplished through the power of the Atonement. Individual willpower, personal determination and motivation, effective planning and goal setting are necessary but ultimately insufficient for us to triumphantly complete this mortal journey. Truly, we must come to rely upon “the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah” (2 Nephi 2:8).

Group 2

Grace is the divine assistance or heavenly help each of us desperately needs to qualify for the celestial kingdom. Thus, the enabling power of the Atonement strengthens us to do and be good and to serve beyond our own individual desire and natural capacity.

In my personal scripture study, I often insert the term “enabling power” whenever I encounter the word grace. Consider, for example, this verse with which we are all familiar: “We know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do” (2 Nephi 25:23). I believe we can learn much about this vital aspect of the Atonement if we will insert “enabling and strengthening power” each time we find the word grace in the scriptures.

The journey of mortality is to go from bad to good to better and to have our very natures changed. The Book of Mormon is replete with examples of disciples and prophets who knew, understood, and were transformed by the enabling power of the Atonement in making that journey. As we come to better understand this sacred power, our gospel perspective will be greatly enlarged and enriched. Such a perspective will change us in remarkable ways.

Group 3

Consider the example in the Book of Mormon as Alma and his people are persecuted by Amulon. The voice of the Lord came to these good people in their affliction and indicated:

“I will also ease the burdens which are put upon your shoulders, that even you cannot feel them upon your backs. ...

“And now it came to pass that the burdens which were laid upon Alma and his brethren were made light; yea, the Lord did strengthen them that they could bear up their burdens with ease, and they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:14–15; emphasis added).

What was changed in this episode? It was not the burden that changed; the challenges and difficulties of persecution were not immediately removed from the people. But Alma and his followers were strengthened, and their increased capacity and strength made the burdens they bore lighter. These good people were empowered through the Atonement to act as agents and impact their circumstances. And “in the strength of the Lord” Alma and his people were then directed to safety in the land of Zarahemla.

Group 4

You legitimately may be wondering, “What makes the episode with Alma and his people an example of the enabling power of the Atonement?” The answer is found in a comparison of Mosiah 3:19 and Mosiah 24:15.

“And putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father” (Mosiah 3:19; emphasis added).

As we progress in the journey of mortality from bad to good to better, as we put off the natural man or woman in each of us, and as we strive to become saints and have our very natures changed, then the attributes detailed in this verse increasingly should describe the type of person you and I are becoming. We will become more childlike, more submissive, more patient, and more willing to submit.

Now compare these characteristics in Mosiah 3:19 with those used to describe Alma and his people: “And they did submit cheerfully and with patience to all the will of the Lord” (Mosiah 24:15; emphasis added).

I find the parallels between the attributes described in these verses striking and an indication that Alma’s good people were becoming a better people through the enabling power of the Atonement of Christ the Lord.

Group 5

Another example from the Book of Mormon is instructive. In Alma 31, Alma is directing a mission to reclaim the apostate Zoramites, who, after building their Rameumptom, offer a prescribed and prideful prayer.

Notice the plea for strength in Alma’s personal prayer: “O Lord, wilt thou grant unto me that I may have strength, that I may suffer with patience these afflictions which shall come upon me, because of the iniquity of this people” (Alma 31:31; emphasis added).

Alma also prays that his missionary companions will receive a similar blessing: “Wilt thou grant unto them that they may have strength, that they may bear their afflictions which shall come upon them because of the iniquities of this people” (Alma 31:33; emphasis added).

Alma did not pray to have his afflictions removed. He knew he was an agent of the Lord, and he prayed for the power to act and affect his situation.

The key point of this example is contained in the final verse of Alma 31: “[The Lord] gave them strength, that they should suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ. Now this was according to the prayer of Alma; and this because he prayed in faith” (verse 38; emphasis added).

The afflictions were not removed. But Alma and his companions were strengthened and blessed through the enabling power of the Atonement to “suffer no manner of afflictions, save it were swallowed up in the joy of Christ.” What a marvelous blessing. And what a lesson each of us should learn.