PC 103 University Skills
Gathering Agenda for Week 04
Overcoming Obstacles

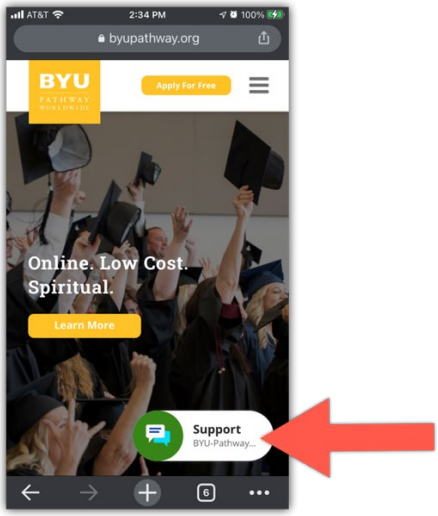
Gathering Purposes

- Review the process to apply to the online certificates and degree programs through BYU-Pathway Worldwide

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 will 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
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.
Review: How to Apply for Admission			
10	Review	Most students in this course will apply for admission to BYU-Pathway Worldwide to earn online certificates and degrees from BYU-Idaho or Ensign College. BYU-Pathway offers access to more than 30 online certificates that build into a focused set of bachelor's degrees. While you are welcome to choose any college or university, here are a few reasons why continuing your education with BYU-Pathway may benefit you: 1. Degrees that you can earn completely online (from a Church college/university) are only available through BYU-Pathway Worldwide. 2. You'll keep your reduced PathwayConnect tuition rate throughout your online degree program! (Tuition rates increase annually.) This reduced rate is not available if you enroll at another college or university. 3. Applying to start an online degree program through BYU-Pathway is simple! If you earn a 3.0 GPA (B average) during PathwayConnect, you get to bypass most traditional admission requirements: a. NO high school/secondary education transcripts	

		b. NO standardized test scores c. NO application fee	
10	Find the Application	The document called "Next Steps Instructions" contains a link to the Application. Ask each person at the gathering with a device to follow these steps: 1. In PC 103, go to any week so far, and click on "Exercise: Next Steps" 2. Click on the link called "Next Steps Instructions." 3. Click on the "Application" link at the bottom of page 1.	
30	Teach and Help One Another	Divide into breakout groups for ten minutes. While in your group, help each other with your application. • If you need to review how to get there, do so (see the box above) • Try to answer as many questions for each other as you can. • For questions for which you don't know the answer, write them down and ask the large group. Come back as a large group. Answer any remaining questions about how to complete the application. If you do not know the answer to any questions, you can contact BYU-Pathway Support. Simply go to the BYU-Pathway Worldwide home page and begin a chat.  **Emphasize this:** If you have not yet completed the application, you will be contacted by a mentor. Please respond to the mentor if they contact you. They are here to help. Be sure to check your email.	
Optional: Read About a Success Story			
	Read and Discuss	***Do this only if you are satisfied that everyone's questions have been answered or they know how to ask them by using BYU-Pathway Support.*** 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. Click here to share/read the article. If that does not work, you can share the text below called "From Nigeria To Ghana: Immigration for Education."	

		Discussion Questions: • 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? • 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? • 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? • 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? • 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?	
	Testimony and Prayer	Bear a 30-90 second testimony of overcoming obstacles and uplifting and encouraging others End with a prayer by invitation.	

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.