

YOUNG ADULTS

I Found Purpose after My Missionary Service

Although the experience of being a returned missionary can vary from person to person, many find it a challenge to reorient themselves after removing their missionary name tags. We asked young adults to share ways they found a sense of purpose after returning home.



by . . .

SEEING MY MISSIONARY SERVICE AS TRAINING FOR LIFE

After serving a mission, I was assigned as a visiting teacher to a young woman my age who was less active. During our visit, I was shocked to find that the Spirit felt just like it did when I wore a missionary name tag. I realized that just as the missionary training center was preparation for the mission field, my missionary service was preparation for life—and this life is preparation for eternal life.

Lauren Hardy, Utah, USA



SET GOALS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



SETTING WORTHWHILE GOALS

I changed while serving a mission, and so after my release I felt like I didn't fit in with my old life anymore. Then I adopted a pattern of goal setting I learned as a missionary. I continue to set specific and measurable goals in four categories: spiritual, social, physical, and mental. I report to Heavenly Father often on my progress, as well as to family and friends. Goal setting has helped me stay focused on what is important.

Kaley Shoaf, Indiana, USA



PURSUING AN EDUCATION

After talking with my family, I realized I needed an education that led to a career. I went to Heavenly Father asking for direction. That night I read the parable of the talents over and over, and the idea came to me to gain training in therapy for athletes. I visited schools and felt a burning sensation that this was right. With this goal in mind, I have moved forward and focused on my future.

Yesenia Rodriguez, Texas, USA



MAINTAINING FRIENDSHIPS

I was the last of six missionaries leaving from my home ward. We decided to keep in touch with each other while we served as missionaries and to help each other "transition to normal life" when we got home—and we did. Maintaining our friendships before, during, and after our missionary service strengthened all of us.

Muriel Pehi, New South Wales, Australia



SEEING WARD MEMBERS WITH NEW EYES

I saw the members of my ward with new eyes when I realized that they were just as important to Heavenly Father as were His children in Tennessee, where I had served as a missionary. I could invite them to come to Christ whether I was a full-time missionary or not.

Jennifer Ray, Utah, USA



RESISTING THE TEMPTATION TO TAKE A BREAK

The natural man in you may want to take a break after a mission. However, I can testify that it is much easier to hold on to the habits you developed as a missionary than to try to regain them later. Become “anxiously engaged” (D&C 58:27) in any activity or social group that is “virtuous, lovely, or of good report” (Articles of Faith 1:13) and your transition will be smoother.

Jesse Hyde, Utah, USA



AVOIDING ACTIVITIES THAT SERVE NO PURPOSE

After serving a mission, I felt like anything I did had little meaning compared to being a missionary. As a result I just wasted time watching television or playing on my computer. One day I decided to stop doing things that served no purpose. I focused on my future. I spent time reading, preparing for university, and surrounding myself with family and friends. I prayed, knowing that the Lord would help me.

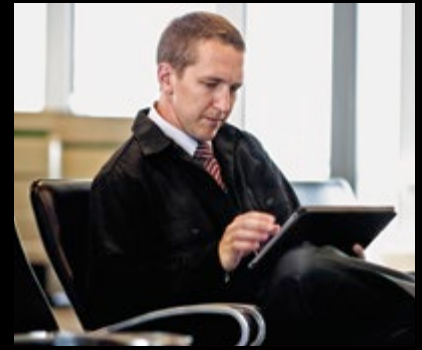
Zachary Cannon, West Yorkshire, England



GETTING INVOLVED IN INSTITUTE

Institute was the cure for my post-mission blues. The much-quoted promise from President Thomas S. Monson inspired me: "I ask you to make participation in institute a priority. . . . Friends will be made, the Spirit will be felt, and faith will be strengthened" (in "Institute Quotes," institute.lds.org/about/quotes). For me, making institute a priority meant more than just going to classes. I sought out ways to get involved, serve, and reach out to others. I met friends. I felt the Spirit not just during classes but all day. Institute was easily the highlight of my undergraduate work and as cherished a memory as was my missionary service.

Bradley Pew, Arizona, USA



DAILY SCRIPTURE STUDY

I used to teach an institute class for returned missionaries. I asked them to name the greatest challenge they faced in trying to keep the Spirit upon returning home. About 90 percent said it was failing to read the Book of Mormon. I challenged the class to feast daily on the Book of Mormon (see 2 Nephi 32:3). By the end of the semester, they reported that they were better able to feel the Spirit regularly as they had during their missionary service.

Ralph G. Degn (former president of the Brazil Missionary Training Center)

BECOMING A MEMBER MISSIONARY

I felt adrift after being released as a missionary, but attending church and accepting a calling helped me. Slowly I realized that I had opportunities for missionary work in my ward. I have helped people convert to the gospel. I have even felt Heavenly Father filling me with light on dark days. I know that with His power, all will be well.

Jennyfer Medina, Managua, Nicaragua

