“The purposes of home, family, and personal enrichment are to strengthen faith in Jesus Christ and to teach parenting and homemaking skills. Enrichment is a time for sisters to socialize, learn, and be uplifted. In planning meetings and activities, leaders should (1) consider the needs and interests of sisters in the ward, (2) counsel with priesthood leaders, and (3) plan activities with prayer and purpose (see *Church Handbook of Instructions,* *Book 2: Priesthood and Auxiliary Leaders,* 222). Efforts should be made to involve all sisters.” (**Guidelines for Relief Society Home, Family, and Personal Enrichment Meetings and Activities, lds.org, Relief Society)**

The above statement may need to be updated, but it will always be a good guideline to follow.

Relief Society Meetings are an organized means to help us accomplish the purposes of Relief Society. We all agree we should be in the process of perfecting ourselves and others around us. The **Three-fold Mission of the Church** is a good guide to remind us where we should aim our efforts: Those who have not met the church yet, or accepted its teachings, Those of us who want to move forward and be perfected, and Those who never got a chance and need our help. And service, always service.

It helps to **put someone “in charge” of the activity or group,** but it can be male or female, whoever has a love for that particular activity. Avoid the “learning curve” anxiety by asking someone who already knows something about “it”. A person with a personal interest needs little motivation to see it to the end.

Activities can be a **one time, a few times, or an indefinite time activity**. It has to do with interest level, reaching the goal set, or offering it enough times so all interested can participate. It is my experience that a one time activity seldom accomplishes the full objective. In order to allow all to participate, you might want to repeat the series, or offer multiple opportunities to participate: your objective is to reach as many people as possible through involvement and/or participation.

With addition RS meetings being held quarterly, less sisters have been participating in “Relief Society” involvement. Their time is being replaced with other things that eat time and are offering more “worldly” or “empty” achievements. **Relief Society Activities provide a re-focusing of what is important to Latter-Day Saints and what our purpose is.**

Activities are very casual in that friends can get together (“when two or more are gathered…”). Groups should adapt to anyone who wants to join at any time. **Friends, family, neighbors, members, non-members, ward members or not, children, spouses, large groups, you name it, can be involved in any given activity.** The RS may organize a group, a woman may organize a group, a man may organize a group (in behalf of the RS); an idea might generate from any direction. All of this can serve as a Relief Society meeting.

Every ward has great talent. **Use your ward members. Use non-members in your neighborhood.** Team people together so it’s not quite so overwhelming. If you have more than one specialist in a certain area, use them both or take turns using them. The more the merrier. This is an opportunity to make all ward members feel needed and valued, or invite non-members to participate in a non-threatening “Mormon activity”, and they might just be influenced to redirect the path their life is taking them.

**Remember, the purpose is to keep the focus on everyone accomplishing the work of the Lord.**

**Following is a list of ideas I’ve thought of in the primary areas I feel are of greatest importance. This is clearly an incomplete list, but hopefully my ideas will generate additional ideas that can be used in your wards and branches.**

MARRIAGE

1. **Marriage Panel** – Ask long-marrieds to be on a panel where any question can be asked with an honest answer. You might have to come up with your own questions at first, but if you have this activity repeated at various times in the year, maybe focusing on various topics, with various couples on your panel, people may loosen up enough to ask really good questions.
2. Ask a **Financial specialist** to speak on various topics: budget, debt reduction, insurance, etc.
3. **Communication** – ask a coach/couple to teach **healthy couple interaction**.
4. **Invite the Marriage Relations Teacher** to head up some class activities that correlate with what they’re teaching.
5. Collect, from the ward, **cheap or no-cost date ideas** and make them all available on the ward website.
6. Teach a class on **How To Produce A Romantic Dinner**; from cooking the meal (something modest, but special), to setting the table, to suggested music, to conversation.
7. Have a **Sports Night** where everyone can learn the playing rules of their husband’s favorite sport.
8. **Offer a Marriage class** (please think outside the box because the lessons need updating), and make it so fun and informative everyone wants to come, and no one is embarrassed to be asked to attend.
9. Review and discuss **talks on marriage** from the Ensign.

**FAMILY**

1. Create a family **Wall Hanging, Or Art Piece**, that is meaningful to your family; include **traditions**, **Experiences**, **IDIOSYNCRASIES**, etc. Share with your ward sisters and display it in your home.
2. Organize and make **FHE ideas, visuals, responsibility charts**, etc.
3. **Invite yourselves to a YM’s activity** and participate with them – even if they’re just playing basketball.
4. Using everyone in the ward, **FILM MOVIES OF SCRIPTURE STORIES**, with costumes, props, the whole bit, then make a copy for everyone in the ward for FHE aids.
5. Start a FHE group for **Singles or Seniors**.
6. Organize a support group for parents of troubled youth OR guide parents to the **CHURCH SUPPORT GROUPS**: Drug Rehab, LDS Social Services, Employment, etc.
7. Invite a **Panel Of Youth** to answer your questions about how they think, what their needs are, what they wish their parents would know.
8. Meet together to discuss a specific topic and allow open discussion – **Parenting skills**; **Support in Caring for the Elderly**; Judging “Popular” Music, Video Games, and Media; **Community issues – What can we do to protect our families**?
9. Invite the YM and YW, and your husband, to attend a **“DANCE OFF”.** You dance your kind of dance, the youth dance their kind of dance. Then teach each other your dances.
10. Work with the young Women to **receive**, **YOUR** Young Woman’s Recognition Award.
11. **Challenge yourself and members of your family** (make it a friendly competition)---a) read lessons ahead of time and participate, b) volunteer to head up an activity, c) ask for more people on your visiting teaching/home teaching route, etc.
12. Start a Mommy’s Group (not a kid’s group). For those entrenched in the world of children, let the kids play while the mommies learn something new; take an online class together or just talk (Talking will be the easiest, but learning together will be the most satisfying).
13. The Marriage Relations class has a Parenting section in it. **Offer a class on Parenting.**  Make it so fun, people will want to go. Invite the children occasionally, to bring families together in the learning process. (Please think outside the box, the lessons are very dated.)
14. Remember **Pursuit of Excellence**? Get a group together, or work on your own, to achieve this goal and create a great award for it.
15. **Update visual aids** for home or Ward Library. Remember, you can check anything out of the Ward Library for home use.
16. Brainstorm ways your ward can protect the family: FHE ideas,( boycott any activity on Monday nights), create a **neighborhood garden** where everyone weeds, and works, together, fill your home with Mormon art made by yourself or others, brainstorm ways to enrich family lives, especially families with teenagers.

**FAMILY HISTORY - TEMPLE**

1. Invite sisters to share their **Cultural Dress, Dance, Food**, etc.
2. Arrange for groups to take **trips to the Family History Library or Temple** together.
3. Direct the **Family History Specialist** to those interested in personal help.
4. Encourage volunteering for on-line indexing.
5. Begin offering **TEMPLE SHOWERS** for those young girls preparing for temple marriages or serving a mission (check my post on this subject for details).
6. **Learn A Language Together**
7. Help one another write a life history. Take all the moments and memories in your life and write about them in **various writing forms: short story,** poem**, sonnet, etc.** If an English teacher or editor is available, have him/her help you with grammatical corrections to make each one a beautiful statement of your life.
8. Pick one or two projects from my list of 101 FamilyHistory ideas, and work together to complete it. (Check all four posts I have on this blog).
9. Invite sisters to study up on various topics such as History of Relief Society, Suffrage, Relief Society Projects, Relief Society Presidents, etc. and create a time for them to share their findings.
10. **VOLUNTEER** your time (2-3 of you) at your local Family History Center.
11. **Attend classes together** offered by the Family History Library, or your local Family History Center.
12. Help the YW **visit people in a Retirement Home, interview them, and write down their history**. I’ve always thought this would be a great way to keep young people connected with older people.
13. Buy a **20 Generation Pedigree Chart** and fill it out with all the information your family has collected. You will have an instant visual of how much work has, or hasn’t, been done.

**HOMEMAKING**

1. Sewing class/Quilting class for the purpose of serving or helping the family in some way.
2. Teach **DI or Garage Sale shopping** basics. Have a **FASHION SHOW**, or show and tell, to show off your great buys. The best fun of all is to go shopping together! Keep within a budget; fix-up and repurpose together.
3. Cooking – Create an **On-Line Recipe Book** that all the sisters can tap into: Everyone contributes, tips on menu planning, notification on sale items, etc.
4. **CREATE A LIST OF TALENT AND SKILLS** in your ward and neighborhood; match them up with needs.
5. **Home Industry** – Offer ideas, support, and know-how.
6. Take a **community class** together on an agreed upon topic or Offer a class on **simple home repairs**.
7. **HOST THE YW** in lessons on cooking, housecleaning, sewing, and organizing.
8. Teach **Computer Skills**
9. Gather **housekeeping tips and tricks**. Put it all on the ward website, or create a booklet, for all the women in the ward, including the YW. Organize it in such a way you can actually find what you need, or easily update with additional ideas.
10. **Teach the YM** how to sew on a button, fix a hem, plan and cook a meal, wash clothes, etc.

**FOOD – EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

1. **Store Foods Together**: Go shopping, can foods, freeze meals together. Create a ward garden, maintain together.
2. Get **CERT** trained.
3. **Auto maintenance** classes
4. Organize the ward to **Buy In Bulk**.
5. **PRACTICE** – climbing out of a burning house, turning off gas, setting up shelter, setting up and maintaining a porta potty, meeting at a specified location, organizing the church building as a shelter, etc. The idea is to actually practice these things before you’re forced to, but talking about, and sharing tips, is very important too.
6. Volunteer to LIVE OFF YOUR FOOD STORAGE for a period of time, or spend a weekend SURVIVING ON YOUR 72 HOUR KIT and report on what you learned.
7. Take a small group to work at the manufacturing plants, or farms, owned by the church (you can call to volunteer outside of your typical ward assignments): **Soap**, **pasta**, **CHEESE**, **Wet Pack**, **apples**, STRAWBERRIES, etc. You often get to buy, or take home, whatever you worked on.
8. Invite a Master Gardener to offer tips on gardening.
9. If someone has a wheat grinder (and they don’t mind sharing) have **a wheat grinding day**. Or a bread baking day.
10. If your ward has a good mix of younger and older sisters, spend some time **comparing then and nows**, or **try canning jam together**, or create a grandma connection with the little ones. **Older sisters know how to recycle, reuse and redo. Younger sisters know how to shortcut, juggle and think outside the box. Everyone has value.**
11. **We live in a throwaway society, and as a result many of us suffer from financial problems. The ward should be there to help one another with ideas, advice, motivation, no cost activities; with no shame, only unconditional love.**
12. Combine efforts to **find sale items** to build food and home storage; encourage teams, groups or friends to shop together for the best deals and brainstorm the best ideas for organization and maintenance.

**HUMANITARIAN AND SERVICE**

1. Have a committee who prepares kits for sisters to complete at home – **make kits available every week** – baby blankets to crochet or sew around, dolls & toys, booklets, etc.
2. **Invite yw and activity day girls, as often as you can**, to teach them how to make these items, visit with them, and set a standard.
3. **Adopt a sister ward** (inner city or across the world). Share ideas, offer aids, knowledge, materials, etc. With them.
4. Double up on **visiting teaching**, so everyone gets a visit no matter what their situation is.
5. **Adopt a charity organization or retirement home**. Provide meals, cleaning supplies, and visits. Organize “**America’s Got Talent**” having your ward perform. The bad acts are almost more entertaining than the good ones.
6. If someone in the **neighborhood needs help** with their home, organize teams to clean, fix up, organize, reconstruct, etc.
7. Clean off Graffiti.
8. take sack lunches to the city park or shelter to **feed the homeless.**
9. Go to a retirement home and give the residence shampoos, foot massages, and backrubs.
10. Ask your Stake Leaders what **service may be rendered to members in your stake:** Form Service Groups, classes, consultations, support, etc.
11. Designate **a day to do humanitarian projects;** Certain hours in the daytime, certain hours in the evening.
12. In October, with the help of all the sisters, **find, visit, evaluate, all who need help for Christmas**—from the active to the inactive (even non-members). Use creative and inoffensive ways to help them: Secret Santa, gift cards, ward talent, etc.
13. **Volunteer at a church, or community, venue**—tour guide, docent, host, etc.
14. Start a **Knitting or crocheting group** making some of our favorite projects, i.e., leper bandages, booties, hats, blankets, etc.
15. Form your own **charity organization** or offer to captain an existing organization in your area.

SISTERHOOD

1. **FORM A COMMUNITY GROUP** that studies issues locally or globally. Learn about women issues and how you can help.
2. **Host An Etiquette Dinner** with the YW, include a “modest dress” fashion show.
3. Invite Sisters To Teach Or Demo their hobbies or talents.
4. **TEACH A PIANO, AND CONDUCTING, CLASS**. Allow students to use their new skills in Sunday Relief Society, Young Womens, or Primary.
5. Exercise together.
6. Offer to **HOST A PRIMARY ACTIVITY**.
7. Tape RS lessons so YW and Primary workers can hear them. Or hold an additional study class just for them. Always find a way to include your YW and Primary sisters. With this same idea: do all you can to help them with their calling, remember them with announcements and activities, include them as much as you can in what the RS is doing.
8. **Sign up for a Welfare Assignment as a group of friends.** Invite those you’re sitting next to (whether you know them well or not is the whole point) and you all go together.
9. Create a Relief Society Prayer Roll. Urge sisters to pray for one another. The reasons for these prayers may or may not be made known, but sisters will feel an instant closeness as they think and pray for one another during the day. You may even want to pick a day during the week and Fast together as sisters for one another.
10. Sit next to someone you don’t know and keep asking them questions until you find something you have in common.
11. Try some **Networking**—share concerns with one another in the likelihood that someone out there has some answers, or knows someone who does.
12. Invite yourself to **sit in Nursery to help** with the little ones. Or **sit with a family with young children** and offer a helping hand.
13. Set up a **bartering system**; trade goods, skills, and labor. Share what you have and bless someone else’s life. Or teach negotiation tactics to make the best possible purchases at the best possible price.
14. Why don’t we hold a **Retrenchment Meeting**—First Sunday of the month, or other, where the Young Women join us for the entire meeting and we plan together what we will do to emphasize Christ’s teachings—projects, lessons, activities, events, goals, service, etc. The following month, report and add new. Just like they did back in the old days.

**SPIRIT**UAL PREPAREDNESS

1. Start a “Church Books Only” **BOOK CLUB**
2. Form a group working their way through **Preach My Gospel or Institute Manuals**
3. Invite the Gospel Doctrine Teacher (or any scholar) to **TEACH A RELIGION CLASS** – a continuation of the Sunday lesson, or other
4. **Study RS lessons** in depth after they’ve been taught
5. **Discuss Conference talks** – pull out, from the talks, what we’ve been asked to do. Challenge and report on what you’ve done to obey.
6. Discuss and practice the principles in **“A Heart Like His”.** (See post)
7. Hold **Testimony Meeting** every Fast Sunday in Relief Society.
8. **Share missionary experiences** as young missionaries, part-time service missionaries, senior missionaries, etc.
9. Learn some **new songs in the hymnbook**, and their story, and **sing this testimony** as a group of sisters.
10. Have a **“Johnny Lingo” party** and be an eight cow wife. Or watch some of the great church, seminary, or scripture study videos available to us that we never have time to watch anymore.
11. Discover what the **“song of redeeming love” or the “new song”** is, in the scriptures. Hint: Everyone will be able to sing it at the Coming of the Lord.
12. **In order to preach the gospel you need to know the gospel**…and be able to **verbalize it**. Other churches teach their people how to confront others with their beliefs and they don’t even have that much to say. We could come together and **practice** telling the First Vision to each other, or explain how the Priesthood benefits our lives, or explain the covenants we make with our Father, and why we make them.
13. Get a group together to attend a **BYU Women’s Conference** or **Time Out For Women**..