

PLTS
FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP
COACHING

*“Personal Financial Management is an Integral
Expression of Faithful Stewardship”*

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary
2770 Marin Ave
Berkeley, CA 94708

Coach Contact: Brian Stein-Webber 510-559-2711 bsteinwebber@plts.edu
 Program Director: Tom Rogers 510-559-2722 trogers@plts.edu

Contents

PLTS Strategy for Creating “Extraordinary” Stewardship Leaders.....	3
How Financial Health Impacts “Extraordinary” Stewardship Leadership	5
Relation of Behaviors and Beliefs in Financial Health	6
Jobs of Students and Coaches	7
Financial Picture for PLTS Students	8
A Coaching Plan (Some Suggestions)	10
Money Autobiography	12
Perspectives and Healthy Boundaries for Coaches	14
Coaching Covenant	15
Meeting Options: Face-to-Face, Skype, Telephone, or Email	17

PLTS Strategy

For Creating “Extraordinary” Stewardship Leaders

PLTS Vision of “Extraordinary” Stewardship Leaders

PLTS challenges students to develop the following 34 competencies¹ in order to become “extraordinary” stewardship leaders:

<i>Core Perspectives</i> The student believes that	<i>Core Practices</i> In his/her personal life, the student embodies	<i>Core Leadership Skills</i> As a leader, the student can
<i>Trusts God’s largess/abundance</i>		
1 As caretakers of all that we have and are, we are called and freed to participate in and with God’s generosity for the sake of the health of the whole.	2 An attitude of abundance rather than scarcity 3 Generosity <u>and</u> sustainability in his/her stewardship practice 4 Ongoing assessment of the integrity of his/her choices	5 Motivate a faith community’s stewardship journey through mission interpretation and gratitude for partnership 6 Reframe conversation to highlight assets (not just money) 7 Cast a vision for a vital future
<i>Grounds in biblical and theological principles</i>		
8 Stewardship is grounded in biblical and theological principles	9 An ability to listen to and interpret all of scripture with an ear for stewardship themes 10 An awareness of the history of stewardship in the life of the church	11 Teach and preach scripture from a holistic stewardship orientation
<i>Holds a holistic perspective</i>		
12 We are stewards of our whole lives including our time, energy, wisdom,	13 A total response to the gospel that does not compartmentalize faith, and	14 Articulate his/her personal stewardship journey

¹ This is a slightly edited version of the “Stewardship Competencies” that were assembled by a special committee created by the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Working with the Stewardship of Life Institute (SOLI), the committee contacted all the ELCA seminaries to come up with a comprehensive list of perspectives, practices, and leadership skill that ELCA roster leaders should have related to stewardship.

<i>Core Perspectives</i> The student believes that	<i>Core Practices</i> In his/her personal life, the student embodies	<i>Core Leadership Skills</i> As a leader, the student can
bodies, money, and other resources.	thus includes care of the earth, money, family, communal relationships and self-care	15 Help others articulate their stewardship journeys
<i>Perceives connectedness</i>		
16 Stewardship is corporate; that is, it expresses a fundamental connectedness within the body of Christ. (an inclusive ecclesiology, as in Paul's collection for the church in Jerusalem).	17 A sense of responsibility to peers and the wider church regarding personal stewardship practices 18 Accountability for decisions and a commitment to collaboration/collegiality around her/his stewardship practice	19 Encourage in others both accountability for and openness to the gifts of a greater whole (both church and culture) 20 Make use of current stewardship resources and conversation.
<i>Engages and critiques culture</i>		
21 Stewardship is missiology. We give <u>through</u> the church, not <u>to</u> the church. Non-church agencies/initiatives can and do also align with God's purposes.	22 An ability to speak of economic systems and the realities of business with some sophistication 23 A reflective stance toward consumer culture 24 A commitment to understanding the implications of our choices (both commission and omission) for the generations that follow us 25 A prophetic concern about present injustice as well as the long-term sustainability of our decisions and systems	26 Frame questions insightfully—how is God at work here? What is God providing for the work before us? 27 Preach often, broadly, and prophetically on stewardship themes
<i>Embraces financial health as an expression of faith</i>		

<i>Core Perspectives</i> The student believes that	<i>Core Practices</i> In his/her personal life, the student embodies	<i>Core Leadership Skills</i> As a leader, the student can
28 Our relationship with money is an integral part of our relationship with God.	29 Transparency with self and others regarding her/his relationship with money 30 A daily dying and rising to the power of money in his/her life including an understanding of her/his family, church, and community histories 31 A commitment to manage and monitor his/her own financial health.	32 Foster a climate that supports others as they daily die and rise to the power of money in their lives (saving, spending, and giving). 33 Assess a congregation's money/finance/stewardship culture (ethics, transparency, etc.) 34 Comprehend how the basics of congregational finance (budgeting, balance sheets, risk management, etc.) impact the mission of a congregation

How Financial Health Impacts “Extraordinary” Stewardship Leadership

PLTS views personal financial health as an integral expression of faithful stewardship. During their time at PLTS students are encouraged to develop their Financial Health by *consciously* considering how they “Think,” “Do,” and “Talk” about money.

“THINK” about Money

- Interpret all of life (including money) from the perspective of a faithful steward
- In seminary, develop thinking regarding stewardship
- **Grow the Talk**

“DO” about Money

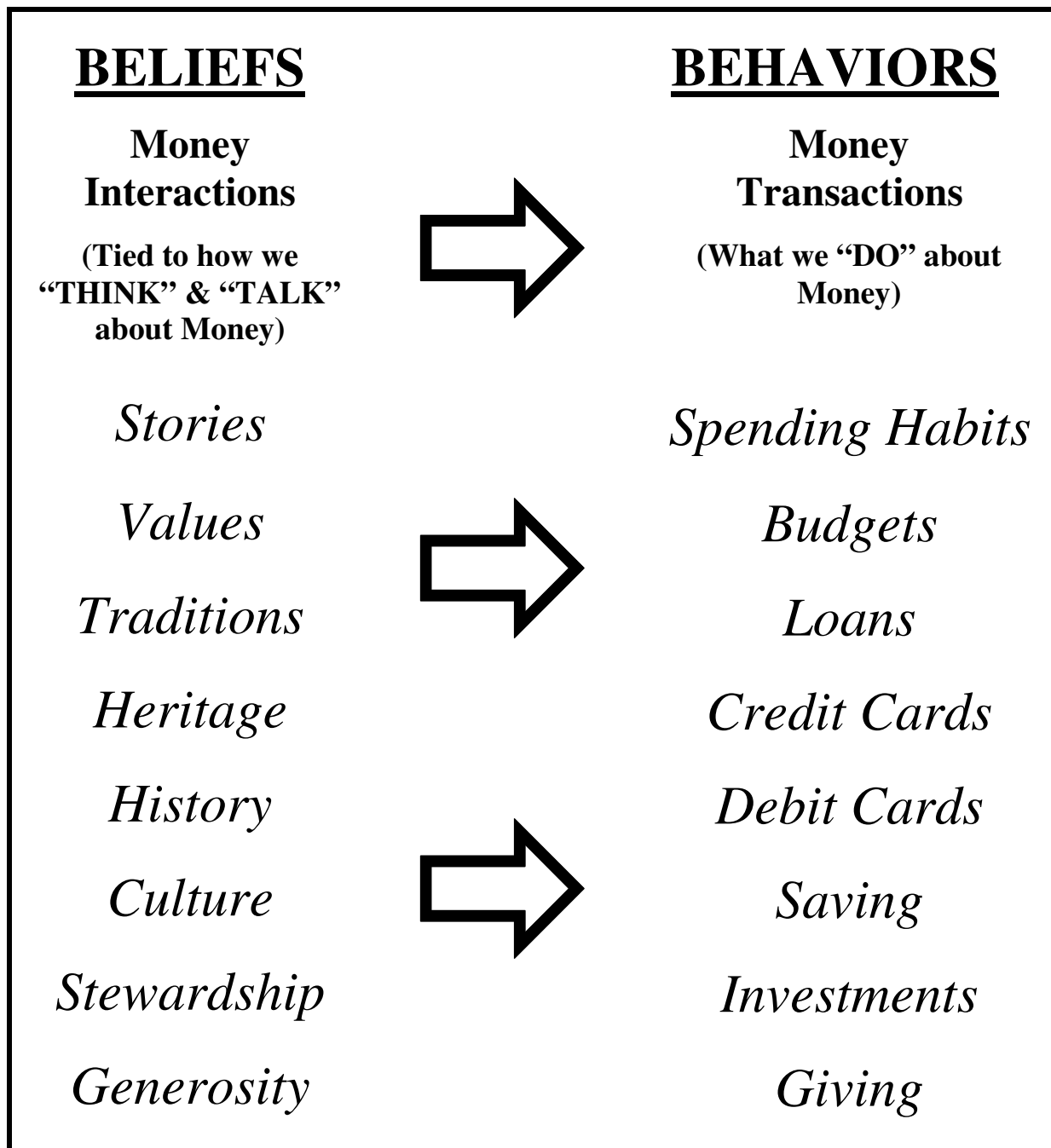
- Practice healthy financial habits regarding saving, spending, and sharing
- In seminary and beyond, responsibly manage personal finances
- **Walk the Talk**

“TALK” about Money

- Lead others in how to “Think” and “Do” about money as faithful stewards
- In the parish, comfortably share one’s own practice of stewardship
- **Talk the Walk**

Relation of Behaviors and Beliefs

- Behaviors Grow Out of Our Beliefs
- Behaviors Are Symptoms of a Belief System



Jobs of Students and Coaches

Student's Jobs

- 1) Identify financial topics he/she wants to work on
- 2) Work on them responsibly
- 3) Reflect on the connection of personal finances

Financial Health Step Addressed

- “DO” about money
 “DO” about money
 “THINK” about money

and stewardship

Coach's Jobs

- 1) Build a safe, trusting relationship
- 2) Listen and ask questions → to help them do their work “DO” about money
- 3) Offer your experience and perspectives as resources “DO” about money
(when appropriate)
- 4) Address connection of personal finances and stewardship “THINK/TALK” about money

(Note: Coaches don't need to be an ultimate expert in all these jobs. If you judge that more expert help is needed, assist the students in locating it.)

A Look at Each of the Coach's Potential Jobs

Build a safe, trusting relationship

Get to know your student; also, tell them a bit about yourself, as well as your understanding of what it means to be a coach. For example, “My job is to help you ‘work through’ whatever it is about your financial health that you want to address.”

Listen and ask questions → to help them do their work (“DO” about money)

This part of your job assumes that the student has the skills and the abilities to work out his/her own challenges regarding money issues. What they need is a safe person with whom they can do the work. A coach asks questions but does not necessarily always give answers. You help students clarify goals, brainstorm plans, work toward their goals, and celebrate each small step they take.

Offer your experience and perspectives as resources (when appropriate) (“DO” about money)

Many coaches have considerable financial intelligence and experience that can benefit the student. Share it when it makes sense.

Address connection of personal finances and stewardship (“THINK” and “TALK” about money)

The most effective coaches believe that personal financial management is an integral expression of faithful stewardship, and they reflect that conviction in conversations with their student. (Note: The Money Autobiography that students complete may be an avenue into conversations about how to “THINK” and “TALK” about money.)

Financial Picture for PLTS Students

Educational Debt vs. Ability to Repay

For most students, educational loans are a necessity. There is growing concern throughout the church about increasing levels of educational debt seminarians graduate with. A high debt-load has financial, as well as personal, impacts on church leaders and the church as a whole.

\$43,000 → Average Student Debt of most recent PLTS M.Div. graduates

\$31,000 → Average beginning salary for a first call ELCA pastor.

A Possible Problem

Long Range Costs of Student Loans

*The following chart addresses **only** student loan debt. It does **not** include consumer debt: credit cards, auto loans, private loans, mortgage payments. The chart assumes a 1.5% loan fee and a \$36,000 per year income.)*

Amount Borrowed	Percent Interest	Length of Repayment	Monthly Payment	% of Income
\$ 1,000	6.8%	10 years	\$ 11	.3
\$ 5,000	6.8%	10 years	\$ 58	1.9
\$10,000	6.8%	10 years	\$116	3.8
\$20,000	6.8%	10 years	\$233	7.7
\$30,000	6.8%	10 years	\$350	11.6
\$44,000	6.8%	10 years	\$514	17.1
\$50,000	6.8%	10 years	\$584	19.4
\$60,000	6.8%	10 years	\$701	23.3

One general rule of thumb regarding loan repayment is that one's total debt service ought not to exceed **8%** of monthly income. Exceeding the "8% rule" may have negative impacts when seeking a home mortgage and other loans.

Note: You can access an easy to use Loan Repayment Calculator at www.finaid.org/calculators/loanpayments.phtml

Other Impacts of Educational Debt

In addition to the obvious financial ramifications of debt, there are other costs as well. An Auburn Seminary study of the education debt of theological students identifies these issues:

- Impacts career choices
- Creates stress in professional life

- Creates stress in personal life
- Delays purchasing a home
- Prevents saving for their children's education
- Delays securing health care (due to costs)

In the same survey, borrowers had these things to see about the effect of debt:

52% "I wish I had borrowed less"

40% "My financial situation is NOT comfortable"

30% "Debt has influenced my career choices."

26% "I or my spouse has had to moonlight."

24% "I have had to accept higher-paying employment—outside the church"

24% "I have missed a payment because I did not have the money."

21% "I have had to postpone health care."

A Coaching Plan (Some Suggestions)

First meeting

1) Spend the first 30 minutes or so getting acquainted. For instance, explore mutual connections. Invite them to talk about themselves.

Tell them a bit about yourself, as well as your understanding of what it means to be a coach; for example, "My job is to help you work through with you whatever it is about your financial health that you want to talk about."

2) Go over the list of the "areas of interest" he/she checked on the Request Form. Listen closely, and take notes. Review your notes with them to make sure you heard them correctly regarding what they want to work on.

3) Review, complete, and sign the Coaching Covenant included in this booklet. The purpose of reviewing the coach and student agreements during your first meeting is to make sure everyone is clear about and comfortable with these boundaries. Assure confidentiality, and keep it.

4) Discuss the Money Autography. Here are some sample questions to get the ball rolling when discussing the autobiography:

- What did you learn about money from your family of origin? Or, more generally, what is the legacy you have received from your family's attitudes about wealth and practices about money? How are you alike or different?
- In what ways are you like or different from your mother and father?
- How do you hope to be different than your family's legacy?

5) Finally, conclude the first session by discussing how future meetings will proceed. Provide an overview of the following "action agenda," which can be used to guide your appointments. Also, be sure you are each clear when and where you will meet next and how you will remind each other of the meeting.

Subsequent meetings

These suggestions are provided as guideline for meetings with your student. While the meetings are to address the needs and situations of the student, you are the leader for the meetings.

1. Check in
Ask questions such as:
 - How are things going? General conversation. Let them get to know you care.
 - At the end of our last meeting, you determined that you would _____.
 - What has happened?
 - What else?
 - What did you learn?
 - Celebrate their success.
 - If they took no action, help them identify the barrier.
(What prevented you? What could you have done differently? What did you learn?)

3. Determine the session goal
Ask questions such as:
 - By the end of our time together today, what would you like to accomplish?

4. Consider options
Take notes as your student makes suggestions in response to such questions as these:
 - What result do you want?
 - What are all the possible ways you could satisfactorily change the situation?
(Brainstorm)
 - What would be an outrageous way to handle it?
 - If you were brave, what would you do?
 - What have you observed that works for others?
 - What else? (Push to get more? When there are no more, you might suggest some that come to your mind.)

5. Choose the best option

7. Identify obstacles
8. Choose the best specific action step(s)
Choose steps that are realistic, reasonable and doable.
9. Make a commitment to act
Ask, “Between now and the next time we meet, what are you specifically going to do?”
10. Write it down!
 - Everyone present should write down the commitment to act. If it is not written, it has not occurred!
 - Encourage them to send you an e-mail or snail mail once they have accomplished the steps prior to your next meeting.
 - Make them accountable.
 - Celebrate every step they make. Affirming even small steps fosters hope and confidence

Money Autobiography

(Note: Students received this with instructions to complete it and have it ready for the first meeting.)

Formative Questions

Attitudes, values and perspectives about money and its relationship to our faith have been shaped by personal experiences. Our families of origin are particularly influential. The church, schools, friends, and our culture influence us as well. In this section, reflect on formative experiences.

1. What are your earliest memories about money?
2. What attitudes did your parents and other family members have about money?
3. What were the spending, saving, and sharing habits of your parents? How were they different from each other? How are you like or different from them?
4. What “money issues” in your family were harmonious, and which ones were difficult?
5. What were your attitudes about money when you were growing up? When did you worry? For what did you save? What were you taught about giving?
6. How did you acquire money – allowance, jobs, rewards, loans?
7. What instructions (rules) did you have in your family regarding money?

8. What role has money played in a satisfactory and/or an unsatisfactory relationship with others? What did you learn?
9. When have you experienced money being used to try to control your behavior?
10. How has the church influenced your attitudes and behavior about money?
11. What have you learned so far about the role of money in your life?

Values Questions

1. Pick four of the following words that best communicate your values and your beliefs about money. Why? Are there other words that better describe your values and beliefs?

Money is . . .

Power	Security	Hope	Love
Pleasure	Prestige	Dirty	Value
Anxiety	Identity	A	Freedom
Protection	Sacred	Evil	Comfort

2. When you think about all the ways you use your credit card, debit card, checking account, cash, and other ways you use money, what do your habits reveal?
3. How well do you think your money habits align with your values and beliefs?
4. What money habits would you like to change? Because . . .
5. When you receive a generous gift, what are your thoughts and feelings?
6. In what ways is your relationship with money a spiritual issue?
7. When do you manage your money well?
8. In what ways would you like to manage your money better?

9. How do you feel about talking about your finances with other people? Why do you feel this way?
10. How much do you currently give to church and charity? How did you come to that decision?
11. Pick which of the following words best describe you.

Affluent	Comfortable	Average
Poor	Struggling	Wealthy
Balanced	Working Class	Impoverished
Stingy	Generous	Anxious

12. Why?

Perspectives and Healthy Boundaries for Coaches

Please read and sign the following statement regarding healthy boundaries in relating to your student.

1. I believe that personal financial management is an integral expression of faithful stewardship, and I will endeavor to reflect that conviction in my conversations.
2. I will keep my conversation with my student confidential unless he/she gives me permission to share the information.
3. I will keep appropriate boundaries. I will endeavor to help my student feel and be safe.
4. I will not attempt to sell or market any financial product or be in any financial relationship with my student and/or spouse.
5. If I decide to present financial information, I will present it on a general basis as possibilities for my student to consider. Product information will not be company specific and will be generic. Coaches may say, for example: "I have found in my own experience...
 - You may wish to consider a money market fund for short-term cash needs that would be coming up in the next year or so."
 - You may wish to consider a balanced mutual fund for a one- to four-year time frame."
 - You may wish to consider growth funds or stocks for a five-year or more time frame."
 - You need to determine your own risk tolerance before making any investments."

6. I will not give direct financial assistance to my student. If I wish to help alleviate student debt of my student I will instead participate in the PLTS Student Scholarship Fund or other giving opportunity.

I have read and understand the statements above and promise to abide by these boundaries.

Coach's Name: (Please Print) _____

Coach's signature: _____ Date: _____

E-mail: _____

Telephone Numbers: _____

Coaching Covenant

This covenant outlines the guidelines and boundaries for the relationship between the student who requested a PLTS financial stewardship coach and the “coach” who has agreed to walk alongside the student to assist her/him to reach stated goals. The covenant also names the commitments each makes as a participant in this program.

As a Financial Stewardship Coach:

1. I believe that personal financial management is an integral expression of faithful stewardship, and I will endeavor to reflect that conviction in my conversations with my student.
2. I will be present and prepared for our coaching sessions.
3. If I need to re-schedule, I will contact my student (by phone or e-mail) 24 hours in advance.
4. I will listen carefully, ask good questions, and encourage honesty.
5. I will keep our conversations confidential, unless my student gives me permission to share the information.
6. I will keep appropriate boundaries. I will endeavor to help my student feel and be safe.
7. I will not attempt to sell or market any financial product or be in any financial relationship with my student.
8. If I decide to present financial information, I will present it on a general basis as possibilities for my student to consider. Product information will be generic and not company specific.
9. I will suggest alternatives, request specific action steps, and provide my student with an appropriate context for being accountable.
10. I will speak up immediately if anything bothers me about the coaching experience.

As a Student Participating in Financial Stewardship Coaching:

1. I will seek to embody core stewardship beliefs in my own financial practices.
2. I will be present and prepared for our coaching sessions.
3. If I need to re-schedule our meeting, I will contact my coach (by phone or e-mail) 24 hours in advance.
4. I will talk honestly with my coach about my financial stewardship challenges and what I want to achieve.
5. I will work with my coach to generate my own solutions and take action toward my goals.
6. I will speak up immediately if anything bothers me about my coaching experience.

Agreement Regarding Meetings

(Please fill in answers to the following questions)

- How many times will we meet during the 2010-2011 school year?
(Note: Typical frequency is approximately one hour per month for at least 4-6 times during the academic year. At the last session of this series, the coach and student may make a new agreement, if there is a desire by both parties to continue.)

- When will we meet? (Days/Times)

- Where or how will we meet?

Each of us agrees to meet until:

- The end of our agreed upon number of times to meet, or
- The goals established have been satisfactorily reached, or
- One or both of us determine that our relationship is unsatisfactory.

Agreement Regarding Possible Termination

If either of us decides to terminate this coaching arrangement, we shall

- Inform each other directly
- Inform Prof. Tom Rogers trogers@plts.edu (510-559-2722)

Coach Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Following your first session, the student is to please place a copy of the signed Coaching Covenant in Prof. Tom Rogers' faculty mailbox in Giesy Hall.

Meeting Options: Face-to-Face, Skype, Telephone, or Email

Face-to-Face

On the PLTS campus

Possible meeting spaces (Monday-Friday) include classrooms, the Great Hall, or the lounge in Sawyer hall. Small classrooms such as “Vaulted Classroom” (in Sawyer Hall) or Giesy Classroom 2 (in Giesy Hall) are available for coaching sessions when there are no classes scheduled there. The “Great Hall” (in Founders Hall) is also frequently available. If you wish to use one of these spaces, have your student contact Cheryl Heuer (510-559-2754) to make a reservation.

During good weather, you may wish to meet outdoors on the PLTS campus. Outdoor tables and chairs are located next to Giesy Hall and Founders Hall. Students will know where these are; plus, they may have other suggestions.

GTU Library

Two study rooms are available in the GTU Library. These would make a good place to meet with your student. The library is located at 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley.

These rooms may be reserved (free of charge to PLTS students) for a two-hour period of time. If you wish to use one of these spaces, have your student contact the library circulation desk (510-649-2510) to make a reservation. Library hours are: M-Th 9-9; Fri 9-5; Sat 11-6; Sun 1-7.

Pacific School of Religion (PSR) Cafeteria

PSR (1798 Scenic Avenue – one block from GTU Library) has a nice cafeteria. There is both indoor and outdoor seating. It is not necessary to buy food to use space.

Other Options in Berkeley

One of the favorite meeting places for PLTS students is a coffee shop near the GTU library called “Brewed Awakenings.” (1807 Euclid Ave. Check with your student for other ideas of where he/she would suggest to meet.)

Skype (Computer Face-to-Face)

With access to computers with a built in camera, you can have a real time conversation (both audio and video) at no charge. You can download free Skype software at www.skype.com.

Telephone

This may be a good option for coaches who live a big distance from PLTS. Also, after an initial Face-to-Face meeting, telephone meetings can be quite effective for all coaching situations.

Email

This may constitute the bulk of some distance coaching. Email may also be a good way to supplement all coaching situations.