



## What's Next Roundtable – Introduction

“What keeps you up at night?” BWFLI team member Charlotte McNally asked the Asbury University student. Quickly, she responded “What’s Next. Everything looks so shiny now, but I don’t know what is ahead.”

Her statement initiated this project. We considered our strengths, our resources, and our mission. Clearly our call is to “stretch and bless the next generation of leaders... to the glory of God.” Fred’s wisdom is broad and deep. His writings have great breadth. As we looked at areas of helpfulness we chose three elements which we believe are crucial to a satisfactory answer to the “what’s next” question: mentoring, networking, and character/faith as demonstrated by perseverance.

We organized the materials and created a format which directs students toward the study of these three factors.

The on campus Roundtable is the outcome.

Our goal is to bring expertise to students in a conversational way creating connections as well as presenting valuable material. Our desire is to strengthen participants in their confidence as they pursue the next step – and mature in their Christian faith. Each team member has life experiences which bring hope.

We look forward to the unfolding of this project.

Thank you for partnering with us to be used by God. We are committed to taking what we have learned through the Good News of Jesus Christ and passing it on. We join together to share stories, principles, and life lessons.

We want this content package to prepare you and your students for an exciting weekend with the BWFLI team and the What’s Next Roundtable. A copy of *You and Your Network* will be provided under separate cover.

In his late twenties Fred decided he wanted his gravestone to read “He Stretched Others.” He did – and it does!

Enjoy these materials and grow along with us.

Bless.

Brenda A. Smith, President

BWF Project, Inc.

## What’s Next Roundtable

**What:** A response from the Breakfast With Fred Leadership Institute to concerns about the future steps beyond graduation. An intensive event for students selected by the Business School focusing on three aspects of effective preparation: mentoring, networking, and character.

**Who:** Teams customized for each school comprised of business and ministry leaders with robust experience in the highlighted areas. Each one has a track record with BWFLI, is fluent in Fred Smith, Sr.’s content, and brings professional credentials combined with a strong Christian testimony,

**Why:** We partner with Christian higher education to forward the Kingdom of God. We come because we believe God has called us to begin conversations and create connections which will bring honor and glory to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Our mission is to “stretch and bless the next generation of leaders...to the glory of God.”

**How:** Three 2 ½ hour modules (mentoring, networking, and character) featuring short introductions followed by roundtable conversations facilitated by BWFLI team members. Curriculum materials used: 1) Mentoring questions used by Fred Smith, Sr., articles written by him on mentoring; 2) Fred’s book *You and Your Network*; Ron Glosser’s chapter on Fred in his book *The Genealogy of Friendship*; 3) Fred’s manuscript *Perseverance: Pathway to Maturity*

**Where and When:** These events will take place on campus. The format of choice is Friday afternoon (3:00), working casual dinner, evening session; Saturday morning breakfast and final session adjourning by noon.

**How much (cost to schools):** Dinner on Friday and breakfast on Saturday.

Each team member pays his/her own travel expenses. We do not pay honoraria and each member comes to bring glory to God and honor the work and life of Fred Smith, Sr.

**What are the next steps?** 1) Scheduling of date 2) letter of invitation from President and Dean of the Business School 3) materials provided for pre-event study 4) prayer

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## **Schedule- Friday afternoon, evening, and Saturday morning**

### **Mentoring Module 3:00 to 5:30 FRIDAY AFTERNOON**

Welcome and Introduction

The WHY, WHAT, and HOW of mentoring

Roundtable conversations

Break

Personal experience

Roundtable conversations

DINNER BREAK – eaten at tables with new seating assignments

Roundtable conversation about mentoring questions

Resources: [www.breakfastwithfred.com](http://www.breakfastwithfred.com) leadership library, Fred Smith articles on mentoring

### **Networking Module -6:45 to 8:45**

Introduction

Review of Ron Glosser chapter

You and Your Network principles- part 1

Roundtable conversations

You and Your Network principles – part 2

Networking personal examples

Roundtable conversations and close

Resources: Ron Glosser: Genealogy of Friendship (chapter on Fred Smith), You and Your Network (Fred Smith's book)

**Persevering Module – 8:30 to 12:00 Saturday Morning**

Breakfast and roundtable conversations – new seating assignments

Welcome and Introductions

Elements of Persevering – Part 1

Elements of Persevering – Part 2

Roundtable Conversations

Break

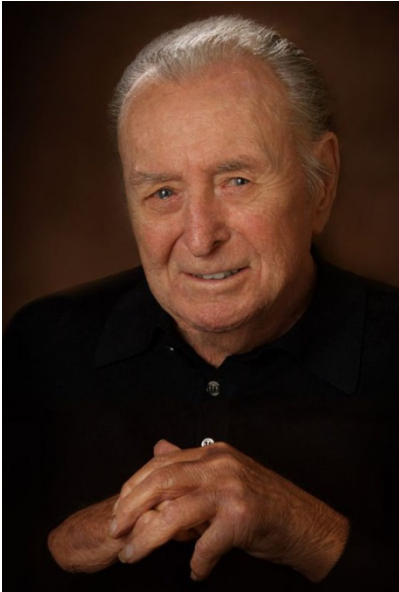
Elements of Persevering – Part 3

Elements of Persevering – Part 4

Wrap up and prayer time at tables

Resource: Draft manuscript for Fred Smith's book Perseverance: Pathway to Maturity

## Fred Smith, Sr.



Fred Smith, Sr. was a businessman, consultant, author, speaker, and President of Fred Smith Associates.

He served on more than twenty boards and trusteeships including Eaton International, S.H. Kress, the Turner Foundation, Youth for Christ, KeyLife Network, Bill Glass Evangelistic Ministries, RREACH, International, Billy Graham Crusade Committee (Cincinnati, Ohio) and Zig Ziglar Corporation. He was a consultant to such corporations as GENESCO, Mobil, and Caterpillar. He frequently lectured at Universities and received two honorary doctor of law degrees. For years he was the featured key note speaker for national sales and marketing venues.

He was widely published and authored four books. He was known as a mentor to a generation of leaders including Zig Ziglar who dedicated one of his books with these words: "One of the wisest

men I have ever known."

Among his numerous recognitions for contributions to management and leadership are the Lawrence Appley Award given by the American Management Association, the Life Worth Living Award given by the Crystal Cathedral, the Australian Calilip Gold Medallion, the INJOY Catalyst Award for Lifetime Achievement, the Norman Vincent Peale and Ruth Stafford Peale Humanitarian Award, the Roaring Lambs Hall of Fame, and the Faith and Work Award given by Christianity Today, International which is named for him.

At his death Christianity Today ran an article. It's insight into Fred's personality clearly expresses his gifts and contributions, particularly to the church. His contributions to business are well-known and the influence of his thinking continues. Here are excerpts from their article:

"Fred Smith, for decades a behind-the-scenes adviser to ministry leaders, mentor to business executives, and leadership expert died Friday, August 17, 2007. He was a master of nuance, said Marshall Shelley, editor of Leadership Journal where Smith served as a consulting editor and columnist. His insight in business and leadership provided guidance for pastors and ministries for 50 years.

In the mid-1970s Smith was chairman of the Youth for Christ board. He was also active in leadership at Christianity Today International. Through his friendship with Maxey Jarman, president of GENESCO, the largest apparel company in the world at the time, Smith was asked to help the struggling CTI. His leadership continued for 25 years as he served on the board.

Smith's expertise as a business leader made him a popular speaker, and his columns and interviews in Leadership were among the most popular in the magazine. Smith credited much of his success in speaking, business, and leadership to his upbringing. Smith was the son of a Southern Baptist pastor. He said he learned the value of organization from his mother who fed a seven-member family on the \$125.00 per month his father earned. He inherited his father's admiration for integrity.

Newly married and twenty-four years old, Smith sought a job in a personnel department, and he decided to meet the President of the one company in Nashville big enough to have such a department. Smith worked at a gas station and regularly serviced Maxey Jarman, president of General Shoe Corporation who had taken his family business from 75 employees to 5,000. Smith took the opportunity to introduce himself.

He wasn't offered a job. When Smith found out where Mr. Jarman taught a Sunday School class he began attending. Eventually in 1941 Jarman invited Smith for a Coke at the local drug store. "That night," Smith later wrote, "I told Mary Alice I thought he would offer me a job and no matter what he offered I was going to take it because he was a man I wanted to be associated with. I sensed then I wanted to be connected with him for life." Smith went on to be President of the Sunday School class, one of Jarman's youngest executives, and mentored by Jarman until his death.

For the next 43 years, Smith wrote down his observations as he watched Jarman build General Shoe in GENESCO. Smith believed gifts were to be shared with others. "Dad taught all of us that whenever you have knowledge that could help other people, you're supposed to share it," Smith wrote in Learning to Lead. Writing for pastors in Leadership Journal and mentoring individuals allowed Smith to build a legacy that continues to benefit the church.

Jack Modesett spent more than 40 years under Smith's mentorship. Modesett, President of Cornerstone Energy and the former chairman of the board at CTI said Smith was able to recognize people's strengths and develop them, while also providing spiritual guidance. Once after Modesett underwent a personal revival he told Smith he was going to use his business position to persuade others of his faith. Smith sent Modesett a plaque saying, "Modesett comes out for God!" That was the right mixture of humor and admonishment to convict him of his spiritual pride. Modesett said, "He couldn't have made the point any more subtly or stuck the needle in any more deeply."

Smith's humor was legendary. Modesett said that during a stay in the hospital in 2004, Smith's wife of 67 years, Mary Alice, asked if he would write to her from heaven. "You'd have to pay the postage," he replied. Modesett said, "He was always making some remark because he saw that the Good News of the Gospel is so good that underlying and overarching the tragedy of life is great joy." Mary Alice died just a few months later.

Smith was known for discerning the heart of each problem presented to him. He liked to tell the story of a logger who needed to fix a log jam. Rather than knocking every log out until reaching the right one, Smith said a good logger could spot the key log, knock it out, and let the stream do the rest.

Harold Myra, former CEO of Christianity Today International said, "Fred was told he had 18 months to live and that was 13 years ago. "He's been living on borrowed time," Myra said, "and I've seen him grow. He's been on his back in the hospital, but he's still on the phone, talking to people."

"One of his great gifts "Modesett said of Smith, "is engaging in conversation whether it's one person or a thousand people. " In January 2003 Smith began hosting conversations online. At [www.breakfastwithfred.com](http://www.breakfastwithfred.com) Smith led discussion forums and wrote columns. Playing off his many breakfast meetings with friends, Smith continued to stretch people.

“He could tell the truth in a way that you could hear it; he could challenge, h could offer criticism with wit and humor, and you would welcome it,” said Harold B. Smith, CEO of Christianity Today International. “Frankly, it would be unwise not to listen to Fred.”

Fred was the husband of Mary Alice Swann Smith for 67 years, the father of three children (Brenda A. Smith, Fred Smith, Jr., and Mary Helen Noland), the grandfather of 6, and great-grandfather of 3 at the time of his death.

## Brenda A. Smith



Brenda A. Smith is President/CEO of BWF Project, Inc., a non-profit corporation organized to archive and relevantly communicate the wisdom and lifework of Fred Smith, Sr., and the Breakfast With Fred Leadership Institute organized to stretch and bless the next generation of leaders...to the glory of God.

[www.Breakfastwithfred.com](http://www.Breakfastwithfred.com) is an online archive. [www.bwfli.com](http://www.bwfli.com) is a website dedicated to the campus events and experiences of BWFLI. There is a Facebook presence with an active page (Breakfast With Fred Leadership Institute) which highlights the BWFLI community, activities, memorabilia, and current posts.

The Weekly Thought which she edits from Fred Smith, Sr.'s material is seen by over 5000 weekly subscribers. The Leadership Institute has conducted 16 campus events since 2008, contacting over 15,000 students, faculty, and administrators. Nearly 85 business and ministry leaders have participated at their own expense with no honoraria paid. Connections created from each campus event are still being nurtured.

In 2018 a national conference is being planned titled "What's Next" to do an in-depth 2 1/2 day focus on mentoring, networking, and living out faith day by day. The participants will be selected and sponsored by their schools, and hosted by the BWFLI teams.

Her background reflects business leadership, corporate management, and community service. She was elected an officer of the Principal Financial Group in Des Moines, IA. In this role she supervised 17 sales managers for the Insurance Brokerage Division of the Individual Business Unit. She held sales and management positions with Northwestern Mutual and Manulife Financial, as well as entrepreneurial endeavors, including joint ownership of Service Printing and Office Supply in Dallas, TX.

Brenda served on the first People to People insurance delegation to China, meeting with financial institutions and university professors to discuss organization and strategic planning.

She speaks nationally on issues of aging, caregiving, Women of the Shield, and purposeful Christian living, authored *Divine Confinement*; edited *Breakfast With Fred*, co-authored *Perseverance*, and has written for *Today's Christian*, and [www.buildingadultministries.com](http://www.buildingadultministries.com)

She was a weekly columnist for the Pagosa Sun (Pagosa Springs, CO) and a guest columnist for the Marshall News Messenger (Marshall, TX). She writes a blog seen on [www.bwfli.com](http://www.bwfli.com) bi-monthly and a daily scripture application post on Facebook.

Boards: Guideposts National Advisory Cabinet, Dallas Area Parkinsonism Society, Royal Treasure, The Damaris Project, Women in Financial Services, President of the Dallas Chapter of the Society of Financial Service Professionals, East Texas Cornerstone Resource Network, and the BWF Project, Inc.



Education: BA from Ohio State University, MAT from Vanderbilt University, Chartered Life Underwriter (CLU) and Chartered Financial Consultant (ChFC) designations from The American College; Registered Representative with Series 6, 63, 7, and 8. Womenary courses in Systematic Theology and evening adult classes at Dallas Theological Seminary.

Reading includes fiction, but mainly focuses on theology, particularly church history. Favorite quote: "What a person thinks about when they think about God is the most important thing about that person." A. W. Tozer. Favorite authors: Fred Smith, Sr., A.W.Tozer, J.I.Packer, Stephen Nichols, R.C. Sproul, Steve Brown, and those who were inspired by the Holy Spirit to bring us the canon of Scripture. Female role models: Jill Briscoe (Christian writer, speaker, and leader), Mary Alice Smith (Mom), and Sandra Gray (President, Asbury University).

Brenda cared for her parents, Fred and Mary Alice Smith, in her home for seven years until their deaths in 2004 and 2007. She is the proud and grateful mother of three married adult children, seven grandsons, two granddaughters, and two great- granddaughters. She happily resides in the Piney Woods of East Texas. She is a member of Holly Brook Baptist Church (Hawkins, TX) where she serves on the Budget and Finance team, participates in music, and mentors younger women.

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