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## Chapter Nine

In Knapp's model of relationship stages is a great way of describing both romantic and non romantic relationships. I say this because of my past experience with those exact stages between an old friend and an old boyfriend. With my old friend, she was my best friend growing up. We bonded over the smallest things like going to get an ice cream or even playing volleyball. We were inseparable. As we got older and I left for college, it was such a different story. We started communicating less and kind of getting upset with each other because we weren't around each other as much. Eventually we stopped talking completely. We live about five minutes away from each other so avoiding each other was a must. Now with my ex boyfriend, we were always together too. He picked me up from my house all the time or I drove to his house. We always tried new things like food or traveling together. Then our relationship ended because he ended up being with someone else when we were together. I blocked him on everything and avoided any party that I knew he would be at.

I use the strategy "Experimenting," the most when it comes to a relationship. I feel like when we experiment with different foods, places to dance or traveling somewhere we've never been, it keeps the relationship fun. Never stop having fun in a relationship. You and whoever it is will be happier that way.

When it comes to dialectical tensions in my relationship, I tend to figure them out by talking to one another about the tension happening. It usually stops when we talk it out but also give each other space. I feel like there isn't really a pattern. So when it comes to my relationship with my boyfriend, he gets easily annoyed and starts being mean to me in a way. I get mad when this

happens and I cry so he usually knows when something is wrong. For my mom, when she gets mad, I tend to stay clear from her and do something as an act of service before she gets mad at me. Just depending on how mad someone is, I just feel like balance, space and reaffirmation is best with my relationships.

I'm an athlete who has to eat good in order to feel good. When I'm at home, I feel like I don't have a good diet compared to when I'm away. I always have to talk to my mom and have her take me with her when we go grocery shopping. It's only hard sometimes because eating healthier is expensive and my dad doesn't like a lot of things. So we have to balance out healthy and unhealthy things in order for everyone to be satisfied.

Three unexpressed relational messages would be when I'm mad, annoyed and when I'm anxious. I think if I used meta-communication for these, there would be probably a sign like me fidgeting with my hands or me not talking at all. If I used this type of meta-communication, I would probably be able to talk about my feelings early on and not just blow them off. When it comes to having hard conversations, I think they should happen when things feel off between each other. For example, if no one is talking or we aren't as affectionate with each other I think asking if we're okay is a valid question.

I think a strategy I used is Rewarding Activity. I feel like when I use this strategy with myself or with others, we'll think it's worth it and we'll get whatever tasks we're doing at the time completed. For example, I'm a substitute teacher. Kids always think they can get away with not doing their work. So I tell them if they do and finish their work, they can have free time and get on their phones. They always do their work and finish fast just to be on their phones and talk. I think if someone used this tactic on me, I would be more motivated to do my work.