

## **Life Development**

### **The Single, Unattached, Young Adult**

DB indicated this stage early than the average due to being an emancipated teen. She was kicked out of her parents' home at the age of 15 due to her rebellious behavior. Not living in the home did not change her core values. DB went against her parents' will and expectations by traveling and living abroad. In addition, she dropped out of law school which impacted her relationship with her parents. Followed by breaking up with long term abusive partner, her parents expected her to marry.

### **The New Couple In the past, this second stage of the family life cycle**

After conceding to family pressure, DB married a man she had only known for less than a season. Her then-husband, HB was under extreme pressure. He was only first generation from India in his mid-20s, in his culture he was running behind and should have been married 5 to 9 years earlier. Neither one of them thought about the cultural or religious differences due to the heat of the moment of what they both thought was love. Couples must seek premarital counseling before marring. Sitting down with a trained neutral third party will help to identify growth areas. Couples can strengthen their relationship through counseling by learning healthy strategies to deal with conflicts. DB and HB did not seek counseling.

### **Families With Very Young Children**

Although not very much was discussed, one of the areas they agreed on was not having children. The honeymoon was short-lived due to unplanned pregnancy. Initiating a family is very demanding and requires support. HB loved the idea of a child but did not adjust to the changes causing conflict and separating the before their daughter's first birthday. The couple attempted marriage counseling to no avail.

### **Families With School-Age Children**

DB always prioritized being involved in her daughter's education; she prioritized meeting the school administrators and all staff. SB's father was invited to participate but has yet to step up. SB had the support of her now stepfather JP who attend stepped up from head start events to big/small dances today. Furthermore, support of extending family was helpful as DB acquired a graduate degree when SB was 3 YO. Challenges have arisen now that SB is in middle school and needs to adjust better due to not being accepted. JP and DB have different approaches to dealing with their daughter. DB wants to allow SB to fight her battles by advising her on dealing with conflicts and situations. JP feels that we should move SB from schools.

### **Families With Adolescent Children**

Currently, the home has a pre-teen whose behaviors foreshadow a usual teen boundary-pushing behavior. JP and DB have experienced adolescents through co-parenting. During that time, the eldest was away in the air force, leaving 10, 11, and 16 at home in a toxic environment. The stage was very challenging due to their mother's mental health struggles.

### **Families With Children Who Are Launching or Leaving the Nest Releasing children**

Our first challenge was our eldest (CP) completing his responsibility with the air force and struggling with his choice to remain in South Carolina. His bio mother was against this decision. she attempted to convince JB to join forces and have CP return. JB and DB felt it was not our place to interfere with a young adult's life when they were not in harm's way. Although letting go was challenging today, CP has a healthy marriage and a 2 YO son. Currently, the 19 and 20 YO are in undergraduate programs, and 25-year-old is graduating from law school. CJ is seeking counseling to deal with his mother's toxic behavior.

### **Families in Retirement and Later Life During this stage**

This stage will look different for JP and DB due to their age difference. JP is set to retire within the next three years, and DB is starting a new career in counseling. This may cause conflict if they are on different pages. It is necessary there to communicate during this time since there is always the possibility of household changes, such as adult children may return home with/without extended family.