Relational Development

friendships ... business relationships ... romantic relationships ...

- Relationship of Circumstance - based upon life's circumstances
- Relationship of Choice - you've chosen to initiate, maintain, and/or terminate

All relationships go through various stages, Up and Down
Outsiders can often tell what stage a relationship is in, by observing the interpersonal communication
There are turning points in relationships
  - Causal
  - Reflective

Bill Rawlins' 6 Stages of Friendship Development
- Role-limited interaction
- Friendly relations
- Moving toward friendship
- Nascent friendship
- Stabilized friendship
- Waning friendship
“Stage” talk

- **Contact** messages
- **Closeness** messages
- **Maintenance** messages
- **Distancing** messages
- **Repair** messages
- **Dissolution** messages

Models of Relational Development

- Two basic models
  - **Staircase** (Knapp)
  - **Elevator** (Beebe, Beebe & Redmond)
- Additional model: Joseph DeVito’s 6 stage model
- Lots of similarities between the models

Mark Knapp’s Stages of Relational Development

A Model of Interaction Stages
BB&R’s Elevator Model of Relational Development

Relational Escalation

1. Preinteraction Awareness
2. Acquaintance
3. Exploration
4. Intensification
5. Intimacy

Relational De-Escalation

1. Post-Separation Effects
2. Separation
3. Individualization
4. Deintensification
5. Turmoil OR Stagnation
Movement Within and Between Stages/Floors

- Intimacy is not the only goal of relationships
- Not all relationships move through all 10 steps/floors
- Movement between steps is generally sequential
- Movement occurs within stages
- Relationships are constantly changing
- Movement is always to a new place

6-Stage Model of Relationships (Joseph DeVito)

Disengagement Strategies

Avoidance/Withdrawal
- Physical & emotional withdrawal
- Relational ruse

Manipulation
- Pseudo de-escalation
- Cost-escalation
- Make other feel guilty for wanting you to stay

Positive Tone
- Take the blame
- Lessons learned

Open Confrontation
- Direct dump
- Justification
- Nobody’s fault
- Blame game
- Negotiated farewell
**Steve Duck’s Typography**
*(Relational Decay/Dissolution)*

**Breakdown: Dissatisfaction w/relationship**

- Social withdrawal, resentment, brooding on partner’s “faults” & relational costs
- “I’d be justified in withdrawing.”

**Intrapsychic**

- Uncertainty, anxiety, hostility, complaints, conflict
- Discuss with partner (“our relationship”)
- “I mean it.”

**Dyadic**

- Going public; seeking advice/support from others, scapegoating
- “It’s now inevitable.”

**Social**

- Tidying up memories, making relational history, storytelling (“cover story”)
- “It’s time to get a new life.”

**Grave Dressing**

- Recreating sense of own social value, envisioning future relationships (and self)
- “What I learned and how things will be different.”

**Resurrection**

**What to do?**

**Coming Together/Escalation**

- Pay Attention
  - Small Talk/Ask Questions
  - Follow Initiation Norms
  - Communicate attraction
  - Self-Disclose appropriately
  - Monitor Perceptions & Reduce Uncertainty
  - Listen and respond appropriately
  - Be other-oriented

**What to do?**

**De-escalation/Maintain relationship**

- Express Emotions
  - Relationship Talk
  - Demonstrate Tolerance & Restraint
  - Manage Conflict
  - Self-Disclose appropriately
  - Use Persuasion when necessary
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