

"Let's Talk!"

HOW TO TALK ABOUT OTHER MAJORS?

by Nealie Ngo

WELCOME HOME—ONE SEMESTER AT STANFORD, DONE!
HOW ARE YOUR CLASSES?

COLLEGE IS FUN, AND CLASSES ARE GREAT! I'M TAKING ONE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND I REALLY LIKE IT.

YOU'RE HOME FROM YOUR FIRST SEMESTER AT STANFORD. YOU'RE EXCITED TO BE HOME, AND TO SEE YOUR PARENTS, BUT YOU'RE ALSO NERVOUS HOW YOUR PARENTS WILL REACT WHEN THEY DISCOVER YOU MAY NOT WANT TO WORK AT GOOGLE LIKE YOUR OLDER SISTER...

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS?! ISN'T THAT ONE OF THOSE MAJORS LIKE POLITICAL SCIENCE OR ART HISTORY—

NO, DAD, IT'S MORE THAN THAT—

IT'S SIMILAR TO HOW YOU WORK ON CONCRETE THINGS LIKE PHYSICS AND MATHEMATICS AS AN ENGINEER.

THINK OF IT THIS WAY—INSTEAD OF ENGINEERING AN AIRPLANE TO FLY, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IS LIKE GETTING THE FLIGHT CREW TO WORK TOGETHER TO COMPLETE A FLIGHT.

ECONOMICS
POLITICS
LAW

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IS MADE OF CONCRETE THINGS LIKE ECONOMICS, POLITICS, AND LAW, AND IT COMBINES THEM TO GET COUNTRIES TO WORK TOGETHER.

STUDYING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MAKES ME WANT TO BE AN AMBASSADOR TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY, OR WORK IN AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION LIKE THE

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

WELL...THEY'RE HONESTLY BORING AND NOT EXCITING THE WAY MY OTHER CLASSES ARE.

YOU KNOW...YOU'RE GOING TO STANFORD JUST LIKE YOUR SISTER...

WHERE SHE DID COMPUTER SCIENCE AND IS NOW WORKING AT GOOGLE, EATING SUSHI FOR LUNCH AND ROCK CLIMBING AFTERWARDS...

Google

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS COMPARING ME TO HER?
THAT'S NOT FAIR, BECAUSE WE'RE DIFFERENT PEOPLE.

I'M SORRY IF I MAKE YOU FEEL THIS WAY.
IT'S JUST THAT—YOUR SISTER IS VERY SUCCESSFUL AND RICH...
SINCE I DON'T KNOW MANY SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY, I ALWAYS BRING UP YOUR SISTER, BECAUSE SHE IS A VERY GOOD MODEL FOR YOU TO LOOK UP TO.

I UNDERSTAND YOU WANT ME TO BE SUCCESSFUL, BUT I DON'T NEED TO DO TECH OR HAVE TONS OF MONEY TO SUCCEED.
I DON'T NEED TO BE LIKE MY SISTER.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SEEMS LIKE SOMETHING YOU ENJOY, AS YOUR DAD. I WANT YOU TO FIND WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY, BUT I ALSO WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND WHERE I'M COMING FROM, AND WHY I'M SO FIXATED ON YOU HAVING A FINANCIALLY STRONG CAREER.

GROWING UP, MY FAMILY WAS POOR AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STABILITY WERE SCARCE. I JUST DON'T WANT YOU TO FACE THE SAME HARDSHIPS I DID.

THANKS DAD. I UNDERSTAND MORE WHY YOU ALWAYS FIXATE ON MONEY. I PROMISE I'LL KEEP AN OPEN MIND—BUT I'M GLAD TO HEAR THAT YOU'LL SUPPORT ME EVEN IF I DON'T CHOOSE SCIENCE OR TECH.

SO AN "AMBASSADOR" HUH? FANCY TITLE! MAYBE YOU'LL EAT SUSHI FOR LUNCH AND GO ROCK CLIMBING TOO...

DAD!



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TEACHING POINT #2 (TO PARENT): "USING 'MENTALIZATION' FOR PARENTAL SUPPORT"

YOUR CHILD FEELS LIKE SHE IS BEING COMPARED TO HER SISTER, BUT FROM YOUR PERSPECTIVE, YOU MAY JUST WANT TO SHOW HER WHAT YOU THINK IS THE BEST PATH TO SUCCESS. IT MAY FEEL NATURAL TO COMPARE YOUR CHILD AGAINST OTHERS IF THERE ARE NO DIVERSE EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS. HOWEVER, HOW WOULD YOU FEEL IF YOU WERE CONSTANTLY BEING COMPARED TO YOUR COWORKERS BY YOUR BOSS?

