

I believe in cooking from scratch.

A rewarding feeling comes when you start with nothing and finish with something homemade and scrumptious. You appreciate it a little more when you put the time and effort into it rather than buying it.

I believe that building true, long lasting relationships is much like cooking from scratch. Making something delicious gets messy and without all the right ingredients it will fail, but if you take your time and do it right the end result will be rewarding.

Some of my favorite childhood memories are the times I spent with my great grandmother "Ninny."

When I was younger, Ninny and I would start the day off in the kitchen. I loved everything about cooking with Ninny. I loved the time I spent with her, the conversations that we shared, and learning her cooking secrets.

I loved to cook noodles with her. About once a month, we would make homemade noodles from scratch together. I enjoyed everything from cracking the eggs open to the feeling of sticky, slimy dough running through our fingers while mixing it up.

The times spent actually making them, even the time waiting for them to dry and finally cutting them up were some of the best times of my childhood. I built an unforgettable, amazing relationship with my great grandmother and although I loved this time with her, things did not always work out.

There were times our relationship got messy. We did not always get along.

There were times we didn't even want to be around each other but no matter what we did we always forgave each other and worked through it. In the end we created a bond that would last a lifetime.

When the time came to move to college, I knew would have to start over and build many new relationships. I would be meeting new people, including the person I would be living with for the next nine months. I was nervous about building these relationships and wasn't sure if I knew how. I found myself thinking about Ninny and remembered our relationship. I remembered the ingredients it took to build that bond and the fun I had while doing it. I began to feel more anxious and excited. After moving to college and settling in, I started to build an amazing relationship with my roommate from scratch. Spending time with Ninny, cooking, laughing, and sharing our days together taught me many things.

It taught me the many ingredients it takes to make a relationship work, it taught me that things aren't always easy and sometimes things get messy, and, most important, it taught me never to stop trying. To start with nothing and have an end product that is unbelievable takes hard work, whether it is cooking or working towards building a relationship. It takes the right amount of time, the right ingredients, and isn't always fun to clean up but it will always be more valuable, this I believe.