

Guard Diamond DeShields

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On her relationship with Kahleah Copper

"Kah[leah]'s like my other half as far as like basketball goes. We call it like she's the two to my one. You say Diamond you say Kah. I think we've built on that in a way that has brought us closer together, both on and off the court. It's really a special relationship that you can have with somebody to just always know that that person has got your back, and not only that but she's like my accountability partner, and likewise me to her. When we're in the game and we're struggling it's like I always know Kah's going to be there to pick me up, she always knows I'm going to be there to pick her up. It's just really refreshing and really nice to have that with somebody. That's my sister and we just treat each other that way."

On what she's looking to add to her game this year

"That's what I'm all about. I feel like I'm blessed to have the offensive repertoire that I do have. Defensive as well. But for me this past offseason-I think a lot of what I've been working on is playing with my back to the basket. As a bigger guard, I think that's something that you just have to be able to utilize. I mean I had six post ups last season. I wasn't really playing down low at all. I know to be able to get some easy baskets around the rim would be obviously helpful. Every year you have to try to add on to your game because the scouting report is set. People like my coach [James Wade] told me last year, you're not a surprise anymore. Year one I came in, had a good year. Year two was like," "I'm not a surprise anymore, so what are you going to do that's going to overcome the scouting report?" "You have to add on to your game in order to be able to do that."

On how she's changed as a person

"I can't even really touch on the ways that I've grown. But a lot of what I've gained, especially over the course of this year is perspective in regards to being able to play the game of basketball. Being here in the WNBA. Being a black woman in America, and what that means. My perspective has grown and and expanded so much that I have so much appreciation for just being alive today. Just being able to get up and have a job, and be around people who I love and who love me back. There's so many things going on in the world that if you haven't had a shift in perspective just in 2020 alone, it's like you're not really paying attention. To be able to maintain a sense of humor, I mean that's at the core of who I am. I'm not really going to be the best version of myself if I can't wake up and smile and enjoy what I'm doing and crack a few jokes along the way. That's going to always be ingrained in the fabric of who I am as Diamond DeShields. But, there are a lot of things that you have to take seriously. So, just finding the balance between those two things but I'd say one of the biggest things for me it's been a change in perspective."