



Episode 1 Part 1 - Transcript

Hey friend, you're listening to The Nicole Walters Podcast. I'm a former six-figure corporate executive who woke up every morning feeling stuck in the life that I built for myself but using my corporate skills I took to the Internet and built a multi-seven-figure business, showing others how they can build a life they love. Now on this podcast, I share stories of being an entrepreneur, a mom to my three amazing girls and a wife to my crazy, cooky dancing hubbin. I've had a couple of viral videos too. So you know there's going to be a lot of laughs here. So whether you've seen me on my viral vids or on the Today Show or read about me in Forbes, this is the place where we can meet, share stories, share laughs, and share fun. I'm your best friend in your head. So sit back, listen close, and let's get started.

So let's talk about why I'm even doing this whole thing. Why on earth is there just another podcast to listen to? Well, in this season I want to introduce you to the principles I've been using to guide my life. I wasn't always a huge entrepreneur making multi-seven figures and having a full-time staff. While it's awesome to be able to build a business where I help people live a life they love and use their God-given gifts, it was complicated. Before that, I'm the child of immigrants who grew up in Washington DC. They didn't have much. My dad was a cab driver and my mom was a secretary at a boating insurance company. I was blessed to be able to go to some top schools. I started off in DC private schools and I worked my way up to awesome, awesome universities, but the reality was I slept on a couch until I was 12, there were many nights where I didn't have much and I was hungry and I woke up to roaches crawling all over me and I closed my eyes tightly hoping I could get back to bed quickly. I had days where I didn't know if I was going to eat, and there were nights where I woke up in the middle of the night knowing that my fridge was empty. I know that story doesn't sound unfamiliar. It's a hard-luck story, rags to riches, but the reality is none of those things would have changed if I didn't change.

After I got married, met my amazing husband, we were living a pretty good life. I was working a corporate job and I was a senior executive at 28, one of the youngest in my division. I loved what I did. I was working, helping build fortune 500 companies, turning them and their products into industry leaders. And it was so much fun. First Class flights, amazing dinners, using my knowledge and my industry expertise to make my company billions. But the reality was that job fed my family, but it didn't feed my soul and I knew that that wasn't all that I was. I had real gifts

that were worth something and I deserve to use them. So when I got older, I knew that I needed to leverage my college experience to get where I needed to go. And rising through the corporate ranks wasn't all that I was. There were times where I only had \$24 in my bank account and I would look at my husband and we'd say to ourselves, we're grateful that we have food in our fridge and we're grateful that we have gas in our tank, but if anything goes wrong, we're not going to make it. We're busy making sure that we're paying off our debt and living our best lives, but at the end of the day, it feels like we're always living paycheck to paycheck and all we really want is some breathing room. And that was when I said, I've got to get a side hustle. I started my blog, Natural Nicole, and it was awesome.

It was great to share knowledge about African American beauty products with people who were also looking for answers. I knew that I loved sharing answers, but you know what? I didn't hate my nine to five job. I just knew that I was about something more. And so that was when I started offering my blogger friends information about how to build their blog into a business. I mean, I did it for corporations all day. Why couldn't I do it for the everyday person? And boy did it work. It took off. Now that's what was happening in front of the scenes. That might be a little bit of why you may know me or see me or caught me on a viral video, but the reality is there was a lot happening behind the scenes. You can follow my journey at www.nicolewalters.com, you can sign up for my business products at www.1k1day.com. You can listen to other people's podcasts and you can follow me on social media and you'll catch all the business stuff and maybe even catch a little bit of fun family stuff, but the reality is everybody's little bit more complex than that.

There are things happening behind the scenes that no one knows about and there are principles that have helped guide me and help me grow, and that's what this podcast is about. It's the behind the scenes. It's the deeper story, there's more to it and I'm excited to share all of that with you guys here today. I want to make sure that in this podcast I am being honest, real and transparent because I want you to understand that nothing happens overnight, and I'm able to share with you the journey that it takes. I'm going to be doing that by leading each episode with a different principle that I've been applying during this very journey. I'm hoping that one of these principles will unlock your own success. Today, I want to start off by sharing a personal story of mine, one that changed my life and it led me to actually being right here on this podcast chatting with you and it's the story of how I became a mother of three girls in just 30 days. So if you think you need a break or if you need a snack, now's the time to grab it. So it's only going to take a couple more minutes, but turn up the volume. Lean in. We're going to get started.

It was in 2014. I'd been married a little over six years. I think it was closer to seven and my husband was this amazing guy. We met online on Ok Cupid back before it was too sketchy and we had a pretty awesome marriage at this point. The first three years were, man, isn't that marriage overall? I think that it's one of these things where we're like, oh yeah, dating. It was great, and then you get married and you're like, Whoa, you're in my stuff. You're touching my things. You're breathing my air. I think I love you, but oh my gosh, if you don't do these dishes. Right? It's just so crazy. Knowing how to date is so different from knowing how to be married,

but we made it work. We were disagreeing, but we just didn't understand what it meant to be married. We came into the marriage with two different definitions and we're just trying to find our footing, but oh my goodness, by year five, oh, we were in our sweet spot. By year six, the love was overflowing and I'd finally gotten really stable. I had my six-figure job and we had a little bit of extra income, even though we knew that things were tight, but we were at that place where I think most of us remember right when we got married and things were kind of working and our jeans still fit. We didn't have kids. We were going out for dinners, having fun, you know, finding little hobbies, things to do. It was that great place in our marriage. We were looking good. Oh, the late twenties it was a pretty good place and I remember on this October night, we just had date night, which frankly when you don't have kids and you're newly married, every day is basically date night. We were hanging out with each other and went out to dinner and afterward I said, hey, how about we grab some dessert? So my husband said to me, that sounds great. Yeah, let's go. So we went to go grab some crepes at this place called Sophie's. It's in Baltimore. I absolutely love it. And Sophie's was actually the shop that we went to for our very first date and living in Baltimore. We would always swing by there. We just love to go back. It was one of our favorite places and I'm kind of like a type A personality. I think it's worth noting. I liked doing my research, I like checking things out and for some reason this night, even though it was like nine o'clock, I didn't even check Yelp to see if Sophie's was open. I was like, let's just swing by there and you know, that's kind of how God works, right?

He moves and ordains our steps and sends us in the right direction even if we don't necessarily know if it makes sense because there's someplace we have to get and we were going to get there whether we liked it or not. So we're driving down this street in Baltimore, it's called Northern Avenue. And so I see this image and it's just bouncing up and down in the corner and it's so, so dark. I mean guys, this was at, this point it was probably 9:30 or 10 o'clock on a cold October night in Maryland. It was brisk. So I was like, we need to pull over. We need to pull over and we get to that corner or really close to Sophie's. I know he's focused on dessert, but as we get closer, I noticed that this isn't a dog at all. There was actually a woman standing in that shadow as well, and the woman's older and it was a small child. She was jumping up and down because it looked like she was counting. You know when you walk around and you try not to step on a crack and break your mother's back? You could see that this woman who was older look to be about in her fifties maybe even older than that. Whatever it was, you could see she was wearing a lot of the life she was living on her outside. She looked like she'd been through a lot. I'm trying not to get emotional here because I don't even know if I could ever tell the story and not get emotional.

This little girl was dirty, her clothing had smudges on it, and her shoes had holes, but her face was just a light. She was absolutely radiant. And I remember when my husband pulled over, this woman said hello and you know, my husband goes to give her some money. Now this woman was holding a sign that says, you know, I'm hungry, please help. And he hands her a couple of bucks and when he goes to hand her the money, she takes it and then it looks over at, the little girl and says, now what do we say? And this little girl looks up, she looks to be about two years old, she's really, really small. And she says, thank you. And as she says, thank you. I noticed

that she's missing some of her front teeth. And I say to the woman, oh, she's missing her teeth. And she says, yeah, she has to go to the dentist and get it out. And I was like, wow, you're going to the dentist, you're such a brave little girl. The girl was shy like most young kids are, but she started beaming this big smile and I just saw her whole face light up. I didn't even know it could get any brighter.

I said, okay, well you guys stay warm. Have a good night. God bless you. But I could feel something happened within me. Something had changed. There was a pivot. We continued driving, and we went to Sophie's, but everything was different. Sophie's was closed and had been closed for about 45 minutes or so. And I kinda thought to myself, why didn't I look up the time? And of course they're closed, it's nighttime. What was I even thinking? So we start to head back and we turn around the corner and head back home and we have to pass by that corner again. And let me be honest about something. I remember thinking to myself, and God forgive me for it. I remember thinking, please God, don't let them still be on that corner. Don't let them be there. Because if they are, I'm going to have to do something. And I don't know if you guys have ever been in that place before where you just know that once you know something, you can't unknow it. Once something enters your world, you have to act. And for me, this feeling of not just being able to drive by again was something I didn't want to lean into. I didn't want to do it. I just wanted to go home and find something in the fridge to have for dessert for my husband. I wanted to finish date night. I just didn't want to have to act. Not that night. But sure enough we see them there and I tried my best not to make eye contact. I remember thinking, just don't look at the corner Nicole. Just don't look at the corner. And my husband drives by and we don't even make it to the next stop sign before I'm doing that, hitting his arm thing again and I'm saying we have to go back, we have to go back. So we turn around and we go back and as we're driving back, it's only a couple seconds before we pull up to them.

And I'm thinking to myself, what am I even going to say to these people, what am I even doing? There are barely any cars around cause it's night and it's late and I don't even know what I'm doing. What am I even going to say to them? And I gotta say, any moms or dads who are listening to this. You know that feeling you get, that mom feeling deep in your gut, when you see a situation and you just know it's not quite right and you can't put your finger on it, but you're like, something here is not adding up. It's not good and, and something's gotta change. I have to step in. It's kind of like that. Something in my gut that said, this little girl is out just a little too late and it's a little bit too cold and I just need to do something about this. We pull up next to her and all I could think was, are you guys hungry? And the mom says, yes, actually we really are. And I said, okay, well you know, I don't know what's open right now, but I think there's a subway down the street. Could I maybe get you guys some dinner? And she says, yeah, that'd be great. That'd be really great. So I'm like, well, come on with us and hop in the car and bring your bags with you and then we'll get going. And in the back of my head, all I could think was, this little girl doesn't even have a car seat. But you know, it's interesting how in those moments, those details don't seem to matter much. You just wanted to get some food into their belly. So they get into the car and we pull up and the only thing open at this hour is Subway. I feel like Subway never closes.

So we go in and they're walking in and you know, I'm like, get whatever you want, you know, whatever you need. And the woman looks at me and she says, you know, I have two more at home. And I was like, okay, well I guess we should get something for them too. Just get whatever you want. So she's taking her order, and the little one is standing there and I squat down and I get eye contact with her and I say, hey, so what's your name? And she looks at me and I'll never forget hearing her voice say, Ali. And all I could think at that moment is that I have to do whatever I can to help this little girl. I don't know what that means. I don't know what it looks like, but I need to help them. So we finished the order and when we're done, the woman stands on the sidewalk outside of the Subway and she's like, thank you so much. And she turns to walk home and I look at them both and say, Hey, uh, we could give you a ride back. Now if you've ever seen my husband on social media at all, you'll know that he's a playful guy, but he's kind of a serious matter of fact guy and he's quiet. God blessed this man for dealing with me as his wife, man. He goes along with anything I put him through. And I am so fortunate that God really matched me with the right person because he gives me the space to be as crazy as I want to be. As long as I respect when he puts his foot down and says, okay, Nicole enough. This is one of those times where he shot me those eyes and said, Nicole what are you doing? And I just kind of shrugged my shoulders and gave him the please, I'm sorry, I can't, you know, and they look back and they're like, yeah, we'd like a ride if that's okay with you. So they get back in the car and I drive them back to their home and I call it a home because that is where their family lived, but it wasn't much, it was a small one story row house in Baltimore. They kind of looked like townhouses, but they've been split into several apartments. And on the first floor, it's government provided housing.

So I walk them up the door and I walk up to the door and the one thing I noticed right away was that the home was packed with stuff and it wasn't super clean and I just couldn't figure out when I was looking around where a little kid would play. It was just so much going on. It was pretty apparent that things weren't right here. I couldn't believe that there were any more people that lived in that house, let alone a family of four. The mother opens a door and I step inside and she screams the name of the other two girls and I wait a second, I kind of look towards the area that she was just calling them from and the little one runs in and just kinda scurries around looking for some toy. And then the two girls come out and they are gorgeous, just gorgeous. One was 11 at the time and the other one looked to be about 14. The best way I could describe them was three beautiful girls, but they looked like wilted flowers bent over, not smiling, looking at the ground. They didn't make eye contact and their mother said thank the nice lady for bringing us sandwiches. Whether you want to call it partially just being a teenager or maybe even lacking joy. I mean they say in unison, thank you. A classic teenager response. And I'm like, you're welcome girls. You know, you're welcome. And I didn't know what to say. I mean I'm old. I felt awkward. What are you, what are kids even like nowadays? What do, how do I connect with an 11-year-old and a 14-year-old? All they do is Snapchat and listen to rap. I don't know what to do with this. So I'm grasping at straws for something more to say. And I'm just like, uh, do you guys like makeup and hair and stuff? I have this little blog thing that I do and you know, if, if you like, I got some stuff I can bring to you and maybe if you're just into that and they kind of lift their

heads up and they look at me maybe doing a little half smile and they're like, yeah, yeah, we do like that stuff. And I was like, okay, well great. I'd love to bring some stuff back to you tomorrow. And then the mom's like, sure, sure. And so I look at the mom and I say, is there anything else that you need? I mean, since I'm coming back and she looks at me and says, well, we could really use some groceries. And I said, no problem. You know, I'll be back tomorrow.

So I say goodbye to the family and I walked down the stairs and when I get into the car, look at my husband and he can tell something is up. He can tell that I've pivoted. I say to him, Hey, so we have a choice right now. I know what it's like to grow up poor and I know what it's like to have people promise you that they're going to help and fall through every single time. Here's the truth. We can walk away from this situation right now and we would not be the first ones to do it. We can walk away and never come back. We would just be another one on the list. They wouldn't even remember us after a while. But if we say we're going to come back, then we can never ever leave. These kids are used to people leaving them and I do not want to be another person who does that. My husband looks at me and he says, Nicole, you can bring them groceries. He's so matter-of-fact I mean, he didn't even think much about it. I was like, okay, thanks. I'll take it. I'm not going to, I'm not going to complain. I'm going to shut up and roll with it.

So the next day I bring them groceries and then the day after that I pick up the girls and I take them to school. And the week after that I bring them dinner and the weeks after that I start bringing them to my home and helping them study. And soon after I'm in their school and meeting all their teachers. And over the course of a month, what started off as just a lucky meeting on the side of the street, turns into a full mentorship of these three girls where I'm just trying to help support them. And I'm kind of like a big sister just being in their lives and I don't know what my goal was. I Dunno really what I was thinking. I just, I just wanted to make sure that they knew that someone saw them. I wanted them to know that somebody sees them because kids who aren't seen, they don't feel like they belong to anything. They questioned their worth and then they just do whatever and I just knew that if they knew that somebody saw them and if somebody acted like they mattered, then they would act like they mattered. It's all I really wanted to do, so I just wanted to make sure that they were seen, so 30 days into knowing them or a little over 30 days, I went to go do my regular drop off. I pick up the girls from school and make sure that they got some dinner, help them with their homework, and then I'd take them home again. I'd been doing this routine for a while and it's starting to feel pretty regular and I go to drop them off and their mom is acting a little weird. Maybe even a little erratic. And she says to me as I'm getting ready to walk back to my car like I always do. Hey uh Nicole, I need to talk to you. I need to talk to you. So we step outside and we get into the car and she looks at me and she says, Nicole, I need to tell you something. I'm like, oh, all right. I don't know what that means. I don't know what that entails, but okay. And she says to me, Nicole, I use drugs.

So this is the part of the story where I have to admit that I'm really, really naive. I mean, some of you guys are probably already like, of course, Nicole, obviously the situation wasn't together. What did you think? Well, listen, I'm the person who literally thought that Milli Vanilli was real. Okay. My mind was blown. Okay. Like I am telling you, girl, you know it's true is my favorite

song. So like I legit did not know. It was like, bless my heart. I'm just one of those people. So I'm sitting here and this woman is telling me that she uses drugs. I could feel my heart drop into the pit of my stomach because now, all the little signs made sense. All of it suddenly was like a flashback playing in my head and everything was coming together. But then I was like, oh crap, what did I get myself into? What's my husband going to say? Oh, oh no, am I safe right now? Wait, what's going on? It was almost like, and I'm a big believer that God doesn't show you everything you need to know all at once because it might actually affect your decision making. You may run away. And if I'd known this going into it, who's to say, what I would've done? Probably would have run away. But needless to say, she told me this and the first thing I could muster, the first thing I could say was, well, okay, well what type of drugs? And she says, and I can kind of laugh at it now because it wasn't really funny in the moment, but she's like, I do a little bit of heroin. And I tried to stay clean off the heroin. And so when I'm clean off the heroin, I'm only doing a little bit of crack. Cause like a little bit of crack is a thing. Right? Jeez, I just got this sort of like, okay, oh my gosh, well are you clean right now? And she's like, well I try to be and I'm telling you, this conversation goes left super quick. So I'm like, well what do you know? I mean are you doing better? Are you in treatment? Like what does this mean? You know? And she says, well the reason I'm telling you this is because I'm going to jail and I freeze. I look straight ahead over the steering wheel and then I look at her and it's almost as if I was trying to search her face to see if she was telling me the truth cause this wasn't a joke and she was definitely telling me the truth and all I could say to her was, well, okay, what's going to happen to the girls?

And she says, well I can sign my check over to the boyfriend or the state might take them. And it was in that moment that I said to myself, okay, this is more than just mentorship. I'm going to have to make a choice, whether it's now two months from now, three months from now, I'm going to have to come to a place where I'm going to have to decide if I'm willing to step in and help these girls completely and be there for them for whatever stretch of time, whatever that means. If it's parenting them for a stretch, supporting them for a stretch, this is more than I ever thought and I have got to be prepared to step in because this situation is unstable. So I said to her, okay, well you know what? Let me see what I can do. I'm going to talk to my husband, I'm going to see if there's something we can do to make sure we can still help with getting the girls to school, things like that, because it may just be a lot for your boyfriend to take on. And I feel like maybe I could help a little bit. And so she looks at me and she's like, okay, well that'd be good if you could do that, that'd be good. And I said, yeah, you know what I mean? Maybe you know, we have a lot of space in our house and it might just be easier if the girls stay with us at least during the week, just until you get out. And she was like, yeah, I mean, I guess we could do that. She'd never been to her house before, but I guess she was okay with it. And I was like, well yeah, knowing in my head I was just like, please God, speak to my husband's heart because he's going to be like, oh my goodness. So she's like, all right, cool, cool.

I remember going home and telling my husband what was going on and that the situation had escalated and this is what I think needed to happen. And so he said, okay, well let's figure out what we can do. And so he goes ahead and he figures out how we can make it work and just

make sure that we can handle their medical affairs and their school affairs and all that good stuff. And sure enough, we made it work. I remember at the time when I told their mom that we were willing to step in and watch the girls while she served her time, the thing she asked me was two things. One, will I still get to keep my check? Yeah, you'll get to keep your check. And two, this still won't make you their mom, you know? Right. And I told her, you're right, I won't officially be their mom. And she said, okay. Yeah, no, all right. So 30 days in and just a matter of moments, I became a mom to three girls.

Now, it may not have been clear as day at that point, but I did know from that moment on based on what I'd seen, experienced and what my husband and I discussed that I was never going to turn back. About a year after she went in, when she was finally released and she came out, it was very, very clear because the girls found out and they looked at me and the first thing they said was, Miss Nicole, please don't make us go back. We want to stay with you. I looked at my husband at this point, I gotta tell you, we had a routine. We had joy. I invested in potty seats. And any parents know that once you convert, everything over to potty seats, that's commitment. We have baby clothes everywhere. We had toys. I mean it was at a point where I could not imagine my world without these girls in it. We looked at each other knowing that we had a lot to take on and that we probably couldn't stay in our tiny home in Baltimore City and we probably would need to get a different school district and the little one was going to need to start school soon. We had to figure it out. We have all of our family conversations in the open, so we all sat down and had a family meeting and we all looked at other and we said, what do we want to happen here? And the girl said we want to stay with you? And we said, we wanted to stay with you too, so let's go talk to your mom. We sat down and talked to their mom and their mom agreed. There's a better school district near you guys and I'm sure your home probably has a little bit more room and definitely more food.

We all agreed this was what was right and this is what we needed to do. After that, I looked at my husband, I said, we're going to need to move and he's like, Nicole, this is getting real. And I was like, don't worry, I'll figure it out. I'll work and I'll hustle and I'll make it happen and I think that it was around this time that most of you who are listening, who may have met me before, seen me on social media. Who have been following my story as I become an entrepreneur and launch my own businesses. This might have been when we first met. I was working my nine to five corporate job as a senior executive and loving it, but also realizing that I wasn't using all of my God-given gifts to serve people and it was in that time that I knew that if we were going to get our girls full time, if we were going to move into the suburbs and have a home where they could each have their own room, know that they're wanted and build our family, that I would need to quit my job.

I had a three-year-old that needed me full time. I had a family now. We all needed to be together. I had a kid going to college and in just two years, another one going to college. My whole life had changed in just a matter of a few months and I needed to make sure that I was bringing in the revenue to support this family. We were not going to go into debt behind this chance meeting. I also needed to make sure that I had the time to love this family. I needed to

better align with my purpose for my own inner calling and I needed to glorify God. And so it was in that moment that everything changed and I knew that I needed to pivot and it was then that I decided I needed to have my quit day. And that is a story of how my family came to be, but there's so much more to it. And this story is the one that led up to the big moment where I went live online in front of 10,000 people. I called up my boss and I quit my job and that's where I want to start our next episode.

I want to tell you how I launched my business, how I made \$11,000 in just three weeks prior to calling my boss and quitting live. I want to tell you how this very video went viral within 24 hours and it was watched by over a hundred thousand people. It was absolutely crazy and I can't wait to share every single moment what you saw in front of the screen and what happened behind it, but before I go, I want you to know this. If there's nothing else that you take from this episode, just remember, no matter what your situation is like whenever you're feeling low, remember that God is speaking about you in rooms that you are not in at the time when you got your first job offer, there was a conversation while you were at home wondering whether or not you would get the job when you got proposed to there was a guy going out and buying that ring for months in advance. Always remember that things are moving on your behalf even when you can't see them.

Thanks for listening. I can't wait to chat with you soon. Thanks so much for listening, friend. If you enjoy this podcast, head over to NicoleWalters.com I'd love for us to stay in touch, so make sure you drop your email address so I can send you inspiration, business details, and the occasional funny story and because I'm so generous, there might even be a selfie in the mix. Thanks again. Make sure you subscribe and come back soon.