



## Episode 15 - 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.

Hi, friend. So, in our last chat we talked about being perfectionists and how that is keeping us from doing all the things that we've been called to do. But in this chat. I promised that I would get real and super real. Realer than normal, and I'm going to talk to you about something that I have literally never discussed and anywhere before. This was my worst day in business. And when I say it was my worst day, I mean it was everything going wrong, all at one time in a way that I don't think I'll ever forget. Partly because of how it came to pass and mostly because of the aftermath and what happened to me that changed me forever. Now, this wasn't that long ago and what makes this a perfect time to chat about it was it was also March. It was March of 2017 and this day and this story I'm going to tell you right now, you guys know about me and my pit stain moments, right?

Well, this embarrass me, it frightens me. It brings up bad feelings. This is really uncomfortable to talk about, and most of that is because I have to admit that I had a really bad anxiety disorder. Now, if you're not familiar with what anxiety feels like or if this is something you haven't heard of... A lot of people have this and it's something that's often minimized or undiagnosed or something that is masked because the person might be really good at covering it up because there are super effective person. They're an overachiever, they get it done, but sometimes overachieving is the way that people manage their anxiety disorder. If I can just plan for everything, if I can just control everything around me, if I can just fix it, well then maybe my anxiety will stay at bay. Maybe I won't feel that awful sweaty palm feeling and the flip of my stomach and maybe all of those things will go away if I can just get a handle on the things around me. But we all know that's not how life works, right? You can plan a perfect day and you

better believe that's going to be the day that your baby throws up on you. You can figure out everything for your business and for your launch, and that's going to be the day that the wif goes out, right? Because that's just life. Life happens. And when your body and your mind responds to it in a way that's almost extreme in a way where it feels like every moment is life or death. Well, you may have an anxiety disorder and I certainly had one and it was bred from years of growing up in poverty. When you're growing up in poverty and you don't know when your next meal is gonna come or you're worried about whether or not your parents have everything figured out or if you think you might come home and your stuff's going to be evicted on the curb... it lends itself to a mindset where you feel like you always have to prepare for the worst.

And when something does actually go wrong, it makes me wonder whether or not it's going to get even worse than that. And growing up like that, even after things change around you, doesn't necessarily mean that your heart or your mind have caught up yet. And that's where I've been for the past couple of years and especially my first few years of entrepreneurship. I lived in a lot of anxiety, so much so that anxiety had become a fond friend of mine. I was used to allowing anxiety to help drive me. Some of my best things that I've built in my life businesses, my academy, 1K1DAY, we're built from a place of anxiety. Sure, a purpose, a drive, a God given mission. But anxiety is what kept me up at night to figure out how to html code and to work out my graphics and to record videos. It was anxiety saying, 'hey, I'm going to make sure that my bills are paid. I'm going to make sure that my kids are fed. I'm going to make sure, because if I don't, everything could come crashing down'. Now I want to let you know, for those of you guys were out there saying you share some of those same concerns... well, there's nothing wrong with being concerned about what's happening with you and your family. That's actually totally normal. But the way that anxiety works is - it is way more extreme than that. It's feeling like if a launch doesn't work out, that you might die... that your heart's going to race, that it's going to stop... feeling overwhelmed, like you're losing your breath. It's being frightened that it's so much more than what it really is, which is just a fleeting moment, which is something you can recover from. Heck, most of us have recovered from worse. Anxiety tells you that you're just never going to make it from that moment. And the time that anxiety reared its ugly head worse than ever for me was in March of 2017. My business is thriving at this time. I'd been doing the entrepreneur thing for about two years. I was really getting the hang of it and boy, I was booking these amazing speaking gigs. And as a matter of fact, I had an opportunity to speak on stage with my dear friend Chalene Johnson. And this was at her event called Marketing Impact Academy and I was so excited about it. Partly because I knew her crew. This was a friendly group of people, 2000 people on stage and I loved to speak. I love it. It's like, I mean, if you guys have ever been to one of my events, you know there's no way you can look at me on stage and not say, 'that girl is in the zone, she is meant to do this.' I love engaging with people from the stage. It is one my favorite things to do and this was one of my favorite places to do it. I got to go to sunny California, be with my great friends and it was just an awesome thing I've been looking forward to for months.

And I was so grateful that Chalene was, you know, letting me on her stage to talk to her people who are some of the best people out there and just really teach. And even better for this opportunity, Chalene and her team were allowing me to share 1K1DAY academy with her crowd. This crowd of 2000 people - to be able to say, 'look, this is what I've built. And 1K1DAY can change your business and it can change your life and I am so excited to tell you all about it.' And I could not wait to get on this stage and do exactly this.

And as a matter of fact, I'd even started shifting and changing and preparing my business in anticipation of this event. One of the changes I made, because we had well crossed the \$1 million mark, was that I'd started hiring my own full time team. Prior to that, I'd had some vendors, some contractors, I'd worked with an agency to kind of fill in the gaps and make sure that I didn't absorb a lot of the expenses with building a business. But I knew that it was time for me to get my own people on board who were working with me 24/7 and dedicated to my people 24/7. So as part of that transition, I started training a couple of people to come on board and our main person who was going to be my new head of operations, she was just about ready. So about 24 hours before the event, I actually terminated the contract with my previous vendors. I said, 'hey agency, we're good to go. My person's all trained up and ready to roll. We're not going to need your services anymore. It was so appreciative. Thank you so much.' Guys, I felt awesome. I'm getting on this plane to go speak in front of all these people. I was going to be welcoming a bunch of new rich friends into the fold, and I was getting ready to launch and become even more of a business owner with my own team. I mean, I was riding cloud nine. So I get ready to board the plane headed to California and right before takeoff - I'll never forget this. I'm sitting in my seat and my phone rings. It's my new head of operations.

Yeah, I think it's a little weird, but maybe she's checking in to make sure everything's all set before we go. I go ahead and answer the phone. I'm like, 'hey, what's going on? I'm just boarding right now. Headed over to California, I'm super excited because I got the event. we're going to have a lot of people on board, so what's going on... you ready to roll?' 'Hey, Nicole. I just wanted to let you know that I'm going to be terminating effective immediately. I'm sorry. You know, unfortunately, my dad's health is declining. I got a lot of things going on at home. I just can't do this anymore. This isn't going to work for me.' Um, okay. I mean, I just terminated agency. I need someone to watch the inbox. I guess I'll send an email out. I guess we'll figure everything out. We'll figure out all the pieces. 'Yup. Okay. Nicole, I'm really, really sorry. I'm really sorry about this, but I just, I don't have any choices right now.' Okay. Well, I hope everything gets better. I'll pray for you. Okay. Um, all right. Bye.

My heart sank. I didn't even have time to check in with my husband to let him know what happened because the plane started taking off for the next six hours on that long flight from the East coast to the West coast. I had to sit in anxiety because I knew as of that moment my team was non existent. I was the only person responsible for managing a business that was currently serving thousands of entrepreneurs, generating over \$1 million, getting over 200 emails a day in an inbox, logins, customer service questions, emails from my rich friends, social media, managing a course... AND when I landed in California, I was responsible for welcoming any rich

friends that were interested in coming into the fold of the business! How on Earth would I manage? I just want to let you guys know this is like walking into a Target and there being only one employee.

This was bad. I remember landing in California and thinking to myself, 'I can't quit this event, but I'm definitely not going to be able to make this happen. What is this going to happen? What's this gonna do to my revenue? Do I even know all my logins? Am I gonna be able to manage this? I have to change passwords. What if I have to get security? Is everything okay? And why, what happened? Is se okay? Is her family okay? A million things are going through my mind. So, the first thing I did was call the agency back and say, 'hey, do you guys have capacity? Can you guys take me back on? Because everything's changed and this is a bind.' The first thing that agency said was, 'you were one of our biggest clients. We actually back-filled on new clients in anticipation of you leaving, we actually don't have capacity to take you back on. We're sorry.' I called my husband and told him what happened. He's like, 'well, you can take it one step at a time. You've got to just focus on the thing in front of you, which is getting on this stage.' He was right. And so I did. I stopped what I was doing and I just decided to focus on my speech. But I got to tell you the whole time I was thinking of this and my heart was still racing, my hands were so sweaty. In the back of my head all I could think was, 'nobody's watching the inbox, nobody's at home.' It's like going from having your parents living down the street, your grandparents on the other side, your spouse at home... to being a single mom. I was responsible for all the jobs by myself. And while I was focused on my speech thinking, how am I gonna deliver something that's really going to serve?

All I could think was, 'this speech isn't good enough. These people aren't going to like me. How can I go on stage and tell these people that I know how to build a business? Right now I'm running this thing myself. I'm a fraud. I'm a fake. I'm not good at any of this!' That's right. What you're hearing is imposter syndrome. I mean, the reality is these sorts of things happen in business all the time. People quit, people leave. People do bad jobs at their work. Mistakes happen. Errors happen. So you're building by yourself and you don't have a team. All these things are really, really normal. We don't tend to talk about them much. Entrepreneurs and all the internet always want to play the shiny role. Heck, moms always played the shiny role on the internet. Have you guys seen those moms breastfeeding with perfect hair? Yeah, right. That's what I'm talking about. It's just not reality. And the fact that it's something you're facing - challenges in your business, whether it's with your team or with managing and balancing everything yourself that is real - that is normal. And the fact that it scares you and that you don't know how to handle it or you don't know how to manage it, that's normal, too. And no one says that. And so in that moment I realized I had to get on stage and tell something that wasn't really where my head was. My head was in the fact that I don't have answers right now and I can't figure this out. And above all else, I need help. There's nothing like being put into the humble position of knowing that you need help to really bring out the best in you. I realized that I needed to get on that stage anyways, and I did.

My speech was a special one that day because I did share part of my kids' story, the story that I shared in our very first chat - pivot points. Well, I shared some of that story from stage. I gotta tell you, the combination of that and knowing where I was then, thinking of my children and knowing that they didn't even know the full picture of where our business was now, it almost wrecked me. I was on stage in front of those 2,000 people and I started crying. The tears were coming down. It was tough. And for those of you guys who aren't professional speakers, it's actually kind of rule number one. You're not supposed to lose it onstage. You gotta keep control of yourself because you're the one responsible for taking people on a journey. I managed to gather myself, but I gotta tell you - minutes later I was up in my room and I will never forget crumbling to the floor, leaning my back against the bed and just calling my husband up and saying, 'I'm no good. I've fallen apart.' I get word soon after... I managed to welcome over a hundred people into the academy. That somehow, even though it's all a blur, I mean I couldn't tell you to this day what I said on that stage... that it spoke to some people. That some of my returns, even some of you guys listening right now met me that day for the very first time and we've become friends since that moment and I say all this to let you know, this part of the story is that even when we feel like a hot mess express inside, even when it feels like we are falling apart in all aspects of our lives... understand that we all have our own messes and odds are somebody who's looking at you as their example of how they can pull it together. This goes back to granting yourself some grace. Go easy on yourself as you tried to figure it out because little do you know, someone's watching and admiring you.

So, my husband tells me again, take it one piece at a time. And that's exactly what I did. I started answering emails. I got in there and tried to serve people. I managed the inbox. I said to myself, 'well, what are my priorities? What can I afford to let go right now?' As I figured out the other pieces, I asked around to hire some help and I got some new people on board. And then in about six weeks, things look better than they did before. But here's the thing that I learned from that moment in that challenge and the thing that I want to pass on to you today - even though I managed to figure that out after curling up and crying... after I got my answers, after I got it figured out, I also said to myself, 'never again will I let anxiety paralyze me.'

I absolutely got to a point where I said, enough is enough. This, this thing, this anxiety, this trauma, this experience, this past, this hindrance, this mindset challenge... today is the last day. I say this to you to let you know that the only difference between the two of us, friend, seriously, the only difference between me and you is that I just do. I think about it. I make a plan and I go for it. I'm still scared, that anxiety does bring up the nerves are there, but I decide and then I do. What I did after this event was that I got therapy. I got help! I did an intensive, I sat down and I said, 'I have got to work through this thing' and I'm proud to say I haven't had a moment of extreme anxiety since March of 2017. I kicked this thing because I did the work, but I was scared the whole way. But I always tried to keep a vision that on the other side, even more is possible.

Mental challenges are normal part of growth. People will paint a pretty picture. All the Instagram memes will tell you to overcome, push past, disregard, strengthen up. But the reality is,

sometimes you need help and sometimes that help is prayer or mentorship, friends or your spouse... but also be aware that sometimes that help is therapy and that that's a valuable resource. Because making the decision to seek support for a healthy brain is the same as getting a trainer to seek support for a healthy body. You deserve it. You deserve to spoil yourself with some good therapy. And speaking of growth, I'm super excited to share with you that I went from being paralyzed on the stage, frightened in my worst moment of business, to this weekend, the weekend that you're listening to this - hosting hundreds of rich friends live in Atlanta for my very own event. That's right. After everything that happened, I'm hosting my own rich friends for my own event here. And I'm going to be on stage the whole time for three days.

Teaching, encouraging, giving them lessons about how to build a business that actually works and sustainable in a corporate way. And I'm doing that without any anxiety, without any fear... because God is so good and anything is possible. If He can do it for me, He can do it for you, but you do have to decide and then go for it. Now, next week we're going to talk about what it looks like when you decide to go for it. Talking about thinking big and how I started making those shifts to the side that I didn't want to play small anymore, that I deserved to go big and I wasn't going home and I can't wait to pass this on to you because I think it's going to make everything look brighter and more possible, more accessible. When you get these tools to start thinking big, there isn't anything that you can't do. Thanks so much for holding this space for me. I really enjoy our time.

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