



Season 3, Episode 4 - Transcript

Letting Go

Nicole: [00:00:00] Hey, y'all I am so excited about our chat. So even having every single week, these are good. I mean, if you are just tuning in for the first time, make sure you go back and listen to our last episodes. They have been just dynamic and full of information. Honestly, I always talk about how social media is living life in black and white. And what's great about these conversations is that they're full color, you know, we're able to dive in deeper, share more, and, um, it's just been really great chatting with you guys and learning and sharing and all the good stuff. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Now, uh, recently we've started sort of our, I don't want to call it the new format, but just keeping it kind of spicy. So this isn't just storytime situation and our chats. Now we're handling a little bit of Q and a, so you guys are asking me amazing, incredible questions that I've been so excited to give you answers for whether it is the tough talks or, and things that you're dealing with in your life or your family or your business.

Um, or just asking me questions about what you've seen online and you want to know more and, you know, I always aim to be as [00:01:00] transparent as possible while still respecting my boundaries and my family's boundaries. And then also making sure that I'm always sharing with you what I do know, uh, when I know it, because oftentimes people have a tendency to share their scabs and not wait until they're scars, you know, and I always like to make sure I have a full understanding of what's happening before I get out there. So it's great because these questions are really helping, I think, deepen our relationship, but also help everyone get a clear picture of not just what it looks like to build a business and manage a family and grow as an individual in this world, which is Lord knows what we're all trying to do, but also, um, hopefully improve all of our lives.

So I appreciate all of you. And I'm so grateful that you're here week after week and this week's chat. Oh, my word is so, so good. So, well obviously kickoff with little Q and a, and we'll talk a little bit about not making yourself content, but then we're going to chat because we have a special guest now, you know, I don't do a lot of interviews here but [00:02:00] I really only ever

want to introduce people to you that I think have valuable stories, not just valuable names, not just valuable accomplishments, but real messages that I think are going to add value to your life. And there are so many different podcasts you can listen to that are playing on who's the big fancy pants person, but honestly, we all have a worth in this world. We all have experiences that we've been delivered from by God's grace that we can share from. And that's what I'm excited to share with you.

So today's guest is incredible. I'll let you learn a little bit more about them later. Someone I ran into randomly here in Los Angeles because the city is full of talent and full of stories. And all I could think was you have got to come on here and talk to my people. Um, my friends would love you, and there's just so much to do that you've been through that can really, really help them where they are today. So stick around for that instead of our usual story time. Um, I'm going to have someone special on here who's going to just blow your minds.

But before I do that, I wanted to answer some questions from y'all because you are amazing. You're always following me on Instagram at @NicoleWalters. And if you know, I always post the link up there. So you guys can leave me a message at any time and you can leave me a voicemail. And then if you leave a voicemail, I may answer your question here on the podcast. And there's no limit to what the questions are. So, I mean, honestly you can hop on there and leave whatever you want. And, um, I just try to get to them when I can get to them. So, uh, this question came in from Jamie and I'm so excited about it because it's a business question, which is so fun. And I also think it'll help a lot of you guys. So let's hear what Jamie had to say.

Jamie: Hi Nicole, my name is Jamie and I do taxes. I work at a family practice. It's my parents. And. Two of my daughters and one of my daughter's friends and year-round, it's just my parents, me and my oldest daughter and the other two girls. Um, we've just taken them on this year and we don't really have work for them year round, but we would love for them to come back next year.

And so we don't really want to lose them. So we're kind of trying to figure out what we can do. Um, either a way for them to, they can, they could use our office space, but maybe there's some work that they could do by themselves to support themselves, but then still be available to come back to us next year. Our practice is in a retirement community and so my dad was thinking, well, maybe they could offer some elder care services or something like that. Um, we've even thought about, um, paying for them to go to school and get more education since they are very young girls. Um, and then also I just like five minutes ago was thinking that maybe they could even offer, uh, you know, learn or become qualified notary signing agents. I'm currently a notary and I hate it, but, um, I know notary signing agents make a whole lot more money than just a regular notary and it could be something that would be beneficial and our job in the tax field anyways, cause sometimes we have clients who need things to be notarized.

And so anyways, I'm just curious if you had any feedback on what these girls could do the other nine months out of the year when we don't have taxes for them to do. Thank you.

Nicole: So I love this question and I think a lot of us who are business owners or looking to take on interns or someone who can help support our work can understand and relate to this problem. And as a business owner, myself, as the founder of Inherit learning company, which is my e-commerce company, you can learn more about that Inheritlearning.com.

We deal with this all the time. And I think one thing we can all relate to is if you find someone great, you don't want to lose great talent. It is hard to manage people and it is hard to keep people on board. So if you find someone who's excellent, you want to keep them, and I can understand that, but because we all run businesses, we can't just pay you for sharpening pencils and looking good around the office. So if you're saying that you have, what's known as a company that has seasonality or that is cyclical, meaning that our business comes in in different seasons. Like maybe we, we peak during Christmas or we peak during tax season. Well, I want to let you know that person. That is an issue in your business itself.

You want to make sure you have a business that's able to generate revenue year round. So that's the thing that needs fixed if you will. And the ticket to that might be some of these employees that you want to keep on. Now, in this particular situation with Jamie, I love hearing that she's trying to nurture a younger generation to be able to learn some skills to hopefully stay in the business and maybe continue on themselves. So Bravo, Jamie, I love your giving and gracious heart. Uh, here's what I recommend for you. I think that you have a great opportunity to use these young, brilliant tech savvy people to start bringing in more business into what you have right now. So a great place for them to stand is social media. They can be gathering clients, building out email lists, tightening up websites.

They can be working on establishing your social media, building up a storyline around your brand, and generally helping grow your business and establish your clients all year round. And outside of that from a more tactical standpoint, I think it would a great idea for them to become notaries, especially since you're located within a retirement community. There is a constant need, especially around state planning for people to come in and notarize.

So I think that's a great idea for them to have as a back pocket talent, particularly if it's something you want to get off of your plate, cause you hate it. So I think that's a great, great idea in terms of more tactical skill, but I think there's a great opportunity here for you to kind of allow them to leverage some of their natural young people, talents to help bring and grow your business into 2022. So if you know that you have some interns that you're sitting around and saying, what can they do? Think outside the box y'all, don't think just about what you're doing every single day that you may want to delegate, but can't because they're not as qualified, think about what their skills are that they have in house and how you can apply those to your business. So that's my advice, Jamie. I think it'll work out great and feel free to follow up because I can't wait to hear.

So we have another question that came in via DM from Quanda. So I'm going to go ahead and just read her question here and, uh, and give you guys an answer. So Quanda wants to know she's been following my health journey on social media and she wants to know how did you do it. How did you finally get the willpower together to say, I am going to create change in my life. I am going to drop a couple extra pounds and I'm going to really make something happen. So I feel better. And I look better.

Quanda, thank you so much for asking. I appreciate it. I talk a little bit about my health journey online. Um, infrequently, you guys know that first and foremost biggest disclaimer, I am not a health expert. I am not a doctor. I am not a nutritionist and I'm not trying to play in those waters because your life to me is more important than getting advice on your body from an influencer. So all I will ever tell you is what I have done and what has worked for me. And I will always encourage you to go seek out what works best for you.

So when it comes to business, I'm comfortable giving you advice all day. Cause I know what I'm talking about, but when it comes to bodies, they're all different. They're all individual. And you should see your doctor first. All that being said, uh, the big question around willpower, uh, what happened was I was told that I was shortening my life, in so many words. After finally saying to myself I'm unhealthy. And that was the truth of it. It was difficult for me to walk upstairs. I was having issues with stamina on stage and, uh, it, wasn't fun for me to get on stage and in the very beginning of my session, be so out of breath that I worried whether or not I would catch my breath before I'd be able to really engage the very high end. Or if you guys have, haven't seen one of my keynotes, or if you are looking for a keynote speaker, you guys should book me. It is a good time. It is chock-full of education.

And it's also just a lot of laughs and we just, we really have a lot of fun. I love, love, love speaking from stage, but when I tell you I get tuckered out. Okay. Not only am I'm not a spring chicken, but I'm a seasoned chicken, you know? And not only is that the case, but I'm also, you know, I was, I was a little bit on the thicker side and I loved my body. I love the way I looked, you know, and you guys have heard me talk about this before, but the truth was just, my stamina was affected. And what happened was I'd spent years doing the yo-yo dieting thing, going back and forth, you know, losing weight, gaining it back, losing weight, gaining it back. And finally, I went to a doctor. I just went and saw an expert. Which is what I think, uh, if there's any takeaway that I hope you guys get from this, I'm not gonna tell you to do keto. I'm not going to tell you to do paleo. I'm not going to tell you to stop eating carbs or to work out 20 minutes a day or take these vitamins or this shake. What I'm going to tell you to do is go in and see a doctor, get your numbers so you know exactly what really matters and what you need to watch and then follow whatever they tell you to do.

If that doctor tells you that you need to work out every day for 30 minutes, that is your answer to weight loss. It's not every other thing. It's the thing your doctor's telling you. If that doctor tells you look based on your body type or you being pre-diabetic, you cannot have sugar because it will shorten your life. Then listen to your doctor. And for me, you know, and honestly, if your

doctor tells you anything, I know that there's a lot of, um, talk about things like bariatric surgery or, um, you know, going in and starting a paleo diet even or Mediterranean diet, what have you, everyone has opinions around how people lose their weight, but the truth is if your doctor recommends it for you and it is to extend your life, please just do what they say.

You know, that's all that matters is that you're here tomorrow. And that's what I care about. You know, you have so much to bring to the world. So when it comes to willpower and finally figuring it out. I mean, honestly, I went under doctor advisement. I treated my weight and health condition as if it was a sickness, you know, that needed treatment. And I talked to my doctor, I went in and that was a little over a hundred pounds ago. And, um, and then I gave a time I was consistent. So this has been a journey. That's been about six years long now. And I've gained back 22 pounds at one point over the pandemic. And I ended up losing 30 after that once I started really taking exercise seriously and integrating fitness, not just slimness and, um, and it changed my life.

I keep up with my nutrition. I still eat donuts, still eat fudge, still eat sugar. I don't restrict or eliminate anything from my diet, but I am mindful about portions. And I err on the side of, um, you know, eating proteins and then definitely exercising and limiting my sugars. So that's what I do to keep myself well, um, it's an imperfect science. I am still human. I do not deprive myself. And, uh, and it's not based around my body. It's based around everything that's inside. So I encourage you to love yourself along the journey as you're going. But again, the answer is start with your doctor.

So I love these questions. I love that they run the gamut. I love that you guys asked me about everything from babies to bodies to business. So just keep that stuff coming. You guys are incredible. I appreciate you. You can always drop your questions on Instagram. I've got the link up there. You can click there, leave me a voicemail and I will pull any questions. You know, I'm not doing crazy filtering. It's just kind of how I answered it before. Um, and no filter. Don't worry about feelings. I'm a big girl. Send it my way and I'll answer what I can answer for you. Cause I love sharing my answers.

Now I want to talk to you a little bit about don't make yourself content. Now this is a segment that we do every single week, where basically I think you guys can relate to it. Crazy things happen in this world. We see it happen and we're like, what on earth is this thing? And I don't know about you, I'm feeling like we're living in a world more and more. It feels like good sense is gone where I'm like, I don't know if I was just raised differently or if I just look at things funny, but it feels like, wasn't this not okay? And shouldn't it be talked about? So I love taking something that is a hot piece of content reading we're seeing it all over social. It's trending, you name it and just being clear and real about the truth of it.

So I can't think of anything better to talk about than what happened at the Oscars. And I know you're hearing it on so many podcasts. You're getting so many chats so much back and forth of people saying, oh, well, you know, this happened, this was right, this was wrong, but I want to

take a different angle at it. And I think you guys will understand also at the end of the day, when there is an awesome opportunity to receive accolades and recognition for your accomplishments, the last thing you want to do is make yourself content. The last thing you want to do is make yourself something that's talked about in a negative light. And I think we all can collectively agree that that's what happened. And it wasn't a good thing. Um, I will let you know that under no circumstances, do I condone violence, do I condone bullying. There is no circumstance, whatsoever, where it is ever okay to physically hit, touch, beat, assault, another person period ever.

So that being said in this circumstance, I want to talk about the boldness of it all. And you guys have heard me say this. I have tough talks online. I think that we've gotten into a place in our life right now, where whenever something occurs, where it may be made content, we all feel like we have to pick a side. We all have to get polarized. And that's the thing that I want to talk about here. I want to talk about the fact that we're not acknowledging the bothness of this situation. So yes, Will was wrong. He knows that, the Academy knows that, Chris knows that, his mama knows that, everybody knows he was wrong, dead wrong.

Chris was wrong. Yes. He's a comedian. Yes, it's his work. Absolutely. But at the end of the day, poking fun at a woman's appearance. Hopefully I'm hoping he didn't know that there was a medical need behind it. Um, and I'd like to be inclined to think that he wouldn't have done what he did if he knew that. But nevertheless, not the best call, particularly considering the history of black women and our hair and just all the, uh, weight behind women and our appearances. Our appearance really shouldn't be conversation. Let alone something to be poked fun at. So that wasn't right either. I think that where we start getting polarizes, where we start saying to ourselves, well, which one was more wrong and if one was more wrong, then it would warrant an action that is either equally wrong or wrong.

And I got to let you know that I just don't agree with that. I just don't. I think what happened was terrible, but it was also human. It was an escalation of emotions where the outcome of it was painful. And my heart goes out to Chris Rock. Who's now in a situation where, you know, his Wikipedia was updated with this controversy that he didn't ask for, you know, um, I think that's unfortunate because he now has this thing to talk about. We don't talk about trauma, but he's a 57 year old man, you know, who was at work and he's, he's been on the Oscar stage many, many times. He's worked for a very, very long time to build the career he has, where he's able to get on stages like that.

Being an LA there are comedians right now who are doing improv and working really hard to hopefully be in the place that Chris Rock is in right now, he is known as a legend in this space. No matter how you feel about the quality of work that he does, he is known as somebody who has worked very hard. You can never minimize how hard someone has worked to get where they are. And, um, unfortunately now, you know, as an almost 60 year old man, this is part of his story and he didn't ask for it.

And so in that situation, truly sad, you know, and, um, especially because he was, you know, misspoke, if you will, you know, he, as a comedian went too far, which is part of treading the line of his work. And it's unfortunate it happened, and this was the outcome. And then, you know, the same applies to Will. Here is somebody who has spent his entire life building up to his first Oscar. How heart-wrenching. Not to mention he is well-known as being one of the nicest, kindest, most generous people in Hollywood. I mean, I can tell you, I have had the opportunity to work with a lot of people, I haven't worked with Will, specifically, but there've been overlaps and I've heard nothing but incredible things, how he remembers everyone's name on set, how he's very generous and making sure people are well fed and well cared for him, paid how he's constantly developing talent, mentoring people, extending opportunities.

He is known for being someone who is gracious and, um, and humble too, on top of all of it. And it's just so sad to see that both of these men have had to overcome so much to get where they are. And this interaction between the two of them is something that has become a defining point or a discussion point in their career. And it's one of the things where I just want to say in terms of not making herself content. There are times where even though someone has made themselves content, what we should be discussing is the humanity of it all. that, despite the fact that you may be famous or rich or wealthy, or have high visibility, or you're good looking, or you're an influencer, or you, you know, rub elbows with the fancy folk, whatever it is, my God, we are human.

We are human. We make mistakes. We misspeak, we tread into territory. We cross boundaries. We eat, we become emotional. We get aggressive. But you friend, I hope you hear me when I say this, you are so much more than your lowest moment. And so while that low moment may be something that you deserve consequences for, and it may be something that you need to reflect on, and it may be a moment of growth for you. It's critically important that despite what the world may say, turning you into content, that you recognize that your worth has not changed, that there's nothing you have done between when you wake up to, when you go to sleep that increases or decreases your work worth, you are worthy right now.

And it's my hope that in looking at moments like this content, things like go crazy over, you know, people who have built a history of, of knowing who they are and showing up consistently that when people have off days, that we also acknowledged that they may have just had an off day because they are human rather than immediately saying that they're canceled or that they're no good or that you're over them or that they're done. Um, things are getting out of hand with that a little bit. You know where we're so quick to throw away people. And, um, I'm not saying that Will gets a pass just because he's him or Chris gets a pass, just because he's him, I'm saying let's trust who people have shown themselves to be consistently and then afford them, the grace of knowing that they're human and know that that speaks volumes, not just about them, but about who we are.

So Will, Chris, they made themselves content and hopefully we can learn from it. So we don't make ourselves content.

[22:06]

Um, and now I can do my intro into the Alex conversation. And then I guess I'll do a little wrap up at the end of the Alex conversation. Is that okay? Um, let me see. I mean, I guess I already filmed like an outro, so I mean, like at the end of, because at the end of the conversation with Alex, I was like, thank you so much.

You guys can find more about him in his show notes. Like the only thing I would have wanted to say at the end of that was, um, gosh, I love this chat. It was so great. Like this was so good, but I mean that's, I think is in my out. Yes. We, well, typically from what I've heard, like once, like that is just what the end of the episode would be, and we have your actual, like, yeah, that's the same.

I prerecorded that's the saying? And then that's it. So I could just leave it at that, that I don't have to do another follow-up. Perfect. Well then let me just do my little intro into the next part and then that's it for this episode. Oh, I love this episode. It's so good. Okay, great. All right.

Next one.[00:23:00]

So, I have to let you know, I am so excited about this episode. And the reason why I am is because one, you guys know I don't do interviews a lot. So I told you earlier that I've got someone cool who's on here. But what we're going to talk about is something that you guys have seen on social media and around the world so much. If you're new here, you may not have caught it, but I have a squad. I have a squad and I have, it's my girl squad. And I've talked about them. If you have, if you don't have time to just listen to season one of the Nicole Walters podcast, episode 10, you needed this yesterday. And I talked in detail about my girl squad. Now it's cheesy to call it this, but there's four of us. Uh, Nikki, Jada, Jen, and myself. And we've been friends now for. I want to say five years. I'm glad they're not here. Cause they would, they would call me out on it and maybe I'll have them on, you know, later to talk about some stuff cause they're incredible.

But we are all mama's. We all have a business, you know and uh, we're very similar people who are all very different in personality. And um, needless to say, definitely go back and listen to that episode, but you will all know how hard I'm sure you understand this, it can be to not either get friends after 30 or to maintain friendships after 30 and maintaining meaning still continuing to get together, to hang out, to fit them in, in between the kids and the clothes and the everything else, but also to maintain them in terms of being there for each other, in terms of becoming vulnerable with, um, with other women, you know, that is something that I think we don't talk about enough.

I talk about it in episode 10, but it's true. It can be really, really difficult and challenging to, especially if you've been hurt trust-wise with other women to allow yourself to deepen and have those relationships. So when I met my girl squad, we decided with intentionality that we were going to do life together. And that meant being honest about where we are, where we wanted to go, holding each other accountable, but also holding space for love and reception of things that we may not want to hear. So in having this relationship with my girls, you know, I've grown so

much. And, um, and it's just been a real blessing. They have been with me through, um, you know, issues with my older children, which, you know, having adopted older girls, they, they have a lot of complexities. Uh, they've been with me through MidTiny, my 19 year old when she was 17 was diagnosed with stage four cancer. She's fine now mama's in case you didn't listen to that episode, but, uh, you know, that. A journey that they walked with me as well. They've been with me through my own health issues. They've been with me through the transitions we're going through now. I mean, it has just been such a blessing to have a girl squad.

And I can tell you that one thing I never think about that we're going to talk about and dive into in today's episode is what do you do when you have had people in your life, that have served a role kind of like a girl squad or kind of like a best friend, but it's time to let them go. Meaning these people have been in your life for so long that you don't really know what life is without them, but you also recognize that you may be changing and you may be evolving, or you're not finding as much joy in that relationship anymore. And you're saying to yourself, Hey, maybe it's time for me to look into something else. And that's not easy.

I mean, we spend so much time looking at our monthly subscription bills to figure out what we need to cut or looking at the scale, figuring out what we need to lose or looking at, you know, our kids' grades figuring out what they need to improve, but how much time do we spend really looking at our list of friends and saying, look, is this person a value add or are they subtracting joy?

And so that is what I want to do today. The guest that I have on, Alex Csillag, is fantastic. Being in LA, I've had the opportunity to meet the coolest people. I mean, it's so different from the corporate world where, you know, you might only meet or see the same people in your cube every single day. But working in this industry has been such a blessing to me because I get to meet the most dynamic people at events at parties, through clients. And, um, and there's always like musicians around. I mean, literally the barista at Starbucks, you know, probably does like a show three times a week and you know, me, I'm chatty Cathy. I'm always making friends with everyone. And Alex was one of those people. We were at an event and he just started chatting me up about, um, you know, some of the transition he was going through and Lord knows people just spill on me.

And when he started talking about some of his friendships as a precursor to his purpose, ah, now you're like, oh, okay, Nicole, okay. You know, I'm a truly, I, cause I'm always asking people, are you in your purpose? You know, do you love the work that you're doing? Does it make your heart sing? And for him, he just started going into how the friends he was selecting was essential to where he is today as a musician.

I remember the first time I met you and you were telling me, which this you're not the first one, but people, whenever they meet me and I'm sure a lot of people listening right now know this, I very quickly become like a best friend You know, like everyone just starts telling me all their things and all that. And the first time you met, I mean, pretty quickly you were telling me about

some of the changes that had happened in your life regarding friendship and not, not bad stuff per se, but just a lot of intentionality. And that's actually what this episode is about. It's all about being intentional, especially as adults, with who we have around us and the choices we're making and how they impact, not just us personally, within our own growth, but also within our business and our careers. So I'm so excited that you're here, but before I dive in to all your stuff, it's guys it's so, so good. Tell me a little bit more about you, you live in LA and what you do you do out here?

Alex: I do live in LA and born and raised originally one of the few

Nicole: That is rare. That is

Alex: know, and my main bag of I played trombone. So couple that with, you know, being from LA I'm,

Nicole: I don't know if I know any trombone players.

Alex: exactly. It's just all weird. from LA.

Um, it's not a thing, but, but it's the thing.

Nicole: Okay.

Alex: Yeah. Um, yeah, so I played trombone, I do horn arranging orchestral arranging and string writing. Um, worked on my own projects, but yeah, mostly freelancing for different artists, recording sessions, different kinds of bands of all different kinds of styles and

Nicole: it's so cool. Cause coming to LA, just like for work and stuff, one of the things that I've learned is that there's just so many different people that are required. to Make something happen, you . Know? So like, so everyone here is in the industry one way or another, but they're all you know, playing really different roles. So I think that when you think musician, a lot of us instantly think lead singer, you know what I mean?

But the truth is, I mean, it takes so many people just like you. And how did you even get into that? Did you go to school for that? Or do you go to school for tromboning? I feel like this is a family shot. I gotta be careful like of wordings or whatever, but

Alex: Right, Oh, I've heard it all. Believe me. I've heard it. All

Nicole: just in case the kids are listening, Okay.

Alex: the kids. Um, yeah, I picked it up like in third grade and, um, I just, you know, I was big kid for my age, so I had the long arms and they're like, oh, trombone is good for you. Coupled with the fact that it can just make predicted.

Sounds and, you know, I'm ridiculous person. So I just kind of like, you know, we felt a good

Nicole: went

Alex: there. It was just a good match.

Nicole: So you hear that. Okay. Any moms out there who are wondering about your kids and instruments in the future, let them play, what they want to play.

Alex: Let them play what they want to play. And, you know, that's what I do for a living full-time now.

So who would have, who would have figured, you know what I mean? Like

Nicole: That's incredible. And you went to school for that, Like it

Alex: I did, I went to school, I went to Berkeley college of music, um, playing trombone. Um, while I was there, I also, I, I did a film scoring, which is what I got my major in. Um, so I figured I'm going to be playing regardless. It might as well pick up a new skill on along the way. So I did film scoring and which I worked on for a bit. Um, but now focusing on performance and that's working out pretty well. So

Nicole: That's awesome. So I mean, just a little detour. I mean, we're about to talk about the friend stuff. more, but I think what's cool about that is, You know, we're hearing that no matter what you're doing, no matter what career you're in, whether you're an entrepreneur, you're still figure yourself out no matter what, we're all dealing with the same sort of stuff, you know, which is balancing friends, growing our personal life. So let's talk a little bit more about that.

So when we first met, I remember you were telling me that you'd gone through some changes. You would just, I guess like you hadn't just turned 30. Do you mind me saying your age? in front, everyone? Cause I mind people saying my age so I mean, I don't need, I don't need everyone to know that I'm 25 cause it makes them insecure. You know what I mean? it does. Yeah. Cause they were like, oh gosh,

Alex: I'm barely hanging in there. So

Nicole: it's tough. It's tough. So good. Thanks for being sympathetic to that.

Alex: now

Nicole: that said you are over 30.

Alex: I am. Now not so sure I'm comfortable with it, but

Nicole: you're 32. And so, um, you know, when I, when I, when we first met, I mean, you were telling me that like 30 kind of was a pivotal moment for you with some of your decision-making I
Alex: yeah. At 30, 31. Um, it was especially because that was in the middle of, that was like, that was the pandemic, you know, that's when everything hit, um, you know, I'm not the only one that dealt with it, but there was a big, uh, identity crisis that happened in the pandemic for a lot of musicians and people in the industry because, um, you know, it was like our legs were swept out from under us. We, we had worked out, um, you know, we had, we had worked in our job for so long. We had created, you know, we got the ball rolling, we had work coming in and then all of a sudden it was just like nothing.

Nicole: The momentum like stopped. Yeah.

Alex: stopped. So

Nicole: think a lot of people can relate to that because, you know, whether it was in music alone, you know, a lot of us are building momentum every single day, you know?
So we all kind of think we're building towards something and the pandemic really yanked the rug out from under us. And we're kind of like, Do I have to start over and I'm sure it's so much worse for performers. I mean, I can't even imagine what it was like, I wasn't in LA, I was in Atlanta at the time. but I couldn't imagine being here trying to deal with all of that.

Alex: Yeah. And it was, it was, it was tough. Um, you know, just because, um, you know, just trying to figure out who we were, it was like, because you know, a large part of our identity was we are a working musician.

Nicole: Ooh, let's talk about that that

Alex: part of the

Nicole: Yes. That's a thing. What The working part or the musician part

Alex: Where the working part is, it's different than just being a musician because you can be a musician just playing guitar in your room, and then you go do your nine to five, whatever.

But if you're, if you're a working, you know, successful musician, that's what you're doing as a living that is a whole other part of your identity.

And so when that gets taken away from you, you're like, like, you know, kind of the, who am I like kind of thing, you know? And, and a lot of people straight from the music industry in the middle of that and had to kind of reidentify who they were and like what that meant for their careers and what that meant for their lives and

Nicole: Oh my gosh. You are saying a mouthful

Alex: So it was, it was a lot,

Nicole: Yeah, no, a lot. And I think what's great about that is, you know, we're talking about how applied to your career and to your identity and all that. But I think moms or anyone who's listening to this right now, we can really relate to that too, that, you know, big changes in our life, whether it's having a kid or starting to stay at home more, or switching your career starting your first business, whatever it is, All of a sudden, you really start questioning yourself where you're saying, who am I, you know, how do I show up in this world?

How do I want to show up in this world? Or am I just the label that I've been living? So knowing that that's the case, I guess the question I have for you is how did friends play a role in this? Because the pandemic kind of pulled us apart. But I think that a lot of us tried to stay close. I have my squad.

You guys heard me talk about that earlier? My squad got me through it. we used to see each other every quarter and we would spend time and reconnect. So we had to switch to like zoom calls and things like that. It's not the same, but you know, we did everything we could to maintain that relationship. So, I mean, is that what you were a musician zooming? Like what were you, what were you, guys doing?

Alex: I mean, we were doing whatever we could, we resuming or, you know, some people just, Nicole: met up anyways. Yeah, I'm sure. Yeah. No, for sure.

Alex: Um, I know everybody kind of had their pod that were like, okay, we're the ones hanging out as long as it's just us then, and we're good so far, then we're going to assume that we will continue to be good.

Right. Um,

Nicole: Like we're going to collectively make good choices,

Alex: you know, or at least, or at least try because nobody had all the information and we're like, we're just going to do what feels best for us.

Nicole: Yeah.

Alex: So, um,

Nicole: so tell me more about that.

Alex: Yeah. So yeah, so.

Nicole: So

Alex: Yes, because, because we had to re-identify everything in our lives because of the lockdown and because of the pandemic, everything, we had to be much more intentional about where we spent our time and where we spent our energy.

Um, and, and that crazy time like this, that was just, that was a very important to put your energy in the right places.

Nicole: Okay. So let's talk about that shift then. So basically what you're telling me is that when the pandemic came around, you started really focusing on where you're putting your time and energy, because honestly, I don't know about you and, but everyone who follows me on social. Or if you guys have like watched my show, you know, I am always buzzing. I am always, I have a new project or something new that I have going on. And so because of that, I'm go, go, go. And the pandemic for me was a real slow down, you know, like what really matters to you? What do you want to, because once we reentered the world, it was like, what do you want to keep? And what do you want to leave behind?

Because everything was taken essentially. So are you saying that that was some of the focus that you had was just kind of, I really have to choose where I'm going to be and was that kind of turning into the people as well?

Alex: yeah, absolutely. I had, yeah, I had to refocus where I want to be in my career, in my, uh, in, in being a musician and my identity but I also, with my friends and the people that I surround myself with, I had to reevaluate what was important to me, what kind of energy wanted to keep around me. Um, and so it was, it was a thing, you know, sometimes, um, you, you look at the people around you a little bit differently when you're going through these things and you're

Nicole: Well, let's talk about that. Let's not say So, surface. So like if it's a situation, cause I think that a lot of us can relate to this, you know, a lot of us are older now, you know, maybe we have families or at least we have, you know, jobs that we're committed to our time matters a lot. So, you know, we do care what we do with it. And I think, I don't know about you, but for me, I found myself just kind of putting friends on a back burner, you know, or having surface friends as I kind of call them, which is, you know, I got a lot of people, but I don't have much depth there.

And, um, because that was easier. If you don't have depth, you don't have to commit you know, like, and you don't have to be there necessarily during all the times, but you're, there's always guaranteed to be someone around So For me, at least coming out of the pandemic, I was like, you know what quality over quantity. Right. So tell me more about.

Alex: so, yeah, so it was two, it was two sides for me. It was, um, on one hand I had my friends that I had grown up with that I have a fierce loyalty for.

Nicole: Okay. Do you have a lot of those, like,

Alex: no, there's this, there's a select few, um, you know, friends that I've been friends with for over 20 years.

Nicole: Oh, wow. That says a lot. One of my good friends Luvvie Jaya Jones. She's a New York times Best seller. If you guys haven't read her book, I'm judging you. You should get it. Um, she also has her second book out professional troublemaker and I'm on her podcast. So definitely listen to that as well. But lovey talks about how, uh, if you don't have friends that you've known for like more than 15 years, you need to question the type of person you are.

You know what I mean? because you shouldn't have, after it, once you hit, like over 30, you shouldn't have a rotating cast of characters where it's like, oh yeah, all my friends are like a year or two.

You know what I mean? Because you should, you know, I think as an adult, one of the character traits is keeping people. you know?

Alex: And so that's like.

Nicole: um,

Alex: Yeah, that's a weird thing because you get so comfortable with what you have, and it's great to have long-term friends, as long as you're growing together and moving towards the same direction. Sometimes in my, like in my, in my situation, um, you know, I had a friend where maybe, you know, we had been friends for over 20 years, but we were just hanging on to what we had, you know, just because it was there just because we were used to it.

Nicole: because you had history, a history, so this is an

Alex: that yeah, not necessarily that it was just something that I needed around me or wanted around me, but it was there, it was comfortable, it was familiar. And you know, it took a while to realize that like, you know, maybe this isn't the best thing for me.

Nicole: Wow. Wow. So wait, before we dive into that, cause that sounds like I don't know about y'all if this sounds like some tea a little bit like I want to hear what's going on here no. Before, because, I mean, anytime you have a breakup of a lot of years, whether it is a marriage or a business or a career or a friendship, There's something behind it. So before I dive into that, I think what I'm hearing that's interesting is, you know, a lot of us, I just finished talking about how it's so important that you have friends that are long-term, but what you're saying is, you know, not all things just because they've been there are good for you.

And it's important to also evaluate if that whatever that relationship is, if it's still bringing value to you and if you need to retain it.

Nicole: So I know that we're about to talk about the breakup right? Cause obviously there's a friend breakup and people, we don't talk enough about how painful friend breakups are. You know what I mean, like, I think that we spend a lot of time talking about relationship breakups, marital, breakups, even career and business breakups, you know, but We don't talk enough about how, when you have a friendship of 20, 30 years and there's a falling out, which is usually what happens. Um, but it sounds like that's not what this was.

It sounds like this was more of an intentional decision per se, which is w honestly there probably should be more of these breakups. I mean, that's the reality. So before that, let's talk about the thing before the thing, because before there's a breakup, there's usually either a series of events that kind of indicate something needs to change, or there's a major transformation or mindset change.

And that's what I want to hear. And hopefully inspire, if anyone is listening right now and saying to themselves, do I have someone in my life that may need to transition out for my growth? What was happening within you? you know, that said that you needed to make change.

Alex: Yeah. So, um, it's funny. So I, like I said, I had a fierce loyalty towards my friends growing up. Um, and there's a lot of people in the industry that I would be on gigs and rehearsals with and stuff that I would see around town for years, but never formed actual relationships with these people because

Nicole: what was that like? Just got like, oh, Hey, catch up? a little

Alex: Are you seeing on the next one?

Nicole: Oh, well, but that's also very LA like I had to learn to adjust because I'm from the south, you know? And so you meet someone and like they're at Thanksgiving dinner, you know what I mean? So even like, just like meeting you. I was like, oh, I should have you on my podcasts. Everything you're saying is so great. Like, people would love you, you know, like, um, I love your work that you're doing all that. But like I learned in LA you can say that that doesn't mean anything. Like people won't follow up.

Alex: this is, well, this is one of the things that I've worked on through the years is following up,

Nicole: Sure, sure,

Alex: Catching up with people like maintaining relationships with new people and I was kind of with the mentality of, you know, no new friends,

Nicole: Ooh team no new friends.

Alex: I was team no new friends for a long time and I didn't form new relationships and meaningful relationships with people that I actually thought were good people. I thought they were talented. They had good energy.

Like these are people that now I'm actively trying, I guess, trying to pick up the pieces make up for lost time

Nicole: like leaning in, but with

Alex: leaning in leading with intentionality, because I realize that these are people that will, will, and can add value to my

Nicole: but to make space for these people because our time is limited And I think what's great about, and why you're such a great fit For this chat is just because as a musician, like I can't a working musician also let me clarify that it does matter. It does matter, you know, as a working musician and a freelancer, you know, and, and your own boss, you know, you're an entrepreneur in many different ways. You know, our time matters so much because our time literally is money. If we don't put up the time, if we don't show up, including with these relationships, we don't get paid. So knowing that that's the case, you know, if we're going to invite new people into our life and say, we're going to dedicate time to them, it's almost like, Hey, I'm going to give up money to be around you. You know? So, potentially.

Alex: And so, and so you just have to end, so with that mindset, you have to, um, realize, you know, who is worth that time and who isn't.

Nicole: and who isn't. Right. So if that's and people feel weird about that. You're saying it very casually. People feel weird saying that. So y'all, I'm telling you right now lean in and understand that, like, you may have to say, look, some people are not worth my time and that's hard to say. It feels icky. I feel gross saying it.

Alex: It's a hard, it's a hard pill to swallow and especially.

Nicole: To like

Alex: To realize it. And then to put that into action,

Nicole: is that what happened first before you were like, when you were starting to evaluate even these long-term relationships, you were like, what is my time worth? Like, what am I worth? It was

Alex: Yeah, for sure. It's the same, it's a conversation about, you know, what you do you deserve, you know what I mean?

Um, know what I mean, do you deserve to be surrounded by, there was, there was a thing where, um, I was around musicians that were, I thought were so talented and I thought were so just incredible that I wasn't even in the same league. And I had just had this voice that I wasn't there. I wasn't good enough to even be in their space,

Nicole: Wow.

Alex: you know, or even to maintain a friendship with them because I didn't think I was in the same league. And, and then it's funny. I come to realize later, the more confident I become and maybe my musicianship has changed, maybe it hasn't, but you know, just being open to the idea of being around them and that I do deserve to be in the same space as them. And then I feel, and then it's funny because then I do feel the more the connection with them.

Nicole: This is really big. So what you're telling me essentially is that by believing more in your worth, around being in spaces of talent, you're you are finding yourself one, attracting more talented people and then two getting better yourself.

Alex: getting better myself. Yeah, for sure. Wow. Absolutely.

Nicole: so that's The value of friends right there. I mean, we hear it all the time.

You are the company you keep, you know, you're the sum of your five [00:46:00] closest friends.

Alex: then not even that, just once I told myself that I am deserving and that I am qualified to be in these people's space that, uh, you know, doors have been opening for me. I've been more productive in my life. I've been feeling better about the people I have around in my life.

Nicole: Um, when you say doors are opening for you, are you saying that you're also finding yourself getting like, w I mean, with these transitions and friends, which means that like. again, Your people that you're around you, like you give energy and you get energy. So you're saying with like shifting of some of this energy and having certain people in your space, you're finding yourself doing and being, and engaging in opportunities that either a making you more money, be getting you more visibility. All of that, like automatically you're saying that's definitely happening.

Alex: There is a correlation. There is a, like an absolute correlation between the friends, the friends and the company you keep and your career and your personal success and all that stuff. Because like, you know, just telling yourself that you're deserving to be in these people's space. Convincing yourself that you are good enough, even just to be in their space, then it convinces you that you are good enough in general. And then in that confidence, it translates to the work that you do. It translates to the focus and discipline that You

Nicole: sure. So, well, so I'm gonna, you know, be candid for those guys. So listen, you can tell Alex a good looking young man.

You know what I mean? Lyric Google looking fellow. I mean, it's an industry, Everyone's good. Looking at LA y'all like, honestly. Everyone's it makes me feel good. Walking around. I'm like, by default, I swear I might be like a seven in Atlanta, but you come to LA, you get in a room full of good looking people. You go up and down number two, so you can hit Nate. You know what I mean?

It's nice. So so I say all that to say, have you found, um, and I've talked a lot both here.

Um, you know, there are a couple episodes. I talked about my health journey. Like I had to lose, I lost a bunch of weight, but I dealt with some health scares and things like that. Have you found that some of these transitions and,

Alex: and

Nicole: choices around your. worth, You know, that's changed the space you're in. Has that changed you personally, like in terms of how you take care of yourself or how you feel about like your appearance or anything like that?

Alex: oh, for sure. Yeah. I mean, I grew up, I was, I was bullied for years.

Nicole: Oh, wow. I mean, you play trombone, buddy. So

Alex: I was not, I was not helping my cause. I'm telling you I was not, I was a band nerd, a little overweight at skin issue. You know

what I mean? It was just, it was what was what it

Nicole: I just love it. If there are any kiddos listening, what their mom is right now.

I want you to hear this, that whatever you're dealing with right now, whether it is skin issues or feeling uncomfortable, or like you don't fit in auntie Nicole's telling you right now you could be a cool kid and a working musician in LA some days.

So stick it out,

Alex: more importantly, a working trombone

Nicole: Oh, working trombone player leaning on The trombone with the mamas right now, we're going to send me mean messages like, please, I do not want to hear trombone being plaque practice in my house right now. Please do not encourage this. Like next week is going to be a drummer. Like I don't need that energy.

The mamas right now are not here for it now. Um, but no. So I understand. so what you're saying is like friends have really transitioned that.

So the big thing for you was once you started realizing, cause I really want to chart out this course so people can understand it started with, I realized my worth. I started really saying to myself, what do I want in my future? What do I deserve in my future? And really leaning in on that belief, but then putting people around you and removing the people that didn't support that idea.

Alex: Yeah.

Nicole: Ouch. That's not easy. That's not easy.

Alex: It's not easy. And it was something it took years to do. And it's somewhat of a recent revelation for me. Like it's

Nicole: Wow. Like, look, when you look back on it, now you understand better the, the moves you made.

Alex: Oh yeah. It's, I mean, I'm sort of mad at myself that it took so long, but you know, you have hope in people,

Nicole: Everything happens at the right time.

Alex: you and you, everything happens at the right time and for reason and all that, I truly believe.

But like, um, you know, I wish not that I wish I had done it sooner because I think everything happened in the appropriate time, in the time that it was meant to. But, um,

Nicole: so let's talk about the breakup,

Alex: the breakup

Nicole: going to say let's lean on this tea. Cause I wasn't saying like, so what happened? So I guess the question that I want to know is. Let's use an example, because I'm actually, you've shifted more than one person out of your life. You know, like even if someone isn't completely out of your life, maybe you're choosing to spend less time there, or you're not in scenarios. Like if you had a friend who maybe was, and I think a lot of us mom has to relate to this, like our going out friend, you know, where all they want to do is go out every single night or they want to, all they want to do is gossip.

And you're just like, girl, I can't, you know what I mean, like we may still be friends. I may still invite you to things here and there, but I'm just not hanging out on your terms. So I'm sure you have those people, but I really want to know some of the, because people right now are hearing you and they're saying, okay, this all sounds good and great, but how? They've been around for 20 years and my kids know them, you know, they're part of my life.

How do I shift. to Just not talking to this person.

Alex: I straight up told him,

Nicole: oh, you're thinking of one person

Alex: I'm thinking of a person I'm thinking of a person

Nicole: I appreciate you

Alex: and this and this scenario. Um, I'm gonna say that. Um, yeah. So with this persons specifically, I said he, he was engaging in, um,

Nicole: harmful behavior

Alex: behavior.

That was a repetitive pattern. That was something that I didn't think added value to my life. It was something that I couldn't just stand around and watch happen.

Alex: You know, we've, we've had talks, I've tried we've tried to figure out all the options to help him through

Nicole: So you're saying that you kind of gave them a shot at change first.

Alex: gave them a shot of change. I told them what my concerns were. And then if nothing changed and I said, you know what? Um, we straight up can not be friends until you come to me and tell me that I, that there are concrete steps being taken to remedy this situation.

Nicole: Ooh, That is not easy. I mean, cause what you're talking about is you drew a firm boundary.

Alex: I drew a firm boundary. I am a straight up person. I don't like to beat around the bush because you just, you just can't, you know, so, so, um, I had to draw that firm line in the sand and say like, literally we cannot be friends until I see improvement in this behavior that I'm seeing. And so when you come to me with that, then we can talk until then we are not

Nicole: that's rough. And I got to say, For people who are listening right now, you know, there's some of us that come from the old school where it's just basically like family's family. And when you have a friend of 20 years at that point, they're like family, you know, you've grown up together. And so you can't cancel family. You're going to hear I'm playing devil's advocate here because it's true.

Some people are thinking them, this to themselves, like you're supposed to help them through the tough stuff or you're supposed to whatever. And it sounds like you did. a

Alex: Lord knows. I

Nicole: you know? Yeah. Lord knows. you tried. Right.

Alex: But, um, you know, at a certain point, you know, you can't, they have to want to help themselves

Nicole: Ooh, that is good.

Alex: the end of the day, they

Nicole: That is good.

Alex: You can't, you can't lead a horse to water and make them

Nicole: right? You can't set yourself, on fire to keep them warm.

Alex: Yeah. can't, they have to want to help themselves. And I decided that I only want to be surrounded by people who want to help themselves. Who want to improve and grow and move in these directions that I feel like I'm moving in.

Nicole: Because that impacted you?

Alex: Because it impacted me. I fell, I found myself, I realized there was a pattern with me. I was holding myself back my entire life for my friends. You know what I mean? Like it was little things even, you know, like, uh, like in middle school band. Um, my band director wanted to move, move me to the eighth grade band when I was like in sixth or seventh grade and I stayed behind.

Nicole: So you turned down an opportunity, you were turning down opportunities to stay, where you are

Alex: stay with my friends. Yeah. You know, I went to the high school. They all went to, just to be with my friends. And then in 10th grade was the first time I realized that I needed to do something for myself and I needed to stray from them.

Um, but I would still, I would still did school all the time and I, and I would go hang out with my

Nicole: Ooh, mom, if you're listening right now, if you share this with your mom, mom and Phil is saying, he's sorry. He used to skip school. he turned out okay. He's a working musician.

Alex: Yeah. I play trombone.

Nicole: plays run everyday.

Alex: It's fine.

Nicole: So, But you know, I mean, you're saying that honestly, it was a pattern that you basically had to intentionally when you were 30. which I just want to call out, first of all, Bravo, Right. I didn't know that piece of it.

You know, people realize that when you're sending your way for so long, you feel like you can't change. But,

Alex: that's what it was for me for a long time. I felt like I couldn't improve in my craft. I felt like I was stuck because I was stuck with my friends. I was stuck in this mindset. I

couldn't improve on my craft because I was just stuck with what I have is what there is. And that's all I know. And that's what it is.

Nicole: pause on that for a moment. How many of you are saying to yourself today that you are stuck, that you are stuck in your definition as a mom, that you were stuck in your place in your company company. or a Career or that you're stuck in your marriage or that you're stuck in your weight or your body that you're in right now that you don't love.

I want you to hear today that even the behaviors at first started showing up in middle school, have the ability to transition and change if you decide that you deserve.

So, so good. So I want to talk about the end of this. So obviously he took it very well changed. His whole life up became a whole new person and you guys now have an amazing and incredible friendship, right?

Alex: Yeah, sure.

Nicole: It wouldn't be a good episode if we didn't tell the truth. So the truth is these conversations don't always go well,

Alex: Yeah. The truth is he understood. We haven't really spoken. And, uh, as far as I know, a lot of those behaviors haven't changed.

Nicole: Wow. So, I mean, the relationship essentially expired you know? Yeah. Yeah. And are you still open? Are you saying I mean, that's kind of you, I mean, I know that I'm. you know, Bless people's hearts I'm from the south, bless their hearts.

But you know, ultimately, uh, once that milk's gone bad, I'm pouring it down the drain, you know what I mean? and recycling the carton. So it's over, you know, um, just because time and effort and also leaving space. open.

Alex: And I feel like I'm not necessarily pouring it down the drain. I'm just putting it in a separate jar and I'm putting it in the cabinet.

Nicole: Oh man. Cupboard, Ooh, it's

Alex: it in the cupboard. I am, I get a little stinky, but it's still going to be there.

Nicole: Okay. I think that's sweet. I think that's good.

Alex: It's still there and it's, I'm still open to drinking that stinky

Nicole: milk, Oh, that's good of you for my faith base listeners, listen, look at how good, of a heart this one has. Oh my

Alex: you know, so it's always there, but I need to know, I need to know that things

Nicole: things are improving

Alex: things are improving before I'm even open to opening that cupboard

Nicole: Of course. And then, So let's talk about what your life looks like now that you've made some of these changes. And are you carrying this perspective of that was difficult. I know that was hard to do, you know, anytime you terminate anything, I mean, I've gone through relationship changes and. you know, It's difficult, you know, the watching things, either evolve because that happens like me and my kid sister, you know, we've had to evolve in our relationship you know, from one where I was almost maternal to her, you know, and took care of her to recognizing look, she is an adult and I got to let her live, you know?

And you know, I've marital changes. Like I've had to go through so much there, you know, and there've been a lot of transition, so it's just, it's not easy. I know that I'm better on the other side,

but it can be so hard when you're in it to think that's really going to happen. When I met you and you were telling me about.

this, You know, it was actually kind of a lot for you to tell me, like, right out of the gate, just letting you know, I was just like, but I'm not having people tell me stuff. Like they're

Alex: just got that face. I know I can tell you stuff. You know what I mean?

Nicole: yeah.

Alex: of drinks on my Italian, my whole life story.

Nicole: My life. I always joke everybody here. who's listening. They all know I'm like, I'm your internet bestie. And the thing is is, cause I love it. Like I care. I'm like, oh, friend, tell me more. tell me more about that. Oh, I care. You know, so, and Cause I do cause I do. Cause I always like, I just, you know, I'm like, let me stand in this space with you.

Let me, hold this space. So, but that said, you told me all about it, but I think you were kind of still in the thick of it at that

Alex: Yeah. Yeah. I was, it was like very fresh.

Nicole: It was fresh. Yeah.

Alex: fresh.

Nicole: Oh, I didn't know. It was days. Oh my gosh. Okay. So It was fresh. So I could see the like, angst in you, you know about it. But it was part of, why I said, oh my gosh, we got to talk about it because, you're so, [00:58:00] but now that there's some space between then and now. I mean, are you seeing fruits from it or was it,

Alex: yeah, absolutely. I've gone. I've been much more proactive about making friends outside of my original friend group,

Nicole: And are you picking different types of friends,

Alex: different, all different types of friends. I got friends I meet up with and, you know, play trombone, quartet music with, and we play Catan and then Mario kart, you know, and then I've got, and then I've got friends.

We just, my, my lunch buddy friends, you know what I mean? And then I've just got like friends I can call for all different kinds of things. And it's, you know, and because of those, I mean, I've gotten gig opportunities,

Nicole: So it's translating into other

Alex: translating into other areas of my life. Like I'm getting work out of it just because I'm creating more of a solid, uh, network, I mean, again, I will say it's important that I'm not just trying to make friends for work purposes.

Nicole: course you're basing it on legitimate

Alex: only spending time with people that I think like one like that I like spending time

Nicole: with,

Alex: you know, and if that translates to. And, and it has, you know, like, that's great. That's great, but that's not the main focus. You know what I mean? Like I just like being surrounded by talented people, people who work hard, people who are like-minded like myself and, and my original friend group, I'm the only musician.

I'm the only one in this kind of space. So it's really nice to lately have been surrounding myself with more people in who live in a similar space and we have a lot more in common

Nicole: So they're supporting where you want

Alex: So they're supporting where I want to go.

Nicole: so good. And I hope everyone's hearing that also because I mean, I think a struggle, a lot of my listeners are people like me they're like moms, you know, they married like that type of life, you know?

And a lot of them are like, it's hard to make friends, you know, like you spent your whole life being dedicated to like you your craft, you know, or like just busy. Um, but I'm hearing that you make time for it.

Alex: And it's something I'm trying to do more and more all the time.

Nicole: What does that look like? is it like, just, I mean, you know, you got to eat lunch, so you just bring them to lunch or is it like, how are you integrating these people into your time?

Alex: Um, it seems like, you know, sometimes people have like a game night once a week or sometimes, um, I don't know, you grab a, you grab a beer after a rehearsal or, you know, just making time when you can, because everyone's busy. Right.

Nicole: So, just folding it into your regular life.

Alex: Or even just trying to make plans, putting the effort out, you know, sometimes it doesn't work out cause people are busy, but as long as like, you know, you're trying and people see it, you know, I think that goes such a long way.

Nicole: I love that. I know that one of the things that I always talk about is how I feel guilt, you know, about working so hard, you know, as a mom and like, am I making enough time for my kids? And you know, how do I balance it all and how to make time for friends? And like, one of the things that I started doing was, uh, much like what you're saying here is instead of putting so much weight around having a dedicated fancy lunch or meet up for dinner, which can be hard to match up with. I'll say like, you know what, this is going to be a mommy daughter date, and we are going grocery shopping together. Do you know what I mean? And like, and while we're pushing through the aisles, you are telling me all about what's going on at school or what's going on with your life. And I realized I can do that with a friend. You know, I literally can say like, look, I'm going to go get my nails done anyways. Why don't you come with me and we'll catch up, you know, I'm going for a walk. Why don't we just go on a walk together.

Alex: yeah. Right. I'm going to walk my dog.

Nicole: Right. Come with me.

Alex: Anything, just finding any time at all I think is meaningful. You know, and just putting out the effort. I think that's the biggest part is putting up the effort

Nicole: This is so good.

Alex: know, like just, just trying, because people, like I said, people, especially after the pandemic people, everyone is in this space of, they got real, comfortable chilling at home, um,

Nicole: and we need to like get back out there and connect, but with

Alex: back out there and connect with intentionality.

Nicole: And I love that. I think if there's anything that I've taken away most from this conversation. It's intentionality. It's the fact that the entire intention of any relationship that we have here has got to be that we are looking for something meaningful, that we are looking at the purpose, and there's nothing wrong with, at any point you are in your life, whether it's middle

school or coming out of college or in your thirties to look back and say, [01:02:00] okay, I am really reflecting on who's around me how they're influencing me.

Maybe they don't get to stay cause I'm worth, you know, giving out good stuff. Right? So you're worth having the best people around

Alex: Exactly. I mean, like having somebody around you that you can learn something from, I mean, I can look at each one of the friends that I have and say, oh, he really makes me think about this perspective.

Or he makes me learn about this. I can actually name it and say, he makes me, she makes me think about this,

Nicole: whatever,

Alex: you know, but

then if I look at somebody and say like, this person,

Nicole: are they here? why are you here? Why are you even in the room right now? Who are, you

Alex: you know what I mean? What are they teaching me?

What can I learn from you? And if the answer is nothing, you

Nicole: it says a

Alex: And I know that I'm teaching them, so it's a one-sided relationship and that's, and that's not something that you want to keep.

Nicole: Oh, That is so good. And so heavy. So if there is one thing that you think you would leave people with that you've learned about the value of friendships and how they can change you when you decide what you deserve, what would that be?

Alex: Um, I would say, just be confident in yourself. I think being able to make friendships and be successful with your whatever business you're doing, it starts with being comfortable and, you know, uh, confident with yourself.

Nicole: Yeah, that's good.

Alex: think that translates to everything

Nicole: and we're working on that every single day. Oh my gosh, Alex, this is such a good chat, So many valuable insights. I know I'm going to listen to this one more than once to take down notes and I hate to say it, friends who are listening and keeping up with my content, I'm going to be evaluating you. And I'm going to be thinking, what do you bring to my life? So now is a great time to Venmo me some money. That's right. Text me some compliments, you know, if you trying to stay on that list. So now is a good time as any. That's so, so good. Thank you, Alex. So much for being here where can people, um, like, listen to your tunes, like uh, you played with some cool people, right? Like, is there, like have we heard anything that you've done recently or is there anyone that like, not recently, but anything that you've ever done, like, have you done any cool stuff that we might've heard of?

Alex: I've recorded on a recorded for Jill Scott. Um, yeah. And her singer, her single closure. Um, I just did a recording for a Meghan Trainor track. Um, yeah, I played, I played with, uh, Leslie Odom Jr. On the Kelly Clarkson show. So just, you know, it's just kind of all over the place. And then like reggae scene played tribal seeds

Nicole: Oh cool. Oh my gosh.

Alex: It's just kind of all over the place. My musical ADD.

Nicole: All over the place, but you're a working musician And that's what counts? will cool. What people will look you up on the internet? They'll keep up with all your good stuff, Alex. Thank you so much for being here and I'll have all your dets in the show notes so that people can click around and I would just keep up with you.

And do you have like a, what do the kids call it? A Spotify? One of those,

Alex: a Spotify

Nicole: listen to your to or SoundCloud? Is that what it is? I will have all that in this, in the show notes that you guys are able to keep up and click around and not worry about spelling.

Cause I know you're all in transit. move into a mom things, but Alex, thank you so much for being here.

You're incredible. This was great.

Alex: Amazing. Thanks for having me.