



Season 3, Episode 20 - Transcript

Are YOU ready to date?

Nicole:

Hey, friend, we have been having so many powerful chats, week after week here. I mean, some of them have been great, because I've been able to introduce you to some of my friends and some of the people I've worked with, and some of my clients and just people who I know are out there doing incredible work that you may not be hearing about, but you should know. So I've loved having those chats. But I've also really enjoyed some of our, what I like to call our one to ones, you know, our quick little 20 minutes where I get to kind of update you on where I am what I'm learning, and hopefully give you information that is helpful for you and meets you where you are. And as you know, the theme of this entire season, you know, this entire sort of grouping of chats that we're having, is starting over, and how we really need to get good at starting over and how life is going to call us to start over whether or not we want to or sometimes by choice, you know, starting over isn't always negative. Sometimes it's about having a new baby or choosing a new business idea or getting into a new relationship. You know, there's a lot of really fun, positive, happy ways that we get to start over. But sometimes it's also something that is more unexpected and a little bit more challenging, like ending a marriage or ending a friendship or terminating a career, you know, and, or even something as simple as maybe a little neutral like becoming an empty nester having your kids grow up and move out, you know, all those different things are a part of starting over. And I'm just excited because I found that a lot of the lessons are transferable and all the conversation that we've been having, the back and forth a few guys reaching out to me and leaving me voicemails and telling me about you know, how a lot of this information is applying in your life, it's just been really fruitful and helpful for me. And I'm just very grateful to all of you.

And today, what I wanted to talk about is a little bit more sensitive, if you will, it's I would say for my mom is in the room that this may be a headphone chat, just in case, you've got some little little ones, but it's definitely like, teen, 14 year old and up friendly. Because I am going to talk about more of like relationships and dating and things like that. But you know, we always keep it appropriate around here. But I do want to just give you that heads up. Because for me, it's also super sensitive, this is a little bit more personal. And I'm still, I usually share my scars and not

my scabs. So I like to share things once they've healed over a little more, even if there's still marks around them, not when they're still fresh. But I have a feeling that the season I'm in right now, in relation to this, is just gonna be fresh for a while and I just want to be honest with you about it.

If you've listened to episode one of season three, you already know that I parted ways with my was-band. And you know, I'm currently bicoastal. So I live in LA and Atlanta with my babies. And I am doing the single woman thing, if you will. But if you've been watching a little closely over the past couple months, you also know that I have recently re-entered the dating pool. And it's interesting because it was something that I did not anticipate. And it wasn't something I was seeking out and frankly like just to be really honest, I wanted to talk a little bit about this. And I'm going to talk about it as much as I can in different ways, because it's a bigger issue. And I know it's different for everyone. But everyone always wants to know, what is that like? Do you even consider any what? Like, what are the feelings and what I want to share is kind of what I've experienced.

I've been told a lot of what I'm experiencing is kind of textbook. And so I'm hoping it meets you where you are, if you either are still in a relationship, but thinking of exiting and worried about some of these things, if you are recently out of a relationship, and you're wondering if this makes sense for you, if you're just one of my internet besties and you're worried or wondering how I'm doing like, I'm happy to I'm going to talk about some of this stuff now. So this episode is all about the before, of getting ready to date, and what that means and what that was like sort of even putting on my single girl hat after being a wife for 12 years. So what you may not know is that I got married superduper young, wow, it feels weird, because I'm about to I'm about to talk my business, right? We're about to talk my business for real. This is a real like, home girl, we're sitting down, we're gonna chat chat, because you guys made I don't really talk about this type of stuff. I talk about in my book a good bit, you guys will see that come out at the top of next year. But you know, I guess we just doing it. So grab your ginger ale girl because we bout to chat.

So, I met the was-band when I was 22. And I was married by 23. And I know that some people get married at 18 or 19, or they've known their highschool sweethearts and all that. But I mean, we met when I was 22 and we were engaged within six months. And the was-band is actually a little over six years older than me. So we had like, you know, some good space in between us. And what's interesting. Now, you know, obviously hindsight, like I'm almost 40. So like hindsight, looking back, I think about the fact that I have two girls that are the age that I was when I got married, you know, I have Midtiny is 20, BigTiny is 23. And I'm like, Oh, heck no, like, I can't even get mid tiny, like, move up my house. You know what I mean? Like, she is like, No, I'm under your mom, like, Are you kidding me? You know, big tiny is, you know, probably nine months sober and you know, doing really well, you know, entering the world, but my gosh, marriage, hardly even on the plate. And I'm just like, what was I thinking? Like, my first thought going back to all that was, what was I thinking getting married at, like 22 to 23. Like, and I know that part of that was my checklist-ness, if you will, where I felt like this is, you know, this is

something that I've really shed, you know, over the past couple of years with this sort of idea that I have to be a certain way and there are certain marks that I must hit.

So for me a lot of it was go to school, get the job, make this money, buy, get married, buy a house, have a baby, like this sort of general, like, you know, hit these marks because that's what you're supposed to do. And so I had entered that phase, I guess where it was like, you know, 22, 23 is like you're out of college, whatever. And you're like, Okay, I need to find my mate. Because that's the next thing that you do to start building the life. I also had the mindset that I couldn't start building the life without a mate. So how on earth would I get a house or do the next thing if I didn't find my mate? I have to let you know. And it's fun to talk about now. And you know, I know that this is maybe you can hear me smiling. So this is sort of the prequel sequel. No, that's not the word. Spoiler alert. That's the word, it's sort of the spoiler alert, if you will, but I have love in my life now. And now that I know what I have, I didn't realize that I didn't have it before. So that's why you hear the smile in my voice a little bit. But I was not aware of how important love was in finding a partner. It's hard to say out loud, but it's true.

I really thought that love was something that grew over time. And this is something I've heard is a common thought that, Oh, it'll happen, it'll grow it's about finding someone who matches on a lot of bullet points are compatible with and that love you know, if you feel some inclination towards it, it will grow and mature as you experience and do things and and that it matters more that you're able to be compatible, because love will vary and wane over time. And also, you know, and again, I talked about this in detail in my book, I did not grow up in a home where love was heavily present and you know, culturally, partnerships within the Ghanaian community, you know, not to say they're devoid of love. There's obviously like, you know, lots of love partnerships, but there's also a practicality about a lot of relationships in our culture where they are, you know, you want to be sensible and you want to marry someone who's like well to do and has their things together and you know, stuff like that and you also need to come to the table in a like minded way.

So when I met, you know, my was-band, like he was great on paper, I was attracted to him. And he was very different than people I dated before. And in my book, I talk about, you know, some of the relationships I was in prior to him between the ages of 19 to 22, that were, you know, physically abusive, that were emotionally abusive, that were financially abusive, and, you know, and just really meeting someone who seemed mild mannered and to sort of be the counterpart to my high energy self, while also it felt like gave me a lot of space to be and dream and do. I just was like, this is great. You know, I'd rather be with someone who seems like they don't do too much, you know, then be with someone who does too much, because I experienced the other side of it, you know, 22 year old self.

So fast forward married for 12 years. Because also, I'm not a quitter, you know, just so you know, like, I never ever in a billion years thought I'd be getting divorced, because I just, everything is just a problem to be solved in my brain, right. But on the other side, Boy, am I glad that, you know, God had different plans for me, because now I think I'm really shaping a life that

is going to be just so flippin beautiful. But that said, I just didn't expect any of this. So what's crazy is, I have not been single, getting back to now we're fast forwarding to real time, I have not been single since I was 22. And y'all know, dating at 22 is so different then when you're an adult. So for those of you guys who got married in your 30s, or in your late 20s, or in your mid 30s, or are remarried, you know so much more about yourself, like what! Like I know what I like, I've accomplished goals, I have failed things before I have succeeded at things. There are things that I am not looking for in a partner because I know how to provide them for myself.

There are things that I am expecting in a partner and boundaries, I noticed that because I know what I require in order to function at my best. I know what it's like to truly, especially now as a woman who is, you know, a multimillionaire and has corporations and has had the ability to literally, I have lived a whole life already. I've had three kids, I've sent kids to prom, to college to driving, like I've done all of the things. I've had a full 7000 square foot house, big old house, made all this money, I've lived a whole life. And I have closed a whole chapter. So it's like, I'm literally not even 40 yet. And I've had a whole life and whole family. Like I literally could just start over. It is the weirdest place I could have ever imagined myself. Like, it's bananas.

But what I can tell you about it that's cool is when I finally was ready to date, I was like, I don't need anything but somebody that I know will help me grow in the areas I need to grow, challenge me to be my best self, love me, you know, and nurture me, you know, where I need nurtured and who I can lend my gifts to so that collectively, we can really show up in this world in a great way. You all when I tell you, that is not how I was dating at 22. You know, I was like, I need someone who like I can, like do dishes with and who like when we bought a house. It was just like we it was more perfunctory. It was odd.

So all that being said, when I first separated from my marriage, and unexpectedly so, I remember thinking to myself, oh, boy, I'm trying not to like tear up I guess I don't know, I remember when I left, I remember thinking no one would ever want me. And feeling like I mean, it was even a thought I should stay in this marriage because no one's gonna want me because I'm old. And I have three kids. And I like have a divorce under my belt. And maybe I should just stay where I am. Because who's to say that I'm even going to find anyone you know. And it almost, you know, I a couple chats back I talked about how, you know, dealing with the mom guilt around divorce is really hard. And that how that alone can keep you in a relationship that doesn't serve you or the world, you know, and this was one of the things that I thought would kind of you know, I was like, I don't know if I want to leave because what if I can't find anything ever and I'll just be alone.

And even when I was forced to go, you know, I really quickly had to accept like, look like maybe it's okay, if you're alone. As long as you have peace, and as long as you're safe. And as long as your kids are there like I'll always have my kids always you know, and as long as you're able to do work that's meaningful and you know, maybe like.. I'm not kidding like, and maybe some of this sounds familiar, maybe it doesn't. But like, maybe love just isn't for you, you know, maybe that is a thing that is just like people talk about, you know, and it's just not a real thing, kind of

like a unicorn thing, or, you know, it's like a fairy tale concept, or maybe people are hyping it up, but it's just not, it's not all of that, you know, and so and that's okay, you know, just do you like, I'm still a happy person. And I still, I still feel love in a platonic way, and in a parental way. And in a familiar way, you know, so maybe romantic love just isn't something that's going to be in the cards for me.

And, and that was something that I actually had to accept first, as part of my healing process. Because then it allowed me to realize I needed to focus very much on me, like, what type of life would I build, if romantic love wasn't part of it. And that is something that I just want to throw out there. So that you know, for those you guys were saying yourself, because my first thought was, I will never get married again. I will never have another part. And this is apparently divorce one on one, like, the minute you get out of it, you're like, I'm never doing this again. Like that is just a very standard feel, like why would I ever want to even tie myself to anyone ever again.

So that was so so me. Also, I was just physically exhausted, mentally exhausted, I was ill, I was sick. You know, I talked about this in episode one, my face was paralyzed, my blood pressure was soaring, like my body was breaking down. So, you know, the last thing on my mind was dating. So once I finally started bouncing back a little bit and building out a new routine. The next thing that happened that I started doing was just really again, loving myself and loving myself meant and in this, you know, it's kind of sad to say, but in the base form, going to doctor's visits, and eating well, and exercising and doing yoga three times a week. And I just want you to know that it is not it's, I would like to throw out this caveat, it is not lost on me that I am very privileged in having the ability to recover from, during this transition, the way that I have not everyone has the money, the flexibility, the space, the time, older children, all of these things are privileges, some of which I've worked to earn, but some of which were afforded to me, by my, my place in society, my stature, what have you, you know, so I'm not speaking any of this from a place of, you know, this is what everyone should do and it's easy, it's not. These are just the cards that I had in front of me, and I'm fortunate that I got to play them. But that said, I was able to, to really just double down like, obviously, still, you know, got a mom, got to work, you know, all of those things. But in between all of that, I discovered that I like to snowboard, you know, and I learned how to roller skate. And I, you know, went to yoga classes, and I lost another 22 pounds, because for the first time in my life, I'm gyming regularly. And I've discovered things like, you know, for 12 years, I didn't eat Mediterranean food, because in the very beginning of our relationship, it was sort of determined that we don't like Mediterranean food, but then I discovered I really love a good falafel, you know <laughs.>

I really got to spend time asking myself, How do I want to show up in this world, if a partner is not going to be in the cards for me, and I spent months doing this, like, actually not miss probably the better part of a year, just saying, I'm going to be alone, possibly forever. So I better like the person that I'm with. And if that's going to be me then I'm gonna be the best me. And that is what I did. And boy was it amazing because what happened was, I realized that that energy attracted people to me. And when I say people, I mean, not just romantic partners, but friendships, you know, I, you know, have been able to strike up conversations with girlfriends in

the nail shop, you know, because moving to a new city, I needed girlfriends, you know, and, you know, it's been awesome, because we now are, we hang out. We talked on the phone for hours, you know, like, I have a little brunch group, you know, like, all these cool things. Because I said to myself, What is my life going to look like? If it is not fixated on a romantic relationship and serving a family? You know, if I still have to show up in this world as me, you know, the best version of it. What does that mean? Who am I? You know, and so, that's what I did. And what happened was, I met someone, that's the best way I can describe it. I didn't expect it.

When I say I was putting myself out there in feeler form. It really just meant that if someone decided to strike up a conversation with me after a certain point, I said, Okay, I will engage in the conversation, but my intent isn't to develop something romantically because I just don't know where I am. And so, I did, I went on a couple dates and if you were following on Instagram, you know, it was really hard my very first date that I went on. I remember being so uncomfortable and talking about like my kids and You know, I think it turned into like a coaching session almost where I was like, Well, what's your purpose? Well, what do you think your dreams are? Well, you can do it. Like I just didn't, I realized I don't even know how to interact with people. Like, it was like, what is wrong? I'm so awkward. What do I do with my hands? Like, what do I wear? What is weird?

And then also the whole, like, people date weird now, you know, like, it's like, it's online is a huge thing. It's not like, you know, you don't necessarily meet through a friend through church. And then like, also dating an older segment, you know, like, some people are really ready to, like, settle down and have families and you may not be in that season right away, especially right after divorce or with kids. You know, it's just like, there's just a lot. Also, for me, like, I'm Google trouble, you know, and that is really different to because we all first of all, let's just keep it real. We all Google people when we're going on dates, and if you don't, you should, you know what I mean, because you want to find out what you can find out. But it's also weird, because I would sit down and I literally would have a date with someone and find out, you know, that they already knew about the was-band, and you know, or they'd sit down and they'd be like, wow, like, your life is so cool. I can't believe you did all these things. You're just kind of like, oh, man, like, there's so many more sides to me. And all that's really great. And it's really sweet and supportive. But I'd also like us to get to know each other organically. And so I was just like, Man, this is really, this is tough, you know. And so it was kind of in spurts, you know, like the getting ready to date is like I would I would go on a date or two. And I kind of be like, maybe now's not the time. But I was so glad that I spent time getting to know me before that because it allowed me to go back to me, you know, and say like, cool, I'll just hang out with friends and go snowboarding like I never felt like I lacked, I didn't feel like I was chasing a romantic relationship to complete myself because I was enough. And I was always was prepared to know that if it was just me and my babies forever that was enough.

And so for those of you out there who are saying to yourself, like, I don't know if I want to leave my relationship, because what if I have to get back out there? Well, guess what, even if you leave a relationship, and it's just you, you're enough, you know, nothing is missing with you. And

if you're feeling like something would be missing if you're just by yourself, and that's even more encouragement for you to start really doing some of that deep dive to make sure that if you're by yourself that you feel complete, you know, because that is something that you would still have to come back to many times over so might as well do that work now. And then of course, if you're already single, and you're saying like, Well, how do I date, these guys seem like trash and all of that. One of the things that was pretty awesome was because I didn't have any major goals around dating or a relationship or anything. I actually didn't have too many parameters. Like, I went on a date with a guy who was like in his 50s, I went on a date with a guy who was dated a 28 year old, which, by the way too young for me. I was like I can't do this like, like you're good looking fella. But you know, I keep wanting to call you kiddo, you know, and that's not a good move. Just so you know, like, you can't do all that. Okay, kiddo. Sounds good. You keep after it. Like, I was like, I got kids my age. It just didn't work for me.

But you know, like, it's cool, because I didn't have any weird parameters. Like I dated people of all ethnicities, I dated people of all working classes. I did. Like I just, it was really just like, I'm open to meeting people and finding out and I think sometimes we also put these tight parameters around like, well, I'm looking for someone who works like this. And I'm not saying like, lower your standards or whatever. I'm not some pro dating expert, I'm just telling you what I did and what worked for me, but I'm letting you know that part of how I found my partner, who I said partner, you know, like what have I found the person that I'm seeing now that I'm very, very, very happy with you know, is because I wasn't putting any parameters around it, I was just kind of like, God, please just bring goodness in my life. And while I'm doing this whole thing, I just want to experience and be happy, you know, and also, I want this to be a value add to my life. And helped me have the strength and comfort to use the boundaries that I've created where if this isn't a value add that I can stop that and be comfortable again, being with myself. And I mean, that really has been my prayer like I just bring in goodness bringing ease, bringing peace, you know, bringing people who just add to that.

And so the readiness to date part is not one where I think that we just arrive at some place or it suddenly feels right. It really is about kind of putting your toe into the water and also just being very open. But it's hard to do that if you're not okay being by yourself. If you're still thinking you have to find a partner, you need a partner or you require a partner if you're at a place where you're like I'm okay being by myself, well then guess what, every time we go on a date, you might just end up with a new friend. And that's okay too. You know our new business partner or new whatever, but just that energy really does serve the dating world and experience. I was so grateful to have allowed myself to engage it that way because I didn't really leave dates with a lot of disappointment.

I will tell you after my first date I did you know cry because it was kind of a jarring experience. It was very real and realizing I'm going to be out there like holy cow I'm doing this all over again. And it was tough, you know, but that was tears for me, sort of a little bit more of that mourning and grief of having been a wife and not like, I like I'm gonna be completely honest, I'm so happy in my current partnership, and yet, I still wake up some days, or I still have moments where I'm

like, I don't have my ring on, you know, like, and oh, no, you know, and it feels weird, because I'm just so used to being a missus, you know. And I wasn't ready to give up that title, you know. So it's a shift, you know, and all parts of your body aren't going to catch up, and all parts of your mind aren't going to catch up at the same time. But when they do, it's a beautiful thing.

And so speaking of a beautiful thing, you know, I am excited to talk about it. But you know, we'll do this on a different day. But because I just really wanted to focus on the readiness part of it, but when when I was ready, I think that there were parts of me that also showed that, you know, and when I went on my first date with this person, again, I walked in there not expecting anything, you know, I just knew that I thought he was incredibly good looking. And I knew that he was totally different from what I dated before, because I used to date introverts. And, you know, people who I felt kind of matched my energy but weren't necessarily competitive with my energy. And because I just thought we'd be a lot in one room, like two extroverts, you know, um, but this person was just a ball of energy also. And, and just generally, like, you know, I had sworn off dating anyone who even looked like my ex, you know, so it was a total shift. But man, am I so glad I stuck it out. I'm so glad I stuck it out. Because that first date was everything. And it taught me so much about myself. And I knew, as of that first date, that it was something different. And I'll tell you now, you know, I'm almost eight months in, you know, to this in which, you know, you guys haven't known the timeline and the tracking, but that's some of the math and I've been dropping little clues on social but you know, you get more deets here. But you know, now that I'm 8 months in, like, that eight months could easily be forever, you know, but I also because I'm level headed. If it's not forever, that's also okay, because I can always come back to me and that means everything.

So all that being said, I can't wait to tell you about the first date, because I think that you'll get a laugh out of it. But I also think that there's gonna be a lot of really great lessons in there around, "Okay, so these are some markers, these are some things that make sense, these are some things that I can look for, you know, if I'm trying to figure out if it makes sense, or if it's something worth exploring." One of the biggest things that I'll give you a little preview of now that I, you know, told I tell my kids, my older girls, when they're dating, is that I'd never showed up at that date, looking for a partner or wanting to prove myself or trying to find a way to make this person fit. Instead, I sat down, you know, totally open minded, you know, just getting to know who this person is. And knowing that, like, you got to earn a second date, meaning if there's something that intrigues me, if there's more that I want to know, that is what dating is. Dating is seeing that person, you know, to find out more about them until you determine it's no longer a fit, you know, and even though we're eight months in, I almost ended that date in the middle of the date because I was like, I don't know if this is a fit. So it's kind of funny because once you hear all the things you'll be like, Oh my gosh, I can't believe she almost blew it. But um, but well, we'll cover that another time.

All that being said, I'm excited to share this stuff with you because it has just been a dream and obviously in the book I will go into much more detail about like kind of the ins and the outs but you've already been seeing it on Insta and I can't think of a better way for us to have this

girlfriend cha. So you can hear me cheese it and you can hear me sounding super giddy about it. But you know as much as I've shared some of the darker times you know and how I have that season of struggle. I also want to share the light because life is very much both and we are incredibly, incredibly deserving.

So friend, more to come.