



Season 3, Episode 21 - Transcript

The First Date

Nicole:

Hey, friend. So I was thinking about this chat as I was driving in and I know that in our last chat, I was talking about what it was like preparing myself for the concept of dating and how it was a two part process. So, oh, heads up. Of course, if you've got the tinies or the littles around, this isn't exactly headphone conversation, like, I'm not going to use any funky language. But, you know, it may bring up things that you might want to chat offline with, with your littles because we are talking about grownup-y things. And if you are a younger folk, meaning millennial or better, I want you to know that this stuff is all stuff you're going to need.

I gotta tell you, it wasn't too long ago that I was in your shoes in my late 20s, early 30s. And I like to embrace that I still am there, at least in spirit, you know, it's the age God wants for me, not just the age that my body is. And, you know, I gotta tell you, life comes at you fast, and it changes even faster. And I never would have guessed I'd be where I am now. So it's always my hope that everything that I'm sharing here, I'm not just sharing it, because oh my gosh, it's like juicy or interesting or salacious or fun to follow along with what Nicole is doing, which I do hope that it is fun to kind of see that I'm able to bounce back and that life is still good and rewarding. And that life is still generous, even if it's complex. But I also hope that in hearing all the stuff I'm going through all the things I've done, all the things I've overcome, and that I'm still confused and lost and figuring it out in a lot of different ways. It just affords you the opportunity to grant yourself some grace as you start over. Because that's what this is all about. We're constantly starting over in life. And I want you to know, it's something you can do too.

So back to the meat of what I was saying. So, in our last chat, I was telling you that I obviously you know recently divorced, you know, trying to figure out how I can get out there, it took like about a year before I kind of got my mojo back. Mojo meaning my body felt right, both mind health, spirit, all of those things. And I felt like I was in a place where I was willing to sort of embrace others, you know, and interact more, maybe not even on a romantic level. But I was open to the possibility that there could be somebody out there for me?

Because initially, I was like, one, I didn't even see myself in this position, two heck no, I'm not going to do all of this again, you know, and then three, just you know, being a mom and having a lot of jobs and responsibilities, I just felt like, "Where would I even have the capacity to work with someone else?" So being completely honest, that's a good thing that I listened to myself, and I took time to focus on myself and be comfortable being alone. That is actually the first step of being good in any relationship.

Before you take a job, you need to make sure you are good. And knowing that your skill sets aren't enough to keep you supported, and that your work and everything you do is meaningful without the job, you don't want to be in a job feeling like you have to be there. You know, in a man like that, that is something you have to be good at, you have to be good alone. Same thing with a relationship, a relationship shouldn't completely which should add to it, it should encourage forward movement, it should amplify your life. Even if it's hard, it should still feel like it's a meaningful hard. But it definitely should not be the thing that fixes you or accommodates your gaps or stands in the place of your lack. If you're feeling that then you need more time alone to figure out how to fill those gaps before expecting someone else to do it. And that was a lot of what that one year plus was for me before I decided to get out into the dating world.

So if you haven't heard our last chat, definitely listen to it. Because I talked a little bit about that mindset that preparedness honestly, some of the inner ick of feeling like this was never going to happen for me or I wasn't good enough, or who was going to want someone who had three kids or who was going to want someone who, you know, was a public figure, you know, which, you know, between us, obviously, I'm not fancy pants or whatever. But when you're Google-able, people think that you're something or not. And that can be really, really hard. And I'll talk about that more in a sec. But you know, I talked about that stuff. And it's important because that is the starting point. But what I want to chat about right now is how I took those first few steps and what I discovered when I hit the dating world.

Y'all, there is pee in the dating pool. I gotta tell you, if there's anything I've ever heard, especially from the married, right, those who are still married out there, they're like how you doing it because it is different from my day. And I gotta tell you, it's changing. It feels like month to month, so I'm going to share a couple of things because I'm sure gonna get all the way real real. And this may be a time to earmuff the littles if they're listening in, I have been shocked at how, let's just call it biblically open, the world has gotten with their bits. Bits, meaning body bits, and personal detail bits and lifestyle bits and things like that. And I say all this no judgement, right? Because everybody's got their own thing going, I gotta tell you, even as a mama, I really do not judge how people want to show up in the world because one, we're so much more than our lowest moment, two we are not defined solely by our jobs, our work, our preferences, those sorts of things. So I just really don't get caught up in that. And I'm also aware that people evolve.

So whatever you are in front of me today may not be what you are a week from now, right. But all that being said, I remember when we used to keep stuff to ourselves a little bit, you know, what I mean? Like, where it was, you go on a date, and you get to know the person and, and

you maybe like, keep some things to yourself, you know, so you are presenting your best foot forward first, you know, but while still assessing the partner, asking questions, but you keep it kind of high level, you know what I mean? Y'all, it's not like that anymore. And I don't know if it's because when you're meeting someone through church, or through a friend, or at a restaurant, or a supermarket or something that, you know, we may have seen in movies and TV growing up, you do have to kind of start with small talk first. But now because of the internet people put all their business out there. And then you can corroborate that evidence through Google. So it's different, right, because like, literally, you'll have someone do a profile, where they'll say, like, on any of the dating sites, which by the way, like, a lot of people say, online dating is terrible, just throwing a little stat, because, you know, I love date, details and data. But most, 50% of marriages now start with online dating.

So if you're somebody who said, I can't do online dating, or I'm not into online dating, I got to let you know that you are knocking your chance of finding a partner down by 50%, if you don't engage in online dating, because that is how people are finding partners. So just, you know, a little wormy to put in your brain, if you're, you know, thinking about getting out there, or going out there for the first time. And it is just about finding the platform that works for you, you know, I am partial to like platforms like Bumble, which, you know, is what I actually recommended for my girls, it's a female driven and lead platform, meaning that while you can match with people, males cannot engage you without you engaging first. And then you have the ability to like block and get rid of them quickly, you know, and the page is a little bit more than a Twitter, two or three lines, swipe situation, you get a little bit more details around them, as well as it encourages and fosters conversation rather than being a site where, you know, it's kind of like, Hey, what are you doing? What are you into, it's a little bit more conversational in case that isn't a natural thing. So that's part of why I think Bumble was a great platform, not just for me, but one that I recommend for my girls.

And then also Raya, which is, Raya is an approval based platform where if you are a high networth individual or public figure, or a celebrity, you actually have access to this platform, and you have to get approved, you know, to be honest, but if you are approved, you know you have the ability to date, like other people in your similar field of work, is the best way to describe it. So you know, it just and there are lots of platforms that are like that. So I'm not opposed to online dating, but you need to know how to use it, you need to be safe, you need to engage carefully. But all that being said, it's just weird, the concept of dating is weird. I mean, who on earth ever thought that this was a good idea that you just meet somebody that's been in the world, your whole life that you've never even known. All of a sudden, you're like, let me meet you in a room privately, to get to know you. And then after like, a couple of weeks, I feel like I know you enough for us to push our mouths together. Or for us to like be in rooms privately together. Like it's, it's actually pretty crazy. It's actually counter to everything we've ever learned, like don't go home with strangers, don't go places with them. And yet here we are doing all of this stuff in the hopes that we can procreate, it's crazy.

So just accept that you're gonna be crazy if ya jump. It was just like, once I got over that part. That was when I realized, Okay, I'm gonna get out there. So I'm getting onto these platforms. And I realized that people are leading with a lot more than they used to. So they'll tell you right out of the gate, like I've got anxiety or, which is fine. You know what I mean? I've got anxiety too, if you can't tell by the cadence of my voice, that I'm a high energy person, you know, prone to anxiety. You know, or people will tell you on, you know, on these dates, like, just their whole family history, or, like I went on a date once with a guy who was literally I think, maybe like my second date ever, like, since I was 22.

So it was my second date in probably 10 plus years, wow I sound 1000 years old. My first date was actually with a guy that I met by accident. And just a this is gonna sound a lot scarier than it is. But you guys know, I travel a lot. So it wasn't a hotel lobby, but I was there for work, like so skeevey as it sounds, but I bumped into him in the hotel lobby, and it wasn't a date day, basically, just at the end of the evening, we were like, This is sounding really terrible. You I swear you this is a lot, this is a lot cleaner than it sounds. But at the end of the evening, after we both finished work, we just met up for a drink in the hotel lobby. And then we went to our respective quarters, y'all, I kept it clean. But I'm just saying, you know, that was what I consider my first date, because we spent a lot of time talking. And for me, it was my first time engaging with a male with maybe romantic intentions or like non-platonic intentions since I was married. So I kind of counted it as a date, but it wasn't like I was like asked out, officially or anything like that. But for me, it felt more like that. And I realized it more after and that went well, I ended up doing a second date with that guy when I came back to Los Angeles, but it he was a little young for me, at the time, he was 31, which is not young, and definitely within the ballpark of appropriate for me to date, but it felt young, just in terms of where he was in his life, in particular, because he was still, you know, he was like figuring out if he wanted to quit his job. And he, you know, was still kind of figuring out where he wanted to show up in life. And, you know, that's not where I am, you know, like, I know what I'm doing. And like I you know, I know, my passion and my purpose I show up. And so that was sort of the thing that wasn't the mesh, and it lent itself to me being prone to coaching him. And I had an inclination to do stuff like call him kiddo. And I can tell you right now that that's not the move ladies. If you're thinking about dating, getting out there, don't go on a date and call a guy Hey, kiddo, I really, you know, sounds good kid. Like, that's not, I'm just gonna let you know right out the gate that never goes well. Even if you have kids around his age, so you know, that are close-ish, because I adopted so that's possible.

Anyways, anyways, so my second date, I was like, Alright, let me try to do the dating thing. You know, let me get out there, kind of create a profile. So the first part is creating a profile. Now, I gotta tell you, it's a meat market out there. And don't let that dissuade you. Because a lot of us feel like, Oh, well, because everything is so visually based with social media and things like that, you gotta like have filters and look a certain way in order to really get someone interested. But I want to tell you, truth moment, there is a lid for every pot. Okay, there is someone out there who is absolutely looking for someone who looks like you, for someone who acts like you, for someone who has everything that you have going on the good, the bad, the ugly, the messy, all of that, what may be the issue standing in your way is that you aren't willing to look for them, or

you aren't willing to accept what that package looks like. Because you may already have a vision of what you think that needs to be. I actually let go of all that, you know, when I talked about that a touch on my previous chat, I literally was like, I just want to be happy. And I'm looking for someone who can be my friend, and I'm in a new city and it is lonely. And I am not inclined to just hook up with people, that is just not even my makeup. Like not judging those who are have that sort of nature. I'm just saying for me, not my makeup, you know, I'm the type where I'm a couch cuddler and I'm a movie watcher, and I'm a let's, you know, cook together and do activities and you know, like, I'm a family girl, you know, so it's like, I just really wanted something more traditional.

So all that being said, profile. So I put my profile out there and fortunately you know, because I'm on the internet. I have lots of photos, but I'm not kidding y'all. I have never in my life felt like I was looking at photos in a whole new way. Ya'll know what I mean? Like I was literally like, okay, so I probably don't want this is not the time to put up the funny the photo that I think it's funny of me and my bonnet and my Walmart Grandma MooMoo? Because that's comfy. Like, that's not the look, that's not the move here. I mean, like, they won't get my sense of humor around that, like you actually like I literally was like, Oh, I have to put up pictures that would make me appear attractive, you know, to whatever whoever would be attractive, Best Foot Forward sort of sitch and I was like This is so awkward. But you know with the help of some girlfriends so I always encourage y'all to talk to your friends and the marrieds love this. By the way, Mary's love creating profiles they love swiping through from you for you. They just love it because they don't do it. So they're like, oh my gosh, this is so much fun. Let's get you matched up. So I went ahead and I was able to do you know, create a profile and I can honestly tell you I did not have much difficulty finding matches, and I can also tell you neither will you.

The hardest part is finding matches that you believe are worth pursuing. And that's where we start getting really critical. And we either cancel ourselves out, or we match with what we think is right for us and what isn't. So I'm about to truth moment, truthy, truthy, truthy about something about me. So, I've always been super inclined. And in all of my dating my first my, my second date, you know, in LA was with a guy who literally on the date was complaining about how his boss is out to get him, which was like, I was like, Oh, your paranoia is showing speller. tuck that away, so not hot. Like, that was like my second date. Trust me. Oh, and then he proceeded to tell me about how like, he was living with his parents and had no intention to move. He was like, 35 years old. And he was and I was like, oh, but like to save money. Because again, I'm not judging. I'm like, is there? What's the, what's the goal towards that? And he was like, Nah, like, it's just a good setup. Is it? A setup for one because you gonna stay single? That was like, where I was with that. So. So yeah, so you know, no second date with that guy.

But I'm telling you, when I put myself out there for these first few dates, the nerves that I had with these profiles, this selection, like I like, and I'm telling the truth, why I'm gonna put yourself out there, I literally was looking for someone that I thought would be like my ex. I'm not kidding. I like which it's so hard to say this out loud. And I think you guys, for those you guys who have been divorced, or for those of you guys who have been in relationships and have breakups, you

know, people say you have a type, right? What happens usually, is that you either find someone who is not your type at all. So you go for the anti, or like, you know, like, if you were dating good guys, you want bad guys, if you're dating guys who touches you want guys nothing like clean cut, whatever, you know, or you go for the same thing over and over and over again. It's like a learned behavior. And y'all I'm not gonna lie to you. Like, I literally was like, I want someone who's like introverted and in a professional field, and who, you know, seems kind of mild mannered. And because in my head, I was like, that's what matches my personality, at least I thought that was what matched my personality. And I say all this now, because I'm in a partnership right now with someone and I have been for several months, who is not any of those things. And boy, are we a very great match. Boy, is it going really well. And, and I just say all that to let you guys know, you may need if you are struggling with dating, struggling to get out to date, or just struggling in general with even feeling like the market has anything for you, you may need to evaluate dating outside the norm. I want to let you know that a date will not kill you. Going out on one date is just an exploration, you don't owe anything to anyone to just explore, it is free to try it out. So why won't you go on one date with something outside your box to determine whether or not that may actually be the box you should be in? And that's what I learned after striking out so badly, so often.

I kept going on dates with guys who were super introverted and being like, Why are these people boring to me, or going on dates with guys who seem very mild mannered, and realizing that that actually was aligning with them being a lack of ambition, or a lack of drive, or at least enough ambition and drive to match my energy. Or I would go out on dates with these guys that felt like, it was great because they understood that I was a force to reckon with and that I had a strong personality and that I, you know, was definitely like a boss girl, you know, and then being disappointed that they weren't stepping up or that they didn't feel like they knew how to take initiative, or they lacked a certain masculinity to match my femininity that I still wanted to embrace, even though I was a woman who absolutely did not have a need for a man, but I wanted a one. And y'all ladies know what I'm saying without me having to go into detail on that one. I know just collective room. Right?

So all that being said, here, I was dating a lot of the same and striking out because it's not what I needed. But it was sure enough, what I swore up and down was what I wanted. And so finally, I just end up going on a dating hiatus where I was like, and I'm done. Like, I can't do this. But I will tell you, to my credit. One of the things that was great about dating was I made a lot of friends because also I'm friendly, right? Like I just like people in general. So as I was going on these dates, I was meeting great people, really awesome people like I you know, babysit some of their dogs. Now. I go to their birthday parties. Like I have a great friend network in Los Angeles. And some of that was birthed from the people that I had gone on dates with and met their friends and things like it was just, it's a really great thing. So shout out to those fellas who are listening to the podcast, all y'all who didn't work out, you know, who are still my friends. Here's a shout out to you. Because I didn't because I'm gonna send this to you for you to listen to. It may not have worked with us. But I also think that you're amazing. And I'm glad we're still friends.

But all that being said, you know, what finally happened was I kind of went on a hiatus. I was like, I'm just not going to date. You know what I mean? I think some of you may be in that window now, or some of you may not be it like, it's just it's crud out there. I can't do it. But after that hiatus, here's what happened. I said, if I'm going to make this work, I'm going to do it differently. Are you hearing what I'm saying? Y'all, whether it's in relationships, or in business, or in life, if you keep taking breaks to step back from something then re-entering them with the same spirit, the same plan and the same energy? Why the heck are you shocked that you keep getting the same results? When are you going to say to yourself, okay, if I'm going to re enter this, I'm going to do it with something new. And that's exactly what I did. I said, You know what, I'm going to step back from this, but when I come back, I'm going to do it differently.

So doing it differently can look like a lot of things, y'all, it can look like, I'm going to work out and change my body, because I feel like that's gonna get me different results. When I get back out there, I'm going to go and see a stylist, and figure out my clothes and refresh my look, because I've been getting the same haircut since 1982. You know what I mean? It could, it could mean I'm going to go and take classes on being more conversational, I'm going to go learn a skill, I'm going to stop accepting the Netflix and chill date. And I'm going to start insisting on us going to bowling or an activity or cooking class. I'm going to ask out the person that I want to date, rather than waiting for them to ask me out.

I mean, whatever it is, if you're not trying something new, don't be surprised that you keep ending up at the same place. And that's what I did. I said, You know what, I keep dating the same, I'm going to look for someone who is different from my ex, the wasband. I'm going to look for somebody who really does embody some of the attributes, the perfect one in particular, that I never thought would work for me I have never tried before. But I'm interested to see what happens.

And so I looked for somebody who was extroverted. I wanted to see what it would feel like to go on a date with someone and not have to feel like I carried the room. To not have to be the energy, I wanted someone who went in the presence of their spirit, I felt like my spirit could rest. Because they can entertain, they can take it on, they can make decisions. I wanted to see what that would be like. And that's what I started looking for. So what does that mean, on the profiles, I started going on dates with guys who, you know, that manifests in a lot of different ways. Some of them had very strong spirits, and they were more of the toxic masculinity type. And that just wasn't a fit for me. Or they had strong spirits and they were looking for someone maybe a little more docile or more of a timid woman. And y'all know that ain't me, that's not this energy, and it wasn't a match. And that was okay. But what I also was learning was, there's a whole window of fella out there that I was not paying attention to not embracing, but there was an energy that was right on the money. And it actually encouraged me to keep looking because I was like, I think I'm finally headed down the right path.

And it was in that path that I ended up meeting somebody special. And it's crazy, because I went ahead and I saw this person's profile and we met in 2021. And we started chatting, and I

try not to chat too long online, because like, what is even the point? Are we going to meet in real life or not, right? I just wanted to chat long enough to get a feel for you, run a little light background check, do a little like googling kind of figure out your blood type, your DNA, your credit report. Kidding, kidding, kidding. But also maybe not kidding, all the way. But some kidding, you know, just enough to see who you are, and then go on that date. And what's great was, we had a little bit of that chatting, it was kind of over the holiday season of 2021. So that put me in a position where we couldn't really get together because we all had so much stuff going on. But then on top of the year, randomly, I was getting ready to hang out with another friend. And that friend canceled. And in LA that happens all the time. People literally don't make plans until the day of delivery, like call you at the day and be like so what are we doing tonight? And then they'll call you an hour before and be like, are we still doing it? Like it's it's so annoying. But it's also again, I think, a generational shift that's happened now. Because back in my day, you had to stick to plans because you called people before you left the house and there wasn't a phone again, until you got there.

I'm showing my age, but I'm telling you like now people will be like, I will text you be like I didn't make it you know, it's crazy. Or I had my location on, you should have known I wasn't coming. It's a different energy. But, but yeah, so like the person, you know, said that they couldn't make it. And so I was like, I still kind of want to go out like I'm still ready and like this what I want to do. And then I remembered I've been, you know, talking to this fella, you know, and I hadn't, we hadn't locked anything down. So I was like, you know what, I'm gonna be a little LA right now. Let me just go ahead and give him a call and say, Hey, if you're free, let's hang out, you know, like, if you're free, let's do it. And so I called him up and I said, Hey, you know, I know that we've been doing a lot of back. Oh gosh, it was it's crazy. I don't know if you can tell. I'm literally getting butterflies about it thinking about it. It's the craziness because I'm feeling the feeling I felt in that first moment. So I also want you to know, when he starts stepping outside of the box, it's going to feel weird, your body's still going to tell you that it's there's nerves, and there's excitement and there's awkwardness, and all those feels are still going to be there. Because that's normal. That's part of it. But I also want you to know that that's all part of the beginning of something that could be great. You know, so don't ever feel like, Oh, you shouldn't do things. If it doesn't excite you. If it doesn't create something in your body, then what the heck are you doing anyways? Right, because life is for the living. And that is a feeling of being alive.

And so, yeah, so I called and I was like, hey, you know, I know, we've been chatting back and forth. And we were talking about, like, kind of syncing up schedules. And I actually have an opening tonight. And if you're free, you know, do you want to just grab a bite to eat and, you know, do something tonight? And he was like, actually, I am free. And I was like, great, cool. Let's do it. You know, I was like, I'll let you pick somewhere and text me and I will just plan to meet tonight. I think we met at like seven or something like that. And, and he was like, Okay, sounds good. And he texted me. And I remember getting home and being like, just low level excited, but also totally kind of like anything could happen, because I just had spent so much time striking out and I just wasn't sure but I knew that like, Okay, well, this is I also thought he

was very good looking. I was like, at minimum, I'll get to enjoy the visual representation of God's great work in the accompaniment of a delicious meal. So, you know, all is not lost.

So I, you know, just got ready. I recall very vividly not trying that hard. I remember being like, I'm just gonna throw on a shirt. Like, I was like, I'm running late. I'm not even gonna, like worry about too much makeup. I would because I you know, just frankly, I was like, I'm old. Y'all know me. I'm like, after a certain point, I'm like, Y'all go, you don't get what you're gonna get it just split. It is better. Let me set that bar good and low. So I don't have a pedestal to fall from. So but you know, he saw my profile pictures. He knows what the potential is. He knows what the possibility is. He knows what I can aspire to. So let me just go ahead and give him a little bit of real life. You know, he's just such a mess, y'all. But yeah, so I went ahead and I got ready and then went out. And I actually was a few minutes late, and I'll never forget walking in seeing him. Having him look at me. I'm thinking, Gosh, that guy has like a killer smile. Like his energy was so bright. And it was so bright. I want sunglasses, y'all, I sat down and I'm not even kidding.

When I sat down on that date, the first thing I thought to myself was he's kind of a lot. Which, between us friends. Just let's just want to lean in on this one. I know I'm a lot. How dare I? How dare Nicole Walters even say somebody else's a lot. She has a lot of hutzpah, right to even sit here and be like somebody else's a lot. It's too much for her. Like the goal of it. All right. I'm a lot. I'm y'all. I'm the worst. So I sit down like he's a lot. And I'm not kidding. First thing he says is like, yeah, you know, I knew that you're a few minutes late. So I just kind of ordered some basic things just in case you got here and you're already hungry. You know, so I just ordered some things just so that that way, you wouldn't have to wait. Y'all, I remember thinking to myself, boy, that was really thoughtful. You know, and having been in previous partnerships where you know, thoughtfulness was not a priority, I was really impressed by the fact that he was thinking of me, before he knew me. And that said a lot about his character, because he had no idea how this date would turn out. However, he was still doing something that was kind and thoughtful. And it was something that like, was a mental note for me on my personal list of what I'm looking for in an ex partner, one that prioritizes me, one that, you know, is thoughtful and reflective and one that their character is consistent no matter who they're with.

So people can have a consistent character of being a total douchebag like that's a real thing. But a character where if I talk to your friends who have known you for 20 years, or like that's who they are, because that's something that honestly I can say, I bring to the table. People who have known me for years, like literally you can google articles about me from my teachers talking about me in high school who were saying we are not surprised that Nicole is where she is, who she is, how she helps people and how she shows up because she literally was this person when she was little. I have essays that I wrote in 10th grade that where I talk about wanting to be a mom who like helps the world view it like it's just like that is my hardwiring. And so it's something that I know now to look for that I didn't know so much at 22 I thought that relationships were more bullet pointed like he got a job you know, what's his like? You know, is he going to show up? Is he nice? Is he hot? Like things like that? Now I'm like, What do people say about you when you leave the room? You know, how do you show up to your jobs and your

work? Do you phone it in? Do you have proper work ethic? How do you respond to hardships because These are the real questions that you need to figure out about someone if you decide you're going to commit to them. And even if the partnership lasts five years, like, do you want to be with someone for five years, who stalls your forward movement in life? Or do you want to be with someone who, you know, stalls? Or is a wait, you know, let's talk about that, that you're dragging through life? Or do you want to be with someone who amplifies that, or at least in moments when you're operating alone, supports you, you know, and helps, like, nurture you and nourish you, you know, so I'm sitting down with obviously a long list, y'all, you know, he didn't know that was in my head, but it was when I sat sat down.

And, you know, like that first action, I felt that it spoke to his character, not just in relation to me, but his character as a person. And no one had done that before. And I just, I appreciate it, because the type of thing I would have done, so I just really was like, okay, cool. He's meeting me at least with some energy that I think is similar to my own. But then, you know, he's like, doing this weird thing where he laughs at the every at the end of every sentence. And I was like, maybe he's just uncomfortable. I know, now, months in that's just how he is, and it doesn't bother me anymore. And I just think it's like, I think it's cute. Like so first and foremost, you know, again, just like I'm telling you, there's a lid for every pot, your very quirks are the things that your partner, your person, your perfect partner is going to think our delights, you know, so as much as you may think there are things about you like, oh, that scar on my face, oh, that I have a weird lisp, or Oh, blob, whatever it is, that your partner is going to think that thing is, is just amazing. It's the thing, they're not going to want to change about you. So know that there is someone out there who's gonna want you as you are.

So I am, you know, sitting across it, I'm just I'm not kidding, probably, like 5-10 minutes. And I was like, I don't know, if I'm that interested. He's kind of a lot, and I'm kind of tired. And maybe it's time for me to go. And I'm not kidding, that was the energy I was bringing. But you know, the food was good. We were having sushi, the food was good. And, you know, I was already out. Y'all know that energy. I'm already out, I'm already dressed might as well. And so I just ended up sticking it out. And the conversation was easy. It was really good. And, um, but I'm not kidding, I definitely had a moment I was like, should I just say, hey we're not connecting, we should go? Which, by the way, people don't know, you can do that in a date. You can, you know, if you're a younger folk listen to this, it's you don't have your time is valuable. You know, obviously, as a woman, we have to be careful of our safety because not all men respond well to, to rejection, which is not our problem or our fault, but we still need to protect ourselves, sadly, and women have, you know, women that are raising sons, obviously, it's you know, we got to raise our sons to know that they have to respect women, you know, when they say no, in all capacities, ways, shapes and forms, that it is not our job to manage that. But it doesn't change the fact that we still got to keep ourselves safe, as frustrating as that may be.

So all that being said, you know, it doesn't change our autonomy to be able to say, you know, you're great, that's all great, but I may want to step out, and I've done that a couple times. So because, you know, my time is valuable. And I also want to respect people and not mislead

them. So, but all that said, I was getting a little bit of that five, just because I guess I was just being kind of crotchety about it, you know, like, homogeny, you know, about my my tude because I was like, I don't know, he seems like a lot, but I stuck it out. And I stuck it out but it was it was going pretty well. Like we were talking was easy. It was fine. You know, so funny part is, if you ask him, he would tell you that this was the best day he'd ever been on. And he was like, the conversation was so easy. And you were so delightful. You're so pretty and blah, but like saying all these things. But it was just funny because you know, I was not matching that same energy. And y'all ladies already know, we can put on, we can be on dates, and they will never know that we're not feeling it. Because we do know how to put on if we have to, you know, and I wouldn't say I was doing all of that at all. Like, it was very natural for me because I did, I liked him. I just was catching like friend vibes versus romantic vibes, you know, right away, even though I felt like he was attractive.

So before I move on, I want to call this out because it's important. I want you guys to write this down. If you're taking notes or mental notes about it. That's one of the things that I'm learning about dating and new partnerships and seeking a partnership that really honors the person that I am completely, it's that I wasn't looking for a partner, I ended up finding a friend, but a friend that I was like romantically attracted to, and all of that emotion and that connection was so different from me at 22. And it was so different from what I thought I needed, even if I had been single at 27, I still wouldn't have known to look for that. And part of me wonders, you know, if I was 45 would I'd be looking for, I don't know, you know, but I will tell you that in this season of my life, you know, knocking on somebody's door, like it was very easy for me to recognize that the balance of what I was feeling wasn't a romantic lust-filled hormonal connection, you know, at least that solely you know, and it wasn't just a platonic friend vibes sort of relationship. It was a mixture of the two that felt healthy and balanced, where you were like, This is someone I want more than a friendship with. But my goodness, I want them around, I want them around, I want to know things about them, I, I'm interested and it just felt unfamiliar.

So if you're feeling something like that, I want you to know that, you know, that may be one of the signs that it is something to pursue, that it may not look like either TV romance, and it may not look like previous romance, but it is something. Don't ignore that just because it's different. So, um, so I didn't, I didn't ignore it. And the date continued. And it was really, really great. And after that first date, I remember, I obviously went back to our respective, I shouldn't say, obviously, some people do go home together at the end of the first date. I don't, and I didn't, but we and that's not a judgment, just a choice. But I went to my respective home and he went to his respective home, but he called to, you know, make sure I made it home and all that which, again, thoughtful, respectful, and all that. But we ended up talking on the phone for six hours that night. And it was like we just didn't get off the phone, you know, and, and it was so easy and it was so natural. And I don't even remember what we talked about being completely honest. I remember we laughed a lot. And it wasn't like put on, it was like full on belly laughs. And I woke up tired the next day, and it was the best type of tired. Where I was almost in a daze of like, what happened to me. You know, like what happened, you know, and it was dizzying, and it was exciting. And I knew I wanted to see this person again. But it also still felt healthy. Like it felt like

I'm excited to explore this. I'm optimistic. And this is something that feels positive, but it didn't feel artificial. It didn't feel put on. I didn't feel any of the, "Should I text them or should I not text them?" Because I felt like if I text them, I know this, this person is matching my energy. They're giving what I'm like I'm getting what I'm giving, they want to hear from me. You know, I've never felt any of that weird. Is it texting too much? Is it calling too much? Am I interacting too much? I didn't feel any of that from day one. I didn't feel like I had to play any of the wait three days, wait a couple hours, whatever. If I wanted to see you, I want to see you. And the same thing applied to him one of my good friends Demetria Lucas always says interested men act interested. Interested men act interested. So what I knew from that very first date, that very first moment with this guy was that he was interested, and so was I. And that was the beginning of everything. And I can't wait to talk to you more about what that everything is. And I also can't wait for you to meet him. More on that next.