



## **Season 3, Episode 22 - Transcript**

### *Living Meaningfully*

Nicole:

Hey friends, I am so glad that you're here today because today's chat is a special now you know, I don't really have people in the studio if I am not certain that we're going to have the very, very best to chat and this is a big one because I have brought in experts to chat with us about a couple things.

One the babies because y'all know I am a holy hot mess, okay, every single day trying to keep up with these kids. And on top of that, I just love talking to fellow strong, smart, empowering women about how they have started over many times in their life and what we can learn from them about how to start over better.

So, I am in studio with the team at Meaning Full Living, Haley Hubbard and Jessica Diamond. Ladies, thank you so much for being here.

Hayley:

Thank you so much for having us. It's so fun to meet you in person.

Nicole:

Oh my gosh!

Jessica:

It's so exciting. Thank you.

Nicole:

Oh, it's so exciting. And also, this in person things weird we were just talking about a little before like, I mean, it has been especially with podcasting it's kind of cheating zoom.

Hayley:

Yeah, you know, it's true.

Nicole:

It's the weirdest thing! So, in person is kind of cool. And y'all, it's just these, they're lovely in person, just so you know, I know you're listening but they're just absolutely beautiful and I'm so grateful that you guys are here.

Now, I wanted to cover a lot of ground because you both know so much around parenting, around nutrition, around how to wrangle the babies and keep our lives together. So, I just want to kick off first with something that you guys touch on but I think is so so important.

Now, personally, as all my friends listening, know, I am you know going through divorce and I am you know Mama to my babies, my three littles of crazy range ages 11 , 20 and 23, so hands are full.

Hayley:

Wow!

Nicole:

Yes! Quite the spread. So, I want to talk to you guys about something, you know with partnerships. So, Haley, post pandemic, I feel like, I mean, not just you everyone's life looks different. Right?

Hayley:

Totally.

Nicole:

Totally. But you've gone through some major shifts just with your husband's career. And then all these dang babies, you know? So, tell us a little bit more about that because it's definitely a season of starting over for you.

Hayley:

Huge season! Just like you said, I mean, everyone else is in the same place of like okay, how do we begin again? And how do we integrate back into society? Because it's like, there's now a new a little bit of anxiety and like, okay, it's just different. And yes, now we have three babies before the pandemic we had, gosh, two and not went on the way and now we just have three and gosh, now he's almost two years old. And in that time, my husband was in a whole another band, he was in Florida Georgia Line. And as of the last couple weeks, he has now started his own solo career.

Nicole:

Which we're all happy for woo-hoo!

Hayley:

So exciting! Yeah. And it's just been a really fun fresh start. But as you know, like fun fresh starts come with stuff. Like it's not easy.

Nicole:

Thank you for just saying that out loud. And Jessica, I know that you probably like Jessica y'all can see she is nodding she is doing giving me the like front row of the church nod right now. Like, like she is agreeing with everything pass Hayley is saying right now.

Okay, so because yes, like, I feel like on the internet people look at your lives and they just think, oh my god, it's so glamorous, she's like with a rock star, she's got like all these things. She's juggling but the reality is like we still have bumps and bruises and chaos and crazy.

So, tell us just being candid about what you feel like sharing, right? What has been the hardest part of that transition, you know, because you've got a partner who's got to hit the road harder than ever because he's building his career further.

Hayley:

Yeah, you know, I think initially it was just kind of we had our quote rock bottom, it was in 2020 and I was pregnant with my third kid and had varicose veins, it was hard to walk. My husband a month before I gave birth, he actually broke his ankle and towards Achilles

Nicole:

No, he didn't!

Jessica:

He did. And then like, at that time, we were told that his duo partner wanted to do a solo career and you know just having all of those things, it was like. Boom! Boom! Boom! It would have been fine. It just, it happened all at once.

Nicole:

Oh yeah!

Hayley:

So, kind of hearing that, that news and, and absorbing it and kind of letting it settle in, it took some time to, to really understand it. And now we've realized that like it, it really is such a blessing in our life. And as sad as we were to watch Florida Georgia Line kind of transition, transition is the best word.

It's really such a fun thing to watch my husband get to come into his own and like watch his creativity.

Nicole:

Awesome!

Hayley:

And, and honestly, simultaneously, his partner's, like, they're both getting to really own their own space and like. But again, it just came with its own stuff of just like, alright, how do we now go on doing this together? And it's really starting over I mean, starting a new career, as you know, it's just, it's, it's hard.

Nicole:

It is.

Hayley:

And it's where you really put in the hard work and the grit. And I mean, once it gets to the top I feel like you're just coasting a little bit more, not always. But in the beginning, you're just putting in the time and effort and so, we've watched my husband, supported my husband through that but I feel like I personally haven't been as present in other areas of my life.

Nicole:

Wow! That's so interesting to hear coz I think that a lot of times we don't register that, where we realize that sometimes just starting over it's not just about digging deep and finding the effort, it's also about where we're not being present. So where are we extracting ourselves from in order to be okay.

Hayley:

Right? And honestly, I mean, even with Meaning Full Living our brand, it's like, I feel like I haven't even got to be as present with that. And it partially is because I'm so excited to be supportive of my husband, I've forgotten what it's like to be on tour again. And we hadn't been on tour in three years. So now it's like, we're traveling every day. And it's that excitement again. And it is it's glamorous on the outside, but it's also like schlepping suitcases.

Nicole:

That's right with baby stuff you know. Oh, no, like that is so real.

Hayley:

I'm sweating thinking about it.

Nicole:

I know, literal. And so, on that note, I want to know Jessica, like, eating with kids on the go. I know this is like a little random tidbit, you know, but I feel like I became like Mama snack pack. Do you know what I mean? Like, I don't know what it is but like one of those suitcases, I know is filled with goldfish crackers because ...

Hayley:

1,000%

Nicole:  
1,000%!

Jessica, I just want to know in starting overseas and when you have kids, and you are like I was reading on your page about kids can taste flavors in the third trimester. Their babies can taste like they're amniotic fluid I was like what? Like I was like gonna eat Ethiopian food just so my kids like, you know, fully acclimated to all things of flavor.

So, like all that being said, you know, it's clear that our kids can absorb things constantly and so they probably know that we're starting over to so when we're on the go, when we're doing all these transitions. How can we help make sure that they are maintaining healthy eating habits? Because I know that like, I just want my kids you know, from Georgia to California like they're, like what are all these tacos? Why is everyone eating salads? Like you know what I mean? They want a biscuit. So, help us out here.

Jessica:  
Totally! And I think it's about separating kind of like when you're on the go and starting over you know like when you are traveling on those travel days schedule goes out the window.

Nicole:  
Yes, it does! Own that!

Jessica:  
Yes, schedule goes out the window.

Hayley says this all the time, but telling your kids that what is happening today is not the normal. So, on travel days, when you're on an airplane you're gonna give snacks constantly, you gotta, you're in survival mode. That we have to like separate survival mode from real life mode. And kids absorb a lot like nutritionally but from what they see and how we talk to them.

So, always telling them when there's something new. Hey! We're in California! There's new types of foods. Keeping you know the culture alive. Cooking some foods when you can and what they're missing, find out what they're missing. You know, have an activity at home to be able to incorporate those when you can but really just cluing them in of here's our new routine, here's our new schedule, this is what it's gonna look like and keeping the consistency with that and then on the days when it's just a shitshow where it's just.

Nicole:  
It is just what it is!

Jessica:  
It is what it is and just going with it.

Nicole:

And granting ourselves some grace in that knowing that like, look it's not always figured out.

When I tell you like I absolutely used to be when I was married like you know a lot of my audience is Christian so understand this phrasing but like the Proverbs 31 woman. Like I was like, look, I mend the clothes, I tilled the soil, I cook the meals and I'm bringing the coin, okay. Like can nobody look at me and say I don't do it right? And I mean, it was about cooking a hot perfect meal every single day and so you better believe it became a stressor when I added having a business and having a TV show and having a I was like. Oh no, like the meal wasn't balanced and there wasn't a crunchy and a salty and a fresh thing. And you know, like, just like crazy pan stuff.

Hayley:

Yeah.

Nicole:

When I came to California, I was like, listen honey, so tonight we're having something called fish sticks. I think it's cod. Do you know what I mean? Like it may be a blend of I don't know what but you're gonna eat it and guess what? Tomorrow we're going to try again. You know, and like it's so comforting to hear that like, maybe that's just what it is sometimes.

Jessica:

Yeah! I mean, tomorrow is always that we can try again. But also, kind of just embracing like I actually said this earlier today, I was talking to someone, if you saw my meals as a dietician for my kid, you would not be like, this looks like Pinterest.

Nicole:

Right!

Jessica:

Like, I don't, I don't have the space or the energy or the time some people love that. And that's fantastic, that's not me, right? And so, I think giving ourselves grace in those times when it is chaos but kids respond more to like our behaviors around food and how we set up meals and conversations and the structure around mealtime as opposed to what's actually on the plate. Right?

Nicole:

So helpful.

Jessica:

It's so much. We just have to take that pressure off like they're gonna get what they need to when we're consistent enough.

Nicole:

Oh!

Jessica:

Nothing needs to be perfect.

Nicole:

That's so good. Next time I serve fish sticks, here is your five-star meal. Oh, aren't we so grateful and blessed for this decadent dish of breaded cod? Instead of being like, girl, this is what mama could do today. You know what I mean, because it's that perspective. That's what I'm taking away is like, it's showing her that look, whatever the meal is on the plate. We have gratitude in the season because we're all doing the best we can, you know.

Hayley:

Yeah, and Jess you always say this, but it's like the guilt that we put on ourselves, whether it's like, of eating that thing, or, or presenting that meal is worse than the actual meal itself.

Nicole:

That's so true!

Hayley:

Oh, so it's like, let's just forget the guilt. Whether ..

Nicole:

And feed the baby.

Hayley:

and feed him.

Nicole:

That's right!

I love that also! Cause especially with starting over, I don't know about y'all but for me, the food thing is like the first thing that kind of went out of the window. Like, I mean, just because I'm like, I'm dealing with emotions, I'm managing all the people's schedules. I'm worried and thinking about money. Like a lot of people don't acknowledge this enough in divorce but you can have all the money in the world, be a wise spender, manage things well but when something shifts you still save yourself, will our lifestyle change? What choices will we have to make? And what does this mean, for my partner, even for our food. You know, like dining out, cooking more, like you just really think about all those things.

So, Hayley, I mean, it's amazing that you and your partner are embracing so many new things that it sounds like you've built, you're starting to see some regularity around those choices. How

does that work, though? When you're on tour, I know that you go with but there's got to be I'm a single mom. So how does that go with some of that solo parenting?

Hayley:

You know, it's been interesting because like I said, we were talking earlier before the show and just we aren't used to being on tour. So, it's a new thing again.

Nicole:

And with babies, additional babies.

Hayley:

Babies. And so, I'm just kind of jumping back into that where I'm going to be at home or with the kids because school starting and, and we're not used to that. Like we're used to being with dad all the time, where I'm used to being with my husband all the time and it was just that team thing. And now it's going to be a little bit more divide and conquer for sure. And I think just kind of what we've been establishing a lot in our household, in the last two months. With a transition of I didn't even say this yet but our last nanny has left to build her own family. And now we have a new nanny, which

Nicole:

We're happy for her. We're also like, why'd you leave us?

Hayley:

Don't leave us. I know. I know, it's so sad. But you know, I'm grateful that we have someone wonderful now it's just the transition. It's harder on the kids, it's like, it's just new. And so, with that being said, we're really working on just being on the same page and over communicating. I'm like, you know, I know, I communicated this to the nanny today but Tyler here, like, so you can be on the same page, like, this is what we're working on right now in the house, even if he's not going to be home for the next week.

Nicole:

For sure.

Hayley:

And that has helped our kids feel a little bit more stable.

Nicole:

Oh, that's big. So just like I mean, Jessica was just saying it really is about it doesn't matter what the situation is a thing on the plate. It's how are we communicating because the kids absorb that? They're paying attention to it.

Hayley:

They really are. And we actually just did an episode before this on discipline because during that transition, I was a little bit more leaning on the kids and the new nanny coming in was just



trying to figure out her role and sure trying to be liked. Maybe not. It's just that hard balance as a nanny. And so, I was like, you know, we got to be respected. Work on being respected, not liked. You will be loved when you're respected.

Nicole:

Yes! Oh, my gosh it's so funny because you're like I don't know if you guys can tell like I know some of you already listen to Hayley and Jessica but I'm telling you right now, sweetest demeanors softest voice you can also tell she don't play as a mama. She is telling you right now she is not the one two or three. Okay, do not try her.

Like I'm picking that up entirely I get the vibes because I'm the same way where, it's like I love my babies, I am a mushy puddle for them. But I also believe you know, like, for me like biblically like kids need require discipline but discipline doesn't mean like, you know, brimstone and fire. Discipline is like clear direction and structure like they desire you know.

Hayley:

Totally! So, we've been working on that and watching the evolution of it. And like, of me being a softy and then maybe the new nanny not being fully on the same page.

Nicole:

Then you seeing it and being like, oh, no, no, no.

Hayley:

Oh! The kids were running the show!

Nicole:

Yes! It's a disaster. Now with three littles. Yikes!

Hayley:

Oh my god, we are in boot camp mode right now.

Nicole:

Oh, it's a real thing. I mean, I came home the other day and this actually great to, I'm so glad to hear Jessica because I have a legit question. So, I came home and the nanny had done grocery shopping for the first time with my little, my 11-year-old. And I have a list, right? I can pretty much say these are the things to get. For some reason, we had fruit snacks and we had soda. And just to be clear, I'm not one of those people who's like, there's bad foods, good foods. But if we're going to bring those things in, we also need to make sure we have conversations around moderation and where they fit in and understanding what you're consuming just so you can choose to consume it versus just eating whatever whenever you know, so.

So that said, it's you know, I come in and I'm like, oh, how did these end up in our house? You know what I mean? And because I just want to have conversation, you know because otherwise they just disappear? Well, she's like, well, we went to the store and she said she wanted them.

So, I got them. Now we have two issues, one, I didn't realize that she gets to spend my money anytime away. That's issue number one. Okay, we need to have that conversation. Okay, because my name is on that card, not hers. Okay, number two, you know, now I have to talk to her because she was raised with a different food value, you know, like systems, you know, she's like, why can't the kids just have some sweets? Or why can't the kids just have you know, a thing, like, you just throw a free roll up in the backseat. You know, and so, what are some ways to make sure that if you have helpers in your home, to help them not just adhere to like rules and distinctions, but, but habits that we know will affect them down the line, Jessica? Because not everyone, you talked about this all the time. You know, our relationship with food starts so early. Like they have a relationship with food, you know, how do we make sure that doesn't impact how they're raising our kids?

Jessica:

Totally. You know, it's funny, as Hayley always says that with you know, babysitters or nannies anyone watching your kid. One of the hardest things to tackle is the food because there's the actual items served and then there's all the conversation around it. All the judgment or the good food, the bad food, the treat, the desert, that you can only have this much. And I feel like learning a new language of how to eat is hard and that's a hard thing to teach. So, number one, it takes time.

Nicole:

Yes!

Jessica:

Number two, if there's any parents out there struggling, we actually have a download on our website, you can go to

Nicole:

I love that!

Jessica:

Tips For Raising Less Picky, Intuitive Eaters. Which kind of is something you can put on your fridge to help with anyone that's watching your kid.

Nicole:

I love that.

Jessica:

I think having this conversation of if your kid goes to the grocery store, and they say that they want coke and they want fruit snacks, and they want something else, we need to listen to those desires in a way, right? So, we don't want them to be off limits. Cause anytime in the world, when we make something completely off limits, it has the opposite of what we want. Which means our kids over eat it, they desire it, they obsess over it, it's the forbidden fruit, right?

Nicole:  
That's right.

Jessica:  
How you can't have the fruit if you want it. So, I would say like, you know, picking one of those things off the list, having it in the house and then having it where they can have it in a defined way sometimes, like it's structured. Sure, for the next five lunches till we get through the snacks, this is going to be with your lunch every day. You know, with an 11-year-old, it's different than a younger kid because with a younger kid, you have so much more control. With 11-year-old it's more of you model it like model the behavior you want to see. So as opposed to this being an off limit or indulgent food or a food that's a non-growing food, or not healthy for us. It's like you know what, sometimes I like those fruit snacks. Sometimes I want that with lunch and other times they don't or however it makes you feel.

So, I think it's more about being neutral with it and helping in the background without your kids. They're talking about what foods you want in your household and then thinking about what are those foods that they're being exposed to at school and their friends that are they're obsessing over.

Nicole:  
That's right!

Jessica:  
And how can I bring those into my house to normalize them a bit more in a structured way? It's like the same thing with alcohol and drugs, right?

Nicole:  
That's so true.

Jessica:  
It's like it's a really a hard thing to navigate and what do we do, but we don't want our kids not to have any skills or social media.

Nicole:  
Because it's gonna be there, right?

Jessica:  
Like they need to learn in a structured way. So not having em' ever in your house is we're not giving them the opportunity to learn about their bodies in a way where they're comfortable and we're making it to off limits. But having it a free for all access all the time is not allowing them to like really be intuitive and understand how they feel. So, it's this nice balance.

Nicole:

That's so good.

It also reminds me of like, you know, with being intuitive, my kids also need to develop their own choice system and like figuring out what they like. So, what we do in our house right now is we have bins, and each bin instead of it being labeled chips, or cookies, or whatever else. We have bins that are labeled crunchy, sweet, fresh, and we have crunchy, sweet, fresh and squishy. And so that's how we do our lunches. So, it lets her choose what she wants.

So, like what's in the squishy is we've got yogurt, we've got applesauce, we've got pudding, you know, we've got all these different squishes than fresh is like a clementine or an apple or grapes or strawberries. And then crunchy would be like popcorn, like a small popcorn bag or Cheez Its or crackers, something like that. And then sweet would be a cookie or those fruit roll ups or you know, something of that sort. And so, she knows that if you're making yourself a snack, I'd like you to have one of each of those things, you know, so you can play with textures. You can choose whatever you want out of those bins. So, if you've had one thing for a while, you can switch it up. So, she always has ownership over what she's eating but she understands that it needs to have a variety versus the same same all the time. Is that, am I ruining her? Tell me

Hayley and Jessica:

No. No.

Jessica:

That's awesome. I actually love that I helped parents all the time. I was just saying, like, yummy or good or bad. Like those are that's like diet culture. We say it all the time, right? Like this is healthy or unhealthy. I always say, let's start labeling the food what it is, crunchy, sweet and a lot of times, honestly, parents say to me, like, I don't actually know how to describe it. Like how would you describe it?

Nicole:

Because we weren't raised with these things.

Jessica:

Right. You know, like they're like, how would I describe a blueberry? I'm like, think like when you feel it, like let's get in touch with how it feels like, okay, so it might be a squishy food, or it might be a chewy food. But helping our kids be able to describe it that way is the best way for them to understand food, understand their body and be able to make their own choices, because we don't want them to make choices based on what we project on them. Because if they're doing that, that means anyone on a diet, any commercial, any influence in their life will be able to influence them. We want them to make decisions based on how they feel inside.

Nicole:

Oh, this is so good. I am going to treat myself to a latte from their therapy budget. So, we keep a college fund and a therapy fund for our children. Anytime I hear that I'm doing something right, I

take \$20 out of therapy fund, y'all don't need it. Mom got it, right. This was amazing! Amazing! I love this!

So okay, so we're already shifting the parenting stuff. Let's just talk about it. Now, I know that besides trying to make sure we're not passing that are junk to our kids in so many ways and forms, right? Whether it is through divorce, or transitions, coz I think more than ever before because of podcasting and social, we're having conversations, where we're talking about different styles of parenting. I know that growing up, it was always sort of the full house volume full house system was different but it was that traditional. Like, good parenting is your kids go to the same school every day and they're home every day, and they eat the same snack every day, and they have a glass of milk with their meals. And they you know, it's just sort of this, you know, image that we're all aspiring to and anything short of that, oh my gosh, you failed. Well now, because of people like you at Meaning Full Living and you know, just learning about how that all the different ways people live and still have awesome kids. You know, it's really been helpful. So, for you, I want to know, you guys give so much to everyone else. Even now, we're learning so much here. What are your resources that you use to pull this information out outside of your expertise professionally, but just in living, you know, because I need them.

Hayley:

Well, I love that you said that because that's our goal is to just share resources and knowledge. Because that's what our initial passion behind this was. Like, I was a new mom and I was, like, oh my gosh, where do I find this information? I want to be this kind of parent but how do I do it? And I felt so grateful that I had, we found an incredible nanny, like I talked about Katie and Jess. And I was like, I have this knowledge at my fingertips anytime I want. I can text them and I have this like, knowledge and systems that work and people were texting me all the time. And they were like, oh my gosh, like your kids are so good. How do you do this? And I'm not like tooting my own horn because this is not me, like everyone else.

Nicole:

All of us. Right working together.

Hayley:

Yeah. And all this, these great systems that they were helping us put in place. And I was like, everybody has to know this.

Nicole:

Right.

Hayley:

Like, we have to share this! And so that's initially why we started Meaning Full Living. And of course, I talked about my eating disorder and I was like, I want our kids to have healthy relationships with food. And again, like, I've learned so much from Jess in that department, because it's just the language around food. It's all of that. And so.

Nicole:

But that overlaps into parenting. Like, I really noticed, like, I'm not kidding. Jessica talk about stuff like, listen, it's not exactly the action, it's what you're saying, or on the action, like, where doesn't that apply? Like, yes, I understand homework is hard, you know, quote, unquote, you guys couldn't see my quote, marks hard.

Hayley:

Right!

Nicole:

But, you know, how do we feel about hard things? You know, like, it's, I mean, it starts with food, because we have to do it three times a day and we need it to live and it's never going anywhere. So, if we teach them and empower them around that by like, some of the tools you guys readily share, my goodness, what strong people are rebuilding, you know.

Hayley:

Right. And I think like you said, we all have our own stuff that we don't want to pass along to our kids. And so, it's through our own therapy and, and whatnot. But really, I mean, I give just so much credit, and I'm not the expert on your I am the parent that is learning as we go. And that's really been the biggest blessing in this podcast is like, we get to have experts on and learn things as we go.

Nicole:

The application is everything to though, you know what I mean? Because I like I just love the language Jessica uses to begin with, because Jessica, like when you speak, it's so like, oh, you know, like, it's like, it's not just the aha moment, but you understand how to apply it, it doesn't feel inaccessible, you know, so I just, I absolutely love that! And Jessica, like, I mean, I actually am really good friends with a few registered dieticians and I don't know, if I've shared, I don't think I got a chance to share this with you guys. But I've lost over 100 pounds myself, because I had, you know, kind of the reverse, it's still just eating disorder, you know, but I had a disordered relationship with food, it was a reward system, it was you can't have this, you know, and except for me, because I grew up in poverty. That was why I couldn't have it, it was something and so every time I would have a big win, I'd go have a steak, and I'd eat whatever I could and as much of it as I could, because that was such a treat! You know, and, and food was such a low level, easy way to reward myself regularly rather than I didn't even know about things like go to the get a massage at the spa, or just go for a walk. Like all those things were rewarding as well. I just had never had money to engage in those things. So, food felt like such a treat. So, you better believe that exposing my kids, you know, as you guys are sharing, you know, regularly to other ways to reward yourself is something I actually have to teach myself how to do. So. It's just so empowering to hear, the application of what you guys are saying to parenting and everything overall.

Now, we've talked a lot about partnerships, parenting, all those good things. Let's shift gears, because I have to know you guys are both independent women who have your own thing going

on. And we're not just the kids and we're not just our partnerships. You know, we're people ourselves. So, Hayley, how are you doing? You know, with all these transitions. Are you feeling full? Are you feeling cared for? And what are you doing to make sure if you're not there, you're getting there?

Hayley:

Oh, thanks for asking that. That's a good question. And I don't think we take the time to ask ourselves a lot of the times. You know, lately, it's funny, you ask this, I feel good, very full, almost too full.

Nicole:

That's awesome!

Hayley:

You know, with that schedule ,schedule is too full, but, but it's like a feeling. I feel full about it. It's like, oh, my gosh, it's all these great things.

Nicole:

Like it's worthy work.

Hayley:

Very grateful, yes. I'm grateful to have time with my kids and family and be on the road and watching my husband's new career take off and it's just a very exciting time. I would say the thing that I'm working on through it. Is just my relationship with social media right now, it's been an interesting time.

Nicole:

Social media has gotten so. I didn't even realize how I felt about it, how it impacted me until I started seeing shifts. In one, how people use it ,two just like algorithms, you know, and I'm like, oh! I didn't even realize I saw this much validation. I thought I was great, you know, and now I'm like, oh, let's click sex, whatever. And I know, it's not even my content. So now I'm like, what's going on? Am I okay, you know, and also people are mean. Just like, outright people are being on the internet. They're just mean, people don't know it, but it's just like, oh.

Hayley:

Random troll that just has zero followers, zero posts, and they go around trolling.

Nicole:

Literally! I mean, they made a profile, just to say unkind things, which is wild. So yeah, so what's what's going on with you?

Hayley:

So, you know, I think I'm just at this point where I'm like, alright, my kids are at this age, and I share a lot of my kids. They're so joyful. It's so fun, of course, like their kids.

Nicole:

And they're cute! If they weren't, I wouldn't say so. I would just say hmmm, but they are actually very good-looking babies.

Hayley:

Thank you.

They're so hilarious, and they do funny things just like kids do. And so, I'm at this point where I'm like, okay, I feel like I need to just back up and like, why am I posting this? Am I posting this for me? Or like, what am I proving? I think that's really the question because I think I've spent so much time in my life proving. I have a great husband because I had a very toxic boyfriend relationship in the past many years ago. But it's like, okay, I'm trying to prove I have a great husband. I'm trying to prove that I'm a mom and can do it all. I'm trying to prove that, you know, I'm having so much fun.

Nicole:

Right, right.

Hayley:

And so, I think I'm just really taking a step back to be like, okay, I should have nothing to prove. Oh, like, what, what is the purpose of this in my life right now? And like, if my kids see me on Instagram, and then when they turn 6, 7, 8, like, and they're like, Hey, Mom, can I have an Instagram? And I'm like, no, they're like, well but I've been on your Instagram.

Nicole:

Oh, yes!

Hayley:

Since I was a baby.

Nicole:

Right.

Hayley:

And so, it's just this interesting thing that I don't think we've really had to navigate because

Nicole:

It didn't exist

Hayley:

Instagram didn't exist before. So, I'm just really trying to navigate that



Nicole:

Your just showing intentionality, you know.

And I can relate to that because I have shared everything. I've been on social media for 15 plus years and I've shared everything people have literally seen me grow up. And it's interesting, because you see people come into your journey at different points and think that you only started existing from the moment, they found you. So, I've had people meet me when I was very married, you know, to meet me now. And the people met me when I was very married are very like, you've changed? Yes, I have. You know what I mean? If you've watched me since the beginning, you'd recognize I'm pretty consistent to who I've always been but I'm not asking you to scroll back 15 years. But what that means is I had to learn that, oh, I'm the one who controls this relationship with what I share and my intentionality.

So, one of the things I made as a decision, speaking of what you're saying, maybe a couple months ago was I stopped sharing my kids. Like, which is crazy because they were so I was such a family person and I am, but they were such a huge part of it because I just was like, without their permission, she's 11 now 20, 23. Like, gosh, shouldn't they be allowed to go out in the world and not get recognized and go out in the world and like, if my 20 year old wants to have a really stupid night at the bar, get totally trashed, and like drop a glass, like she's going to do that, it's going to be dumb, she's going to feel embarrassed. You know and she should be allowed to let that live there and not feel like that has to be something she has to answer to, to someone else who was in that bar. You know what I mean?

Hayley:

Yeah!

Jessica:

Totally!

Jessica:

Yeah. So glad you said that because that's been kind of what I've been toying with like, okay, you know, maybe I just share, like on their birthday, do like a post and do that. And I hate to like, not post about them because I know that I get so many comments are like. Oh my gosh!

Nicole:

And people like seeing them grow up, like and overwhelmingly people are sweet, right? Oh, like I call them the "Internet Aunties". You know, like, overwhelmingly we are collectively I've been helped by internet aunties. Like, when I first got my three-year-old and I was a newly adopted mom, they were like, hey! the buckle on the car seat isn't in the right place like pull that up higher in her chest. And, like, I mean, I've gotten a lot of unsolicited advice that I did not need and a lot of advice that was really timely and helpful. You know, and you guys know exactly what I'm talking about.

Hayley:  
Totally!

You know, but I'm also very aware that you know, some people are just tuning in in a spectator capacity. And my one job as a mom is to protect my babies, you know, and so it's finding that balance.

Now Jessica, do you think that to some extent, you know, because you are so good at this that it's maybe less about coz you're doing this already Hayley like less about not doing the thing coz it's the polarization right good food, bad food, but you know, is it not is it not not doing the thing double negative on purpose, but the conversation we're having around what we're doing so if I'm still posting my kids but what is the conversation instead of the caption being like look at what you know, little Timmy is doing instead the conversation being I'm so grateful I get to watch my little one, you know, or whatever. Like, is there a balance maybe that that would occur to you?

Jessica:

Yeah! I think, I think completely I really like like there's a lot of accounts where the kids are in like the background, right? Like you can still pose something but it's not a direct face. Or you know, they're there and you see the legs and the faces like in a lot of stories like the face is blocked out like when they're younger, it's different because they change so much, they look different when they get older. When you hit a certain age, you can start recognizing whose people's kid are right and you can start recognizing that so I think there's a way to share life in a way that's authentic to us.

Hayley is much better at social media always than I am. I don't ever kind of know naturally what to share what not to share. I'm not good at like the curated moment, I'm just kind of always me in that, like I'm not I'm not the best picture taker. And like the thing is, is like Hayley can capture a picture and it look like completely natural zero thought into it and it's and it's beautiful. That's not me, but I have been sharing Bryce obviously more cooking because I think when people see kids in action, they can learn more you can learn when you see. And so, I've been trying to do recently, more so of just watching his hands like you don't need to see his face of what he's doing, like you can watch a kid during the action of it. And so, I think it doesn't have to be a black and white where like, I shared nothing or I share everything. It's more just about like everything in our life, being conscious about it and having conversations and just intentional when we do post and what we do. And it's it's a weird world.

Nicole:

It's so weird! Isn't it?

So weird? I think that's one of the things that's been helping me and a reflection of that is just like, what sort of interaction do I want to see if somebody were to meet my child after seeing this photo. So, it's like, if I post this, and then someone were to see my kid, would they say, congratulation on your thing? Or, you know, oh you look beautiful like, and how would my kids

receive that? So, one of the things that kind of started weirding me out was, as my daughter was getting older, my littlest one, people would see her and want to hug her. Like they instinctively want to go in and just like touch and hug and all that because they feel that closeness from the relationship and just sort of, you know, the impact of our story. And I knew as a mother, that made me deeply uncomfortable coz I'm not trying to listen, I have a therapy fund, I have a college fund, I do not have bail money. You know what I mean? Like when someone just comes in and goes in for a hug on your kiddos? You know them, but they don't know you, you know. And so that was where I started saying, you know, what, way less you know, and then aside from that just also asking, like now that they can vocalize like your littles are so little, but is this okay, if I post this picture? Or are you comfortable with me talking about this thing? And she's old enough to be like, no! I don't think because she's in that pre-teenage phase. Yeah, you know, or I don't like that one or I have a pimple today. And I'm like, I get it, you know, cool. No problem.

Jessica:

Yeah. But it's also like important because they are gonna to live with social media, social media is here to stay. And so, if we need to also teach them how to use it in a way right. Like, there's this whole etiquette of how do you text message and what is nice. I was just talking with us on a previous podcast, like, what is right and what is not and about being intentional with that. And, you know, Nicole, something that was interesting to me, something we have in common is I actually had them FOMA.

So, in the start of the pandemic.

Nicole:

I'm so glad you did.

Jessica:

We did! And I mean, obviously, there's so much starting over with that but part of the thing on social media is obviously everyone that knew that but with Bryce, the language we used around it, I did not want my kid to know that I had cancer because as you grow up, you hear cancer and you hear that stories.

Nicole:

Yeah!

Jessica:

And I didn't want him to think those bad things were gonna happen to mom. So, we were very like, specific with lymphoma. We were very specific of keeping it brief and honest and let him ask questions. But when I started posting about it, like, you know, and then people would talk to him, they'd ask, like, you know, I, you know I heard about your mommy how she's doing? And I'm like, oh, I have to have now a conversation.

Nicole:  
Context.

Jessica:  
You know, we don't need to have that conversation with him. Like, we can just, that's not the center stone of his life, his life is his life and like, I'm this stable pillar. And it's not being dishonest, it's being intentional with what we say to him and when we say it.

Nicole:  
oh, let's talk about that. Because you hit the nail on the head, like, we all have personal and private things that we go through and using social media is a thing where, especially because I think what we have in common is we're talking about our life journey but we're sharing a specific context around it. And that is something where people believe like, if I show you 1%, I'm entitled to the other 99. And that is so difficult to navigate because we're still whole people, right? You know, and it's not that we're not grateful for a platform, grateful for a voice, thankful to have an opportunity speaking peoples. I like I am not; it's not lost on me that this is an incredible blessing but I also am still a complete person.

So, for instance, when we are going through our cancer journey, which you know, I'm so grateful my daughter is, you know, through that journey, and she is literally just busy being a crazy teenager. And as much as it drives me nuts, I'm thankful because she's here. You know what I mean? So, but we chose not to share a single word of it. I mean, literally, people saw her, you know, post chemo and you know, she looked like she had gone through that process. And I looked him in the face and I was like, I don't know what you're talking about. You know what I mean? Like, and it was because one not my story to tell and I think a lot of people forget that is even though I'm the mom, even though I'm married to this partner even though like I'm attached to people, so the details of my divorce are not solely mine, I cannot share them. It's not appropriate or fair or, you know, in integrity or graceful. And then, you know, two, just because it's private doesn't mean I'm embarrassed of it. It just means it's private, you know, and I share my scar not my scabs, I want to see things heal before I'm putting it out there.

So how have you navigated that with starting over? And I think this is a great place for us to kind of leave people with a little wisdom, you know, when you're starting over and there are parts that you don't want to share. You know, so let's say we're navigating an eating disorder, and we've had a slip, and we're trying to get back to good or we are not implying that that's the case with you. But you know, having, you know, knowing that, especially, our eating habits is a constant battle we're always aware of, we're always starting over and some microwave, even if you're making the correct decision for you every day, you're still starting over every day, you know.

So, with that being said, in all these different spaces, how are you navigating what to share of starting over, so you're still helped and blessed and you're helping others. And what you're not sharing while you're starting over.

And I'll go first you know what I mean? What's hard for me is I'm seeing someone new. People didn't know that I was divorcing. You know, the day that you decide you're going to divorce, you don't say quick, let me go live and let the world know, you know, because I want them to be with me during this journey. Like, you don't do that. Cause first it was a complete and total surprise. I did not expect that I would not be married at all. Second, I absolutely thought for a solid year plus, I'd be getting back together. You know what I mean? Like in my head was like, I didn't even buy appliances, because I was like, I don't want to have two air fryers, even though I've been out of the home because for some reason, that would be the thing that would mean I can't go back. You know what I mean? So, it's like, there were so many things that I had to reconcile before I could talk about it and that has actually been my measurement system now for whether or not I'm ready to share with the world. If I'm still answering questions myself about the new guy, I'm seeing, the city I've moved to, the job I've taken on, how I'm parenting something, the school I've picked, I'm probably not ready to speak on it. That's kind of where I am with how I decide what I share. So, I don't know about what you got. But Jessica, do you have like kind of ah, how do you share where and when and how much?

Jessica:

Yeah. I mean, I'm obviously still struggling with that, like, how do you move on. I think you move on where you become the same person, but a different person.

Nicole:

Yes!

Jessica:

And for me, I'm an open book, in the sense that like, if anyone personally is going through a struggle, I'm not hiding any part like during the treatment part of cancer or anything like that. It's not I'm not private in the sense that I won't help you. Right, like I want, I will tell you any of the things. I think, like you said, there's something about knowing to get on the other side where you're focusing really just on you not the perception of you not helping people be clued in every step of the way but more so focusing to make sure you're okay, and not worrying about any of the other opinions. Because I think also when we share, we're opening ourselves up to a lot of opinions. And those opinions, sometimes are some of them are super helpful. So, when you need an opinion, you ask for it. But if you don't need that opinion, then a lot of times it's like, am I with the right doctor? Am I doing the right treatment? Am I all of these things that I think and kind of make us focus less on then what's important and not getting through the journey. And I love your thing of saying, when I'm feeling comfortable that's when I know I'm ready to share. For me, I've seen that. And the truth is, is like I I'm not exactly sure fully how to move forward, I know that I just take one step at a time.

Nicole:

That's right.

Jessica:

There was, you know, a lot that came crumbling down for me like, this was my career, I did this, I couldn't wait to be a mom and then all of a sudden it was like, whoa, what your reality is is different than what you ever planned. And I'm okay with that. I'm at peace with that. But what that actually looks like day to day gets confusing and it's a work in progress. And so, I'm definitely a person where as I feel comfortable and I know I've gotten through. So that I'm not also worrying people in the process. Part of it too is the people around you care about you. Yeah, and and if you're sharing every detail of all the scary stuff, we're kind of scaring in the process.

The wisdom I want to leave is that I think everything we've talked about can kind of be wrapped into this idea that we deal with adult things, adults deal with adult things, divorce cancer, you know, changes in career, everything we talked about today. And I think with our kids, we can be in chaos. We can serve those fish sticks but when we're doing that, we still have to say we're a good mom. We're not a frantic, mom. We're not I'm not good enough mom. In those moments, even when we're crazy, we can exude to our kids and tell them I am a really good mom. Like, because I think sometimes life can be so frantic that we start to feel this guilt and we don't feel that we're good moms when we're doing moments like that. But we are right and showing up and showing our kids even in chaos even when things aren't exactly planned how they want it to be. We are good and, and we're worthy. I think our kids learn a lot from that.

Nicole:

Oh, so good! So good.

I'm over here. Like, I needed all of that right now. Like, yes, like, it's so true. Oh my gosh, oh, oh, I'm gonna sit with that for a little bit. Hayley like for you, like, you share so much you give so much of yourself and there's so much to be vulnerable about, you know, but with that, where are you sharing and where are you not sharing? You know, going forward? I know that you said, kids, for sure.

Hayley:

Yeah, I know. That's a big thing right now. It's such a interesting part. And I think I've realized in just observing myself in the last few weeks, like, gosh, when I'm not sharing in the moment, I am so present. I'm like, oh my god, I need to do this more, instead of being so concerned with like giving Instagram, although I love Instagram, and I love my followers. I don't owe them anything to see that my day-to-day life. I think I've really done better by going back and giving them tidbits. Like because I'm just my worst self. When I do that.

Nicole:

Of course!

Hayley:

I feel like I've just been, I'm exhausted. I'm like, you know, the kids go down for a nap. And I'm like, okay, did I post this, this this and, and then like why did I post?

Nicole:

Why am I even like, what is this? Oh, absolutely.

Hayley:

And so, I think really just like going back after, you know, two weeks and being like, alright, what were the things in the last two weeks.

Nicole:

That were worth sharing.

Hayley:

That are worth sharing. Because as I'm really looking back, the things that I was going to share in the moment, really weren't that poignant. Like, it wasn't, it wasn't going to make that much of an impact anyways. It was just me sharing it to share it and make myself busier and more stressed out. And, and honestly, I talked about this with my husband last night, I was like, our life is crazy, our life is overwhelming. We're in a new city every day, sometimes we fly overnight to get to here, to there and we're busting overnight most nights and then we're, of course, like I said schlepping three kids. And I said that overwhelms me, I don't want to put that on my followers.

Nicole:

Oh, for sure, for sure.

Hayley:

Like they do not need all that they can see some little little pieces but the more that I am being real and R-E-A -L and stepping away from my R-E-E-L I am like, I feel so much more real.

Nicole:

Yeah, absolutely. It's peace, right? Like just bring a little peace into your life. And I think also for both of us. You know, one thing that I heard you both echo was we have enough internal voices that are telling us like be afraid be scared worry about this, we've got this. The last thing we need is to let a chorus of hundreds of 1000s of people speak into that as well. You know if we have the ability to kind of keep it to ourselves until we're able to navigate it all. So, oh my gosh!

Hayley:

Because then yeah, you can listen to yourself and that that voice inside of you instead of everyone else because I think I grew up learning to check with everyone is this, okay? And to not check with my gut? And as I get older, I'm like, no, my gut knows like knows .

Nicole:

It knows!

Hayley:

It knows. To stop checking to everyone the other day I was like, Honey do you think what do you think? Yes. And I'm like, why am I doing that?

Nicole:  
Right?

Hayley:  
I know!

Nicole:  
You know. You already know the answer because if they say something over here like no. No, I don't think so. You know, so you do know.

Hayley:  
Yeah, so yeah. Oh, steer gut.

Nicole:  
So good ladies, this was incredible. Your , you guys are in so this is so good. I feel fed like I'm over here like ah, all right, you know like you're screwing everything up and that is fine go get a crunchy and move on with your life. You know what I mean. Yeah, like I'm feeling good about it so thank you guys so much and ladies is there I mean everyone I know listening is just like oh my gosh, this is the greatest half of them are already following me following Meaning Full Living on Insta but where else can they find you? What do you guys have coming up? You know, how can we just dive in and get the Levin's that we need?

Hayley:  
Anywhere that you listen to podcasts of course right here Meaning Full Living is there and then our Instagram @meaningfulliving and it has two L's and then yeah, we have a course on our website intro to solids for anyone with littles and what else Jess?

Jessica:  
And yeah, and we've got a ton of articles. We've got a lot of free stuff like honestly. Yeah, our whole vision is just give the knowledge. So, you can search any articles. It'll give you just exactly what you need to know and yeah, we've got some more courses and fun stuff coming. So, thank you for having us today. You are incredible. Your platform is incredible and just loved this every moment of it.

Nicole:  
Oh, thank you, ladies for being so generous. Y'all, you can find out all these details in the show notes we'll have everything for you there. Please make sure you follow and listen to them and keep showing them love. Thank you both for being here.