



## **Season 3, Episode 34 - Transcript**

### *How To Help The Hurting*

Nicole:

Hey friends. So I know that every week we chat about the highs and the lows and our last couple chats have actually been a little bit more exciting because we've talked about what it looks like to grow and to transition and things of that sort. But you also know that I've made a point of sharing with you, in a very honest and vulnerable and raw way, some of the things that are a little bit more difficult. So this is one of those chats and I just wanted to issue a headphones warning, because some of the subject matter is a little bit tougher. And I also want to do a trigger warning, because we are going to talk about suicide. And I know that some people have struggled with those thoughts or are currently struggling with those thoughts and so I just wanted to issue that warning right out of the gate.

Now, if you have been following on social media, if you are someone who is consuming content, you know that we now find out about the loss of celebrities and influencers, politicians and people in entertainment at rapid fire pace. I remember the days where you really didn't hear about these things until hours and hours after they had passed, if even same day. And you heard about them through montages that would happen during new segments on TV, that's how I grew up. And now, I mean, it is almost real time something tragic happens, a devastating loss, and we are waking up to seeing it all up and down are timelines all throughout the news. And it can be very difficult because it shakes you. It absolutely shakes you. And life is difficult, and life is hard but when you have these messages, and these sorts of stories coming into our world, unexpectedly, even though we know these things happen unexpectedly, it can be jarring.

And I wanted to speak to this because I don't know if it's just that I've reached a certain age or you know that maybe because of the pandemic, I don't know if these things can even be explained but I have been seeing more and more young people, particularly young people of color, and women and anyone who kind of categorizes themselves as a minority, or a marginalized group being lost, you know, and taking their own lives. And that's what I wanted to reach out to. So I say this, because I know that so many of us just on a simple level deal with

dark days. And I want to describe it that way because, yes, I am absolutely an advocate for strong mental health. I know some of us have received formalized diagnoses of depression, and not just situational depression, which if you're not familiar with it, situational depression is a real thing. And it is depression that is specifically related to a circumstance, you know, it's about being in a season or you know, dealing with a struggle like an illness or, you know, loss with your child or a situation postpartum something to that effect, where the situation and circumstances or why you're experiencing that depression, it's directly linked to something.

But then there's, you know, those of us who have received diagnoses of depression, where it's due to a chemical imbalance, or you know, ongoing trauma and are, you know, trying to cope with that. But outside of that, outside of a clear cut, diagnosis of depression, you know, I always like to consider the fact that dark days happen to all of us, it's that emotional connection to dealing with the hard that we know that life is going to give us day in and day out, and sometimes for weeks on end, even if we do eventually break through. And I wanted to talk about that because I think that what often happens, and I'm actually getting I find myself getting a little bit choked up and emotional about it, is that for some reason, and maybe this is sort of the challenge and the difficulty of depression. We think that depression looks a certain way. And I know on social media, we always talks about man, you just never saw it coming or they seemed so happy. Or they always had a smile on their face or everything seems so okay, and you're just everyone is just so shocked at a particular loss. And I wanted to express to those of us who are looking at others from the outside, or those of us that are that person who's working so hard to not give or share or put out how we may actually be feeling inside, that it is possible. It's very, very possible to still have happiness while still carrying that sadness. Grief and joy can exist in the same place and because of that, it's why we care of each other, and ourselves has to be a constant. And that's kind of what I wanted to address here today, one, you know, and first I want to speak to myself in my own story. And, you know, say pretty openly that I've dealt with depression in a pretty heavy way, not just over the past couple years, but I've also dealt with depression in a heavy way for probably really recognizably since my early 20s.

And I never want to minimize other people's formal diagnosis around mental health, I am not on any depression medication, and I have not been formally diagnosed with an ongoing case of depression. And I say that not because the medication is a problem. Honestly, for anyone out there who is considering it, or thinking it or on medication for depression, I am fully in support of you categorically without question. I don't believe that prayer is the only solution. I don't believe that your pastor is your therapist, I don't believe that there should be any stigma whatsoever, around getting them additional support to correct something that may be off and give you the extra tool that you may need in that moment to carry on, you are too important. Your role in this world is too important. And frankly, the responsibility that you have showing up every single day, oh, my God, you deserve, you deserve all the help you can get. And that includes if that help comes in a chemical pill form, to help you stay balanced.

And I know that for some people that may be a controversial stance, it's one that I categorically stand behind. And if you don't support that, I understand that that may be where you are. But

100% I will never shame anyone, if they need support in any way, shape, or form. Just like I don't shame someone with diabetes, for needing insulin, just because you're built a little differently and you need that help, get that help, because it means nothing about who you are, you deserve to show up completely. But all that being said, I am fortunate enough that that is not something that I've needed to adjust to or accept in this season. But what I can tell you is I have absolutely dealt with depression. And I'm fortunate that it has mostly been situational and that my spirit, my energy and my chemical balances, err on the side of neutralized. I don't want to say normal, because I don't feel like that's a fair statement. But all that being said, in the times, and in the seasons, where depression has found me, it has been dark, dark, dark, dark, dark, dark. And when I say dark, believe it or not, you know, being Nicole Walters, the person who's always talking about granting others grace, and looking on the bright side and believing in our purpose and chasing after the greater good. When I tell you I couldn't find an ounce of grace for myself. And it was so easy for me to see a world where my girls would actually be better off if they didn't have to carry the weight of having my presence. And I talk about this in my book that's due to come out in 2023 in very specific ways, you know, and very revealing ways. I discuss some of the moments where I truly felt like I had failed everyone. And I was a disappointment and that everyone around me would be better off if I was not around. And those moments, not only are difficult when you're within them, but coming out of them and feeling shame and embarrassment that you were even in that place, particularly when your quote unquote job, you know, is to show up and be happy and be Grace filled and take care of others and show up in the world.

It's very difficult and it can be a sabotaging cycle. You know and I share all of this will let you know that oftentimes people look at me and say my gosh, Nicole, you're such a joy, you're such a light, but it can be hard to see that even if someone is a light, we're all kind of lights on a dimmer. You know, some days we may shine brighter than others. And there are times our lights go out, you know, and we have to work, you know, to come back at full brightness. And I wanted to just speak to those of us who are in those seasons and just like I said about seeking out medication, I just do not want you to feel any shame around that. Because one thing that I am very fortunate about was that anytime I have been in those dark seasons, by nature, I have been someone who has been very big on gathering resources in the season when it isn't so dark.

So if you know that those seasons have found you and you are currently in one where you are feeling like you are a little bit more functional are able to show up a little bit better or able to get out of that bed. Then I want to encourage you to start building up your resources that you need. So that should those seasons find you again, at particularly because life is difficult, you know, and we know that hard things come, you know, gather your tools, gather your friends, gather your therapist, you know, let people know that you've had these dark seasons. I think one of the hardest parts around depression is that there's so much stigma around it, particularly if you are seem to be the person who's strong, we worry that what other people are going to think about that but shame doesn't serve us. Tell people that it's something you've dealt with, and that it is something that has worried you. You know, when I share that with people, it lets them know that

if they see that I am getting a little too reclusive, or they know that I'm dealing with a lot of overwhelm, those people in my life have an inclination and a tendency to call just a little bit more, or to send that extra letter, or to help out with that extra babysitting day, or get the extra work or sometimes to just be the extra person in the room standing there. So I don't feel so alone. And it's really nice, because I've found and I've discovered that people want to help. That is the truest fact that I've noticed about humankind, is that we all desire to help even if we just don't know how, and giving people the opportunity to help you is blessing them. Because it makes us feel good to help each other. Think of how good you feel, when you're able to help people. As a matter of fact, for those of us who struggle with depression, sometimes it's because we feel like we're not helping enough and, and if you recognize that, then you'll understand what a blessing it is to allow someone else to help too.

So if you're in a season, when you're feeling stronger, and you're able to communicate a little better, and you're able to do a little bit more, ask for the help, then before you need it. Because without fail, all of us are going to come to those seasons. Now. In speaking to you as a person who has been in that space, I also want to speak to the other side of it, because I think we're all we all play both roles, right? Unfortunately, everyone around us is going through one season or the other, you know, just like some of us seem to be on the top and seem to be having our best moments, other people are in the valley. And we may not even know how dark it may be. And we don't find out that they are in that space, because they're still walking around and functioning. They're still playing with their families, they're still creating content every day, they're still showing up to meetings and to work and to filming and to production and to parent-teacher meetings and to momming and they're showing up every single day doing all the things, but you don't know that they're crying for a few minutes in their car before they go inside. And you don't know that they are dreading having to go home because they're arguing with their spouse, or you don't know that they are overwhelmed by stacks of work, because they're worried that they're going to lose their job. And they're scared about being able to pay for things. People carry so much. They carry so so much. And what I want to offer is in response to what I see often, whenever we discover that people decided to end it all rather than carry the weight that they've been given, we often respond by saying, if you're going through this, don't be afraid to ask for help. Don't be afraid to talk to someone. Reach out instead of doing this, I wish they had told someone. That is often the response. And I just want to offer a gentle alternative. I just want to say something tenderly to let you know that when you're in those dark seasons, especially if you're someone who's not familiar with it, especially if you're someone who can't comprehend why a person with children and a loving family and opportunity and fame and money and popularity would want to leave that world. I just want to offer to you that it only has to be that bad, that that ease sounds like a better option. It has to be that bad that they feel that grace only exist in ending at all.

And if it is indeed that bad for them, understand that the idea of asking for help, can also feel too hard. And so it's here in this moment, for those of you who are listening and possibly in that dark space, that I just want to let you know that if that is where you are and you're hearing this right now. I just want to take a moment before I go back to talking to our friend who are supposed to

help and support us, that you are deeply loved, and that you are so important and valuable. And I want to let you know if you are listening to this right now and you're wondering, man, she's describing where I am right now. And I am hearing what she is saying, I just want you to stay with me for one second and know something that I have found to be true because I've been in that dark place. Darker than you would know. It does pass. It does pass. The same way that you remember seasons before, that were bright, where everything seemed to come together, where everything seemed to be less heavy, even it feels like gosh that was so long ago. I just it's and it was so fleeting and brief, and but it was so long ago, I want to let you know that brighter days, absolutely return again. Absolutely. They always will. And they always do.

And that the moment that we are in right now where it feels so so dark, the sunshine does come back. And that all that matters is that we just step out of the moment that we go be with someone else. And that we just stay in that joy for a brief second, to remind us of how good it can and will be. So if you are in that space right now, where you are saying to yourself, it is so so, so dark, just trust what I am saying right now, because I've stood there with you. But I'm still here and you deserve to still be here too, because we need you.

For those of us who are on the other side who you know, hear about these things, and just say, gosh, I wish they'd ask for help. I want you to know that what's important for us to remember is we may not know what everyone's struggle is. People always say you don't know what they were dealing with, you never know. We don't need to know the details of someone's pain, to know that they will encounter pain. Everyone encounters pain, everyone engages in suffering, that is part of the human existence. Because without suffering, we would not know some of the greatest forms of joy. It's both sides. That is life, nothing is missing. But I also want you to know that because we are aware that everyone is going to engage and embrace suffering as an aspect of their life. Instead of saying, Oh, my goodness, I wish that if they were carrying that, that they would have asked for relief, it's a lot better for us to just treat everyone, every day with the utmost grace. Be kind to them. Show them love. Do not engage in gossip and assumptions. Treat them tenderly. Give them an abundance of kindness, support them, stand with them. And providing that to everyone you encounter every day and always the best that you are able. Because again, we're all carrying our own thing too. We want to care and not carry per se. Understand that in doing that you may be breaking someone through one of their hardest moments.

I remember the other day, when I was having a particularly tough day. And I took myself to lunch by myself. This was after, you know, working. I'd gone in and had a couple of meetings that day in Los Angeles and I was kind of going through the motions. I already woke up kind of feeling in a funk and call it hormones, call it dealing with divorce stuff, call it momming, whatever it is, it was daily stuff that just felt too hard to carry that day. And I still had to show up. So I did all the meetings and I did those things with a smile. But at the end of it all I got into my car and I was just like, I'm so tired. I'm just so tired. I don't feel good. And fortunately, in that moment, what broke through my thoughts of negativity and my thoughts of difficulty and depression was that I was hungry. You know, a simple human emotion was the thing that carried me through in that

moment. So I said, well, you know, in this moment, the next thing I can do is I can go eat. And so I went and sat down to eat and I was feeling like putting myself in a shell. I didn't really want to look at anyone's eyes. I didn't really want to engage. I was choosing to be sort of in my own space and maybe avoid engaging with, you know, the human existence because if I engage with the human existence, it just be one more reminder of how I felt like I wasn't all the way there. But what happened was that I had a really kind waitress. And she was so delightful. I mean, she was like, how are you doing today? And when she said, How are you doing today? It wasn't a casual, flippant, I'm just asking, but I'm not listening. And I'm just like, oh, great, you know, she wasn't pre constructing her answer without listening for what I was really going to say she stopped, she paused. And it made me look up at her and say, actually, you know, I'm doing okay, but I definitely can tell that I needed to treat myself to this lunch. And she looked at me and she said, I know what that's like. And you definitely deserve this lunch. And we'll see what we can do to make it special for you. And just that very real human interaction, just made me feel a little bit more connected. But I'm trying not to get choked up about it, because it was so tiny, I'm sure in her world. But it was like, where I was feeling like I was drifting off and drifting away, she tethered me back to the world.

It was like she tied me back in and pulled me back in, where I said, She's giving me this interaction. And I remember that entire day where I was feeling so alone and feeling so lacking. Every time she came back to the table, she was just a little bit kinder, and saw me a little bit more, and I just felt more present. And by the end of it all, she brought me an extra dessert, you know, and we were chuckling a little bit. And I felt like I could be more me, you know, because by nature, I love people. So that engagement was good. It was, she broke through just a little bit by seeing me just a little bit. And I remember walking out from that lunch. And I was renewed, I was restored. And y'all know, I'm a God girl. God can use anyone, he can use you. And he used her on that day. Because I remember getting in the car and driving. And it took a couple minutes before it really dawned on me that that a shift had remained within.

But as I was driving back, I realized I didn't feel as heavy that I felt a little lighter. And by her expressing joy and giving me happiness and choosing to see me because lord knows she probably is carrying her own stuff, too. She lent me a little bit of her light until I could find my own. And if there's anything I can lend to each of you, it's a reminder that no matter what state you're in, whether it is in the dark days yourself, or you know, on the other side of a dark day, I want to let you know that you possess a light. And that light is valuable. And it is important. And it never goes anywhere, even if it feels like it's not shining as bright. And one of the best things we can do for each other and for ourselves is to lend that light to as many people as possible. Because as we always say, you never know what someone else is going through. So friend, I know that we are constantly finding out, some of us right now today this week about a new loss or a new change or something difficult that we have to carry. But I want to let you know that one of the benefits of living this life and being here is that we get to do all of this together. Thanks for letting me do life with you friend.