



Season 3, Episode 39 - Transcript

Fighting Fair

Nicole:

Hey, friend. So we have had some really deep dive tough talks, and I love it. And I want to talk about what I'm going to air my own business on this one. And I'm going to let you know that this chat is all about Fighting Fair. So what does that mean? It means that whether you are negotiating at work, or you are arguing with a partner, or you're getting it in with your kids, because they are just being impossible, you gotta know how to fight, you got to know how to fight fair.

And I say this, because I'm a strong fighter, y'all. If you didn't know this, and so many of y'all are like, Oh, Nicole, you're so sweet. You're so friendly. You're so this, you're so that, you know, and it's true. I'm nice, you know, I am nice, but I'm also not nice. What I mean is I'm firm, I know what I want. I know how, what I believe, my value systems. I work hard. And, boy, I tell you, if you're gonna come with it, you just better have your data, your facts and everything in alignment, you better know what you're trying to say and be clear on your stuff. Because if not, you know, you're not gonna win with me.

And my kids know that my partners know that. And everyone knows where I'm a softy, it's the babies. But you better believe that when it comes down to it, I have no problem, you know, whether it's coming from my sales background in business, or my hard working, you know, do it yourself Mama, attitude, or, you know, my cultural background as an African and a Christian and someone who just really has a strong value system around like work ethic and kindness and grace, you know. I'm a sharpshooter and a straight shooter. And all of that means that, you know, I get what I want, and I get what I want a lot. But it's not fun to get what you want, if everyone in the room doesn't feel good about it.

And that's what I wanted to talk about. I wanted to talk about one of the things that I have learned in this land of free-ness, you know, post divorce, in a new partnership with older children, you know, doing new things as my business grows in different ways. I have just had to

learn so much about fighting fair. And this all came up because I have arguments in my current partnership. Now, I think that that's something that a lot of people don't expect, you know, they're like, oh, my gosh, especially if you follow me on social at Nicole Walters. Everywhere, you know, you may see how absolutely giddy, happy, delightful, smileypants, joyful I am. I have never shared a relationship like this ever before. I've also never, I think looked like this in a relationship. I am absolutely over the moon in love. And we are over a year into this and I am just still just smitten by my fella, you know, but I want you to know the other side of it all. It is imperfect. And maybe even you know, I'll talk about things today but maybe we'll even have the MR fella back to share a little bit because he keeps it all the way real. So I may or may not. We do have editing though.

So in any case, he is a sharp, straight shooter as well, you know, he's direct, he is clear, you know, and you better believe that in our relationship we both wear the pants and we each have one leg in each, you know, it's like that I would definitely say I do not feel like and it's crazy, because I think that oh, and I'll even start here to let you guys know if we're gonna keep it all the way real. I think a lot of people have always assumed that. What is it like to be with someone like Nicole Walters? Well, it's clear. Like I just finished saying I have a strong personality. I am a talker. Especially when it comes to being on camera and things I'm just so comfortable that I have no problem filling the room. I am a lot. I'll be the first one to say it. I know it. I know that for some people they're just like, Oh, you're so much. I'm okay. What's the saying? If I'm a lot go find less. You know, like I'm okay with that because people who love me love my a lot, right? So I'm okay with it. But I know I'm a lot.

And one of the things that's interesting is in my relationships, though, and people don't ever realize this, but I'm really very clear about my direction and my vision and my morals, like what I would like to accomplish, what I want my family to do, but I am so willing and submissive when it comes to picking up the workload. And I say this because I've learned this from my friends, during this divorce process, during even my marriage, I would hear it constantly from my family, from my friends, like Nicole like do less. Nicole it's okay to not. Nicole like you know you give in too easy you're you know you're you're okay to stand up for what you know is right you know, and And I can tell you that some of that is just kind of my personality, I will like, some of the traditional myths, if you will, of the classic relationship, you know, this is not me saying I'm anti-feminist, this doesn't mean me saying I'm pro patriarchy, I'm not to pick me, I gotta say all those things, because I feel like now, people come for you and cancel you, you know, if you say anything that can be interpreted any type of way.

But what I'm trying to let you know is that I really like the classic, cheesy, traditional relationship, call me a nerd, I love when my guy opens the doors for me, and I like, you know, having a partner that I trust, to defer to and, you know, without misinterpreting the Bible, or trying to use, you know, biblical things to support patriarchal ideas that are harmful to women, you know, I do understand the submissive request of the Bible in a relationship, you know, in a marital partnership, or in a relationship. What I've learned, though, was, I used to believe that that meant that you differed to your male partner, you know, or your male partner in the relationship,

if you're in a traditional heterosexual relationship by saying, hey, you know, you make the decisions, I support you, you're the head of the household, you decide all of that. And that was very much, you know, how I did my relationship before, and a lot of people wouldn't know or think that, the way I did it was, you know, I'll go fetch all the different ideas and things of that sort, lay it out, you pick, and then we go for it. Or I'll come up with a concept, you know, and if you tell me, that's okay, then I'll go build it, or I'll go do it, you know, and what I learned very quickly, was that I still believe.

So coming out of divorce unexpectedly, you know, I definitely thought I'd be like, oh, never again, it's gonna be all me all the time, I'm going to manage my own stuff, no more relationships. I will never ever allow myself to let a man's needs, whims, emotions, whatever dictate how I make decisions, you know, I'm not going to ever seek permission, you know, within a relationship again, you know, I'm just going to do whatever I need to do to make sure everything's okay.

But what I learned was that I actually am a better person in partnership. It helps me with, you know, keeping grace at the forefront, and not overworking myself and being kinder to myself. And it helps me to have someone who, when when I'm in a relationship that's healthy, sees the best version of me, and gives me the benefit of the doubt because that helps keep me in the place that I need to be in, in order to show up in the world in the best way and to take care of myself.

And in those types of healthy relationships, submission can happen, but the way that it happens is in a way where you are looking at equality in that partnership, you know. I'm okay, stepping back many times over, you know, which honestly always ends up being like 50/50, because if you're in a relationship, it goes both ways. But I'm okay, stepping back and just be like, Okay, it's your thing, because I trust that this person is not just going to make decisions that are beneficial for them, but also beneficial for me and also beneficial for our kids and also beneficial for our future, that they're always considering all the factors and not just themselves.

And that is sort of the lesson that I had to take, which ties into fighting fair is that, you know, it's okay for me to lose, you know, a fight, it's okay for me to lose a disagreement. It's okay for me to not, you know, come out on top all the time, if the person that I know is in it with me forever and does the work and shows up and cares about the outcome because that means you never really lose it means that you just found a happy medium of compromise. And it's exciting because that's what I'm in right now.

And so one of the things that I learned in our disagreements because we have them still so you know, in a simple sense, one of the things that we had disagreement about, I hope he's okay with me sharing this and probably should ask first but I'm sure he's okay with it, is that in our partnership, you know, I obviously have my 11 year old daughter, my kids come first. Anyone who knows me personally, if you haven't picked it up online, to be completely honest, I am a fierce mother. I am a forcefield of love, care and attention around my babies. I'm interested in

everything they do, what they eat, what the texture of their poop is, how they're feeling, how they're sleeping, what they need, I care about every single aspect of my babies from their nose to their toes.

So because of that any partner that I ever had would have had to be okay with them first. Like without question there's just no question right? Like I'm perfectly content you know, before I even met my partners with it just being me my babies. So my partner that I'm with now, the Misterfella, he had to learn, you know, what that meant for me as a mom, you know, and how it happened in practice, because he'd heard it. And he'd seen how I put their interests first, especially during this divorce process and how I, you know, built a space for them to make sure that they were transitioning and comfort and how I always have prioritize my children. And you know, and he saw all of that. And it's worth noting, and we've mentioned in previous episodes that he's been on that, you know, for those of you who are out there saying, Man, I have kids, and you know, what, how will I find a guy who's interested in that, you know, he loved it, he was like, this is the guy who has to look up pictures of his food before he orders. So he's very visual. And for him, he was like, Oh, my gosh, I love seeing you as a mother. Because when I see how you mother I want that for my children, you know, and so, you know, it's, he knew who I was, and he loved that.

But it also meant that he had to learn that understand that all that fire can come towards you too, if you're not on your A game. So when I tell you he is stellar, I like I'm trying not to tear up because it moments it hits me like, Oh, thank you, Jesus, thank you God, like, that's how I feel like, Oh, thank you God, like, it's like many praise moments, you know, when I think of how good of a man he is, and how blessed I am, like, not just for my existing babies, but future babies, like the idea that I could have him as a father and a partner and raising a child is such a gift. It is such a gift.

He is so incredibly good and caring, and loving and smart. And, and good with discipline and high energy and invested and interested and patient and balanced and nurtured. And you know, to his credit, he had a great childhood, his parents are beyond wonderful. Like when I tell you, I met his parents, and I was just floored at the goodness of these people. His mother is so generous, you know, and truly is just like all in on her family. His father is just this like, positive, optimistic, sunny man, you know, who just finds joy in everything. And just, he comes from good stock, I didn't even know they made him like this anymore. And that said, he's showing up 100%, too, because he knew that with me comes my baby. So he's showing up so well. I mean, he's helping you with drop offs and pickups and putting food on the table and just you know, all the things all in. But it also means that if you say you're all in, you better not drop the ball on my babies, you know what I mean? Like you can, you can let me down, but you never gonna let my babies down. And you know, that type of energy. And we had a day where I was on set filming a TV show. And so I've had a couple of different TV projects while I'm out here. I live in LA because I work in LA, my studios here. You know, I get TV show projects, I'm on panels and speaking engagements, like I do all that stuff out here. So you know, my agents, everyone's out here.

So I was working on a TV show project for a major cable network. And so I'm on set 15 hours a day. And so, in working on this show, I had a regular touch base with my little one, my 11 year old, where I was like, Hey, I'm gonna call you at this time, just to touch base and make sure okay, but I knew I wasn't gonna make the touch base, because I was going to be on set. And that was just unusual. But during the early stages of the transition, you know, I was always so worried about her anxiety level around it, making sure she felt secured and loved and had attention. And just making sure that she was getting that from a parent, you know, that was truly invested in her, you know, and she felt that she had that rooting, that healthy attachment. So when I knew I wasn't going to be able to do it, you know, I shared that, you know, with the Misterfella, I was like, Yeah, you know, I don't know what I'm gonna do, I'm going to be on set.

And if you listened to last week's episode about asking for help, it was my way of asking for help without asking for help, and I'm getting better about it, you know, but I was sharing that I had this problem. And so he jumps in, and of course, because He's, um, he's like, Oh, I got it. I'll do the touch base call. I'll make sure she's good. You don't have to worry about it. You know, and they already have a relationship that's just so beautiful. And so I wasn't worried about it. I was like, oh, you know, I love it. Thank you so much. Just, you know, make sure you do it because it's really important. And he's like, okay, no problem. I got it, right. Not a problem.

Y'all know what happened. Y'all know right now you know exactly what happened. I think it was like 4:30 rolled around in the afternoon and the call did not happen. And so I get off set and I see on my phone, you know, multiple text messages like Hey, Mom, you know, just checking in you know, didn't get my touch base call, make sure everything's okay, you know, and I am hot. Right? Hot. And I know some of you right now are like, what's the big deal? He's trying, what? You know, everyone has different feels on stuff. I'm gonna tell you right now one of the things that there are two areas of my life that people can come for all they want. And I just it rolls off my shoulders. I literally don't care, right one is my business consulting. I'm an excellent business consultant, I'm very good at what I do. I'm qualified and tried and true. I'm very, very good at my business consulting. And so that's something I know I do well, and it just is what it is.

The other thing is my babies. There is no one on this planet that could ever tell me I don't love my babies. Well, I'm not saying I'm perfect, be clear on that. I make mistakes. And I hear and listen to feedback for that. But no one will ever tell me that I don't have their best intentions in mind or that I need to protect them differently or whatever. Like, just they can't even come for me. So for that reason, yeah, I was upset. I was upset because this was an expectation that was set. It was a responsibility that I delegated in relation to my most cherished possession in the world. Right? You know, my most cherished thing that I have in my existence up under me are my little littles, you know?

And what mattered to me more was that he knew not so much that the call was dropped. And I think all the mamas here are gonna know and feel this. It wasn't so much that the call was dropped. It was that I needed to know that he understood that my babies were a priority. That

under no circumstances would there be any relationship where my babies come second, ever. Current babies, future babies, ever. And the I wanted to make sure that there wasn't any energy of being cavalier around my babies, I needed to know for a fact that there was complete and total understanding that we are not going to be casual around my baby's needs ever.

And bless his heart, y'all. When I tell you, when I tell you first go of it. He's allowed a mistake. But I wanted to make sure you understood, you know, you get one. And so I bless his heart. Oh my god, I just look back and I'm like, Oh, my God, it was so hard on him. But you know, I went in on him. I was like, Listen, I need you to understand that this is not acceptable. And it's not okay. And bless his heart. He came back and he was like, I don't understand. It's a phone call. Like, I know, I messed up. That was wrong. I understand. But why are you so mad? Oui, mamas. I know, all you right now. Like, hold on, hold on. Again. It was early, not too early, like we've been together for the better part of a year. But he was just new in the kids lives because I didn't introduce them to the kids until after six months.

But he was just like, oh, and he could see my face. The minute he said that, that he said the wrong thing. And immediately, I mean, I'm telling you within minutes, it dawned on him, it clicked. He was like, Oh, my gosh, I messed up. I understand it will never happen again. I am so sorry. This was the thing that I did. This is how I shouldn't have done it. Here's how I'll correct it in the future. I understand what you're saying. You're heard you're understood. I'm sorry. You know, how can I make this right? And here's where I went wrong. Because I can, you know, say this all day, because I've learned so much since my previous relationships to was I said to him, my demeanor was, Oh, you don't need to worry about another chance because I don't need to worry about, I was in that mood, you are not going to get another chance to to mess this up. Because you don't need to worry about calls, I will do the calls like I instantly, you know, this is part of my demeanor, you know, that I've had to work on you know, is if somebody messes up, I'm like, I'm taking it all back. You don't need any response. I don't trust you anymore. You know, and when it comes to my kids, especially my kids, my money, my best, that's how I am. And so he was like, no, like, Please give me another shot. And, again, growth. I let him have another shot. He nailed it. And he's nailed it ever since that, right? Like, it's never been an issue. He's on it with my kids, and especially the little one and I'm just so so blessed.

Now, I say this because people are flawed, they're going to make mistakes, like we know what's going to happen, your relationship will have issues, it will have issues. And I you know, read that, you know, in a study that if you have a relationship where you aren't fighting, and you aren't having disagreements, and I'm not talking about obviously physical fighting, emotional abuse, you know, narcissistic behavior, any type of aggression. That's not what I'm talking about. I'm talking about disagreements like, I don't like that you didn't do the dishes or I'm upset about you know, this thing with the baby or I would like to do this with our funds but this isn't happening, if you're not having a relationship where you are disagreeing on things and that is coming to a verbal awareness. There are bigger issues in your relationship. Hear me on that. A good relationship has fights. Because if you are fighting it means you're talking about the issues.

When I tell you so many people think they have happy relationships, and it's just because they're not saying anything. I've heard so many stories and people in the DMs of women who are like I just don't say anything. I just keep it all to myself, but I'm fuming, I'm bottled up, I have resentment. I, I have so much anger, you know, I have so much frustration. I know that feeling. You know, I spent my early years of my relationship trying to talk about the issue saying this is a problem. And does this make sense? And I didn't understand, I was 22. I didn't understand that, so much of that was signs that things weren't making sense. They weren't gonna change later, right. But I really thought that oh, yeah, you know, like I'm saying all these things when I see change, but then down the line, I'm saying a lot less, and I'm just doing the work myself. And instead that breeds resentment, right?

So I want you to know that it's important that you're speaking up on things that you disagree with, and it's important that you're speaking up on things that upset you. And it's important that you're speaking up, you know, on things that you know are issues and points of dissatisfaction and improvement that you need within a relationship. One, because you deserve it. I mean, what on earth, you're going to be connected to someone for a lifetime and, and just settle and deal with things that you know, make you uncomfortable or against your morals or affect your family or your kids? Get out of here. That's not okay. You know, and I can say that proudly now, like I felt it in my body, because I'm saying it to you and I'm saying it to me, it's not okay, you deserve more.

But I'm also saying that it is important that you have a safe space to do it. And I think that that is twofold. One, it's about constantly cultivating in the relationship, a safe place, way, system, process, in order to to discuss these things. Now, that part is going to differ for everyone, right, and part of why it's gonna be different also is mental health issues. If you're with a partner who is mentally stable and had a great childhood and is healthy and well developed, fortunately, when you have disagreements, the disagreement can stay in the center of the room and accountability, responsibility, blaming is not really an issue, you're able to be able to say, hey, we're talking about the issue, we're focused on the problem at hand, we own that this isn't our problem, even if you're bringing it up. And I own responsibility and how we're going to fix it because I want a happy relationship. And that is honestly, it takes therapy to get there. You know, if somebody doesn't have it, sometimes it takes therapy to stay there, because life will throw you bumps and bruises. But that is such a core part of a relationship is being able to say, what is my role in, in helping fix and solve this problem. And let me own the fact that, you know, I am responsible for my own life, you know, and this relationship is part of my life. And I'm going to have to do things to maintain it, you know, and that might include having this difficult conversation and taking away things that I'm going to act on, in order to have a better life, you know?

If you feel like you have a great partner and you want to sustain it, or you have a great life, and you want to sustain it, you're gonna have to do stuff to keep it you know, like, that's just how life is, you can't have nice things and not do work. And, and that is a huge part of how I fight with the Misterfella. One of the things that we do is we have a, you know, the issues on the table,

you know, it's not me, and it's not you, it's on the table. So we're looking at it, we're describing it, we're talking about it, we're explaining how it might make us feel or what we see it doing. But we do not talk about it in the context of you are this or you have done this or you are this person, because that's such an overarching statement. And it doesn't honor the fact that there is love there. And it doesn't give the benefit of the doubt that is so necessary in a relationship. You know, for me, in particular, what that looks like is I know without a shadow of a doubt that I'm well loved, and that my partner is committed and that everything he's doing is in our interest and the interest of my girls.

So that means that if there's something that occurs in the relationship that is negative or hurtful or challenging or hard, that it may just be a thing, and not necessarily something that is happening to me or done deliberately or personal. And I don't need to take it personally. I don't need to get dejected about it like oh, this will never get fixed or everything is awful, or the world is terrible. Or this is a symptom of my partner being a horrible person towards me. It's just not that. It usually is we need to figure this out because it's probably a misunderstanding. And if nothing else, the figuring it out portion of it will tell me a lot more about whether or not this is a real problem. And the other advantage I have there is, if something is a real problem, and I do need to figure it out, I'm also able to, because of my own therapy, and my own self love my own worth, say, look, it's not my job to fix my partner either.

So if they're showing me like, no, like, this is my value system, I don't care about your kids. And this, I will never do school pickup, or I'll never clean the house, or I'll never do whatever, it's not my job to sit here and spend years and years and years trying to help that person understand the value behind doing those things for themselves even, no. It's my job to say, Okay, if that's who you are, and your firm behind that, then I deserve to find someone who will, you know, think align that or I'm allowed to have that for myself, because I am enough for myself too you know? And so it makes it a lot safer to be able to talk about those issues, because you feel that sense of personal security, around, not needing to be completed in your other partner and your partner is also hold within themselves.

So with us for fighting fair, it's keeping the issue in the center of the room. The other thing we do, and this is, you know, kind of cheesy, but also based in science. You know, touching is something that we do a lot. So if it starts getting too hot, which is the phrasing that I always use, like it's too hot right now, meaning we are getting kind of angry, voices are a little elevated. I'm not a big like screamer yeller in or like I'm not heightened anger, my kids always talk about how I use like my firm mom voice, you know, but I'm not like a big like, oh, like, I don't do that, I don't throw things like that's just not my nature. And so you know, and my partner isn't either actually, but like, when we both start, I can feel the escalation and energy. Sometimes I will literally just stop talking, walk over and like, hold him. And I'll say, phrases like, you know, we can keep being angry, we can keep talking this through. You know, I'm not saying that you're wrong. And I'm not saying that I'm right. You know, and I want to keep figuring this out, but it's too hot right now. It's too hot right now, we need to bring it down. So that we can get this figured out because I know we'll figure it out. And, and sometimes I'll just say like, we're not breaking up, we're not

breaking up. This is not it's not going to be over. This isn't what this is, we're just figuring this out. And when I tell you the saying of these phrases, and he'll say them to me, too.

So, you know, if he's like, season, I'm really upset about something, you know, he'll say phrases like, you know, I trust you, and I love you. And I know that I'm probably misunderstanding something, and we're gonna figure this out, you know, so let's just keep talking. And when I tell you these phrases that are sort of independent of the disagreement, but are just reminders, sort of in the context of a hot moment of how much love is still there, and how this hot moment is not changing that sometimes will even say, you know, I love you, I love you so much. You know, like, and not in a sarcastic way, like I love you, you know, like, let's keep talking, and it's important to say those things because it almost diffuses things, but it also shifts our brain kind of you know, from that place of, like, I have to defend where I am to, it's us, we're figuring it out, this is figureoutable, like we can do this. And it's been so, so helpful, um, you know, physical touch being a really big one.

And, again, you know, I'm not diminishing the privilege that I have of a safe partnership. It's not lost on me. I've been in partnerships before that were physically violent. I've been in partnerships before that were emotionally abusive. I've been in partnerships before that, you know, especially when I was very young, that were extremely lopsided in terms of, you know, age or, you know, all these different things, I talk about a lot of that and how that has led to some of my partner choices in my book that's coming out this year in 2023, in fall of 2023. So, you know, it's not lost on me that not all of us are in positions where we can do that safely. Especially if mental health is present. You know, I've been there.

But I also want you to know is that what I describe here and I'm trying not to be too emotional about it, because I know, this is hard and sensitive for some. But it's this part I want you to hear especially if you're in your 20s or early 30s. And you are new to this thing and trying to figure it out or a year in or three years in. I want you to know that it is actually possible to have a normal, healthy relationship, where disagreements don't end in fighting, throwing, physical stuff, where the partner doesn't talk badly about you or hang up on you where they don't block you all over social or make fun of you in front of your friends or your family, where they don't leave you hanging or, you know, strand on the side of a street.

And I see a lot of stuff on social media or on like some of these reality shows where it's, it's not what we kind of constantly label as, like obvious violence, you know of that physical sort. But I want you to know that, like, it is possible to have disagreement and still feel loved. And not only is it possible, I want you to know that that is like normal, it is healthy, it is common, and you deserve it. And it took me a while to learn that, and I hope that for some of you listening, you know, in this chat that we're having, if you're ever wondering if that's real, that you're hearing my voice, you know, as as your good friend, who you really can trust that I'm telling you like, it is really normal, and healthy, to be able to still feel and have and be loved, even when it's hard or bad, or challenging or difficult.

And I'm not just saying that from my perspective, I'm not just on some, well, of course, because you're this or you have this or this this, no, I have friends who have gone through miscarriages, and, you know, cancer and really traumatic things in their own lives, like y'all, I'm going through a divorce, you know, and I have a partner that came into my life, you know, on the tail end of this thing and was still here and present with all of that hardship and was kind. And I want to let you know that like that is normal and to be expected across the board. And if you are holding up your relationship and not seeing that, there is something to explore, you are not crazy and if it's been years and years and years of that there is something to explore, and you're not crazy. And even if you've acclimated to it as your norm, just because it's normalized, does not mean that it is normal.

And I don't want you to normalize in your life or for your littles that are watching or for the challenges that life is going to be, I don't want you to normalize fighting unfairly, or in an aggressive way, as what a relationship is, because it's not. And if you're on the other side of it, where you feel like you're the aggressor, I want you to also recognize that you can be in places that make you into someone that you don't want to be. And at any point in time, you can choose to make it different. You can get into an environment, you know how some people are like on vacation me, when I'm on vacation, I'm just lighter and brighter and happier. I want you to know that living as the best version of yourself also can do with your environment, your circumstances and people that you have around you.

So I'm going through one of the hardest times of my life, you know this post divorce, life, rebuild, restructure what does it look like figuring oneself out you know, and yet this is one of the best times of my life. My life has been truly filtered down to only the best of the best, the people that you see in my life every day are all good and stable people. The people that you don't see in my life every day are people that I have intentionally chosen to not for my life and there's a reason for that. And it's because I am fiercely protecting and shaping and having my peace and it's the most valuable thing to me because it's tied to my health and I deserve to live well and live long and so do you.